Chair of the Council:
Graeme
Blenkiron

FRAMWELLGATE MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

www.framwellgatemoorparishcouncil.co.uk

Clerk:
Craig Eddon

The Pavilion Building, Front Street
Framwellgate Moor
Durham
DH1 5BL
clerk@framwellgatemoorparish.gov.uk

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Framwellgate Moor Parish Council held on Wednesday 1st April 2026 at 6:00 pm at The Pavilion Building, Front Street, Framwellgate Moor, Durham, DH1 5BL.

1	**Attendance:** **Councillors** **Chair** G Blenkiron, R Dodds, M Charlton, R Perry, E Clarkson, E Pears, G Tidbury, M Wilkes, V.Amyard **Clerk** C Eddon **Apologies** A Hopgood, D Wheeler
2	**Declarations of interest and dispensation requests** R. Perry – Trustee for Framwellgate Moor Youth & Community Centre
3	**Public participation (please notify the Chairman or Clerk in advance)** N.Rippin – MP's office
4	**Review minutes from 4th March 2026 and actions agreed.** The draft minutes of the March 2026 meeting were accepted as a true record. No matters arising were noted for reflection.
5	**Correspondence** • **5a/010426 - Framwellgate Moor Youth & Community Association** o Correspondence was received regarding their AGM on Thursday, April 2nd, at 6 pm and invitation to all councillors. o They also requested their public notice of the AGM be displayed, which has been arranged. o The Association is seeking to extend its 17-year lease with the County Council to over 30 years to secure future funding. o It was suggested that the Parish Council could potentially take over the leasehold and charge a peppercorn rent. o **Decision**: Members noted the invitation. E.~~Clarkson~~ Pears and R.Perry confirmed attendance. o **Action**: Other councillors wishing to attend the AGM should do so to understand the centre's operations before any future discussions on the lease. • **5b/010426 – INKY&CO** o An inquiry was received from Poppy, owner of Inkey & Co., a new children's vintage and pre-loved clothing shop opening in May. o They asked if the Parish Council offers support (grants, promotion, advice) for new local businesses. o **Decision**: The Parish Council does not provide financial grants to private businesses. o **Action**: o The council will provide promotional support (Facebook posts welcoming the business).

Signed: G Blenkiron Dated: 6th MAY 2026.

	○ Direct the owner to Business Durham and Umi for advice and potential grants. ○ Suggest contacting The Weigh To Shop for community engagement and collaboration. ○ Share information on the Pity Me and Framwellgate Moor Facebook page. • **5c/010426 – Team Solan** ○ Correspondence was received from a small cancer charity based in Spennymoor, supporting ~500 families in the Northeast, seeking to raise its profile. ○ The Clerk has requested further specifics on desired support or promotion but has not received a response in three weeks. ○ **Decision:** To note the correspondence and await a detailed response from the charity before considering further engagement.
6	**Action Log** • **6a/010426 - Change in the tennis court gate code:** Still open. Clerk pursuing LTA via inquiry forms and email. • **6b/010426 - Unsafe Cycle Lanes:** DCC acknowledged receipt of email regarding unsafe cycle lanes and will look at remedial action. Clerk to be informed when repairs are scheduled. • **6c/010426 - St Cuthbert's Hospice donation:** Council confirmed a £100 donation in May 2026. Clerk has made them aware, and they have expressed thanks. Item remains open until payment. • **6d/010426 - Renewal of NetPower Management Plan:** Agreed and renewed. **Closed.** • **6e/010426 - Discussed with groundsman to assess fixing playground items (row machine handle and two gates):** Groundsman confirmed materials cost £180. Materials ordered. Work to be completed by groundsmen by next meeting. **Closed.** • **6f/010426 - ILCA training for Clerk:** Approved and booked. **Closed.** • **6g/010426 - Renewal of DCC HR advice SLA:** Agreed and renewed. **Closed.** • **6h/010426 - Purchase Fathom AI annual subscription:** Approved and purchased. **Closed.** • **6i/010426 - Adjust Memorial Garden lighting start time:** Chair to action. Still open. • **6j/010426 - Tennis coach (Stephen Harden-Gilbert) £6/hour fee:** Stephen will use two agreed free taster sessions to gauge interest before committing to the three hours at £6/hour. A full review is scheduled for the May meeting. A free community slot has been reinstated. Still open. • **6k/010426 - CDALC Data Protection Training for Clerk:** Booked for April. **Closed.** • **6l/010426 - Reviewed social media Policy:** Changes made, updated, and added to the website. **Closed.**
7	**Financial Report** Clerk presented Invoices and receipts for previous month, reconciliation and current budget which were agreed by G Blenkiron.

