

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
11th June 2026

IN ATTENDANCE

Chair - Councillor D Hales
Councillors – M Elgie, J Guthrie, M Hall
L Jackson, S Jackson, K Logan, P Savage, A Smith
Emma McCann, Town Clerk (TC)
County Councillor C Hunt

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.

22-2627 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.

23-2627 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor C Hales.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor S Jackson

24-2627 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.

25-2627 MEMBERS DISPENSATIONS

None received.

26-2627 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

27-2627 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 21ST MAY 2026

i. Matters arising

None.

ii. To approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 21st May 2026.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 21st May 2026 as written and circulated were agreed as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

Signed by the Chair _____
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iii. Chair of the Meeting to sign the minutes as a true record

Councillor D Hales signed the minutes as a true record.

28-2627 MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 28TH MAY 2026

i. Matters arising

None.

ii. To approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 28th May 2026

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 28th May 2026 as written and circulated were agreed as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Logan

Seconded Councillor Elgie

iii. Chair of the Meeting to sign the minutes as a true record

Councillor D Hales signed the minutes as a true record.

29-2627 PLANNING

i. To consider valid planning applications that have been received

- DM/26/01180/FPA - 5 Trinity Gardens, Willington - Replace garage door within front elevation with glazed patio doors
- DM/26/01286/DRC Sewage Treatment Works, Cobey's Carr Lane, Todhills - Discharge of conditions 3 and 4 pursuant to DM/25/03212/FPA
- DM/26/01300/PND - Spectrum Leisure Complex, Hunwick Lane, Willington - Prior Notification for the demolition of Spectrum Leisure Centre

ii. To acknowledge any decisions on previous planning applications received

- DM/25/03383/VOC - Land To The North Of Oakenshaw, Farmhouse, Stockley Lane, Oakenshaw - Removal of Condition 8 (Occupancy Restriction) pursuant of planning permission DM/15/02058/FPA
Approved 26 May 2026
- DM/26/00875/PNA - Land South East Of Whitworth Lane, Brancepeth - Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 6 Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for 4 Bay open sided pole barn constructed from lightweight timber poles with box profile sheet roof (anthracite grey) and access
Prior Approval is required 01 May 2026
- DM/26/00893/FPA - 13 Dunelm Avenue, Willington - Single detached garage
Approved BNG Not Required – 08 June 2026

29-2627 BANK RECONCILIATION

i. To approve the Bank Reconciliation for April 2026

The Council began in March 2026 with a starting balance of £55,838.60. There was expenditure of £9,530.69 and £133,426.22 credits which

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include the Precept of £130,930.75, a grant of £500 from the Wellbeing for Life team and allotment rents. This leaves an end balance of £179,734.13.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor Guthrie

ii. To approve the Bank Reconciliation for May 2026

The Council began in May 2026 with a starting balance of £179,734.13. There was expenditure of £14,869.41 and £2,003.21 credits for allotment rents. This leaves an end balance of £166,867.93.
Proposed Councillor L Jackson
Seconded Councillor Logan

30-2626 BUDGET REPORT 2025-2026

i. To approve the Final Budget Report for 2025-2026

The final budget for 2025-2026 is £174,655.15 due to funding of £1061.93 from Fun & Food.
The current spend to date is £158,277.28 with further committed costs of £9,159.58. £3,000 has been allocated to the 2026-2027 budget to cover the cost of HR Policies reviews as agreed previously. This leaves an available resource on budget of £4,218.29.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor Guthrie

ii. To approve the committed costs of 2025-2026

The committed costs of £9,159.58 is committed to this budget as agreed in previous meetings. The further £4,218.29 is to be added to the Projects Budget 2026-2027. This is to cover the cost of the Hanging Baskets as agreed in April 2026.
Proposed Councillor Guthrie
Seconded Councillor Hall

31-2627 BUDGET REPORT 2026-2027

i. To approve the Budget Report for May 2026

The budget for 2026-2027 was agreed at £136,730.75 when setting the Precept. This budget has been increased to £160,697.52 due to the VAT Reclaim allocations of £16,748.48, HR Costs, and the £4,218.29 underspend of 2025-2026.
There has been a total spend to date of £22,030.47 with committed costs of £4,251.00. This leaves an available resource on budget of £130,197.76. 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 Elgie
Seconded Councillor L Jackson

ii. To approve financial decisions

The Town Clerk reported that the Council has now run out of dog poo bags. She presented the costs for purchasing quantities of 50,000, 60,000 and 70,000 bags, together with projected income based on maintaining the current retail price of 60p per pack and on increasing the price by 5p to 65p per pack.

Members noted that, even with a proposed increase to 65p per pack, the Council would still be making a loss on the sale of the dog poo bags.

Resolved1. To purchase 60,000 dog bags and charge 65p per pack.

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor Savage

The Town Clerk reported that the organisers of the Big Brass Bash will be arranging food vendors for the event but will not be providing any discounted food vouchers.

In previous years, the Council has provided picnic boxes for the adults and snack and gifts for the children. It is therefore recommended that the Council considers providing its own discount vouchers for couples and families and to continue the gift bags for the children.

