GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
10th September 2026

IN ATTENDANCE

Chair - Councillor D Hales
Councillors – J Guthrie, C Hales, M Hall
L Jackson, A Smith
Emma McCann, Town Clerk (TC)

Meeting began at 6.00pm.

WELCOME

Councillor D Hales welcomed everyone in attendance and went through the safety procedures in the event of a fire.

38-2627 NOTICE OF MEETING

It was confirmed that a Public Notice of the Meeting has been given in accordance with Schedule 12, paragraph 10(2) of the LGA 1972.

39-2627 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors T Alderson, M Elgie, S Jackson, K Logan and P Savage. Also from County Councillors C Hunt and E Hunt. Councillor D Hales informed members that Councillor Elgie had recently had a fall and we send our best wishes to her for a speedy recovery. Also, previous Town Councillor Ken Henfrey has also had a fall and is currently in hospital with a broken hip. We also send our best wishes to him.
Proposed Councillor L Jackson
Seconded Councillor Hall

40-2627 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received. Councillors were reminded that they could declare an interest on an item on the agenda at the beginning of the item.

41-2627 MEMBERS DISPENSATIONS

None received.

42-2627 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Tenants from our allotment sites attended the meeting to receive awards in recognition of their efforts and achievements in maintaining their allotment plots. They were congratulated and presented with a certificate.

43-2627 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 11TH JUNE 2026

i. Matters arising

None.

Signed by the Chair _____
Dated: 8th October 2026

ii. To approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 11th June 2026.
The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 11th June 2026 as written and circulated were agreed as a true record.
Proposed Councillor Guthrie
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

iii. Chair of the Meeting to sign the minutes as a true record
Councillor D Hales signed the minutes as a true record.

44-2627 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 9TH JULY 2026

i. Matters arising
None.

ii. To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 9th July 2026
The meeting scheduled for 9th July 2026 did not take place, as no councillors were in attendance. The Town Clerk was the only person present and, as the meeting was not quorate, no Council business was transacted, and no formal meeting took place. There are no minutes of that meeting requiring approval or signature by the Chairman.

iii. Chair of the Meeting to sign the minutes as a true record
There were no minutes as no formal meeting took place. Therefore, no minutes to sign.

45-2627 PLANNING

i. To consider valid planning applications that have been received

- DM/26/01145/FPA - 17 Prospect Terrace, Willington - Retention of wall to rear and side of dwelling
  For Information Only
- DM/26/02026/FPA - 28 Railway Terrace, Willington - Single storey sun room extension
  For Information Only
- DM/26/02181/FPA - Land North Of 2 Armstrong Drive, Willington - Change of use of public open space to private garden land
- DM/26/02228/VOC - Stockley View, Stockley Lane, Oakenshaw - Variation of Conditions 2 and 13 pursuant to planning permission DM/22/01695/FPA in order to alter balcony design. Condition Number(s): 2 - approved plans. 13 - details for the proposed master bedroom balcony Conditions(s) Removal: Condition 2 - to amend the plans to show the balcony along the length of the southern elevation. Condition 13 - to remove the need to provide details for the master bedroom balcony which will be superseded by the proposed new balcony. Proposed Plans R101 Rev_ dated 09.06.22 as amended by: Existing and Proposed Elevations 0003P01 dated 07/08/26 Existing and Proposed balcony plans 0002P01 dated 07/08/26
- DM/26/02226/AD – Advertising, Right 10 Albion Place, Willington - Replacement of existing advertisement display with D48 digital advertisement display

ii. To acknowledge any decisions on previous planning applications received

- DM/26/01300/PND - Spectrum Leisure Complex, Hunwick Lane, Willington - Prior Notification for the demolition of Spectrum Leisure Centre
  Decided 17 June 2026 Prior Approval Required and Refused
- DM/26/01286/DRC Sewage Treatment Works, Cobeys Carr Lane, Todhills - Discharge of conditions 3 and 4 pursuant to DM/25/03212/FPA
  Decided 26 June 2026 Approved
- DM/26/01117/FPA - 29 Armstrong Drive, Willington - Proposed Fencing
  Decided 6 July 2026 Approved BNG Not Required
- DM/26/01180/FPA - 5 Trinity Gardens, Willington - Replace garage door within front elevation with glazed patio doors
  Decided 10 July 2026 Approved BNG Not Required

iii. To consider the Section 106 application seeking approval for the allocation of monies for Willington Cricket Club's Extension to Community Sports Building