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Clerk Update on the following.

- **8a/010426 – SLA Renewals: ground maintenance (Batsons), fixed play equipment inspection and maintenance (DCC), building compliance (DCC).**
    - **Ground Maintenance (Batson's Ground Care):**
    - Renewal proposed for April–October 2026 for Abbey Road and King George sites. (Does not include North Terrace).
    - Covers grass cutting, strimming, litter removal, and weed control (14 visits/site).
    - Total cost: £1,697 (excl. VAT), £2,036 (incl. VAT) – same as last year.
    - **Decision**: Agreed to renew the SLA.
    - **Fixed Play Equipment Inspection (DCC):**
    - Renewal proposed for April 2026–March 2027.
    - Covers regular operational inspections of play areas.
    - Cost: £103.04 (excl. VAT), £123.65 (incl. VAT). Additional charges for repairs.
    - **Decision**: Agreed to renew the SLA on the proviso that the Clerk clarifies discrepancies.
    - **Action**: Clerk to contact DCC to clarify the number and type of inspections (routine vs. operational) included and confirm that the council will receive regular inspection reports.
    - **Building Compliance (DCC):**
    - Renewal proposed for the Pavilion Building for two years (April 2026–March 2028).
    - Covers building compliance services including PAT testing, Legionella servicing, and management.
    - Annual cost: £460.27 (incl. VAT). Reactive repairs charged separately.
    - **Decision**: Agreed to renew the SLA.
    - **Action**: Clerk has reported non-flushing outdoor toilets and non-working security lights to DCC for call-out as part of this SLA.

- **8b/010426 – Policy reviews: GDPR, accessibility statement and privacy notice.**
    - **Data Protection Policy:** Proposed amendments to align with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
    - **Decision**: Adopted the updated policy.
    - **Accessibility Statement:**
    - Updated to align with assertion 10 expectations and Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.

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- **Decision**: Adopted the updated statement.
- **Privacy Notice:**
- A new privacy notice has been created, as required by UK GDPR, detailing how personal data is collected, used, stored, and shared.
- **Decision**: Adopted the privacy notice.
- **Action**: Clerk to publish all three updated documents (Data Protection Policy, Accessibility Statement, Privacy Notice) on the website footer.

- **8c/010426 – Pavillion maintenance (security lights and outdoor toilet).**
  - Status: Ongoing issues with non-flushing outdoor toilet and non-working security lights outside the office and toilet (not plugged in).
  - **Action**: Clerk has notified DCC as part of the Pavilion Building Compliance SLA and is awaiting a call out. Boiler was also blown, Clerk is working on this.
  - **8d/010426 – Bowling Green wheelchair access (repair).**

    Background: This is an ongoing issue that has been left unaddressed. Previous quotes for professional repair were £12,000-£16,000.
  - Proposal: New College Durham has agreed to carry out repair work using students (free labour) and providing paving slabs/bricks. The Parish Council only needs to provide additional materials (sand, gravel, cement).
  - Estimated Cost: ~£400 for materials (from Travis Perkins), plus delivery.
  - Timeline: Two to three days of labour; aim to complete before summer holidays.
  - **Decision**: Approved to proceed with the repair and purchase of materials.
  - **Action**:
  - Clerk to purchase the necessary materials (~£400).
  - Clerk to post details of the partnership with New College Durham on Facebook and the website, including photos to promote the work.

