

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 11 MAY 2026**

Present: Councillors E Carr, N Craggs, J Huntington,
B Miller, C Stogdale

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor J Miller be elected Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor L Stewart be appointed Vice-Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

Due to the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair the Clerk sought nominations for a Chair.

Councillor B Miller took the Chair.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Johnson, J Miller, L Stewart and L White.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED that G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor to Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

6 APPOINTMENT TO SUB-COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made:-

Cemetery Sub-Committee

Councillors E Carr, N Craggs, J Huntington, B Miller, C Stogdale

Allotment Sub-Committee

Councillors N Craggs, J Huntington, B Miller, L White

Personnel Sub-Committee

Councillors L Johnson, J Miller, L Stewart, L White

7 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the following be appointed to serve as representatives of the Parish Council on the external bodies listed for the forthcoming year:-

Durham Rural Community Council

Councillor L Stewart

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 May 2026

**East Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils
Deferred**

**East Durham South Local Network
Deferred**

**Smaller Councils Forum - CDALC
Councillors J Miller and L Stewart**

8 DATE AND TIME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED that meetings of Wheatley Hill Parish Council be held on the second Monday of each month commencing at 6pm, except for August where no council meeting would be held due to recess. Meeting dates were subject to change with the consent of the Chair of the Parish Council.

- 9** The Minutes of the last Meeting held on 13 April 2026, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

10 POLICE MATTERS

There was no Police report.

11 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor Craggs provided a report which included the following issues.

- Front Street – update following a multi-agency walkabout which would continue to meet each month.
- Issues related to the abattoir and security of the building.
- Rubbish in the back yards of residential properties had been reported and cleared.
- The Constitutional Club building had been broken into.
- An untaxed vehicle had been reported.
- Local businesses had been spoken to in relation to parking on the Front Street.
- A181 Petrol Station – road around the petrol station would be cleaned.
- Grassed area on the junction leading to the Community Centre had been cleared.
- Offensive graffiti on the back of the Constitutional Club building had been reported but would need to be removed by the property owner.
- East Durham Community Cancer Support Group – the group had contacted County Councillor Craggs to discuss their application for financial assistance.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

12 CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) Requests for Financial Assistance**

- (i) STARS Community Learning CIC**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from STARS Community Learning CIC, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that a donation of £200 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

- (ii) Wheatley Hill Community Association**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 May 2026

Community Association, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that no donation be made.

(2) PACT Meeting

The Clerk reported that the next meeting would be held on 21 May 2026 at 6pm in Wheatley Hill Community Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Cuppa with a Copper

The Clerk reported that the next meeting would be held on 28 May 2026 at 1.30pm in Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

13 PLANNING

There were no planning matters.

14 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Internal Audit 2025/2026

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2025/2026 undertaken by G Fletcher.

Members were advised that every smaller authority in England that received either gross income or expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) at the end of each financial year. The AGAR was made up of 3 sections including an annual internal audit report which was completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor.

The internal audit concluded that all the key controls contained within the internal audit section of the AGAR were examined and found to be working satisfactorily.

RESOLVED that the internal audit report for 2025/2026 be accepted.

(2) Effectiveness of Internal Control

Consideration was given to the report of the Clerk which reviewed the effectiveness of the council's internal controls to support the Annual Governance Statement, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted.

(3) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2026

The Clerk reported that Wheatley Hill Parish Council were required to complete the appropriate part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) which applied to them. As the Parish Council had gross income and expenditure which exceeded £25,000 it was required to complete Form 3.

The Clerk proceeded to take Members through Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, which was approved and then Section 2, Annual Accounting Statements which was approved.

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 May 2026

RESOLVED that Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2026, be approved and signed by the Chair.

(4) Allotments – Plot 15

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from the tenant of allotment 15 to add a resident onto the tenancy agreement.

RESOLVED that the request be approved.

(5) Heritage Centre

The Clerk reported that new 2 year contracts had been agreed with British Gas and British Gas Light to supply electric and gas to the Heritage Centre.

A new contract had also been agreed with BT for the telephone and internet at the Heritage Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Update - Land at East View/Wingate Lane Junction

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members reported that the grassed area at the junction of East View and Wingate Lane, where the Parish Council flower tub was located was a mess. Following recent works in the village the grassed area was now a bare patch of soil that needed reinstating to grass.

The matter was reported to Durham County Council who advised that there were also sections on the A181 that needed reinstating to grass and this would be done at the same time.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

15 MEMBER ISSUES

(1) Dogs

Members reported the receipt of complaints related to dogs barking continuously at a residential property in Wheatley Hill. County Councillor Craggs advised that Durham County Council were aware of the issue and were dealing with it.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Cats – Burns Street/Shakespeare Street

Members reported an increase in the number of cats around Burns and Shakespeare Street. County Councillor Craggs advised that he would report the matter to the Neighbourhood Warden.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

16 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure as at 31 May 2026.

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 May 2026

PAYMENT	TO		DETAIL				COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	E-on Next		Gas - Heritage Centre				76.39	3.82	80.21
Direct Debit	E-on Next		Electric - Heritage Centre				62.14	3.11	65.25
Internet Banking	MKM		Cemetery Supplies				35.12	7.02	42.14
Debit Card	Maxwells		Cemetery Supplies				5.00	1.00	6.00
Debit Card	Jet Retail Uk Ltd		Machine Fuel				116.68	23.33	140.01
Internet Banking	G Fletcher		Internal Audit				260.00		260.00
Internet Banking	STARS Community Learning CIC		Section 137 Donation				200.00		200.00
Internet Banking	HMRC		P11D Payment				377.85		377.85
Internet Banking	J Thompson		Telephone Allowance				25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	Payroll		Wages - May 2026				5,864.94		5,864.94
Internet Banking	Councillor L Stewart		Attendance Allowance				193.18		193.18
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC		PAYE/Pension - May 2026				3,762.65		3,762.65
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - May 2026				68.34	13.66	82.00
Direct Debit	British Telecom		Telephone/Internet				33.68	6.74	40.42
Invoice 108	Co-Op Bank		Charges				17.70		17.70
							TOTAL	11,098.67	58.68
									11,157.35

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the payments be approved.

17 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated