

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
11th December 2025

IN ATTENDANCE

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

Meeting started at 6.00pm.

Councillor D Hales started by presenting Councillor L Jackson with her Volunteer Passport certificate. Other Town Councillors, staff and volunteers who had taken part, received theirs at a presentation night on Wednesday 3rd December 2025.

WELCOME

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

91-2526 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.

92-2526 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Town Councillors Margaret Elgie and Karen Logan and County Councillor Cathy Hunt.
Proposed Councillor L Jackson
Seconded Councillor Smith

93-2526 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received. Councillors were reminded that they could declare an interest on anything on the agenda at the start of the topic.

94-2526 MEMBERS DISPENSATIONS

None received.

95-2526 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received. No residents in attendance.

96-2526 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2025

i. Matters arising

None.

Signed by the Chair _____
Dated: 12th February 2026

ii. To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13th November 2025

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13th November 2025, as written, and circulated were agreed as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Guthrie

Seconded Councillor S Jackson

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

Councillor D Hales signed the minutes as a true record.

97-2526

PLANNING

i. To consider valid planning applications that have been received

- DM/25/03288/DRC – Brancepeth Colliery Reclamation Site East Of Dunelm Industrial Estate Willington DL15 0ER - Discharge of Condition 3 (land contamination scheme) pursuant to planning permission DM/25/00104/FPA (resubmission)
- DM/25/03212/FPA - Sewage Treatment Works, Cobey's Carr Lane, Todhills - Erection of kiosks and associated works
- **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

ii. To acknowledge any decisions on previous planning applications received

- DM/25/00029/FPA - Springfield House Springfield Terrace - Proposed demolition of existing dwellings and introduction of 4 houses and associated works
Application Withdrawn – 14 November 2025
- DM/25/00442/FPA - Land To The East Of 169 New Row, Page Bank - Change of use from agricultural land to residential curtilage including the construction of a triple garage, driveway and 1.2m high post and rail fence and hedge
Application Refused 18 November 2025

98-2526

TO CONSIDER THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

Councillor C Hales reported that he and the Chair had visited Oakenshaw Allotments following a call to the TC requesting an urgent site visit regarding concerns of birds on one allotment. These concerns were from a concerned tenant on site.

Following this site visit, it was decided that the RSPCA be contacted and this issue to be pursued. The TC confirmed that initial contact with the RSPCA had been done. The tenant of the allotment garden was not on site at this time.

There is a big rat problem at Oakenshaw Allotments. County Councillor Emma Hunt confirmed she could provide contact with a contractor.

The OCA has submitted plans to the TC for their new community plot which is to include buildings works and alterations. At the site visit this morning, the Deputy Chair of the OCA was available, and he showed himself and the Chair around the plot and explained the plans. The full plans will be considered at a later date. It was suggested that the Deputy Chair of the OCA will visit the

Signed by the Chair _____

Dated: 12th February 2026

office after Christmas to meet with Councillor C Hales, Councillor Smith and the TC.

Concerns had been raised to the TC regarding issues at Rosedale. This is the third time this has been acknowledged, and it includes fly tipping and burning on one plot in particular. The TC confirmed she has already sent the tenant of this plot a letter previously but received no response. The TC is waiting to meet with the Police to discuss this issue and another issue that was brought to her attention today.

At Park Top there has been a change of tenancy for one plot. A long term tenant has passed, and we send our condolences to the family.

99-2526

BANK RECONCILIATION

i. To approve the Bank Reconciliation for November 2025

The Council began in November 2025 with a starting balance of £84,021.89.

There was expenditure of £21,950.22 and £1,742.82 credits, leaving an end balance of £63,814.49.

Councillor S Jackson asked if all money has been received from the businesses for the second hanging baskets. The TC confirmed there is only one payment outstanding.

Proposed Councillor Hall

Seconded Councillor S Jackson

100-2526

BUDGET REPORT 2025-2026

i. To approve the Budget Report for November 2025

The budget is 2025-2026 is £173,593.22.

The current spend to date is £130,635.39 with further committed costs of £16,881.40. This leaves an available resource on budget of £26,076.43.

Proposed Councillor C Hales

Seconded Councillor L Jackson

ii. To approve Financial Decisions

It has been recommended that the wireless links that stream the images back to GWTC from the cameras at the old William Hill Building, The Co-op and Rose of India, be upgraded to more resilient 6GHZ. This is due to the increase of the 5GHZ range which is now commonly used in domestic devices as well as commercial. Three sets of links will be replaced at the camera locations and GWTC office. The cost is £3,900 plus VAT.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor C Hales

Councillor Smith asked County Councillor Emma Hunt if there is any funding available from DCC or the Police & Crime Commissioner that could offset some of the costs of the camera costs. County Councillor Emma Hunt suggested speaking to DCC regarding them adopting the cameras. Councillor Smith agreed this could be something we could discuss at a later date.

Signed by the Chair _____

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101-2526 TO CONSIDER PRECEPT 2026-2027

The TC circulated the Draft Budget and Precept information. The figures that have been presented set to allow the Town Council to maintain its services and activities as normal.

It is recommended to increase the precept by 3%. This is an annual increase of £1.97 (less than 4p per week) for a Band D property. Councillors were reminded that the majority of the properties in the Greater Willington Parish are Band A, which will be a slightly lower increase of £1.31 (around 2 and a half pence per week)

Councillor Smith proposed the 3% increase and Councillor L Jackson seconded the motion.

The TC asked councillors to vote, and the motion was carried.

Councillor D Hales thanked the TC for all the work involved in providing this information.

Resolved1. To submit a Precept request of £130,930.75 to DCC by 23rd January 2026.

102-2526 TO RECEIVE TOWN COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

The TC informed Councillors that she had received an email late on Tuesday regarding two civic/royal events for which nominations are sought from all CDALC member councils.

A Celebration Event for the retiring Lord Lieutenant, Sue Snowdon and a Royal Garden Party. Nominations must be returned by 31st January 2026 and for each event, all nominees will be put into a draw. Lucky winners will be informed as soon as possible after this date.

Discussions followed and everyone agreed to nominate Town Mayor Councillor D Hales.

Councillor Smith expressed concern that there is still nothing going on with Coronation Terrace. This is not good. Residents are still living with this 19 months on.

The Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and the TC met with County Councillor Nicola Lyons portfolio holder for Communities and Civic Resilience, to discuss various issues. Following the meeting, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor took her to visit the explosion site in Coronation Terrace. She was shocked at what she saw and fully appreciated what the residents are going through but is aware it is a complex issue. Councillor C Hales suggested contacting the media again regarding this issue. Councillor Smith agreed this would be a good idea. County Councillor Emma Hunt said that she had been approached by the media to do an article about HMO's so she could possibly tie this issue in with that.

Councillor S Jackson queried column 51 with Christmas lights on. The TC will check with DCC Street Lighting Team.

Councillor L Jackson said the Civic Carol Service and Switch On was lovely. Residents have commented that they didn't know about it. The TC confirmed the event was advertised as a diary date since June and had been shared on social media and in the office on two further occasions. Councillor L Jackson offered to distribute posters to businesses going forward so that it is advertised more throughout the town. The TC thanked Councillor L Jackson for her offer of help.

Signed by the Chair _____

Dated: 12th February 2026

Councillor Smith commented that we are advertising on our own Facebook page which is the legal thing to do.

Councillor Hall reminded members that the PACT meeting is this week, Thursday 18th December. She had submitted her apologies as she has other commitments. She asked if those meetings could be advertised more. The TC confirmed that she does share them before each meeting.

Councillor D Hales said the switch on was really good. William was a star doing the light switch on. Councillor Smith said she had been approached by residents and received positive comments on the event. Councillor C Hales said the switch on was well attended this year.

Councillor D Hales and Councillor C Hales had attended the Chair of DCC Civic Dinner at the Radisson Blu which was a good event. They had also attended DCC Carol Service.

A Christmas Card Competition was organised with the local schools. There were 90 entries. The theme was Santa Claus, and the winners have been notified. All entries received a small token gift. First, Second and Third prizes received a monetary prize. The winning card will be used as the official Christmas card for GWTC this year. Councillors D Hales, C Hales and Smith will be visiting the schools to give out the prizes next week.

103-2526 TO RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

County Councillor Emma Hunt reported they had a meeting with the Football Club. They are in the process of an asset transfer which can take up to one year.

Regarding Sunnybrow Planning application for the 142 homes, they have had a meeting with Miller Homes and confirmed that the play park belongs to the residents.

For information, the Methodist Church are running Mental Health Groups, one week males, one week females. They are offering bacon sandwiches and tea and coffee.

104-2526 S137 PAYMENTS

i. To consider Community Fund Applications

None received.

ii. To consider Civic Fund Applications

Willington Youth FC and The Black Horse Inn have expressed their gratitude for the sponsorship they received.

North of England Brass Band Championships have been held at The Gala Theatre annually since 2015. They would like a donation towards the cost of hiring The Gala Theatre which costs nearly £7,000.

Resolved1. Approve £100 from Sponsorship.

Proposed Councillor Guthrie

Seconded Councillor Hall

105-2526 NOTICE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR VACANCY

A vacancy in the office of town councillor has become available due to the non-attendance of Mike Currah. Mr Currah ceased to be a councillor from 22nd November 2025 following an absence of 6 months. The TC notified Electoral Services to make the necessary arrangements.

Signed by the Chair _____

Dated: 12th February 2026

A notice will be displayed on DCC website, Town Councils website tomorrow, Friday 12th December 2025. The notice must be displayed for 14 working days, which is up to and including Wednesday 7th January 2026. The TC confirmed that she has contacted Mr Currah via email to inform him that he is no longer councillor and the reasons why.

106-2526 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

The Town Council office will be closed on Wednesday 17th December 2025. We will close for Christmas at 12noon on Friday 19th December 2025 and we will reopen at 9am on Monday 5th January 2026. From January 2026, the office opening hours to the public will be Monday to Thursday 9am till 3pm and Friday 9am till 12pm. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for 2026.

107-2526 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Ordinary Meeting – Thursday 12th February 2026

The meeting concluded at 6.45pm.