

Minutes from the WEST WITTON PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Monday 23rd March 2026 at 7pm

Present Cllr Dave Brown (Chair), Cllr Christine Donovan-Brown, Cllr Neil Dutton, Cllr Ron Barker.

In attendance

Alyson Jones (Clerk)

Members of public: 2

1 Apologies for absence

To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

RESOLVED: None

2 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest under the following categories: Pecuniary interest, Outside Bodies interest and family, friend or close associate interest.

RESOLVED: None

3 Public Participation

Residents may raise any matter relating to the Parish.

The owner from Capple Bank View, West Witton had raised a concern about the Parish Council owned land either side of the commemorative shelter outside their house and the fact that dogs relieve themselves on these small patches of ground and that many owners fail to clean up after these dogs making the area unsightly. The owner of Capple Bank View attended the meeting to discuss a solution with the Parish Council.

Cllr Barker remarked that the property is one of two, recently built behind the commemorative shelter. The owners of the other property have already laid stones over a weed membrane in front of their house.

RESOLVED: The issue was discussed and it was agreed that if the owners of the two properties affected by this were happy to improve the appearance of these areas and to maintain them, the Parish Council would write them a letter to this effect, stating that the land would still remain the property of the Parish Council and that nothing should be placed on the land that would obstruct it or cause a hazard to members of the public, but that the owners of the two properties behind this land affected by dog mess on it, would be able to improve and maintain these areas at their own cost, to prevent future problems. **ACTION:** Clerk to write to the two property owners involved.

4 Minutes of the Last Meeting

To confirm the Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 Sept 2025 as a true and correct record and to sign them as such.

RESOLVED: The Council approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 8 Sept 2025 as a true and proper record and were signed by the Chairman

5 Co-option of new Councillor and training

5.1 To consider an application for the position of Parish Councillor

RESOLVED: West Witton resident, Paul Hunter, has applied for the position of Parish Councillor. Paul is the son of retired Cllr John Hunter. The Council approved of the appointment of Paul Hunter as Parish Councillor, proposed by Cllr Dave Brown, seconded by Cllr Neil Dutton. Declaration of office and other necessary paperwork was completed by Paul Hunter. **ACTION:** Clerk to provide new Cllr with necessary documents including Standing Orders, etc

5.2 To consider any training requests for Parish Councillors for 2026

New Cllr Ron Barker confirmed he had completed the YLCA New Cllr online Training course and found it very useful. At this point Cllr Barker didn't feel any further training for his new role was necessary.

It was agreed that new Cllr Paul Hunter should complete the YLCA New Cllr online Training course as soon as possible. Cllr Donovan-Brown proposed adding new Cllr Paul Hunter as a signatory for cheques for West Witton Parish Council and this was unanimously agreed by Cllrs.

RESOLVED: New Cllr Paul Hunter to complete the YLCA New Cllr online Training course as soon as possible. **ACTION:** Clerk to organise this training to happen asap. New Cllr Paul Hunter to be a signatory for cheques for West Witton Parish Council. **ACTION:** Cllr Donovan-Brown to contact Barclays Bank to set this up

6 Garden Rents

6.1 To receive an update on Garden Rents for 2026 and decide on any actions necessary

RESOLVED: As the new garden rents contracts issued to licencees in Oct 2024 stated that garden rents would remain fixed for three years from 1 April 2024, the next review of garden rents would need to be done by the Parish Council by 31 March 2028. No further action until this time is necessary.

7 Cemetery

7.1 To receive an update on any cemetery matters, including proposal for new cemetery gates and to review burial fees, and decide on any actions necessary
Cllr Donovan-Brown gave an update on the cemetery matters that were raised at the last meeting.

RESOLVED: The slab base for the water butt has been done and the path has been cleaned up and the moss removed. The new cherry trees planted last year have also flowered. The gates have been inspected and the front ones are difficult to open and cause the pillars to move. It was proposed by Cllr Donovan-Brown and seconded by Cllr Barker that the old gates are replaced with new lighter ones and that the posts are put behind the pillars.

ACTION: Cllr Donovan-Brown to get quotes for the work and present at the next Parish Council meeting.

Cllrs also agreed that the cemetery fees should remain as they currently are for 2026.

Cllr Donovan-Brown is also investigating the high rise in charges for black bin emptying at the cemetery and will present her findings at the next meeting.

