

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2026

**The Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Thursday 12 March 2026, 6.00pm,
Conference Room, Fourways2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.**

PRESENT:

**C Connolly (CC), M Joyce (MJ), L McTaggart (Chair) (LMc), I Rackham (IR), J Richards (Vice Chair)(JR), C Dawson (CD), K MacColl (KM), L Osborne (LO).
V Smith (Minutes)**

OPEN SESSION

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)

In line with Standing Order 3d-1 members of the public may at the invitation of the Chairman ask questions, make representations, and provide information to the Council in respect of the business on the agenda or any other Town Council services.

There were 4 members of the public present.

Mrs Eileen Sutherland asked Council what it was doing about climate change. Cllr McTaggart confirmed that this was being looked at alongside National Policy Framework and as part of the Neighbour Development Plan. Council is also liaising with Northumberland County Council on the new LCWIP plans to ensure they align with what the town needs. A 4-year plan is being proposed on the agenda and this will also look to demonstrate how the Council can incorporate this into the Councils long term plan. Cllr Rackham felt it was important that every Town Council integrates zero emissions into their policies and that Council should be supporting this. Further discussion is needed on how Council can do this on a practical level whilst acknowledging that small changes can make a big impact.

Cllr Joyce queried whether there is any scope to hold developers to account in terms of ecological and sustainable elements of their builds, such as replacing trees taken out and installation of solar panels. Cllr Rackham felt that the Town Council should be setting an example.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

212.APOLOGIES

T Regan, personal commitment.

Proposer: Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: Apologies accepted

213. To receive any declarations of interest from Members:

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda, as required by the Amble Town Council Code of Conduct

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for Members and by the Localism Act 2011, now or as they come up in the agenda process. Members are asked to review their completed Register of Interest forms to ensure that they are accurate and up to date.

Members to ensure that their declarations are up to date.

214. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL

214.1 To agree correction of attendance for the meeting of 8 January 2026

Amendment – Cllr T Regan to be added to the list of attendees. Amendment to item 185.3

Proposer: Cllr McTggart

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: The minutes were agreed as a true record. Clerk to amend and publish.

214.2: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2026, items 193 - 204.1

Proposer: Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: The minutes were agreed as a true record.

215. CLERK'S REPORT:

RECOMMENDATION – That the Council notes the contents of the report and consider actions where necessary.

215.1 Clerks Report attached

The Clerks report was noted.

216. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:

To receive the communications and report of the Chairman pertaining to Council Business:

216.1: Chairman

9/2 – Forward planning meeting with Clerk

11/2 – St Cuthberts Church Mother Union

12/2 Rob Murfin

13/2 Michael Gilroy re Amble First School

16/2 – Stephen Wardle NCC

23/2 – Forward planning meeting with the Clerk

25/2 Glen Sanderson and partners re 3G pitch

26/2 Community Partnership Meeting

5/3 Town and Parish Council Conference

8/4 Invite to economic development meeting with NCC

216.2: Vice Chairman

5/3 Town and Parish Council Conference

Amble Development Trust

Residents Association

9/2, 23/2 Planning meeting with Clerk

12/2 Rob Murfin

25/2 Meeting with Glen Sanderson and partners re 3G pitch

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217: Update from Neighbourhood Development Steering Group

The deadline for submissions for the Town of Culture bid is the end of March and much of the team has been involved in this work and therefore capacity has been limited. There has not been a Neighbourhood Plan meeting to report back on as there has been a delay in receiving information from NCC.

Cllr McTaggart proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference that the frequency of meetings is changed to ad-hoc meetings, however the reporting procedure to remain the same.

Second: Cllr Rackham

Resolved: The Terms of Reference to be amended.

217.1 To receive report update from Steering Group and Sub Committees if available

None

218. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

218.1: To receive a report from County Councillor Hume

Apologies received

218.2: To receive a report from County Councillor Davidson

Apologies received

219. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS:

219.1 To receive the report of Councillors who represent ATC on outside bodies (Cllr Reports)

Cllr Connolly attended the NCC walkabout with Cllr Rackham, Northumbria Police and Housing.

