

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
13th March 2025

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor D Hales, Councillor Smith
Councillor Elgie, Councillor C Hales, Councillor Henfrey
Councillor Jackson, Councillor Jordan, Councillor McArdle, Councillor Savage
Emma McCann (DTC) (Minutes)

Town Mayor, Councillor D Hales welcomes everyone to the meeting. She also congratulated Emma McCann on her new position of Town Clerk which will take effect from 1st April 2025. Emma thanked members for the opportunity and said she is looking forward to working in her new role.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Berry and Councillor Jordan.
Councillor Jackson sent correspondence to notify the Council that he would be attending the meeting; however, he would be arriving late.
Proposed Councillor Elgie
Seconded Councillor Smith

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest in matters appearing on the agenda and the nature of their interest.
None received.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Resident agenda items requested through the Clerk.
None received.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 13TH FEBRUARY 2025

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13th February 2025, as written, and circulated, were agreed as a true record.
Councillor D Hales signed the minutes.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor Savage

MATTERS ARISING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

None.

5. TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS

New Planning Applications

- DM/24/02750/FPA - 6 Luxmoore Avenue Willington - Side and frontage extension
For Information Only - Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Thu 06 Mar 2025
- DM/25/00498/FPA - Stockley View Stockley Lane - Field shelter and battery storage building with solar panel roof
Councillor Smith expressed her concerns regarding the amount of applications in that area.

- DM/25/00537/PNA - Tanners Hall Farm Stockley Lane Oakenshaw - Erection of steel portal frame building for the storage of grain/ feed straw and machinery

Previous Planning Application Decisions

- DM/24/03357/FPA - Kevs Autos South Street Willington - Extension to existing commercial repair garage to facilitate body repairs and restoration. Existing repair bay requires indoor storage
Approved – BNG Not Required

Previous Planning Applications Waiting Decisions

- DM/24/00171/RM - Land To The East Of Ash Drive, Durham Road, Willington - Reserved matters application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) within parts of Phases 1 and 2 for the erection of up to 112 No. dwellings with associated landscaping and engineering works pursuant to DM/18/03443/OUT
- DM/24/01313/FPA - The Bungalow 26 Cumberland Terrace Willington Crook DL15 0PB - Retention of static caravan, 4 No. metal containers and metal column for CCTV
- DM/24/03326/FPA - Our Lady And St Thomas RC Primary School Cumberland Terrace Willington - New single storey extension to the existing school (reception and nursery), new deck and canopy and alterations to existing outdoor play area, access and parking
- DM/25/00029/FPA - Springfield House Springfield Terrace - Proposed demolition of existing dwellings and introduction of 4 houses and associated works
- DM/25/00104/FPA - Brancepeth Colliery Reclamation Site East Of Dunelm Industrial Estate Willington - Extension to existing warehouse for covered bulk storage of carbon materials
- DM/24/03429/FPA - 167 New Row Page Bank - Retention of stable block and car port within garden curtilage

6. TO REPORT THE RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR TINSLEY

Councillor Tinsley emailed the DTC and Town Mayor, Councillor D Hales on Wednesday 19 February 2025 with his resignation. He expressed his decision has not been made lightly, and that he has greatly valued the opportunity to serve our community over the past 12 years. The DTC contacted Electoral Services informing them of Councillor Tinsley’s resignation. A Notice of Vacancy in Office of Councillor was displayed in the Town Council office and on the website. In accordance with Section 89(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, where the vacancy occurs within six months before the day on which the councillor whose office is vacant would regularly have retired, an election shall not be held under Section 89(1) of the above Act, and the vacancy will be filled at the next ordinary election of councillors on 1 May 2025.

The Council may choose to fill the vacancy by co-option for the period until that election but have agreed not to co-opt this late in the term.

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor McArdle

7. TO RECEIVE ELECTION INFORMATION

Parish Council elections will take place throughout County Durham on Thursday 1 May 2025. Residents will be voting to elect parish councillors in 197 Parish areas across County Durham, if all the seats are contested.

The Returning Officer (RO) for County Durham is John Hewitt. He will be responsible for the co-ordination of this election across County Durham.

The first-past-the-post voting system, where you vote for your preferred candidate, and the candidate with the most votes wins the election is used at local elections in England.

To take part in the Parish Council elections, you must be registered to vote. You can do this by visiting, <https://www.durham.gov.uk/registertovote>.

Event	Date (deadline)
Register to vote	Friday 11 April 2025
Apply to vote by post or vote by proxy by post, or make changes to existing ones	By 5.00pm, Tuesday 14 April 2025
Apply to vote by proxy (not emergency proxies)	By 5.00pm Wednesday 23 April 2025
Apply to get a lost / spoilt postal vote replaced	From Friday 25 April 2025 to 5.00pm on Thursday 1 May 2025
Polling Day	Thursday 1 May 2025 from 7.00am to 10.00pm
Deadline for emergency proxy applications	By 5.00pm on Polling Day, Thursday 1 May 2025

Prospective candidates who wish to stand in the Parish Council elections have until 4.00pm on Wednesday 2 April 2025 to submit their nominations.