The Town Council discussed the Section 106 application submitted by Willington Cricket Club. Members confirmed that they were supportive of the application in principle; although, concerns were raised regarding the existing parking issues in the area and the potential impact these may have. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would draft a response reflecting the Council's comments for members to approve before submission to Stephen Reed.
Proposed Councillor C Hales
Seconded Councillor Smith

46-2627 TO CONSIDER THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

i. To receive update on allotment matters

Councillor C Hales reported the annual reviews took place in August 2026. Winners were as follows;

Oakenshaw	
First Prize	Plots 31 & 32
Highly Commended	Plot 30
Best New Plot	Plot 49
Springfield	
First Prize Plot	Plots 1 & 2
Highly Commended	Plot 3
Highly Commended	Plot 5
Best New Plot	Plot 7
Park Top	
First Prize	Plots 1 & 2
Commendation	Plots 12 & 13

Signed by the Chair _____
Dated: 8th October 2026

All sites are functioning well, however, there is an issue with rats at Springfield. The Chairman of the site will liaise with us to discuss a way forward.
There is a tree at Oakenshaw Allotments which has die back and needs urgent attention. The Town Clerk has contacted DCC for advice and possible support. Some management letters are to be sent following the reviews.

ii. To approve changes to the Allotment Lettings Policy

The Town Clerk said that Councillor C Hales and her had met recently to review the Allotment Policy. The main changes were and not restricted to;

- Co-workers can be registered as a co worker on the main tenants' plots throughout the whole tenancy.
- Co-workers will only be considered to transfer the tenancy if they have been on the site of no less than three years or longer than the next person on the waiting list. This would only relate to one plot as when the main tenant ends their tenancy, if it is a double plot it will revert back to individual plots.
- All tenants must be off site by 10pm instead of 11pm.
- Fires are forbidden from 1st June to 1st September, burning will be allowed on the first weekend in April and again in May. Notices to be displayed and given to neighbouring properties in advance.
- Tenants must notify GWTC of any evidence of rats.
- The section on Community Gardens allows for larger polytunnels which do not require approval. These community gardens are to be rent free.

This was approved.
Proposed Councillor Hall
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

47-2627 BANK RECONCILIATION

i. To approve the Bank Reconciliation for June 2026

The Council began in June 2026 with a starting balance of £166,867.93. There was expenditure of £10,251.08 and credits of £504.29. This leaves an end balance of £157,121.14.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

ii. To approve the Bank Reconciliation for July 2026

The Council began in July 2026 with a starting balance of £157,121.14. There was expenditure of £6,074.51 and credits of £1,000 funding from Believe Housing for the Family Fun Day and £200 refund from The Coach Company. This leaves an end balance of £152,246.63.
Proposed Councillor C Hales
Seconded Councillor Guthrie

iii. To approve the Bank Reconciliation for August 2026

The Council began in August 2026 with a starting balance of £152,246.63. There was expenditure of £26,403.66 and credits of £20.00. This leaves an end balance of £125,862.97.

Signed by the Chair _____
Dated: 8th October 2026

Proposed Councillor Hall
Seconded Councillor Guthrie

48-2627 BUDGET REPORT 2026-2027

i. To approve the Budget Report for August 2026

The budget for 2026-2027 has been increased £161,697.52 due to the £1,000 funding from Believe Housing.
There has been a total spend to date of £58,761.48 with committed costs of £4,751.00. This leaves an available resource on budget of £98,185.04.
The committed costs of 2025-2026 is detailed under the main budget report as this is not part of this year's budget but will clear this financial year. This is just for information purposes.
Proposed Councillor C Hales
Seconded Councillor Guthrie

ii. To approve financial decisions

Meetings had been held with Baccanalia, County Councillor C Hunt, Local Networks about a Winter Wonderland project. The Town Councils contribution would be £5,000+VAT. The details of the project were given.
Resolved1. This was approved by members.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

