

Holme Valley Parish Council

MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL

MONDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2026

7pm in THE EXHIBITION ROOM, THIRD FLOOR, THE CIVIC.

IN THE CHAIR: Cllr Glenn Kirkby

PRESENT:

Cllr Lawrence Baylin
Cllr Donna Bellamy
Cllr Mary Blacka
Cllr Damian Brook
Cllr Harry Davis
Cllr Tom Dixon
Cllr Donald Firth
Cllr Charles Greaves
Cllr Chris Green
Cllr Jenny Holmes
Cllr Jo Liles
Cllr Alison Morgan
Cllr Hugh Osborne
Cllr Steve Ransby
Cllr Martin Rostron
Cllr Jane Rylah
Cllr Tricia Stewart
Cllr Sarah Whitelaw
Cllr Andy Wilson

APPROVED APOLOGIES & REASONS: Cllr Pat Colling, Cllr Andrew Fenwick.

TAKING MINUTES: Jen McIntosh (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: Rich McGill (Deputy Clerk/RFO), Gemma Sharp (Assistant Clerk)

Draft Minutes

2526 161 Public Question Time

One member of the public was present and spoke to a proposal for the Jam Factory Music School to rent the Gartside unit as a collaborative rehearsal space.

The member of the public was advised to make contact with the clerk team and view the premises before proceeding further with the proposal.

Any such proposal would be considered by the Service Provision Committee at its meeting on Monday 23 February 2026.

The member of the public left the meeting at the conclusion of the item.

Cllr Davis arrived at 7.01pm during this item.

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The Chair reminded all present of the expectation that all would show respect, raise their hand if they wished to address the Council and keep any side discussions to a minimum.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2526 162 Recording of public meeting

The meeting was recorded by the Officer for public broadcast via the HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL YouTube channel. There were no further requests to record the meeting or part of the meeting.

The meeting returned to the correspondence received from a member of the public with regards to the recording of Holme Valley Parish Council meetings and other matters and **NOTED** this. It was commented that the member of the public made some valid points regarding the unsuitability of both the current space and layout. The Clerk was thanked for responding to the member of the public.

The Assistant Clerk updated the Council with regards to ongoing research into improving the recording facilities.

2526 163 Items to be heard in private session

RESOLVED: to hear item 2526 186 Learning Points in private session.

2526 164 Apologies and reasons for absence

APPROVED: apologies and reasons for absence from Cllr Pat Colling and Cllr Andrew Fenwick.

APPROVED: request from Cllr Pat Colling for a dispensation for up to 6 months with regards to Council business and meetings.

2526 165 Receipt of written Declaration of Pecuniary and Other Interests

NOTED: receipt of revised written declarations of pecuniary and other interests from Cllr Sarah Whitelaw and Cllr Jenny Holmes.

Clerk to organise redaction of signatures, addresses and other sensitive information, posting on the HVPC website and sharing with the Monitoring Officer.

Cllr Donald Firth entered the meeting at 7.07pm.

2526 166 Declaration of interests in agenda items and written dispensations

Members were reminded that:

1. If a member has listed in written declaration as a pecuniary or other interest an organisation or body etc which features in the agenda then this should be declared by the member.
2. If a member has a pecuniary or other interest not listed in written declaration in an organisation or body etc which features in the agenda then this should be declared.
3. The onus is on individual members to make declarations appropriately.

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4. Failure to declare may constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct and may be reported by members of the public or other councillors to the Monitoring Officer.

NOTED: declaration of interests from Cllr Jenny Holmes with regards to Holmfirth Arts Festival, should this arise.

NOTED: declaration of interest of the Clerk in item 2526 186 Learning Points. The Clerk would leave the room for this item and the Deputy Clerk take minutes.

No applications for written dispensations were received or considered.

TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

2526 167 Minutes of Full Council meetings

Cllr Charles Greaves entered the meeting at 7.10pm during this item.

APPROVED: the Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL Meeting held on 15 December 2025 numbered 2526 128 to 2526 160.