Nomination papers for Parish council candidates can be found

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-parish-council-elections-england/resources-candidates-parish-council-elections-england>.

Event	Date (Deadline)	Location of Delivery
Publication of the Notice of Election	Thursday 20 March 2025	
Delivery of Nominations Paper Commences	Between 10.00am - 4.00pm from Friday 21 March 2025	Delivered by hand to the Nominations team, situated in the Durham Room, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL
Deadline for receipt of Nomination papers	By 4.00pm on Wednesday 2 April 2025	Delivered by hand to the Nominations team, situated in the Durham Room, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL
Deadline for withdrawals	By 4.00pm on Wednesday 2 April 2025	Delivered by hand to the Nominations team, situated in the Durham Room, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL
Deadline for the notification of election agents (County Council Candidates only)	By 4.00pm on Wednesday 2 April 2025	Delivered by hand or by the post to the Elections team, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL.

Councillors were informed there are Nomination Packs available in the office if they are considering seeking election for the term of office from 2025 till 2029.

8. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION (FEBRUARY 2025)

The DTC reported,
The Council began in February 2025 with a starting balance of £48,514.33.
There was expenditure of £8,599.93 and no credits, leaving an end balance of £39,914.40.
Councillor Henfrey queried the Prime Membership payment. The DTC confirmed the Town Council had subscribed to Amazon Prime previously but would look at cancelling it going forward as it is no longer required.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor Elgie

9. TO RECEIVE THE BUDGET REPORT (FEBRUARY 2025) AND FINANCIAL DECISIONS

The DTC reported.
The budget and report were circulated prior to the meeting for your consideration.
The Budget for 2024-2025 is £206,050.56.
There is a Spend to Date as of the 28th February 2025 of £171,011.19. This leaves an Available Resource on Budget of £34,674.87.
Proposed Councillor C Hales
Seconded Councillor McArdle

Asbestos has been located on a plot at Springfield Allotments. The cost of removal is £250.00 plus VAT. There is money leftover in the Allotment Budget of 2024-2025. This is to be paid from that.
Proposed Councillor Henfrey
Seconded Councillor Smith

Hanging Baskets for 2025 will be around the same price as 2024. There are some brackets to replace and new cable clips to install and strengthen the brackets.
It was agreed to provide a budget of £3,500 to this project.
Businesses who have two baskets will be charged £12 for the second basket. Invoices will be sent.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor C Hales

10. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Smith raised concerns about the ongoing issues at Coronation Terrace. The fence is down, and young people are gaining entry. There are no contact details on the fence of who to contact in the event of any issues. Residents are still struggling in the aftermath of this terrible situation.
Councillor McArdle expressed her concerns regarding mental health issues within the parish. Councillor D Hales has recently had a meeting with a person from the Well Being team. Contact will be made to try and arrange some drop in sessions.
Councillor Henfrey informed the meeting of the parking issues in and around the High Street. This had been reported to the DTC prior to the meeting and had been passed to Highways.
Councillor Jackson reported the ongoing issues at the bottom of Commercial Street.

Councillor D Hales and Councillor Smith has been in correspondence with an officer of DCC regarding traffic calming measures and concerns within the area.

Councillor Jackson reported there were issues of parking brought up at the PACT meeting and this led to ticketing in the area.

Councillor Elgie raised concerns on parking issues at Saxby Drive, Sunnybrow. This issue has been reported to DCC prior to the meeting.

Councillor C Hales said initial visits had been made to all allotment sites managed by GWTC. Discussions with the DTC led to management issue letters being sent to tenants reminding them of their tenancy rules and regulations, tenants facing difficulties and commendation letters to award progress and hard work.

Councillor Savage reported fly tipping and parking issues at Burn Place. These issues have been reported to DCC prior to the meeting.

Councillor D Hales confirmed all the new furniture for the Community Hub has now been delivered and will be built in time for the official launch on Monday 17th March 2025. Representatives and guests have been invited to attend 10.30am till 12 noon. Residents invited 12.30pm till 2.00pm.

Councillor D Hales thanked everyone for their help and support during the process of the remedial works and office refurbishment.

11. TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

None received.

12. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

None received.

13. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

None received.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Office will be closed week commencing 24th March 2025. Reopens at 9am on Monday 31st March 2025.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Annual Parish Meeting - Thursday 22nd May 2025 at 6pm

Annual Meeting – Thursday 22nd May 2025 following the Annual Parish Meeting.