

## AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting and Full Council meeting Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026, 6.00pm, Conference Room, Fourways2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

### **PRESENT:**

**L McTaggart (Outgoing Chair) J Richards, C Dawson, I Rackham, C Connolly, K MacColl, M Joyce, L Osborne**

### **BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED**

#### **1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)**

**In accordance with Section 1(d-g) of the ATC Standing Orders members of the public present may address the Council at this point on the agenda. The Council/Committee reserves the right to respond or debate the issue at a later date**

There was one member of the public present.

In advance of the meeting, the Clerk received two questions to be read out and responded to by Members.

Q1. In anticipation of your vote for Mayor and chair what professional conduct would the council expect from any mayor elected whilst representing the council in a public meeting?

Q2. What standards of behaviour do you expect from your members with regard to how they respond to questions or suggestions put to them by the public, and what message does the Council think it sends to residents and organisations if public contributions are interrupted and shut down.

Members were made aware that complaints had been made to the Monitoring Officer at Northumberland County Council for investigation and as such no discussions were held. Councillors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct that is signed up to upon joining the Council. The Clerk was asked to prepare a response on behalf of Members.

#### **2.ELECTION OF MAYOR AND CHAIRPERSON FOR 2026/2027**

To elect a Chair / Mayor

Nomination: Luke McTaggart

Proposer: Jenny Richards

Second: Kath MacColl

***Vote: 5 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions***

***Resolved: Luke McTaggart was elected as Chaiman of Amble Town Council for 2026/27***

To receive the Chair / Mayor Acceptance of Office

#### **3.ELECTION OF A DEPUTY MAYOR AND VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR 2026/2027**

To elect a Deputy Mayor / Vice Chair

Nomination: Jenny Richards

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Proposer: Luke McTaggart

Second: Lee Osborne

**Vote: 5 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions**

**Resolved: Jenny Richards was elected as Vice Chair of Amble Town Council for 2026/27**

To receive the Vice Chair / Deputy Mayor Acceptance of Office

### 4.APOLOGIES

T Regan, Personal, Accepted.

### 5.DECLARATION OF INTEREST

*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 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 were reminded to update declarations and agreed to advise Council of any Declarations of Interest appertaining to the following items on the Agenda.

### 6.FINANCIAL SIGNATORIES

- **To authorise Councillors to be signatories on behalf of the Council, of whom a minimum of two are required to authorise all payments on behalf of Amble Town Council.**

As previously agreed, Clerk is in the process of adding Cllrs MacColl, McTaggart and Regan to the bank signatories.

### 7.MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES:

- a. **To elect the Chair, Vice Chair and membership of the below committees. The Terms of Reference require there be a maximum of 8, including the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council:**

- i. **Amenities Committee – meets the last Thursday of the month, on a two monthly basis commencing in May. Four meetings may be preceded by an inspection of the Cemeteries, Allotments, Play Areas to be scheduled.**

Chair: Nominations: Lee Osborne

Proposer: Luke McTaggart

Seconder: Kath MacColl

**Vote: 6 in favour, 2 abstentions**

**Resolved: Cllr Osborne was elected Amenities Committee**

**Chairman for 2026/2027**

Vice: Nomination: Jenny Richards

Proposer: Luke McTaggart

Seconder: Kath MacColl

**Vote: 6 in favour, 2 abstentions**

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**Resolved: Cllr Richards was elected as Vice Chair of Amenities Committee for 2026/2027**

**Amenities Membership: Cllrs Osborne, Richards, Dawson and MacColl.**

- ii. **Planning Committee** – Called at the discretion of the Chair dependent on applications of public interest

Chair Nomination: Luke McTaggart

Proposer: Jenny Richards

Seconder: Lee Osborne

**Vote: 6 in favour, 2 abstentions**

**Resolved: Luke McTaggart was elected as Chair of Planning Committee for 2026/2027**

Vice Nomination: Jenny Richards

Proposer: Luke McTaggart

Seconder: Lee Osborne

**Vote: 6 in favour, 2 abstentions.**

**Resolved: Jenny Richards was elected as Vice Chair of Planning Committee for 2026/2027.**

**Planning Committee membership: Cllrs Regan, Dawson, McTaggart and Richards**

### 8. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PARTNERSHIPS

Cllr McTaggart proposed that representation to partnerships remained the same.

