NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at Park View School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 17th November 2026.

PRESENT	Chairman:	Councillor Craig Martin.
	Councillors:	Suzanne Brown, Margaret Caygill, David Dinsley, Patrick Driscoll, Dennis Hall, Darren Hawkes.
	County Councillor:	Craig Martin.
	Clerk:	David Murrell.

The Chairman commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Item 1. 26/106 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Maureen May and Chris Veitch. Councillors agreed to buy flowers and a card for Councillor May.

Item 2. 26/107 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Craig Martin declared interests as a County Councillor and as a Trustee of Park View Academy. Councillor Darren Hawkes declared an interest as a member of the North Lodge Remembrance Group.

Item 3. 26/108 Report of the County Councillor

The County Councillor's report included the matters contained in his written report below -

- - - -

Item 5. 26/110 Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised that he had been honoured to lay a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council at the Remembrance Sunday ceremony at the Chester-le-Street War Memorial. Also, on Remembrance Day at the Remembrance Artwork, there had been a very moving and respectful ceremony. The Chairman thanked Cllr Veitch, the Remembrance Group, volunteers and the Wheatsheaf pub for their input towards a successful community event.

Councillors thanked the Chairman.

Regarding outstanding matters -

a) Re Minute 26/96 section a). Re the turn from North Road to Low Flatts Road, the County Cllr advised that the County Council Street Lighting Department had considered this but had decided that the existing lighting was sufficient.

b) Re Minute 26/97. Re the Picktree Village Green Belt, the Chairman advised that a Working Group had now been set up and a first meeting was being arranged. Cllr Hall, a member of the Group, asked that the Chairman supply a timeline for the development of the County Durham Plan.

c) Re Minute 26/99 section c). Re new displays for the bus shelters' cabinets, Cllr Caygill advised that the posters had now been produced and these were now with Cllr Driscoll for placing in the cabinets. Councillors thanked Cllr Hawkes for arranging the printing of the posters. Cllr Caygill advised that more photos were available should they be wanted.

d) Re Minute 26/99 section d). The North Road tree stump had not yet been ground out. The County Cllr will chase this up.

e) Re Minute 26/101 section e). Re a site for a King Charles III Coronation Bench, the County Cllr is to consult with residents of North Road and Longdean Park near to the two proposed sites.

f) Re Minute 26/103 section a). The Clerk advised that the only room available at Barley Mow Village Hall was not an upgrade on the facilities presently available at the school. Councillors agreed therefore to continue to hold meetings at the school for the time being.

Item 6. 26/111 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Communications and Media Development

In his absence from the meeting, Cllr Veitch had provided the written report below -

- - - -

In addition, Councillors thanked Cllr Veitch for all the work he was putting in to many community matters.
The Chairman thanked Cllr Veitch for his report.

b) Crime and Community Safety

In his absence from the meeting, Cllr Veitch had provided the written report below -

- - - -

g) Picktree Village

Cllr Brown's report included the matters contained in her written report below -

- - - -

North Lodge /No Parish /East North	DM/ 26/01 832/ TPO Brown	11 Castle View Chester-le-street Chester-le-Street DH3 3XA	Cherry (T1) - crown reduce whole canopy by 1.5m, crown raise by 1m, all branch severance to be no greater than 75mm diameter, Beech (T2) - felling and removal to ground level with replacement species, Silver Birch (T3) - removal of deadwood only, Beech (T4) - crown lift lowest small diameter fine branches, removal of deadwood only (Amended Description)
North Lodge /North Lodge /East North	DM/ 26/02 412/ TPO Twin Trees	Brooklands 23A North Lodge Chester-le-Street DH3 4BA	T1- sycamore - fell close to ground level as possible and T2 - birch - fell close to ground level
Chester-le-Street North/ No Parish /East North	DM/ 26/00 002/ FPA Banana Moon Day Nursery Ltd	Queens Head Front Street Chester-le-Street DH3 3BJ	Change of use of hotel (use class C1) to childrens nursery (use class E). Internal alterations to buildings to facilitate the changes of use; provision of ancillary amenity area and associated works.
Chester-le-Street North/ No Parish /East North	DM/ 26/02 225/ AD Lidl GB Ltd	Lidl Picktree Terrace Chester-le-Street DH3 3ST	2no internally illuminated canopy signs, 2no internally illuminated flagpole signs, 2no wall-mounted externally illuminated billboard signs, 1no internally illuminated poster display unit and 1no non-illuminated trolley bay sign

W/E 06/11/2026
No applications within the parish.
W/E 13/11/2026
No applications within the parish.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hawkes for his report.