ACTION: Cllr Donovan-Brown

8 Mill Dam

8.1 To receive an update on Mill Dam, including recent accident and Spring tidy up, and decide on any actions necessary

Cllr Brown reported an incident that had occurred at Mill Dam on Thur 12 March 2026 which involved a car reversing into the dam. No one was hurt and the car was pulled out. Some damage to the dam was incurred and the car owners agreed to send a cheque for the repairs

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown to get costs for Mill Dam repair work and send to the vehicle owners for payment. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown

Cllr Donovan-Brown was unable to provide an update regarding her enquiry to North Yorkshire Flood Risk Management re funding/costs to replace the grill at Mill Dam. Cllr Donovan-Brown will continue to pursue this matter

ACTION: Cllr Donovan-Brown

Cllr Dutton advised the Cllrs that the cleaning rota for Mill Dam has helped and that he will be organising a working party to help with future work/repairs.

ACTION: Cllr Dutton

9 Grass Cutting

9.1 To receive an update on grass cutting for 2026/27 and decide on any actions necessary

Cllr Brown reported that grass cutting costs have not been raised now that DCN Fencing are doing the grass cutting in West Witton. The mower purchased to mow Mill Dam is cutting a bit long.

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown proposed that this mower is part exchanged for a better mower to do the work. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Barker. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to cost and action the part exchange of existing mower for a new one.

Cllrs queried the Urban Grass Cutting 26/27 West Witton maps received in Jan 2026 from HAM and presented by the Clerk. Cllrs were keen to know exactly what areas HAM would cutting and how deep for visibility. **ACTION:** Clerk to find out more and report back at the next Parish Council meeting

10 West Witton Village Updates

10.1 To receive an update on work on the bus shelter and Caroline bench

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown reported that there is a leaking roof of the commemorative bus shelter on Mill Dam. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to provide costs for work to repair the leaking roof at the next Parish Council meeting.

An update on the Caroline bench is pending Cllr Brown writing to Caroline re getting the bench repaired or taken away. No progress to report re the repairs to the Swinithwaite bus shelter. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown

10.2 To consider new signs for the village

Cllrs discussed the proposal to create historic signs that would explain the history of some of the places of interest in West Witton, such as Nanny Well, the Milk Stand, the history of the Burning of Old Bartle, the Giant's Grave, etc.

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown proposed these new signs for the village are created and this was seconded by Cllr Dutton. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to investigate costs and present proposals re the location and wording of the signs at a future Parish Council meeting. It was also agreed that Cllr Brown would approach the Yorkshire Dales National Park for possible funding.

10.3 To receive an update on Christmas tree Milk Stand

Cllr Brown reported that the middle tree of the overgrown trees on the Milk Stand had been removed. Cllr Dutton and the Christmas tree working party were thanked by the Parish Council for their work on the Christmas trees in West Witton for Christmas 2025.

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown proposed putting a new Christmas tree on the end on the Milk Stand, this was seconded by Cllr Donovan-Brown. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to organise new Christmas tree for the Milk Stand

Cllr Dutton raised the issue that water had got into the West Witton Christmas tree lights and it was proposed and agreed by all the Parish Councillors for new lights to be purchased from the reserve from the closed Smorthwaite Trust Fund. **ACTION:** Cllr Dutton to source costs for new Christmas lights and present at the next Parish Council meeting.

11 Highways update

11.1 To consider any highway matters, including bus stop needing repainting in West Witton

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown raised the issue that the bus stop markings need repainting in West Witton. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to contact Highways re this

11.2 To receive an update on the rebuilding of edges of Green Hill and replacement of edging stones

RESOLVED: Cllr Donovan-Brown contacted Area 1 (Richmond Area Highways and Transport division managed by the North Yorkshire Council) re the rebuilding of edges of Green Hill and the replacement of edging stones. There has been no response to report. **ACTION:** Cllr Donovan-Brown will continue to chase Area 1 for a response re this

11.3 To consider the proposal to extend the 30mph zone out of West Witton towards Swinithwaite to beyond Oak Tree Farm

Cllr Dutton presented to the Parish Council the request by a resident to extend the 30mph zone out of West Witton towards Swinithwaite to beyond Oak Tree Farm. This would slow road traffic down on a blind corner.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council unanimously agreed to the proposal to extend the 30mph zone out of West Witton towards Swinithwaite to beyond Oak Tree Farm raised by Cllr Dutton and seconded by Cllr Barker. **ACTION:** Cllr Dutton to let the resident know the outcome of the request and Cllr Donovan to contact Area 1 for a site meeting regarding this.

A suggestion was also made to move the 60mph sign further away from the playing fields and to make the sign that indicates there is a playing field visible from both directions of the main road.