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: All in favour. Consideration to timings of Council meetings to be given to ensure equal opportunity for involvement of all Councillors.

Meeting / Org / Group	2025-2026	Nominations 2026/2027	Proposer	Seconder
Amble Development Trust	Jenny Richards	Jenny Richards	LMc	JR
Amble Youth Project	Ciara Dawson	Ciara Dawson	LMc	JR
NALC	Claire Connolly	Claire Connolly	LMc	JR
Town Parish Liaison Working Group	Chair / Vice Chair	Chair / Vice Chair	LMc	JR
Events Committee	Ciara Dawson	Ciara Dawson	LMc	JR
NTC	Ivor Rackham	Ivor Rackham	LMc	JR
JCSC	Chair / Vice Chair	Chair / Vice Chair	LMc	JR

### 9. TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR

To consider the appointment of the internal auditor David Newman for 2026/2027

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Resolved: Appointment agreed. Clerk to finalise letters of engagement.

### **10.APPOINTMENT OF INSURER**

#### **10.1 To agree the appointment of Zurich Insurance for 2026-2027**

Resolved: Zurich will remain the Town Councils insurer for 2026/2027.

### **11.AGREEMENT REGARDING ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS/SUPPORT FEES/DONATIONS**

To consider payment of annual subscriptions/ support fees/ donations-  
**SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SUPPORT**

- Northumberland Association of Local Councils
- Society of Local Council Clerks
- The Institute of Crematorium and Cemetery Management
- RoSPA – playground inspections
- Pear Technology – digital mapping support
- Team Valley Web – Hosting Fee
- Scribe Audit & Accounting
- Photocopier Lease

Resolved: All subscriptions agreed.

**Donations if requested, up to a maximum of £160**

- Alnwick & District Sports Award
- Northumberland Touring Company

**Donations if requested, up to a maximum of £110.**

- Great North Air Ambulance
- CAN

**Donations if requested, up to a maximum of £55**

- Marine Conservation Society
- Friends of Alnmouth Station
- Citizens Advice Northumberland
- Hospice Care North Northumberland
- Alnwick Playhouse Trust
- Bailiffgate Museum
- AGE UK Northumberland

**Donations to Community Groups:**

- Christmas Lights Committee up to £1500
- Events Committee up to £2000 towards Christmas Parade and Puffin Festival Expenses as determined by Members.

Resolved: All donations agreed on request.

### **12.DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FROM MAY 2026 TO MAY 2027**

## AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026

### 12.1 Members to formally agree to move to bi monthly meetings from May 2026 onwards

Resolved: The meeting schedule was agreed. Bi monthly meetings will take place as a trial run. Extraordinary meetings to be called if necessary.

### 13.POLICIES & PROTOCOLS

To approve the recommendation to confirm at this annual meeting thereafter with a review as necessary subject to changes to policy and/or legislation.

Copies available in the Council Offices for review.

#### Cemetery

- Cemetery Abridged Rules
- Headstone Erection
- Headstone Leaflet 1 & 2
- Memorial Mason Handbook (print)
- Memorial Mason's Regulations
- Memorial Mason Registration Scheme - **AMENDMENT**
- Memorial Design
- Cemetery Fees 2026-2027
- Permission to Erect a Memorial
- Natural Burials 1 & 2
- Memorial Inspection Notice
- Unauthorised Momentos
- Memorial Mason Certificate Request
- Memorial Testing Practices
- Independent Funerals 1 & 2
- Charter for the Bereaved
- Bereaved Handbook (print)
- West Cemetery Rules (print)

#### Council Administration

- Committee Terms of Reference
- Co-option Policy
- Document Retention
- Equality & Diversity
- Expenses
- Flag Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- General Financial Responsibilities
- Honorary Freeman
- Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure
- Powers and Duties
- Standing Orders 2026

## AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026

- Garden Judging Guidelines
- Equipment Loan Policy
- Commemorative Seat and Plaque Policy
- Abusive, Persistent and Vexatious Communication
- Risk Management Strategy
- Annual Risk Assessment
- Asset Risk Assessment
- Memorial Garden Risk Assessment – **NEW**
- Environmental
- Health and Safety Handbook and Policy - **NEW**
- IT Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Staffing Committee Terms of Reference

