

RAVENSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> MAY  
2025**

**Present:** Councillors A Ayres (Chair), J Cooke, B Hird, A Pledge and C Robinson

1. Councillor Ayres welcomed everyone and outlined the make-up of the two meetings. After approving and reviewing any matters arising from the minutes of last year's annual meeting, the purpose of the first meeting is to get RPC's approval for the various Annual Governance and Accountability Return documents and then deal with the organisation of RPC for the coming year.

The second meeting contains reports from RPC and other contributors on the past year's activities. This will then be followed by an Open Forum when residents can speak about any matter of local interest, including putting forward any motion for all present at the meeting to vote upon. However, the result of any vote made will not be binding upon RPC to implement.

2. **To approve the Minutes of the meeting**  
The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were approved.

3. **Matters Arising**  
There were no matters to be addressed.

4. **Financial Report**  
Every year RPC must complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). RPC must approve the various sections of the documents, send an appropriate section of the AGAR to the Government's external auditor, and publish the whole of the completed AGAR.

RPC must evidence that all the correct steps have been taken in the required order and record this in the Minutes of the meeting. All the documents referred to under item 5 had been reviewed by all councillors and the internal auditor before the meeting.

4.1 The cash book for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 showed our precept of £5,400 was supplemented by £239.30 from NYC for our cutting of visibility splays and £13.34 worth of bank interest.

Our major expenditure included £1668.60 - for grass cutting and £683.49 – for Insurance.

The RPC account had a final balance of £10,071.89 - £2,744.84 more than at the end of the previous financial year.

4.2 Since neither our total income nor our total expenditure for the financial year exceeded £25,000, we will certify ourselves exempt from review by the external auditor. The completed Certificate of Exemption will be displayed, along with all the other AGAR related documents, on the RPC notice board and will also be published on the website

<https://www.ravensworthvillage.com/parish-council>

**4.3** The Annual Internal Audit report for 2024-25 required by AGAR was noted.

**4.4** Ravensworth Parish Council approved the 2024-25 Annual Governance Statement for that year's AGAR.

**4.5** Ravensworth Parish Council approved the 2024-25 Accounting Statements for that year's AGAR.

**4.6** Ravensworth Parish Council undertook to comply with the AGAR publication requirements which include publishing the documents noted in 5.2-5.5 using the previously identified website for the period Monday 3 June – Friday 12 July 2025.

**5. Elections**

Councillor Andrew Ayres was unanimously re-elected as Chair.

RPC has a full complement of 5 Councillors.

**6. Dates for Future Parish Council Meetings**

Dates were proposed and agreed -all Mondays for Ordinary Meetings;

8<sup>th</sup> September 2025

10<sup>th</sup> November 2025

9<sup>th</sup> February 2026

The Annual Meeting will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

These dates will be displayed on the notice board and published on the website.

The meeting closed at 7:25 pm

1. **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> May 2025**

**Report on the Year's Activities**

The Chair reported as follows:

**The Green**

Our thanks go to the NYC team, who despite numerous problems with staffing and equipment, has looked after the grass over the last year and kept the visibility splays clear in and around the village. Issues with dog fouling continue and RPC has sought to address these through providing advice via The Flyer and in the purchase of signage. Plans by Open Reach to erect four 9m telegraph poles on The Green have been prevented after protracted investigation by RPC and despite the company's poor and delayed response to our communication of the council's concerns. Now that planning permission for the conversion of the Methodist Chapel has been granted, RPC is determined to ensure that once the work's plan is agreed that it is implemented with the minimum of disruption and damage.

**Highways and Traffic in the Village**

We have managed to make some improvement to road safety over the past year. Warning school signs have been installed on the main road and after two previous attempts, the latest set of road markings appear to be surviving vehicles and weather. RPC continues to seek a 20mph limit through the village and encourages residents to urge drivers on the tracks to follow the 5mph limit.

2. Despite financial problems nationally, it is hoped that the planned A66 developments will take place and so resolve the disturbance and dangers that residents constantly face.

**Other Matters**

RPC is constantly grateful to Ken Bell for the work he does in updating and maintaining the village website <https://www.ravensworthvillage.com/>. Whilst it provides much valuable local information, the Parish Council section enables the essential display of minutes of meetings along with governance and finance documents. In the section Useful Information, RPC has recently provided an Information Pack for residents along with updated details about the Village Defibrillator.

Councillor Robinson reported about the **Village Hall**:

The income for the Hall is healthy and remains below £5,000, ensuring that the Village Hall remains a small charity

Five session per week are regularly hired [art, samba and yoga] plus ad hoc bookings that have included: birthday parties, polling station, Halloween party by the School PTA, wreath making, bulb and hanging

basket classes

The Hall has been utilised for defib training and a highway feedback session. Rishi Sunak, who attended the highway meeting declared that having been to many village halls, ours was the best he had seen. He offered to attend again if he could help with fundraising or any campaigns.

The picture prints that were donated to Ravensworth Village Hall from the Pat Baker memorial are now displayed and were receiving positive feedback.

Ravensworth Village Hall fundraising has been low key in 2024, the main events being soup/desserts events every month between September and May, and wreath-making.

Carol thanked Drew Ayres for organising a free Carols and brass event in December, which was very enjoyable, but unfortunately had not been well attended.

Project work is ongoing for the installation of a disability access door. A quote of £12,000 has now been received and, if accepted by Ravensworth Parish Council, a grant application will be made in November 2024 and Carol expressed her thanks to Joan Hawes who remained Chair, and to Karen Ritzema who continued as Secretary. Carol particularly mentioned the 'unsung heroes' who were the friends/volunteers who were always willing to roll up their sleeves and help.

Councillor Robinson was hopeful and optimistic for another good year ahead.

### **3. Open Forum**

#### **Village Green**

A member of the village community expressed his concern about the state of the village green and felt that the grass cutting needed to start earlier.

The Chair explained that the North Yorkshire contractors had suffered various setbacks this year, including staffing shortages and broken equipment, which had delayed their start. The Chair was optimistic that the village green would soon start to look better.

#### **Use of Village Hall**

The meeting discussed the range of events taking place in the Village Hall and what time was reasonable for them to end. Councillor Robinson said that she felt it would be only fair to the village that events concluded by 11:00 pm at the latest.

#### **4. Fencing of Village Green Adjacent to Village Hall**

Councillor Robinson said that she had now spoken to a local fencing specialist who had agreed to undertake the work of putting a fence around the area of the village green adjacent to the Village Hall.

Agreed: that the Chair will liaise with the contractor regarding the work to be done, the aim being that it will take place during the school holiday in order to avoid any disruption.

#### **5. Clerking of Parish Council Meetings**

The meeting noted that because the Parish Council did not have a clerk, the Chair was currently undertaking this role in an unpaid capacity alongside his chairmanship.

Concern was expressed that appointing a paid professional would incur costs that the Parish Council simply could not afford.

**Agreed: that Audrey Pledge would investigate likely costs etc and report back to the next meeting.**

**Next Annual Meeting is on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026    The meeting closed at 7:55 pm.**