

Gargrave Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting of 4th February 2026

Present: Ian Ackroyd, Martin Banks, Steve Coetzer, David Shuttleworth, Alan Sutcliffe
Cllr Simon Myers, Lesley Tate (Craven Herald) and 8 members of the public

1. Chair's opening remarks.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-chair Cllr Steve Coetzer was proposed to chair the meeting and this was agreed. He welcomed everyone and reminded all of the need to engage respectfully.

2. Apologies for absence

2.1. To receive apologies for absence and record these in the minutes.

Claire Cadman, Chris Hoskin and Karen Hunter.

2.2. To consider the approval of reasons for absence given by councillors.

The apologies book was circulated and reasons noted and approved.

3. Declaration of interests

3.1. To receive, consider and decide upon any applications for dispensation.

No applications for dispensation were received.

3.2. To receive any declarations of interest not already declared under the Council's Code of Conduct or a member's Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

No applications for dispensation were received.

4. To confirm the minutes of meeting held on 7th January 2026 as a true and correct record.

Proposed by AS, seconded by IA, and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 7th January are a true and correct record.

5. Report from invited guests

5.1. To receive a report from NYC Cllr Simon Myers.

Cllr Myers updated the Parish Council on current budget setting within North Yorkshire Council. Pressure on the budget was noted but NYC had reserves to draw on but these are not for plugging financial gaps but for investment for residents. NYC will continue to support those who struggle to pay council tax bills. A video on the budget is available and the Clerk was asked to add a link to this from Gargrave Parish Council website

Cllr Myers addressed the newly published planning sites proposed for Gargrave. These cover a large area but are initial responses which will be screened by NYC. He recommended that the Parish Council should set up a working group to prepare responses in order to be ready to comment on the inevitable consultation from NYC. The Parish Council should identify which areas it would support, where houses would be least acceptable and suggest any improvements that it would like. Residents should be involved to get a broad picture and agreement on the way forward.

When asked about the Neville House development, Cllr Myers stated that he is waiting for a copy of the draft plans and assured members that the Parish Council will be contacted and visited when the plans are available.

6. To receive information on the following ongoing issues and decide further action where necessary

6.1 To receive an update on the cleaning of the war memorial.

The Clerk reported that on checking when the second of the two cleaning activities was due, she was told that due to the weather this was postponed until February. This work has been paid for.

6.2 To receive an update on the FRAP application for removal of the stepping stones.

The Flood Risk Activity Permit has been granted and issued along with guidelines. It is valid for one year and the work can now take place this summer.

6.3 To consider storage of stepping stones etc after removal from the river.

The final query from the FRAP team was in regard to storage of the stepping stones. Most of Middle Green is in a flood zone. The only potential area nearby that is not in the flood zone is next to the railings of the green at South Street. The stones can be stores there or offsite, if there is an available site. DS offered to store the stones off site.

6.4 To consider update on NP Grid substation works and social impact grant

On the social impact grant, the Clerk met with Tom Waterworth, and three others from NP Grid, who will be working with the council to decide what can be funded and the amount of funding available. No councillors were able to attend, but the NP Grid group was happy to explore the site and gain an understanding of the area. The funding would be suitable for a project that is long term and this is preferred to providing funding for something that has no lasting impact.

The group is happy to work with the council as it progresses plans for the river and greens. Stepping stones are of interest, and making the first part of middle green more accessible for buggies was suggested by the team.

Biodiversity, environment and sustainability are areas of interest and NP Grid's involvement can provide leverage for other funding from bodies such as the Wildlife Trust and North Yorkshire environmental groups. George, who deals with the grants, can suggest other possible funding bodies. He will be in touch but there is no rush to make any decisions on either side and NP Grid will work with the Council as it makes plans on the river and greens.

The old pole has been removed and the new one is now live. The pole on Middle Green opposite the substation is having stays moved slightly to align overhead cables to the new pole.

Cables are being dug out this week to transfer power away from the power station and new cables are being connected to the temporary substation. There will be several short power cuts around a minute or shorter while the cables are identified. When the cables are in place the high voltage will be switched to the new temporary substation on Tuesday 10th after which the old South Street substation will be dead and ready to be dismantled. When this stage is complete, work can be focused on the new design to upgrade the network and then eventually remove the temporary substation.

6.5 To consider next steps in river management and protection of the riverbank

Following the presentation from JBA at last month's monthly meeting the Council is now in a position to start planning for protection of vulnerable parts of the river bank and the reprofiling of the river. This is possibly a long term plan requiring significant investment. Some funding should be available from the Northern PowerGrid social impact grant but other funding will be required and contingent on a clear and costed plan. To this end the Clerk suggested that Council should set up a working group to spend time on this and it should include members of the public who have relevant experience. It is important that residents are kept informed and consulted about plans as we may need residents to help with fund raising.

Plans would include issues that are more immediate versus long term such as the tree in the river, the gabions and the substation bank.

It was agreed to set up a working group and Councillors CH and MB were suggested to be part of the group. Expressions of interest would be sought from residents with relevant expertise such as civil engineering, geomorphology and hydrology.

7. Co-option of new councillor

7.1 Voting

There is one candidate, Jack McKell-Thompson, he has prepared a short presentation to deliver to Council.

Councillors welcomed his presentation and his continued interest in becoming a councillor. Expressing the need for younger people to be involved, it was proposed by AS, seconded by DS and agreed that the Council co-opts Jack McKell-Thompson.

7.2 Declaration of acceptance

The declaration of acceptance was signed.

8 Public Participation

Residents living adjacent to Middle Green enquired about replacing the river wall before anymore collapses. This has been fully discussed at the January meeting and the Clerk said she would add the

PowerPoint to the website.

