

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 26 November 2025, 7.00 pm
Hett Village Hall

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor G Hollingsworth, Councillor P Kerrison, Councillor D Pyle, Councillor A Smith, Councillor M Walker, Councillor A Watt and Councillor I Watt.

Also Present:

County Councillors J Blakey and G Hutchinson were in attendance.

On behalf of the Parish Council, Councillor Griffiths acknowledged the recent death of former Parish Councillor, Michael Ord, and reflected on his time and services since joining the Parish Council in 2016 until 2023. The Parish Council offered its deepest sympathies to family and friends.

77/25. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence was received from Councillor I Clark.

78/25. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

79/25. Policing:

The Clerk shared Policing crime stats: 9 incidents being recorded for the period September 2025 within the Parish. The next PACT Meeting is on Wednesday 03 December 2025, 10.30 am, Croxdale Community Centre.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

80/25. Public Participation:

There were no members of the public in attendance.

81/25. Minutes:

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 29 October 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

82/25. Matters Arising:

i. Hett Litter Pick:

DCC confirmed November's litter pick took place on 18 November 2025.

Resolved: For Members' information.

ii. Hett Drainage:

Clerk confirmed a breakdown of fees for the remaining land owner is yet to be received. The signed land easement documentation was returned to the PC Solicitor in order for the other signatories to be arranged. An indicative start date is proposed for early January (date to be confirmed), with revised project costs including VAT is £13,683.26 as opposed to the original cost provided in 2022 as £12,597.56.

Resolved: For Members' information. Clerk to arrange site visit with Alliance / DCC Drainage Team during December 2025 and to notify landowners accordingly.

iii. Allotments:

The following updates were provided by the Clerk:

- Skip hire – costs for a 10-yard open skip would be £310.00 + VAT – as opposed to £320.00 + VAT for a closed skip. Bishop Middleham skip hire company assessed the access at the Poultry Centre and confirmed they won't be able to get HGV vehicle at this location due to the track been too narrow and the weight of the vehicle.
- A Poultry Centre tenant reported a break-in at a small holding (shed) on 17 November 2025 and requested for the gate to be made more secure.
- A Poultry Centre tenant now wishes to keep on the tenancy and improve the small holding next year.
- Two tenants at the rear of Front Street East have not responded to stage 2 letters and upon inspection of their allotment during November, no improvements have been made, therefore will now progress on to stage 3, (notice to quit) and given 4 weeks to clear allotment.

Garages:

- Clerk informed Members of a request received from Langley Lodge Developments to build a new double garage for storage purposes on the area of land where the disrepair garage is to be demolished.

Resolved: Updates For Members' information. The preferred location (nearest to the Poultry Centre) would be at the entrance of the football field and placed to one side to allow access over the stile to enter the field; Clerk to enquire if this location would be accessible for an HGV vehicle. The gate at the Poultry Centre was considered as secure as reasonably possible, therefore no further action; tenants are encouraged to report any thefts to the Police. Clerk to inform the Poultry Centre tenant that the PC has agreed to extend the period for clearing and improving the small holding to 31 March 2026 (in view of individual circumstances), however, if the necessary improvements have not been undertaken by that time, the tenancy will not be renewed from 1 April 2026. The tenant to also be encouraged to make use of the skip, which may assist with the clearance of the fire debris. Clerk to inform Langley Lodge Developments that the boundary of this plot is to be turned back into allotment use which has previously been agreed with the respective allotment tenant.

iv. Rubbish, Public Right of Way:

Clerk contacted Salvin Estate on 2 November 2025 in relation to the private owned allotments / external fencing next to the public footpath at the bottom of Woodview and if there are any plans to repair the fencing to avoid any further items /debris encroaching onto the wooded area. A response was received from Salvin Estate suggesting the liability rests with DCC as owners of the woodland as a consequence of the covenants agreed with them when acquiring the woodland. Contact has therefore been made with DCCs Landownership Team and currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: For Members' information.

v. Pre-Planning Consultation – Phase 2 – Development at Integra 61:

Clerk contacted Lichfield's on 2 November 2025 following discussion at the previous meeting and has received no response to date. Clerk reminded Members once the planning application is received, if time doesn't allow for the PC to consider at the next PC meeting,

Standing Orders allow for the Clerk to respond to planning applications in conjunction with the Chairman under delegated powers or an Extra-Ordinary PC Meeting can be arranged, if preferred.

Resolved: For Members' information. Following the concerns raised at the previous meeting, it was highly-likely the PC would be objecting to the planning application, once received.

