

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 9 JUNE 2025**

Present: Councillor J Miller (Chair)  
Councillors E Carr, J Huntington, L Johnson,  
B Miller, L Stewart, C Stogdale, L White

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N Craggs.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors L Johnson and L White declared an interest in item number 7(1).

**3 The Minutes of the Annual Meeting and Annual Assembly of Electors held on 12 May 2025, copies of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.**

**4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Chair welcomed M Goyns to the meeting.

M Goyns asked if the Parish Council were aware of Durham County Council's plans to park approximately 15 lorries at the depot at Thornley Crossings. M Goyns was concerned that the route the lorries would take to and from the depot would be through Wheatley Hill.

The Chair advised that the Parish Council were not aware of this but would refer the matter to County Councillor Craggs for investigation.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

**5 POLICE MATTERS**

The Police advised that 89 incidents were reported in Wheatley Hill during May 2025 and included the following.

Theft – 8  
Anti-social behaviour – 7  
Criminal damage – 8  
Vehicle crime – 7  
Burglary – 1  
Domestic – 3  
Road related – 4  
Suspicious activity – 9  
Concern – 6

The Clerk reported that the next PACT meeting would be held on 24 July 2025. The Police were proposing to start 'Cuppa with a Copper' at Wheatley House to allow residents the opportunity to address issues away from the more formal PACT meeting.

Members expressed concern at the on-going problem of youths riding motorbikes at high speed through the village and causing a nuisance. It was felt that it was only a matter of time before there was a serious accident.

The Police had advised that they were encouraging residents to report this type of incident via Crimestoppers, which was anonymous. They were asking residents to provide as much detail as possible such as a description of the bike, who was riding it and where it was being stored.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the Police be advised of the incidents involving youths on motorbikes in Wheatley Hill.

## 6 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor N Craggs provided a report on the following issues.

- Arriva 58 bus service – Issues related to the number 58 bus service had been reported to the County Councils Member Services Team.
- Housing – Front Street and Thornley Road. Councillor Craggs had reported the issues related to the boarded up and abandoned properties on the Front Street and Thornley Road to Durham County Council. A walkabout was scheduled to allow officers to get an accurate picture of the situation and the condition of the properties. An update would be provided following the walkabout.

The Chair queried what the situation was regarding the existing Targeted Delivery Plan (TDP) for Wheatley Hill. Public money had previously been spent to produce the TDP which set out an approach to deliver improvements to properties and the wider housing environment. It focused on addressing long term empty homes to reduce the proportion of empty properties in the village.

- Community Safety – Councillor Craggs had met with Inspector Carter and according to police data, Wheatley Hill was currently one of the most settled villages in East Durham. However, many incidents and crimes were not being reported, which gave the impression that everything was fine from a policing perspective.

Councillor Craggs had raised concerns about the reporting process directly with the Police and Crime Panel elected members, as he believed the current system was outdated and not secure. Councillor Craggs was working with local Police to explore better ways for people to report crime safely and confidently.

- CrimeStoppers - At the last PACT meeting it was suggested that CrimeStoppers be promoted by as many organisations as possible on their websites and social media posts.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

## 7 CORRESPONDENCE

### (1) Request for Financial Assistance – Wheatley Hill Community Association

Councillors L Johnson and L White declared an interest in this item and took no part in the voting,

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Wheatley Hill Community Association (WHCA) for financial assistance towards activities/trips to be provided during the school summer holidays. The application outlined a variety of ideas and suggestions for summer holiday activities and trips for 0–15 year olds to be provided by WHCA.

The Clerk provided details of the finance allocated in the 2025/2026 budget for WHCA.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was RESOLVED that the Parish Council contribute £4,034.50 towards the summer holiday activities/trips to be provided by WHCA.

**(2) Thank You**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a thank you card from M Goyns.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(3) Skatepark**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from a resident suggesting that a skatepark located in Wheatley Hill could help to reduce anti-social behaviour and low-level crime.

The Chair reported that he had scheduled a meeting with T Best at the Greenhills Centre and D Jenkins from Durham City Youth Project to discuss the viability of the proposal.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

**(4) Wheatley Hill Mothers Club**

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from Wheatley Hill Mothers Club to see the GT Group Brass Band in concert on 9 July 2025.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**8 PLANNING MATTERS**

There were no planning issues.

**9 CLERKS REPORT**

**(1) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2025**

The Clerk reported that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year ending 31 March 2025 had been submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(2) Changing Rooms**

The Clerk provided an update on the insurance claim submitted for the burnt-out changing rooms to Zurich, the Council's insurers.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

**(3) Summer Bedding/Hanging Baskets**

The Clerk reported that the summer bedding plants had been received from Durham County Council and the hanging baskets had been ordered for the Aged Miners Bungalows.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(4) Update - Road Sign**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the unclear wording on the road sign, located at the chicane between Wheatley Hill and Thornley was reported to Durham County Council.

Durham County Council had advised that following an investigation the sign was not considered to be hazardous, dangerous or in need of any maintenance.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

## 10 MEMBER ISSUES

### (1) 30MPH Road Signs

Members reported on-going problems associated with vehicles speeding through the village. It was felt it was only a matter of time before there was a fatality. It was suggested that 30MPH signs be erected at either end of Cemetery Road to deter motorists from speeding.

**RESOLVED** that the request for 30MPH road signs be referred to County Councillor Craggs.

### (2) Footpath – Wingate Lane

Members reported that the surface of the footpath at Wingate Lane, from Marley Fields towards Whitehouse Farm, was breaking up and in a poor state of repair.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

## 11 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure at 31 May 2025.

PAYMENT	PAYABLE TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	E-on Next	Gas - Heritage Centre	32.91	1.65	34.56
Direct Debit	E-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	46.61	2.33	48.94
Internet Banking	MKM	Cemetery Supplies	9.25	1.85	11.10
Internet Banking	Churches Fire and Security	Annual Fire Extinguisher Service	54.00	10.80	64.80
Debit Card	Home Bargains	Supplies - Heritage Centre	7.82	1.56	9.38
Debit Card	Fish Alive	Supplies for Hanging Baskets	21.65	4.33	25.98
Debit Card	Jet Retail UK Ltd	Machine Fuel	322.00	64.40	386.40
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Trade Waste	1,715.22		1,715.22
Internet Banking	HMRC	P11D Payment	331.03		331.03
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	Wheatley Hill Community Association	Contribution to school holiday activities/ trips	4,034.50		4,034.50
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Reimbursement - Stamps	41.76		41.76
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - June 2025	51.25	10.25	61.50
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - June 2025	5,705.21		5,705.21
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - June 2025	3,876.33		3,876.33
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	37.02	7.40	44.42
Invoice 97	Co-Op Bank	Charges	17.60		17.60
Debit Card	Maxwells	Cemetery Supplies	5.00	1.00	6.00

Debit Card	Post Office			Stamps - Cemetery				13.92		13.92
							<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,348.08</b>	<b>105.57</b>	<b>16,453.65</b>

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

## 12 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

.....Dated