RESOLVED: Cllr Donovan-Brown to contact Area 1 for a site meeting to discuss this change and also 11.3 above. **Action:** Cllr Donovan-Brown

12 Planning Applications and Decisions

12.1 To consider any recent/current Planning Applications

The following Planning Application had been considered by the Parish Council:

16 Oct 2025 - R/91/191 - Householder planning permission to create a 3.9m wide driveway with double gated access (using existing gate posts), provision of a porous block paved area for parking 2 cars and installation of an EV charger

for charging an electric car at Ghyll Holme, Main Street, West Witton, Leyburn, DL8 4LS

RESOLVED: The Parish Council’s response to Yorkshire Dales Planning Enquiry No R/91/191 was submitted on 24 Oct and can be viewed as Appendix 2.

The following Planning Application had been considered by the Parish Council with no objections raised:

19 Nov 2025 - R/91/38H/LB - Listed building consent for relocation of pantry shelves from pantry to cellar to allow for creation of shower room on same level as bedroom, living room and kitchen and for replacement of the existing floor tiles with bathroom floor tiles at Candle Cottage, Main Street, West Witton, DL8 4LX

RESOLVED: No objections raised.

12.2 To receive an update from Yorkshire Dales National Park – Planning Event held on 18 March

Cllrs Brown and Donovan-Brown were unable to attend the online Yorkshire Dales National Park – Planning Event held on 18 March however the minutes from the meeting will be circulated to the Parish Council.

13 Financial Matters

13.1 To approve Receipts and Payments (see Appendix 1 below).

	MARCH 2026			
PAID				
DETAILS	TO	AMOUNT	DATE PAID	P NUMBER
Cemetery grass cutting Sept	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£180.00	10/10/2025	P15
Christine Donovan-Brown	Cable ties/violas	£33.10	24/10/2025	P16
Cemetery grass cutting Oct	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£150.00	05/11/2025	P17
Mill Dam/cemetery water butt and path	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£265.00	02/01/2026	P18
Website domain	Spanglefish	£61.78	18/01/2026	P19
Village Hall hire for 2026	West Witton Village Hall	£80.00	17/01/2025	P20
Flying Start New Councillor training: Parts 1 & 2	YLCA	£73.00	01/02/2025	P21
Parish Clerk Salary	Parish Clerk: Alyson Jones	£1,500	31/07/25	P22
RECEIVED AFTER AGENDA SENT	TO BE PAID			
RECEIVED				
DETAILS	FROM	AMOUNT	DATE RECEIVED	R NUMBER
Use of Mill Dam for croquet	Leyburn & District U3A Croquet Club	£130	02/10/25	R12

L Faulkner burial and Mrs Faulkner res grave	John Blenkiron Funeral Directors	£1200	20/01/26	R13
OUTSTANDING				
DETAILS	FROM	AMOUNT	DATE INVOICED	R NUMBER
A Scaife Burial	Sanderson & Co Funeral Directors	£200	26/02/26	R14

RESOLVED: Cllrs approved Receipts and Payments presented in Appendix 1 above.

13.2 To receive the latest bank balances and sign statements

RESOLVED: Cllrs approved the latest bank balances and signed statements. Cllr Donovan-Brown confirmed that Cllr Barker is now an authorized signatory for cheques for West Witton Parish Council.

14 AGAR Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2025/26

14.1 To approve internal and external auditors for AGAR 2025/26

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to the proposal of using the same internal auditor as 2025 and for PKLittlejohn to be external auditor in 2025/26. **ACTION:** Clerk to send accounts to internal auditor for review after 5 April 2025.

15 Update on Parish Council website

15.1 To receive an update on the Parish Council website, including .gov email addresses for Cllrs and decide on any actions necessary

RESOLVED: Cllr Barker agreed to look further into the .gov Parish Council website and the Clerk agreed to find out more about .gov email addresses for Cllrs. Both to present finding at the next Parish Council meeting **ACTION:** Cllr Barker and Clerk

16 Agenda items for future meetings

16.1 To notify the Clerk of matters for inclusion on the Agenda for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: Cllrs to provide any agenda items prior for the next meeting.

17 Date and time of next Parish Council Meeting

To confirm the date and venue of the next meeting of the Council and the Annual Parish Meeting

RESOLVED: The next meeting of the Council to be held on **Tue 23 June 2026**, 7pm, West Witton Village Hall. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Mon 18 May 2026**, 7pm, West Witton Village Hall.