### Councillor

- Code of Conduct
- Dignity at Work
- Dispensation
- Privacy Notice- Internal
- Relations-
- Contact Details Agreement

### Employee

- Employee Handbook - **NEW**

### Finance

- Financial Regulations 2026-27
- Grant Application
- Grants and Donations
- Earmarked Reserves

### Public

- Accident Reporting
- ATC Aims
- CCTV
- Charging
- Complaints Procedure
- General Data Protection
- General Privacy Statement
- Commemorative Seat Plaques
- Mission Statement

## **AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026**

- **Publication Scheme**
- **Accessibility Statement**

**Please note some may also be applicable to more than one area.**

Clerk to relook at the Risk Assessments to ensure they respond to the general public risks appropriately.

Resolved: All policies approved.

### **14. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.**

*Members are asked to note that contracts are in place for the following.*

- **Gravedigging - Ongoing subject to contract detail**
- **Office Lease January 2022 – 2026**
- **Service Level Agreement – Northumberland County Council - Cemetery & Memorial Gardens Groundworks April 2026 – September 2026**
- **CCTV Maintenance**
- **Community Website Hosting and Domain**
- **Service Level Agreement IT Provision Northumberland County Council**
- **Annual Service to Cemetery Shutters**
- **Clock Tower Lightning Conductor Test**
- **Clock Tower Service**
- **Service Level Agreement for provision of payroll services Northumberland County Council**
- **WorkNest**

Resolved: The contractual arrangements were noted.

### **15. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE**

15.1. None

### **16. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL**

16.1: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2026, items 231 – 249

Clerk received comments from Cllr Regan to be included. Clerk to amend.

Resolved: Subject to amendment above, the minutes were approved.

### **17. CLERK'S REPORT:**

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

17.1 Clerks Report

The Clerks report was noted.

### **18 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:**

**To receive the communications and report of the Chairman pertaining to Council**

## AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026

### **Business:**

#### **18.1: Chairman**

Cllr McTaggart attended the following meetings:

21<sup>st</sup> April – regeneration meeting with NCC and ADT, to discuss a new Town Plan / Regeneration Programme. The next meeting takes place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and feedback from all members is welcome through the Clerk. NCC Regeneration Team will facilitate a Town Forum which will be led by NCC with representation from the Town Council and Development Trust as well as key officers from NCC. An update will be provided at July Full Council. Rob Strettle from NCC has agreed to attend a meeting with all members.

23<sup>rd</sup> April – meeting with Cllrs Hume, Sanderson, Wearmouth, Renner Thompson, and NCC officers Sue Aviston and Rob Strettle with ADT regarding the refusal of the Community Asset Transfer. The refusal is unclear but accepted.

Appraisal with Town Clerk.

Meeting with Advance Northumberland and Amble Development Trust, Rob Strettle and Glen Sanderson.

14<sup>th</sup> May 2026, Annual Parish Meeting. Clerk to circulate slides of the presentation.

19<sup>th</sup> May, meeting with Rob Strettle, Ross Downey, and ADT to plan the meeting taking place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. NCC are keen to enhance public realm and reopen Coble Quay. A survey to identify gaps in the current provision is to be carried out. The Chairman to keep all members in the loop and seek feedback for meetings.

#### **18.2: Vice Chairman**

Cllrs Richards attended the following meetings:

Meeting with Amble Development Trust as the Town Councils representative. Cllr Richards gave an update on the flag poles in the Town Square. Some have come to the end of their life span however the mechanism inside the poles is broken. Work is taking place to establish what is needed and whether they need to be removed or can be fixed. The development trust are extremely disappointed with the outcome of the Community Asset Transfer and are looking at what else the trust can provide.

Cllr Joyce queried what the Town Council is doing about the sign that has been damaged / removed by Persimmon. It was explained that this was an issue for NCC, however Cllr Joyce felt it was criminal damage and NCC should take taking it further. Cllrs agreed that the Clerk should write to NCC.

Clerk to seek further information about the incident before writing.

### **19. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:**

#### **19.1: To receive a report from County Councillor Arthur Hume**

Apologies received

#### **19.2: To receive a report from County Councillor Pauline Davidson**

Apologies received.

### **20. To receive an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Background papers for various policies are being proof read before being sent to the Steering Group. NCC are advising on how the plan will work. It is advisable that the plan is finalised as soon as possible given the emerging Local Plan refresh.

Once the plan is ready, it will be submitted to the Council for review as the accountable

## AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026

body.

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

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

Cllr Connolly attended the recent NALC meeting. Paul Jones NCC gave an update on new products being trialled for road maintenance between Amble and Warkworth. There is a delay in the rolling out of new waste management arrangements. Councillor Glen Sanderson is working with NECA. Rob Murfin gave an update on the new local planning review. Councils were urged to respond to the consultation.

A new Town and Parish Council Charter is being looked at specifically around roles and responsibilities of Town and Parish Councils.

Cllr Joyce thanked Cllr Connolly for attending.

Cllr Rackham attended the NTC AGM.

Cllr Dawson attended the Events Committee. The Puffin Festival is on track to be another successful community event however they are looking for volunteers.

Cllr Dawson attended a focus group by NECA on safety for women and girls in transport. There were similar themes through the session, requiring more linked up transport networks and more infrastructure needed around active travel. Whilst there is currently a cap on public transport it is felt that this needs further subsidisation as women and girls struggle more. Also raised was the cost of learning to drive, a lack of competition for driving instructors and green vehicles. LMc said the NCC feasibility study will look at some of the issues around active travel. IR confirmed that Northumberland Landscapes were also looking at active travel.

MJ offered support to Cllr Dawson doing a rainbow parade.

Cllr Joyce visited local businesses with Cllr Hume to discuss apprenticeships.

### **22. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

#### **22.1 To consider voucher numbers 1 – 35 for payment and receipt vouchers 1 – 10**

Resolved: Receipts and Payments noted.

#### **22.2 Bank Reconciliation to 6 May 2026**

Resolved: Bank reconciliation noted

#### **22.3 YTD figures**

Resolved: Year to date figures noted.

#### **22.4 Grant requests**

- **Northumberland Theatre Company**

Cllr McTaggart declared an interest and took no part in the vote.

Cllr Rackham declared an interest and took no part in the vote.

Cllr Joyce proposed donation of £230

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: Grant request approved.

#### **22.5 To approve Financial Regulations, Statement of Internal Control and Financial**

## AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2026

### **Risk Assessment Appendix A**

Resolved: Financial Regulations, Statement of Internal Control and Financial Risk Assessment and Appendix was approved.

#### **22.6 To note the Asset Register as of 31 March 2026**

The asset register was noted.

#### **22.7 To note the outcome of the Internal Audit 2025-2026**

The outcome of the Internal Audit 2025-2026 was approved.

#### **22.8 Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2025-2026**

- **To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor**

The Internal Audit report was graded good and did not highlight any areas or actions for attention.

- **To approve the Annual Governance Statement**

Approved

- **To approve the draft annual accounts for 2025-2026**

Approved

- **To approve the Accounting Statement**

Approved

- **To approve the Explanation of Variances and additional Information requested for the Intermediate Audit**

Approved

Clerk to send all AGAR and supporting documentation to Mazars.

Clerk was thanked for her work.

#### **22.9 To receive an update on banking arrangements.**

Clerk is continuing to update the banking arrangements as per agreement.

### **23.AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:**

#### **23.1 To discuss and agree the removal of the water feature and replacement options**

Proposal: Cllr Rackham proposed to remove the water feature given the excessive costs to run it.

Second: Cllr Richards

Resolved: All members in favour of removing the water feature. Delegated powers to Clerk to investigate replacement.

### **24: PLANNING COMMITTEE**

#### **24.1 To note planning outcomes for May 2026.**

Noted

### **25 AGENDA ITEMS:**

#### **25.1 To note: Council no longer meets the requirements for the GPC**

Noted that due to insufficient elected members the requirements of the GPC are no longer met.

#### **25.2 To receive an update on in house grounds maintenance progress**

- **To receive an update on recruitment**

The job advert has been published with a closing date of 22 May 2026.

Shortlisting will take place soon after with invite to interview to be arranged.

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- **To consider quotations for West Cemetery Buildings refurbishment if available**  
No quotations available
- **To consider waste management costs received**  
Waste removal costs of £65 plus VAT was under under Clerks delegated powers and the contractor is in place. Waste Transfer Notes are being received.
- **To receive an update on WorkNest arrangements**  
All staff now have log ins for the training element. Clerk has been working with policy team on HR, Employment and H&S. A site visit will take place in July and bespoke Risk Assessments will be developed from that visit.
- **To discuss draft programme of winter works**  
As it will still be growing season when the person starts, the priority will be grass cutting and strimming, however the draft programme of works sets out a framework for longer term work.
- **Members to agree delegated powers to Clerk to research and implement additional security fencing at Coal Yard**  
Clerk to investigate costs for fencing and to determine the exact boundary line.

### **25.3 To consider and approve the Draft Strategic Plan**

The Draft Strategic Plan was circulated in advance and focused on the three agreed themes of People, Prosperity and Place. The next steps for Members is to decide their priorities so that these can then inform a financial plan and budget requirements to deliver on those priorities.

Proposer: Luke McTaggart

Second: Jenny Richards

Resolved: The Strategic Plan was adopted. Clerk to publish on website.

### **25.4 To consider one off additional page in The Ambler at a cost of £222, plus 3600 leaflets at an approximate cost of £300, with delivery costs of £200.**

Cllr McTaggart declared an interest.

Cllr Rackham proposed to fund a page in the autumn / winter edition of The Ambler to contain a tear off page of mental health support contact details for people in crisis and their families.

Second: Cllr Dawson

Resolved: Clerk to arrange with The Ambler. Cllr Rackham to liaise with Northumbria Police and NCC Suicide Prevention Officer for most appropriate contact details. Cllrs Dawson, Connolly and MacColl also requested to be involved.

### **25.5 To discuss representation on Council meetings**

Concerns were raised that given the timings of some Council meetings that the workload was unfair and also some Councillors were prevented from attending meetings due to employment responsibilities. Councillors were requested to consider later meetings, especially in the summer months, to make meetings more accessible for those who have work commitments.

## **26. COMMUNICATIONS: RECOMMENDATION - *That the Council note the items.***

None

## **27. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:**

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**27.1 To note date of Amble Town Council Awards 14 July 2026, 6.00pm, Conference Room.**

**27.2 Notes of joint Town and Parish Council meeting, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

Noted

### **DIARY DATES:**

18 May 2026, Police Community Engagement event, 6.00pm, Amble Library

20 May 2026, NCC Partnership Meeting, 10am, Council Office

21 May 2026, AGM and Full Council, 6.00pm, Conference Room, Fourways2

28 May 2026, Amenities Committee, 6.00pm, Council Offices

30 May 2026, Weeding Group, 10am, Amble West Cemetery

3 June 2026, Amble Town Investment Plan, 2.00pm, Amble Development Trust

6 June 2026, Litter Pick, meet at Church Street, 10.00am

13 June 2026, Weeding Group, 10am, Amble West Cemetery

17 June 2026, Northumbria Police, 5.30pm, Conference Room, Fourways2

20 June 2026, Litter Pick, meet at Church Street, 10am

27 June 2026, Weeding Group, 10am, Amble West Cemetery

4 July 2026, Litter Pick, meet at Church Street, 10am

9 July 2026, Full Council, Conference Room, Fourways2, 6.00pm

### **28. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

28.1 9 July 2026, 6.00pm, Conference Room, Fourways2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble, NE650DT

**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**

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

None

### **30. EXEMPT REPORT**

#### **30.1 Members to note the contents of the exempt report**

The report was noted.

### **31. AGENDA**

#### **31.1 To note completion of staff appraisals**

Noted

#### **31.2 To discuss staffing matters**

Staffing changes were agreed. Clerk to action. Additional training needs to be look at.

#### **31.3 To discuss and agree Honorary Freeman nominations**

Cllr McTaggart proposed nominations for consideration.

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Councillor Richards seconded the proposal.

Resolved: All in favour.

Councillor Rackham requested the policy be brought to the next Full Council meeting for review.

The meeting ended at 19.20pm.