Information regarding ongoing matters arising from the above minutes which did not appear under other agenda items consisted of:

- **2526 149** Swift boxes – Cllr Morgan reported that purchase of the boxes was in progress.
- **2526 154** Shopfront Design Guide – addressed packs of this had been left out for various councillors for hand delivery.
- **2526 147** Packhorse Bridge, Smithy Lane, Brockholes – this had been an item at the last Planning Committee meeting. The Assistant Clerk had written to Kirklees regarding this matter; the letter had been acknowledged but not responded to.

THE COMMITTEE MINUTES UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

2526 168 Minutes of Standing Committee meetings

APPROVED: the Minutes of the EXTRAORDINARY STAFFING COMMITTEE Meeting held on 5 January 2026 numbered 2526 35 to 2526 42.

APPROVED: the Minutes of the PLANNING COMMITTEE Meeting held on 12 January 2026 numbered 2526 98 to 2526 116.

APPROVED: the Minutes of the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE Meeting held on 19 January numbered 2526 88 to 2526 106.

2526 169 Standing item – the Climate Emergency

NOTED: Council was reminded that items on the agenda should be viewed where appropriate through the lens of the Climate Emergency the Council has declared.

The Assistant Clerk explained that a section titled Climate Action and Biodiversity was now on the website.

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FINANCIAL MATTERS

2526 170 Schedule of Payments

NOTED: the Schedule of Payments month-to-date for January 2026.

2526 171 Approving the Precept

Deputy Clerk/RFO reported that at its meeting of 19 January 2026, the Finance and Management Committee voted to maintain the precept at the same level as the current year, £447,780.

The RFO/Deputy Clerk realised that it was impossible to realise this figure with a rounded Band D household charge figure. (Given the revised tax base figure of 10848.49, it could only be realised with a figure of £41.27579.)

APPROVED: Precept for Holme Valley Parish Council for 2026/27 of £447,717 (option A).

2526 172 AGAR 2026 – actions required including Assertion 10 requirements

Assertion 10

The Deputy Clerk/RFO explained that Assertion 10 was an addition to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) this year. Through it, councils were being asked to demonstrate that they are managing digital, data and information governance responsibly. Assertion 10 brings together a series of expectations around digital, data and information governance including data protection principles.

Assertion 10 applied to the current financial year, meaning that the Parish Council should take steps now to ensure they can demonstrate compliance when the internal audit took place in June.

APPROVED: the draft IT policy as presented for the year 2025/26.

RESOLVED: to establish an IT Policy working group consisting of Cllr Tom Dixon, Cllr Hugh Osborne, Cllr Jo Liles and Cllr Glenn Kirkby to review the draft policy and bring further recommendations to the Finance and Management Committee.

NOTED: The Assertion 10 checklist to be referred to the Finance and Management Committee in due course.

Risk Assessment 2026-27

APPROVED: the Risk Assessment for 2026/27 as presented.

It was likely that further sections would be added to the 2026/7 Risk Assessment as this was a live document.

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MATTERS RESERVED FOR FULL COUNCIL

2526 173 Referrals to the Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer's team had reported to the Clerk via email that a complaint against named councillors had been concluded and had not been upheld. Both the complainant and the named councillors had been informed.

One new complaint had been received regarding a named councillor and was in the process of being considered.

NOTED: Update from the Monitoring Officer that one complaint had not been upheld and that one complaint had been received since the last meeting and was being considered.

2526 174 Holmfirth Town Centre Works – updates and oversight

The following verbal updates were received from councillors.

- The last newsletter was received before Christmas.
- There had been some late night/overnight working at Christmas and this had helped the pace of the works.
- Kirklees councillors had had a meeting with the contractor.
- The Victoria Street/Towngate area looked better and had new road markings.
- Hollowgate was currently shut to cars; it was up to individual businesses as to whether to open or not.
- Work on the car park and bridge had begun.
- The layby near the Church was not subject to parking restrictions as yet.
- There were disabled and unloading spots on Victoria Street and it was reported that there was still some illegal parking and that more enforcement was needed to deal with this issue.
- There had been an issue with the hard of hearing struggling with crossings that were now soundless. Newly installed crossing boxes all had a toggle situated underneath the control panel that vibrated when the crossing was safe.
- Concern was expressed regarding closing businesses although figures showed that the vacancy rate was ½ below the national average based on footfall.
- No firm date had yet been given for completion of works.