Cllr Connolly attended the Tapestry meeting and also attended the NALC meeting on 7/3 – NCC have expressed that all communications from Councils should come from the Clerk and not individual Cllrs.

Cllr Rackham met with Cllr Hume regarding inconsiderate parking on Lindisfarne Road and whilst there the ncc officer in attendance confirmed the road markings and double yellow lines would also be looked at.

Cllr Rackham confirmed that his request to the Harbour Master regarding netting had been addressed.

Cllr Dawson attended a meeting of the Events Committee and confirmed the Puffin Festival will take place on 23/24 May. The events committee are looking for volunteers.

220. FINANCIAL REPORT:

220.1 To consider voucher numbers 269 – 302 for payment and 68 - 73 for receipt.

Proposer: Cllr Dawson

Second: Cllr Joyce

Resolved: Payments and Receipts accepted

220.2 Bank Reconciliation to 31 January 2026

Proposer: Cllr Dawson

Second: Cllr Joyce

Resolved: Bank Reconciliation accepted

220.3 Bank Reconciliation to 27 February 2026

Proposer: Cllr Dawson

Second: Cllr Joyce

Resolved: Bank Reconciliation accepted

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220.4 Year to date figures

The year to date figures were noted.

220.5 Grant Requests

- **North East War Memorials**

Proposer: Cllr Rackham

Second: Cllr MacColl

Resolved: All members in favour of donating the remainder of the grant funding for this financial year to North East Memorials at a sum of £247

220.6 To agree budget correction due to formula error

An error in the formula resulted in an additional £660 being required from the general fund.

Proposer: Cllr Rackham

Second: Cllr McTaggart

Resolved: Members agreed amended budget and additional sums from General Fund.

221.AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

221.1 To agree the Cemetery Fees for 2026/2027

Proposal: Increase cemetery fees by 2% - Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: Cemetery fees to be increased by 2%.

Staff to be mindful of charges against other local cemeteries.

222: PLANNING COMMITTEE

222.1 To receive and note planning report

Planning report noted.

223. AGENDA ITEMS:

223.1 To delegate authority to the Clerk to enter into a transitional SLA partnership for a period of 6 months and allocate up to £45,000 from existing budget towards meeting the costs of this.

Proposer: Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Rackham

Resolved: All in favour. Clerk to seek a 6 month transition period for grass cutting and weeding from current contractor subject to confirmation this includes strimming as well as Memorial Gardens.

223.2 Perusant to sections, 111, 112(2), 214(2), 214(6), 215(1)&(2), of the 1972 Local Government Act and the s.96 of the Highways Act of 1980. Members consent to delegate spending authority of up to £63,850 from Earmarked Reserves (as outlined in Appendix 1) to the Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer to set-up an Internal Grounds Maintenance Service. It is also moved that the 'SLA with NCC' budget heading, be renamed 'In-House Service Provision', and the amount budgeted be raised from £93,388 to £144,932.86, such as to allow for all other outlined costs to be met.

Proposer: Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Richards

Discussion was held with regards to bringing the grounds maintenance arrangements in house. Provisional costs from September onwards were provided. Whilst the documents presented top line figures, seeking best value will be the priority across the entire project and will be achieved using the Best Value Assurance Framework.

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It was acknowledged that the outcome of this item has a direct impact on 223.3. Discussion took place around the requirement of a tender should members agree to bring in house. The timescales required for a tender of this size would be prohibitive in terms of the timeline to ensure that Council is in a strong position in September.

Resolved: A vote of 7:1 in favour of bringing the grounds maintenance in house. Any updated and further decisions are to be presented to Full Council.

Proposal: To accept Best Value Assurance Framework – Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: 7:1 Best Value Assurance Framework agreed.

Proposal: To agree required financial draw down highlighted in appendix 1 – Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: 7 in favour, 1 abstention. Financial draw down agreed.

Proposal: Creation of working party to drive project forward: Cllr McTaggart

Second: Cllr Osborne

Resolved: 7 in favour, 1 abstention. Working party agreed. All members welcome to attend.

223.3 To agree position on Tender for Grounds Maintenance

Proposal: Cllr McTaggart proposed that in light of the outcome of item 223.2 that Council resolves to withdraw from further works to produce tender documentation.

Second: Cllr Richards

Members discussed the risk of unsuitable candidates for the inhouse model and reserved the right to revisit the Tender should this be required under those circumstances.

Resolved: A vote of 7:1 it was resolved for Council to cease further work on producing a tender.

223.4 To agree Tender for Memorial Gardens

Proposal - This work to be taken in house as part of the ground project. NCC to be asked to include this into their transition period – Cllr McTaggart.

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: All in favour – Clerk to contact NCC.

223.5 To consider proposal from community group Pride in Amble

Pride in Amble are keen to restart work in the Memorial Gardens and have acquired several new volunteers keen to assist. They are keen to have Council representation on the group to provide a link between the two. Any requests for additional planting must come to Full Council before purchase.

Proposer: Cllr Rackham

Second: Cllr MacColl

Resolved: All in favour – all members expressed a desire to volunteer subject to availability.

223.6 To agree policy review support, Health and Safety support and compliance via external contract

Proposer: Cllr Rackham

Second: Cllr MacColl

The costs of this is included within the grounds maintenance costs given that such a large portion of this is in relation to Health and Safety. Members considered the appraisal and costs presented, being £3175pa.

Resolved: All in favour

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223.7 To note update re political affiliation when leafletting during election canvassing

Proposal: Cllr Joyce proposed that members should be allowed to state their political position when canvassing for election.

Second: Cllr Rackham

Resolved: All in favour

223.8 To declare a Climate Emergency in line with Northumberland County Council, to half this Councils carbon footprint within two years with the ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030, extending to net zero for all greenhouse gases by 2040

Proposal: Cllr Rackham suggested that most Councils have declared a Climate Emergency and that Amble Town Council should lead by example and try to mitigate and reduce its carbon footprint. It was acknowledged that national targets are very ambitious and extending the period to 2036 could be more realistic. Cllr Connolly suggested having a policy in place could help to hold developers accountable.

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: All in favour. Clerk to amend the relevant policies

A working party to be set up to discuss how we may reduce our carbon footprint.

223.9 To agree amendment to the Environmental Policy with agreement to measure and actively reduce Amble Town Councils carbon footprint

Proposer: Cllr Rackham proposed amendments to the Environmental Policy to take on board the Councils commitment to Climate Change and 2036 net zero.

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: All in favour. Clerk to accept and publish the amends.

223.10 To agree the Staff Welfare policy

Proposer: Cllr Joyce

Second: Cllr Rackham

A policy has been developed and has had input from staff to ensure it meets their requirements. Members have had sight of the policy. Members to be mindful of sending emails during the weekends as staff have a tendency to check emails out of hours.

Resolved: All in favour. Policy agreed.

223.11 To receive an update on CCTV provision

Advance Northumberland have agreed to contribute to the provision of CCTV within the car park.

There has been no response from Morrisons to date despite approaches made by Amble Town Council, Advance Northumberland and individual members. Cllr Hume is keen to contribute however no action can be taken until we hear back from Morrisons. This is to be added as an agenda item with Northumbria Police.

223.12 To agree IT Service Level Agreement with Northumberland County Council and agree additional funding required from general fund.

Proposer: Cllr Richards

Second: Cllr Joyce

Resolved: Amble Town Council enter into a Service Level Agreement for the provision of IT software and hardware with additional costs to be met by earmarked funds.

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223.13 To approve the Data Audit working document, Data Protection Roadmap, Model Publication Scheme and Data Protection Risk Assessment

As part of assertion 10, Council are required to demonstrate that they have met their assertion 10 obligations. These documents will be available for the internal auditor when required.

223.14 To note action taken regarding compliance with Assertion 10 AGAR requirements

Members were provided with a briefing note outlining the criteria that has been met by Council to confirm it has met its assertion 10 obligations.

223.15 To receive report on suggested additional banking arrangements and agree new opening of new account(s)

Clerk was requested during previous meeting to research alternative banking arrangements in line with FSCS. Unity Trust Bank is a bank that is used by many parish and town councils and has recently launched a specific town and parish council project specially aimed at the sector and set up to best meet the needs of local councils. An appraisal of the Instant Access account was given.

Proposer: Cllr Rackham proposed Council proceed as per guidance from Clerk re Instant Access account.

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: All in favour. Clerk to arrange the necessary for opening of new account.

223.16 To agree Payroll and Pension Service Level Agreement with NCC for 2026/2027

Proposer: Cllr Joyce

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: All in favour. Clerk to make arrangements

223.17 To agree Councils response to Community Governance Review taking into account previous outcomes- deadline 30 April

After discussions with democratic services staff it is recommended that Members respond individually as Councils response does not hold more weight than that of an individual. Individual responses will present more views to consider.

223.18 To agree retrospective approval for staff training:

What to do if you Consider a Bad / Unlawful Planning Decision Has Been Made (18th February 2026) £46.20

Reginal Training Seminar - North (11th March 2026) - £85.00

Training was approved.

223.19 To discuss and agree quotations for installation of coal truck liners

Three quotations were received and discussed. Members were provided with each quotation. Recommendation for quotation 2.

Proposer: Cllr Richards

Second: Cllr Rackham

Resolved: All in favour. Clerk to contact all contractors.

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223.20 To seek retrospective approval for Newspaper for March 2026

Newspage agreed.

223.21 To agree proposal to continue works on 4 year Strategy Plan and create Task and Finish Group

Proposal: Cllr McTaggart - Members previously expressed intention to develop a 4-year plan to streamline and focus Council resources and develop a programme of works. Two meetings have been arranged to pool ideas to help formulate a plan. A Medium-Term Financial Plan will also be produced to look at how Council can achieve its identified priorities. The themes could evolve around People, Place and Prosperity. All members are welcome to attend the task and finish group meetings to input into the plan however it is not mandatory. It is hoped that the plan can be shared with the community during the Annual Parish Meeting.

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: All in favour

224. COMMUNICATIONS: RECOMMENDATION - *That the Council note or discuss where necessary the items.*

224.1 To note FOI request received 14 February 2026

224.2 To note communication from ICO

Comms noted.

225. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

RECOMMENDATION - *That the Council note the information items.*

225.1 To note letter to Northumbria Police re Operation Ford

225.2 To note the update re Safer Communities funding requirements

225.3 Libraries Consultation 2026

225.4 Notes of meeting with Football Foundation 8 January 2026

Information items noted.

226. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

226.1 9 April 2026, Amble Town Council Offices, Fourways2 at 6p.m.

227. DATES FOR DIARIES

23rd March 2026 – 3pm – 6pm – Northumbria Police Engagement Day – Amble Library

25th March 2026 – 5.30pm – Meeting with Northumbria Police

26th March 2026 – 6.00pm – Amenities Committee

9th April 2026 – 6.00pm – Full Council

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: To consider passing the following resolution: That under Section 1(2) the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the agenda due to their sensitive nature.

PRIVATE

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228. EXEMPT REPORT

228.1 RECOMMENDATION – That the Council notes the contents of the report and consider actions where necessary.

The exempt report was noted.

229. PRIVATE REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

229.1 To receive the private report of Councillors who represent ATC on outside bodies (Cllr Reports)

None

230. AGENDA ITEMS

230.1 To receive and agree Tenders received for Grave Digging Service

Members were presented with tenders received.

Members considered the content of the tender response alongside costings provided.

Cllr McTaggart proposed to engage in contract with contractor.

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: All in favour. Successful contract is Oliver Construction Ltd. Clerk to develop and sign appropriate contract and letter of engagement.

230.2 To discuss historical political affiliation canvassing

Cllr Rackham proposed an apology be given regarding historical arrangements regarding political canvassing.

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: Apology was given to relevant member by Cllr McTaggart in his role as Chair of current Council.

The meeting ended 20:05

ACCRONYMS

ATC – Amble Town Council

NCC – Northumberland County Council

JCSC – James Calvert Spence College

ADT – Amble Development Trust

NALC – Northumberland Association of Local Councils

AYP – Amble Youth Project

WHC – Warkworth Harbour Commissioners

LCWIP – Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans

RAW – Rotary of Amble and Warkworth

NDP – Neighbourhood Development Plan