Resolved2. To allocate a maximum of £500 towards discount vouchers which would include £2.50 per couple and £5.00 per family. First come first served basis.

Resolved3. To continue the packs for children and allocate a maximum of £200.00.

Proposed Councillor L Jackson

Seconded Councillor Guthrie

The Town Clerk reported that, last year, the Town Council provided a bus to transport parish residents to the Durham Miners' Gala. It is suggested that the Council provides a bus again this year; however, a smaller vehicle is recommended, based on last year's usage.

Resolved4. To approve up to £300 for pay for the bus to the Miners' Gala.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor L Jackson

32-2627 UPDATE ON THE AGAR

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025-2026 and Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025-2026 will be put on the website on 15th June 2026 with a Notice of Appointment of date for the exercise of public rights from 16th June 2026 until 27th July 2026. The Completed AGAR and relevant documents will be forwarded to Mazars up to and including 30th June 2026.

Resolved1. That the information is noted

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor L Jackson

33-2627 TO RECEIVE TOWN COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Smith reported there had been a further letter with an update from Mary Kelly Foy regarding the house in Coronation Terrace. It will be 2 years this month since the explosion.

Councillor Logan said the Bingo Afternoons are going well. There have been lots of positive comments from people who have attended. She thanked Councillor Elgie and the Town Clerk for their help. She also expressed her thanks to Councillors who had made donations.

Councillor Hall reported that she had forwarded details to the Town Clerk regarding vehicle issues. Also, that there was a drain at Wells Grove where the cover had been taken off and placed dangerously inside which could

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cause an accident. The Town Clerk confirmed these had been reported to the relevant departments. She would chase up a response.

Councillor Guthrie had contacted DCC regarding the rubbish bins outside a property at Chester Drive following complaints from residents.

Councillor S Jackson informed members that the hanging baskets would be installed next week.

Councillor D Hales said we had received a request from resident Mr W regarding a project he is working on which involves making a model railway. This will then be used in conjunction with St Stephen's Church commemorations for the 60th Anniversary of the closure of Brancepeth Colliery in 2027. Mr W would like to use the office for the preparation and building of this railway. Concerns were raised regarding the use of soldering irons in a public space. Councillors agreed this was a great project and could see the passion behind this project.

They agreed that the office could be used in the planning stages but could not allow works involving soldering irons. The parts could be cut out and prepared only. The hosting of the actual finished piece is not possible as the office doesn't have enough space to accommodate.

34-2627

TO RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

County Councillor C Hunt expressed the good news regarding the Spectrum. The consultations are out now, and we look forward to hearing updates at the end of July 2026.

The Local Networks money should be released soon and a Call for Projects. She had been talking with Bacchanalia regarding a Winter Wonderland Project for Christmas 2026. The Town Clerk confirmed that herself and the Town Mayor, Councillor D Hales had also met with Thomas from Bacchanalia regarding a winter project. Councillor Smith explained that she was unable to attend this meeting but had heard how Thomas had lots of praise for what GWTC provide for the area. It was agreed that GWTC and the County Councillors would join on this winter project. A meeting will be held in July to discuss next steps.

Councillor C Hunt confirmed that she had held a Councillor Surgery in the Town Council office and had been able to sort some of the issues that were brought to her from residents.

She explained that there is a project to roll out which includes providing Ring doorbells to residents in need.

The money for the refurbishment of the Town Green Park has been released, and the project should commence imminently.

The roundabout near the Spar garage will be made good in the coming weeks. Avant are paying for the works to be completed.

Councillor S Jackson asked about the signage on the roundabout. Councillor C Hunt explained that she is currently challenging the Highways Department.

35-2627

S137 PAYMENTS

i. To consider Community Fund Applications

Willington and District Angling Club maintains pathways and other access to the river between the pay bridge at Sunnybrow and Page Bank. This is primarily for fishing access but also serves to benefit the public by removing obstructions including branches, fallen trees and overgrown bushes and also cutting back brambles, thorn bushes and other plants that

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overgrow on public footpaths. They have replied upon patched up, second hand petrol equipment which has now become beyond repair. They are looking to replace this equipment with electrically powered tools which will include strimmer's, chain saws and pole cutters. The total project cost is £3,529.16 (including VAT).

Resolved1. To approve £500.00.

Proposed Councillor S Jackson

Seconded Councillor Savage

Willington Youth FC would like to extend access to grassroots football at Willington Youth by enabling more children and young people to take part in regular structured sessions. The project has been developed in response to growing demand within the community. The club is currently at capacity and operates a waiting list of young people who are unable to join due to limited equipment and resources. Funding will be used to purchase footballs and goal posts. The total project cost is £684.86.

Resolved2. To approve £500.00.

Proposed Councillor S Jackson

Seconded Councillor Smith

ii. To consider Civic Fund Applications

None received.

36-2627 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

None.

37-2627 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Ordinary Meeting – Thursday 9th July 2026 at 6pm.

The meeting concluded at 6.43pm.

Signed by the Chair _____

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