83/25 Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

i. December Meeting Date of the Parish Council:

December's Meeting date scheduled for Wednesday 17 December 2025, was agreed to be cancelled in view of the Christmas break which was originally brought forward from 31 December 2025 (being the last Wednesday of the month). In view of this, it was also agreed to bring forward January's meeting from Wednesday 28 January to 14 January 2026.

Resolved: The Clerk to update the meeting schedule and confirm meeting venue for January's meeting in due course.

ii. Phase 2 Budget Consultation – 2026/27:

Clerk informed Members of DCCs budget consultation proposals for 2026/27 and its Medium Term Financial Plan for the 4 years 2026/27-2029/30, which includes the proposals to cease the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) grant which has been in place for Parish and Town Parish Councils since 2013. In 2025/26, the LCTRS grant was in the sum of £859.00 for Croxdale and Hett, which is paid in addition to the PC Precept.

Resolved: For Members' information.

84/25. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April – 31 October 2025:

A financial update prepared by the Clerk was circulated to Members which included a detailed schedule of receipts and payments for the financial year to date and bank reconciliation to 31 October 2025. The current net bank balances totalled £63,208.38.

The following payments were approved for the period November 2025:

Parish Clerk	Clerk's Wages – November 2025	£487.70
HMRC	Tax Contributions	£122.00
Dave Dove	GDPR Email Accounts Fee – Monthly Charge	£32.00
WJP Software	Annual Gov.uk Domain Renewal	£42.00
Dave Dove	Annual Website Hosting	£306.00

Resolved: For Members' Information. The above payments were approved for payment.

(ii) Budgetary Control: Forecast of Outturn – 31 March 2026:

The Clerk provided details of the forecast of outturn budget position for the Parish Council highlighting key areas of income, expenditure and budget pressures to the end of 31 March 2026.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

85/25. Scheme of Works for Approval:

(i) Removal of Garage Structure / Contents:

Clerk shared a quotation received in relation to the above works at the rear of Front Street East via a licensed waste removal services company.

- Contractor 1 = empty garage contents and demolition of garage structure and removal = £2,800. However, costs will vary due to additional fees per tyre (£20.00 each) and potential increased costs depending on weight of materials or items not visible = £3,000 max (VAT not applicable). This also includes to remove the greenhouse directly behind the garage, free of charge.
- Contractor 2 = free of charge to remove the garage structure, however, the PC would be required to arrange for the removal of the contents.

Resolved: A third quotation was preferred to be sourced, in view of the associated costs. Clerk to arrange accordingly for consideration at the next PC Meeting.

(ii) Croxdale Cemetery Building Restoration – Roof Repairs:

Four applications were received in relation to the above works. Quotations received were as follows:

- Contractor 1 = £14,600 + VAT (plus additional costs for scaffolding/welfare and site management) = £
- Contractor 2 = no quotation received
- Contractor 3 = £7,800 + VAT (not including guttering)
- Contractor 4 = no quotation received
- Contractor 5 = no quotation received
- Contractor 6 = no quotation received
- Contractor 7 = £16,800 (flat crest roof) / £27,500 (premium slate roof)

Resolved: In view of the proposed expenditure, it was agreed to seek advice on the upkeep/maintenance of the cemetery building from a conservation/preservation perspective via Durham County Council and to explore if there are any funding opportunities available, therefore the works are currently on hold. It was noted the PC has previously looked into funding via the Church of England, however, as the cemetery is not attached to a Church as such, the PC is not eligible.

(iii) Allotment Fencing:

Clerk shared a quotation received in relation to the above works at the rear of Front Street East. The associated fees were for new internal and external boundary fencing, which included a day rate charge to carry out clearance work (where required) and skip hire.

Resolved: Clerk to source further quotations for comparison for consideration at a future PC Meeting. It was proposed for the works to be undertaken in a phased approach over the next 2-3 financial years.

86/25. Planning Issues:

No new planning applications was discussed/received.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

87/25. County Councillor Reports:

County Councillor Blakey attended the recent Remembrance Sunday Service at St Barthlomew's Church and was unable to lay a wreath at Hett this year. A meeting has recently taken place with the Fire Service in relation to solar panel battery storage.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

88/25. AOB:

Fencing, Salvin Street, Croxdale:

Councillor Hollingsworth confirmed the fencing at the above location has now been removed.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

89/25. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 7.00 pm, Hett Village Hall (venue to be confirmed).