NOTED: letter received from Steve Mawson, Chief Executive, Kirklees Council.

An **ACTION** for the Clerk was to press Kirklees for an end date. This was particularly important given the range of annual festivals upcoming.

Cllr Donald Firth to pass information on about businesses that were closing or at risk of closing to Cllr Sarah Whitelaw.

No further actions were proposed with regards to Holmfirth Town Centre Works.

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2526 175 Kirklees Local Plan Review

NOTED: the dates of two community consultation meetings on the revised National Planning Policy Framework as follows:

- Wednesday 11 February, at 7-00pm, at Holme Community Centre
- Monday 16 February, at 7-00pm, at Brockholes Village Hall

Members were encouraged to share information regarding the meetings and encourage attendance. The revised Framework was causing controversy regarding infrastructure, development of green belt land and the widening definition of grey belt land.

A flyer publicising the meetings had been created by the Assistant Clerk – she was thanked for her work. The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) had published a document with 26 key takeaway points – see link <https://share.google/LFxdyQCgqYEI0OWo6> provided by Cllr Whitelaw.

No other actions with regards to the Kirklees Local Plan Review were resolved upon.

2526 176 Membership of the Finance and Management Committee

APPROVED: Cllr Tom Dixon to be a member of the Finance and Management Committee 2025/6 for the remainder of the Council Year.

2526 177 Statement for the Holme Valley Land Charity

NOTED: financial statement with regards to Honley Library and Holmfirth Civic Hall released by email on 22 January 2026 to Holme Valley Land Charity.

2526 178 Grant evaluation regarding Holmfirth Pride Grant 2025

NOTED: receipt of a grant evaluation from Holmfirth Forward with reference to a grant of £300 towards a Holmfirth Pride event in June 2025.

2526 179 Town of Culture Competition

It was reported that Holmfirth-based organisations including Holmfirth Forward and Holmfirth Arts Festival were proceeding with submitting an expression of interest with regards to the Town of Culture Competition. The main benefit of completing the submission would be bringing groups together to encourage collaboration, even if the bid was ultimately unsuccessful.

Kirklees Council was also supportive of a bid being submitted.

NOTED: Council's general support for an application for the Town of Culture Competition.

2526 180 Councillor Training

NOTED: feedback from Cllr Sarah Whitelaw's recent councillor training.

Cllr Whitelaw encouraged fellow councillors to look for opportunities to network through externally organised events.

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The Assistant Clerk was thanked for organising the recent Social Media training.

2526 181 The Future of Local Democracy

Cllr Whitelaw reported on The Local Policy Innovation Partnership (LPIP) recently published report on *The Future of Local Democracy – Devolution and the Need to Empower Town and Parish Councils*.

The Clerk reported that the *English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill* was still progressing through Parliament, might be amended and a date was yet to be set for when any provisions of the Act would come into force. It was likely that YLCA would offer training in due course regarding the implications of the legislation at local council level.

NOTED: Report *The Future of Local Democracy – Devolution and the Need to Empower Town and Parish Councils* – from the Local Policy Innovation Partnership (LPIP).

2526 182 Draft Meeting Schedule for Council Year 2026/27

APPROVED: the meeting schedule for Council Year 2026/27.

2526 183 Draft Safeguarding Policy

Recent contact with Kirklees Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer (LADO) had indicated that Holme Valley Parish Council should have a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure in place as soon as possible.

A draft policy was presented for comment, alongside

- a councillor briefing note on safeguarding responsibilities
- a reporting form
- a public-facing statement for the HVPC website
- a risk assessment
- a reporting flowchart
- and a poster for display.