The Town Clerk explained that she had received quotes in from DCC and another supplier for this years Christmas Lighting Request. The details of both quotes were given as follows;
Durham County Council £10,089.79 + VAT for full request
Winter Glow £8,100.00 for full request
Winter Glow £8,600.00 for full request and to supply 10 double spirals
Resolved2. To approve Winter Glow option 2 for £8,600.00.
Proposed Councillor Hall
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

49-2627 TO RECEIVE TOWN COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor D Hales informed members "since our last meeting we have had 2 very successful events. The Big Brass Bash was amazing. The bands were incredible and the weather perfect. The children enjoyed their goody bags – especially the whistles. Our residents really enjoyed the occasion and despite the football, we had a good turnout.
Our Family Fun Day was a huge success. Lots of families and friends spending time together in the lovely weather. There were lots to do for all ages. We have had many positive comments on Facebook. Thanks to William Clark, Fun Experts, Cave Pod, Play Bus, Beacon Traffic Management, stallholders for their support. A special thank you to our business owners for donating prizes for the raffle.
To Emma and all Councillors who came along to help before, during and after the event, a special thank you, it was a busy day and the time you gave to support the event is very much appreciated.
As we move into Autumn, we have our usual events coming up, Halloween, Remembrance Sunday, Pantomime, Civic Carol Service and Lighting of the

Christmas Tree, plus a Christmas Surprise in conjunction with our Durham County Councillors.
Yesterday we had a meeting with representatives from St Stephens Church to discuss commemorating the closure of Willington Pit. GWTC will be organising a competition for our Schools and a special ecumenical service on the anniversary of the closure. More details will be given in the New Year.
Finally, we send our condolences to Ken and Nigel Linge on the death of their mother, Olive. Olive, as many of you know was an advocate for Willington. Her love for the town and her thirst for history resulted in her writing four books about Willington. She was instrumental in saving the commemoration stone from the Miners Welfare and having it sited in Beamish Museum. GWTC provided our hub for the family to meet following the funeral."
Councillor Smith said that there is still nothing happening with Coronation Terrace. Letters have been received regularly from Mary Kelly Foys team. Mary Kelly Foy has brought this issue up in the House of Commons also. Councillor Smith will draft a response to her for an update.
Councillor C Hales said that he is a member of the Patient Participation Group at Willington Medical Group, he informed councillors that there is a new manager in place. The group is yet to meet following this transition.
Councillor L Jackson mentioned the graffiti at Bainbridge Avenue. The Town Clerk will discuss with Rob, Neighbourhood Warden.
Councillor Guthrie said she had reported the rusted bin on the High Street near the office to DCC. They have informed that it will be replaced soon. She had been approached by residents of Watling Terrace about having the bushes cut. The Town Clerk will contact Clean and Green.
Councillor D Hales said there is an old Taxi sign next to the bin on the High Street. Is it possible to have this removed. The Town Clerk will contact DCC and ask.
Councillor Hall said the potholes that were originally reported have now been filled in. Also, she had reported to the Town Clerk about the damage to a garage at Wells Grove and Ripon Drive. These have been reported to Believe Housing. There is a lot of litter up on the Dante Heap. This is to be reported to Clean and Green.

50-2627 TO RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Deferred as apologies received.

51-2627 S137 PAYMENTS

i. To consider Community Fund Applications

Willington Open Door Methodist Church have asked for £500 towards the cost of a Tea Dance and a walk event which will be in conjunction with the events for the commemoration of the closure of Brancepeth Colliery. The total project costs is £668. All necessary documentation has been received.

Resolved1. To approve £500.00.
Proposed Councillor C Hales
Seconded Councillor Hall

The Town Clerk reported that another application had been received from a Community Group within the Parish. She had contacted the group for further information, but the application was withdrawn.

Signed by the Chair _____
Dated: 8th October 2026

ii. To consider Civic Fund Applications
None received.

52-2627 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)
None.

53-2627 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
Ordinary Meeting – Thursday 8th October 2026 at 6pm.

The meeting concluded at 7.27pm

Signed by the Chair _____
Dated: 8th October 2026