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- **9a/010426 – Bowling Green update (R. Perry)**
  Problem: The Bowling Green currently has only three paying members, raising concerns about long-term sustainability.
- **Decision**: The council agreed to give the Bowling Green one final, intensive effort to increase membership.
- Viability Metric: A target of 50 paid members by October 31, 2026, was set as the benchmark for viability.
- **Approved Actions**:
- Board Repair: Approved a quote of £1,650.92 for materials to replace all rotten boards around the green. The groundsman will undertake the work. (Vote: 5 For, 4 Against).
- Rationale: Boards are a safety hazard; materials can be repurposed if the green closes.
- Open Week: Agreed to support an open week of free taster sessions in the last week of May.
- Action: Council to fund 1,000 flyers and a banner Clerk to make promotional posts on Facebook and the website. Bowlers are expected to distribute flyers and man the event.
- Day Rate Trial: Approved a £5/half-day access trial for the current season only.
- Clerk to set up a website booking system for this.
- Website: Clerk to update the website with prominent Bowling Green information and details of the membership benefits (e.g., locker, coffee facilities).
- Membership Monitoring: Bowlers are to provide monthly figures on membership numbers and half-day bookings.
- Membership Deadline: New members would need to sign up by the end of October for the following season. If 50 members are not achieved by October 31st, any pre-paid memberships for next season would be reimbursed.
- Contingency: If the 50-member target is not met by October 31, 2026, the council will review the site's future, considering alternative uses (e.g., community garden).

- **9b/010426 – Review the condition of the playground (E. Pears)**
  Problem: The Abbey Road Playground's rubber safety surface is deteriorating, with gaps between panels.
  - **Action**: Clerk to obtain three quotes for replacing the rubber safety surface and for adding a connecting path from the entrance of the play area. Quotes to be presented at the next meeting for review.

- **9c/010426 – Approve resurface of MUGA (G. Blenkiron)**

  Problem: The Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) surface is unsafe due to potholes and tree root damage, deterring community use (e.g., netball group).

  - Cost Estimates: Patching: £4,000. Complete Resurface: £8,000, plus £800-£1,000 for repainting netball/football lines. Includes grinding tree roots to prevent future damage and a 5-10 year guarantee.
  - **Decision**: Approved a full resurface of the MUGA (estimated ~£8k-£9k) as patching is not a viable long-term solution.
  - **Action**:
  - Clerk to secure the full quote for resurfacing, including tree root grinding and line painting for football and netball.
  - Clerk to investigate grant funding possibilities for the project (Mark to assist).
  - Clerk to consult for suggestions on additional sports markings (e.g., basketball) for the new surface and include this in social media/website communications.

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	County Councillors Report • **10a/010426 - Roadworks:** To note - Additional roadworks and a bus lane suspension are scheduled for the B6532 (driving road) between County Hall roundabout and High Car Road roundabout, starting April 7th for 12 days. This is for the removal of an existing bus shelter and creation of a new base. • **10b/010426 - Council Tax:** To note - DCC's new council tax reduction scheme eliminates 100% reductions; all residents must now pay a minimum amount, which may lead to inquiries from residents. • **10c/010426 - Arson**: To note -Four youths were apprehended on Abbey Road following a recent arson incident. None were from the local area. • **10d/010426 - Bus Shelters**: To note - The two Pity Me Bus shelters (panels, seating) will be replaced in a few months as part of the Front Street improvements project. • **10e/010426 - Speed Cushion**: To note - The speed cushion at the top of North Road has shifted, and DCC has been notified. No further action from the council at this time.
	The meeting ended at 8:00pm on the 1st of April 2026

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