APPROVED: the draft Safeguarding policy and process documentation, as presented.

RESOLVED: the formation of a Safeguarding Working Group consisting of Cllr Mary Blacka, Cllr Chris Green, Cllr Lawrence Baylin and Cllr Tricia Stewart with the remit to scrutinise the policy and its implementation and bring recommendations back to Full Council in due course.

2526 184 The Civic – Preparation for Vision Meeting

Cllr Jenny Holmes reported on first meeting of the Civic Vision Working Group on 6 January and encouraged members to attend the Joint Vision Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 3 February 2026.

How the work of the vision interrelated to the development of the new lease and side letter was raised as a concern. This was an urgent matter in as much as the work on the lease and side letter were near to reaching conclusion.

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An **ACTION** for the Clerk was to organise a meeting of the Civic Lease Working Group and Cllr Jenny Holmes to further review the side letter and draft Heads of Terms in light of the development of a vision for the Civic.

REFERRALS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2526 185 Updates from the Communications and Engagement Working Group

The Assistant Clerk/Working Group reported on actions since the previous meeting.

NOTED: arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held Monday 23 March 2026.

RESOLVED: to renew a funding contribution to Huddersfield Hub for a dedicated Holme Valley news page from the beginning of April for the next year at a cost of £200 per calendar month.

THE STAFFING COMMITTEE

2526 186 Learning Points

This item was heard in private session as resolved in item 2526 163.

The Clerk left the room for the item, having earlier declared an interest. The Deputy Clerk/RFO took minutes for the item.

Cllr Baylin, who had chaired the Extraordinary Staffing Committee meeting of 5 January 2026, reported on the learning points set out in the Minutes.

APPROVED: Council approved a review of the Parish Council's complaints, grievance and disciplinary policies by the Staffing Committee for presenting to Full Council at the Annual Council meeting on 18 May 2026. This was a recorded vote:

- Voting:
 - For – Cllr Baylin, Bellamy, Blacka, Brook, Davis, Dixon, Firth, Greaves, Green, Holmes, Kirkby, Liles, Morgan, Osborn, Ransby, Rostron, Rylah, Stewart, Whitelaw, Wilson **(20)**
 - Against – None **(0)**
 - Abstention – None **(0)**

APPROVED: Council approved the appointment of an external reviewer to undertake an independent investigation into a matter being dealt with by the Staffing Committee. This was a recorded vote:

- Voting:
 - For – Cllr Baylin, Blacka, Dixon, Greaves, Green, Holmes, Kirkby, Morgan, Osborn, Ransby, Rostron, Rylah, Stewart, Whitelaw, Wilson **(15)**
 - Against – None **(0)**
 - Abstention – Cllr Bellamy, Brook, Davis, Firth, Liles **(5)**

CORRESPONDENCE

2526 187 Reports from Kirklees Ward Councillors

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Cllr Mo Crook Holme Valley south had been in email contact with the Clerk and had no specific update to give but would be happy to respond to any Kirklees issues raised.

Cllr Charles Greaves Holme Valley North, Cllr Jane Rylah Holme Valley South, Cllr Damian Brook Holme Valley South and Cllr Donna Bellamy Holme Valley North all reported on current issues including:

- The budget 2026/7 and increase in Council Tax
- Smithy Place Bridge
- The installation of silent pedestrian crossings
- The new Planning Framework and the definition of 'grey belt'
- Postal services in Honley
- Visit of the Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to current Holmfirth centre works.

There were no actions resolved upon as a consequence of this item.

2526 188 Holmfirth Public Space Protection Order - request

NOTED: request for the Holme Valley Parish council to display when possible signs regarding the recent Public Space Protection Order on the Holme Valley Parish Council noticeboards.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

2526 189 Items for Publicity

Identified items for publicity arising from the meeting included:

- Local Plan Review – public consultation meetings.
- The Holme Valley Parish Council Precept for 2026/7.
- The Shopfront Design Guide.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.