A resident asked for an update on the lighting and path to the train station. The Clerk has emailed Cllr Taylor again after he said he would visit the visit in January. He does not have a date, but Cllr Myers has also been encouraging him to visit.

The light at number 33 Neville Road is not working. This is a light that is to be moved, and the Clerk is aware and has been in touch with the electrician about this.

Old Gormless needs to be painted. The Clerk will contact NYC regarding this.

The request from GEC to use Middle Green in May is to facilitate a community picnic with stalls eg pizza, a bar and a junior team barbeque and face painting. The committee intends to donate some of the proceeds to the Council to assist with work on the 'Christmas Tree'. A small tree put on the plantation before Christmas will be removed by the group.

9. To consider a request by Gargrave Events Committee to use Middle Green in May.

A request has been received from the Chair of Gargrave Events Committee to use Middle Green for a May Day event, on Monday 4th May. The issue of travellers possibly turning up and being on the green was discussed. DS will install the 'Lego' blocks when requested and will be able to move the block when required for the event. GEC has offered to donate some of the proceeds of the event to the Parish Council towards costs of trimming the Christmas tree. Council agreed the use of the green and requested a copy of the public liability insurance from the GEC be sent to the Clerk.

10 Matters requested by councillors

10.1 To consider trimming the 'Christmas' tree near the war memorial.

Steve Claxton was unable to dress the tree with Christmas lights since it was considered too dangerous as the tree is high and wide. He has suggested the tree is trimmed. This will require an application for planning permission. The Clerk was asked to contact a tree surgeon to find out if possible and for more information about planning permission.

10.2 To receive an update on the VAS.

Steve Coetzer has circulated the results of recent use of the VAS and gave an update on the volume of traffic and speeds monitored entering Gargrave from the East and West approaches

11 Planning Applications

26/00114/FUL Old Saw Mill, Marton Road, Full planning permission for construction of two pairs of semi-detached houses and construction of access.

Several objections were raised and the response to the planners is that the Council objects on the grounds that the site is being overdeveloped, the infrastructure is inadequate (including the sewerage system which is apparently at capacity), there is no footpath and additional street lighting is required.

26/00297/FUL, 14 Walton Close, Removal of conservatory and formation of proposed single storey rear extension.

The Council has no objection to this application.

12 Planning Decisions: to receive and note the following planning decisions/information

ZA25/27465/FUL 24 solar PV panels on south nave roof at St. Andrew's Church. Approved.

ZA25/27469/LBC 70 High Street, replacement window. Granted.

ZA25/27508/LBC 70 High Street, patio door. Granted.

ZA25/27481/HH 8 Robert Close, balcony extension and alterations for first floor window. Granted.

13. To receive an update from the TGR working group.

13.1 To receive an update from the TGR working group

The group met on 21st January and selected Ian Ackroyd as chair. There was discussion about terms of reference for the group. The Clerk was asked to invite NYC and police to the next meeting. A positive response was received and Karl Battersby, Drew Fussey and Sergeant Sohail Tariq are available to attend on 18th February at 7pm, venue to be confirmed.

13.2 To consider terms of reference for the TGR working group

A draft set of Terms of reference was expanded by SC and circulated at the working group meeting and subsequently to all councillors for consideration by full Council. The Clerk received a query from a member of the TGR working group which can be resolved by removing the activities involved in the TGR plan. The working group advises the council on the action it should take, rather than being the group that meets and greets travellers.

After discussing some of the areas in the plan it was agreed that the Clerk would revise and circulate an updated version.

It was suggested that the TGR working group should discuss risk and insurance (for non-council members) at its next meeting.

14. Financial matters:

14.1 To receive and approve the schedule of cheque payments and receipts as tabled
This was received proposed by SC seconded by IA and approved.

14.2 To receive and approve the bank reconciliation.

The reconciliation for the end of January has been signed by MB and is available for consultation.

14.3 Quotes for removal of tree from the river

The Clerk has received three quotes for removal of the tree from the river. Following discussion with the contractors she contacted Yorkshire Water to find out if the entire tree, including root plate, should be removed or just the trunk as the root plate currently offers some protection to the exposed sewer pipe. The leader of the team which will deal with the exposed sewer pipe was unaware of the problem despite there being a pump on site. He sent a technical worker to examine the bank and proposes a temporary repair of a liner in the pipe which will secure it. He will look at the options of moving the pipe or stabilising the bank and suggested that the Council does not move the tree until he has investigated further. It is possible that YW will deal with this. The Clerk is to phone him back for an update next week. Council agreed that the tree should remain in situ for now.

14.4 To consider costs of repairs to the playground equipment

Three companies were approached but only two have responded and the Clerk has contacted a third but is awaiting a response for the work to be done on equipment. Chris Cowgill has been asked to provide a quote for the ground work but this has not yet arrived.

15. Correspondence received: To receive information on the following new correspondence and decide further action where necessary.

- To consider Highways Asset Management urban grass cutting of verges scheme Circulated.

It was felt that the payment for undertaking this work was unlikely to reimburse the Council and the maintenance of visual splays at the areas being discussed should be an issue for Highways and not the Parish Council.

- Gillian Taylor, 5th January email on speed and accidents
The Clerk had circulated this but SC had not received a copy so the Clerk would check.
- Phone call concerns raised about van and trailer on bend at Home Farm
This has been noticed and is a potential hazard, close to a farm entrance and blocking access to a field. The Clerk has recommended the resident report this to NYC. The Clerk was asked to raise this with NYC.
- Email about alley between South Street and High Street
A complaint was received about rubble on the alley following some construction work. Councillors who use the path regularly had not noted anything there recently.

16. To notify the Clerk of matters for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting.

No matters were raised.

17. To confirm the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 4th March 2026.

The next meeting is confirmed as Wednesday 4th March 2026.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm.