

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2025**

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

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 The Minutes of the last meeting held on 13 October 2025, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair welcomed A Vincent, P Fothergill and B Butters from the East Durham Communities Cancer Support Group, and residents M Goyns and S Facey to the meeting.

A Vincent advised that representatives from the Cancer Support Group were present at the meeting to introduce themselves before applying to the Parish Council for financial assistance.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 POLICE MATTERS

There was no Police report.

6 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor Craggs was unable to attend the meeting and provided the following update.

- **Bus Shelter – A new bus shelter had been ordered for the bus stop opposite St Godric's school and would be installed in early 2026.**

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of thanks from All Saints Church following a donation from the Parish Council towards the annual Christmas Fayre. M Hedley had also thanked J Davies and E Leigh for their assistance with the T Kenny commemorative event held in the Cemetery.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Request for Financial Assistance

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from We Made It From Scratch Productions, a voluntary community amateur dramatics group.

RESOLVED that no donation be made.

(3) Haswell and District Mencap

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation to the annual Mencap nativity service at Durham Cathedral on 20 December 2025.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Durham City Youth Project – Annual Report 2024/2025

The Clerk reported the receipt of the annual report from Durham City Youth Project, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Durham County News – Winter 2025 Edition

The Clerk reported that the winter 2025 edition of the Durham County News was available on Durham County Councils website, details of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

8 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(1) DM/25/02619/FPA – Single storey extension to form babies' room at Wheatley Hill Primary School, Wheatley Hill

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Parish Councils objections to the application were submitted to Durham County Council with a request that a site visit be undertaken to allow the planning committee the opportunity to view the site and the surrounding area.

The County Council had subsequently advised that the intention was for the application to be determined by the planning officer under delegated authority. They were therefore seeking clarification on how the Parish Council would like the application to be determined.

The Parish Council could either request that the application be referred to the planning committee or allow it to be determined by the planning officer, under delegated authority, taking into consideration the Parish Councils objections.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised that the application be determined by the planning officer under delegated authority.

(2) DM/25/02255/FPA – Proposed battery energy storage system (BESS) together with associated infrastructure, engineering works and landscaping at land to the northwest of High Crows House, Wheatley Hill

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Parish Councils objections to the application were submitted to Durham County Council.

Members were advised that Dr. Brown from the East Durham Action Group had asked if he and his team could attend a Special Meeting of the Parish Council to present their case regarding the BESS/Solar developments proposed for the area.

The Parish Council thanked Dr. Brown for the offer and pointed out that the Parish Council had submitted its objections to the application to Durham County Council. It was suggested that a presentation on the issue would be better suited to a wider audience, such as a public meeting or as part of a wider public consultation.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

9 CLERKS REPORT

(1) Annual Allotment Rents

The Clerk provided an update on outstanding annual rents.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Remembrance Sunday 2025

The Clerk reported that this year's Remembrance Day service was held on Sunday 9 November 2025 and was well attended.

The Parish Council had erected approximately 85 lamppost poppies between All Saints Church and the Cemetery. The poppies would remain in place for Remembrance Day on the 11th of November.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Christmas Trees

The Clerk reported that Christmas trees for the Cemetery, the Workingmen's Club, Wheatley House, and the Community Centre were ordered.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Dispensation for Non-Attendance

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Councillor White asking Members to consider a dispensation in respect of non-attendance at meetings due to family circumstances.

Members were advised that Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 stated that if a Member of a Local Authority failed throughout a period of six consecutive months, from the date of his or her last attendance, to attend any meeting of the authority, he or she shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a Member of the Authority.

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor White be granted a dispensation for non-attendance at meetings of the Parish Council for a period of nine months.

10 MEMBER ISSUES

(1) Footpath

Members reported that the footpath from the top of Burns Street heading past Pizza Nova was covered in mud and required cleaning. Quad bikes had been across the area and churned up the grass.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(2) Street Sign

Members reported that to the rear of First Street a “Private Road” sign had been erected. The sign needed to be removed as this was an adopted road and was not private.

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 October 2025.

PAYMENT	TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	E-on Next	Gas - Heritage Centre	41.18	2.06	43.24
Direct Debit	E-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	58.09	2.90	60.99
Chq No 105694	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	25.00		25.00
Debit Card	Maxwells DIY	Cable Ties for Poppies	18.75	3.75	22.50
Debit Card	Screwfix	New Ladders	33.32	6.67	39.99
Debit Card	Screwfix	Cemetery Supplies	7.49	1.50	8.99
Internet Banking	MKM	Cemetery Supplies	10.98	2.20	13.18
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Summer/Winter Bedding	1,206.37	241.27	1,447.64
Internet Banking	J Davies	Reimburements	19.82	3.96	23.78
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	Councillor L Stewart	Attendance Allowance	193.18		193.18
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - November 2025	5,861.94		5,861.94
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - November 2025	4,074.93		4,074.93
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - November 2025	50.00	10.00	60.00
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	37.02	7.40	44.42
Invoice 102	Co-Op Bank	Charges	13.30		13.30
TOTAL			11,676.37	281.71	11,958.08

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