



Minutes of Meeting held Monday, 13th July 2026 at 7.00 pm,
Community Parish Room, 1 Monteith Close, West Auckland DL14 9UB

Present: Cllr E Farrer, Vice Chairperson
Cllr J Curl
Cllr N Foster
Cllr T Horsman
Cllr J Pattison
Cllr M Roberts
Cllr W Robinson
Cllr N Simpson

26.61 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Bolton, Cllr Guest, Cllr Stott & Cllr Swainston.

26.62 DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no expressions of interest received.

26.63 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed accordingly.

26.64 TO INVITE ANY COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A representative from West Auckland in Bloom thanked Cllr Neil Simpson for his efforts in tidying up The Pant and other areas around the village. DCC were heavily criticised for the lack of groundworks around the village; it is strongly felt that there is an air of neglect during their current cut backs and strimming after grass cutting to continue would be a significant improvement. DCC Councillors explained they have received numerous complaints and that this is a county wide problem. All available funds are being allocated to social and other priority services. Cllr Gray suggested formalising concerns by writing to Durham County Council questioning whether registered village green next to the A68 major road should receive improved strimming to provide motorists driving through the area with a better impression. It was resolved the increase of 2 more days between cuts is not a major issue.

26.65 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

- Cllr Nick Brown provided an update on the skip on Front Street left by a builder. Cllr Foster has also been making enquiries with a Durham skip company about having the skip removed in the absence of any intervention from DCC, despite numerous reports about safety. Cllr Robinson is also looking for options to have the overflowing, unsafe skip removed.

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- Following a lengthy discussion a letter is to be drafted to Daniel Knowd, DCC making an offer for the open space land opposite the Memorial Hall; the Parish Council seek this land as a community asset to reduce parking congestion in the area.
- Land Registry Notice of Caution relating to a property on Front Street where a resident is seeking to register an adverse possessed garden adjacent to the property prior to selling their property.
- It was highlighted that the bridge behind the Manor House has been vandalised with all sleepers thrown into the river. The Clerk advised that there is a notice stating the bridge will be repaired within 21 days.
- It was reported that Monteith fence has been repaired with a new post. Following a report of a slip, the ramp in the garden has been painted anti-slip paint.
- It was advised that there is no further update on the garden at the rear of Copeland Road & Ennerdale Grove.
- It was reported that two cars with out of date test are being parked in village car parks. A report will be made to DVLA and the police.
- Slip-road along Morrison's Front Street is in a poor state with deep pot holes. Clerk to follow-up on previous report to DCC.

26.66 CLERK'S TABLING OF CORRESPONDENCE/ENDORISING OF INVOICE CHEQUES

Correspondence received was tabled and payments endorsed as follows:

PT Powerwash Invoice 00125		£150.00
BT GROUP PLC		£40.74
Clerk's Wage	£1,200.00	
Telephone & broadband	£30.00	
Cleaner - L Lord	£88.00	
Internal Audit reimbursed - paid by PC in error		£100.00
Maintenance Cllr Simpson washers, etc		£55.00

- The June quarter end accounts were reviewed and approved by those present.

26.67 TO RECEIVE ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING WORKING GROUP UPDATE

- To consider a suitable remembrance for previous Chairman, Colin Mairs

Following discussion, it was resolved that this item would be reconsidered at the next meeting to explore alternative ways of commemorating former councillors. Members noted that the current practice of installing memorial plaques on seats has reached capacity, with the majority of existing seats already displaying a plaque.

It was also reported that the older benches are in poor condition due to rust and are scheduled to be powder coated. Quotations have been obtained, and a sample of four

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benches has been sent to a local company for powder coating. Subject to the quality of the finished work being satisfactory, the remaining benches will be treated in due course.

- ii. To receive update on removal of shed from Parish Council land

The Clerk advised that following a request to remove the shed, the owner has replied to say he is seeking his solicitor's advice and will reply in due course. It was resolved that the owner should be given a deadline and legal advice will be sought if he does not comply within the next 2 months.

- iii. To consider a possible location for the pigeon men's shed to store baskets

As there has been no further communication from the pigeon men, this item will be raised again on receipt of their update.

26.68 TO RECEIVE FINANCE WORKING GROUP UPDATE

There were no financial items for consideration.

26.69 TO CONSIDER LOCAL PLANNING ISSUES

There were no plans for consideration.

26.70 TO RECEIVE AGENDA ITEM FOR MONDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER 2026 MEETING

- To consider future remembrance plaques.
- To consider a West Auckland boundaries review

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