DRAFT

i) Play Areas

Cllr Caygill's report included the matters contained in her written report below -

---

On inspection of Low Flatts and Merlin Drive all equipment appears to be in good working order. Both areas are once again suffering from a lot of damage by moles.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report.

j) Policy and Governance

Cllr Hall advised that there were no matters to report.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hall.

k) Project Development, Business and External Relations

Cllr Martin had circulated to Councillors the message below -

---

Been having some conversations with the Redeemer Church. Who want to hold a family fun day, May 2027, in North Lodge. Working with the parish council.

I'm going to raise this and discuss it further at the next parish council meeting.

Cllr Martin also advised that, as County Cllr, he would be providing financial support for the proposed event as would the Church themselves. It was anticipated that the Church would also request a grant of £400 from the Council Community Improvement Fund although no application had yet been received. Cllr Martin was also assisting by seeking from the County Council the necessary permissions for use of land near to Merlin Drive play area. Councillors discussed this and confirmed that they were open to the idea.

Councillors thanked Cllr Martin for his report.

Item 7. 26/112 Correspondence

From County Durham Association of Local Councils

Notification of the Smaller Councils Forum to be held on Thursday 19th November 2026.

Item 8. 26/113 Proposals, Reports and Requests for Consideration

a) A Defibrillator for Picktree Village

The Chairman outlined a revised project to install a defibrillator in the bus shelter near the entrance to Ash Meadows. There were advantages over the previous proposal and these included a more serviceable position and a much lower cost which would be funded from the County Cllr's Neighbourhood Budget. Councillors were pleased to approve the project.

b) A Flagpole next to the Remembrance Artwork

Cllr Hawkes outlined this proposal for a 6m white aluminium pole. Councillors discussed this and approved the project in principle although some details such as the colour of the pole and its exact position were to be resolved. Councillors agreed that a Flags Policy would be required. Cllr Hall and the Clerk are to draft a suitable policy.

DRAFT

Item 9. 26/114 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 686.78	Salaries November 2026	
Expenses	£ 118.00	Expenses November 2026	
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 2144.51	Horticulture November 2026	£ 357.42
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 3240.00	Refurb of Longdean Shrub Bed	£ 540.00
Forvis Mazars LLP	£ 378.00	Audit Fee	£ 63.00
Madhouse Media Ltd	£ 90.00	Domain Renewal Fee	£ 15.00
DSJ Property Services	£ 55.00	Repair to Display Board	
S. E. Harrison & Sons	£ 180.00	Christmas Tree	£ 30.00
Whitfield Fella Ltd	£ 260.00	Remembrance Day Buffet	
Total of Above Payments	**£ 7152.29**		

Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription – Nov 2026	£ 7.71
W. Morrison Supermarkets Ltd	£ 22.50	Batteries for Christmas Tree	£ 3.75
Ink Robot	£ 38.95	Printer Cartridges	£ 6.49
Ink Robot	£ 24.76	Printer Cartridges	£ 4.13
Total Card and D/D Payments	**£ 132.46**		

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 10. 26/115 Other Matters for Information

Cllr Brown advised that, as Chairman elect for 2027/2028, she intended to hold meetings with Councillors in early 2027 to gauge future expectations for the Council and to discuss appointments to Portfolios.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.33pm.

DRAFT

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th November 2026.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 686.78	Salaries November 2026	
Expenses	£ 118.00	Expenses November 2026	
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 2144.51	Horticulture November 2026	£ 357.42
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 3240.00	Refurb of Longdean Shrub Bed	£ 540.00
Forvis Mazars	£ 378.00	Audit Fee	£ 63.00
Madhouse Media Ltd	£ 90.00	Domain Renewal Fee	£ 15.00
DSJ Property Services	£ 55.00	Repair to Display Board	
S. E. Harrison & Sons	£ 180.00	Christmas Tree	£ 30.00
Whitfield Fella Ltd	£ 260.00	Remembrance Day Buffet	
Total of Above Payments	**£ 7152.29**		

Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription – Nov 2026	£ 7.71
W Morrison Supermarkets Ltd	£ 22.50	Batteries for Christmas Tree	£ 3.75
Ink Robot	£ 38.95	Printer Cartridges	£ 6.49
Ink Robot	£ 24.76	Printer Cartridges	£ 4.13
Total Card and D/D Payments	**£ 132.46**		

Balance to 31st October 2026

Balance b/f	£49001.73	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments – Oct 2026	£ 3329.29	Community Account	£ 713.28
	£45672.44	Commercial Instant Access	£44823.63
Deduct Card and D/D Payments	£ 267.85	Total	£45536.91
	£45404.59		
Add Bank Interest Received	£ 20.07	Deduct cheques not yet presented	£ 120.00
	£45424.66		
Deduct Bank Charges	£ 7.75		
Balance c/f	£45416.91		£45416.91

Two cheques not yet presented -
£100.00 cheque number 1737 dated 20/10/2026 payable to George Nairn for supply of old postcards. £20.00 cheque number 1738 dated 20/10/2026 payable to CDALC for training event.

DRAFT