

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF EASINGTON COLLIERY PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON TUESDAY, 19 MAY 2026

Present: Councillors L. Clarkson, S. Fergus, A. Surtees,
C. Smith, I. Foster, D. Fraser, M. Vickers, L. Carr. S. Bishop.

Apologies were received from Cllrs S.W. Fergus, W. Smith

Also in attendance: County Councillor L. Penders and Councillor Ramshaw –
Easington Village Parish Council/East Durham Action Group

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Clerk sought nominations to the position of Chair.

RESOLVED that Councillor L. Clarkson be elected Chair for the ensuing year. Councillor Clarkson thanked Members for their support and also acknowledged the hard work of all elected members representing the area. Councillor Clarkson duly signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor D. Fraser be appointed Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

Councillor D. Fraser thanked Members for their support.

3. COMMITTEES/PANELS

RESOLVED that the following Members be appointed to serve on the undermentioned Committees.

Health & Safety Committee – Councillors M. Vickers, S. Bishop, D. Fraser

Finance and General Purposes Committee – Councillors L. Clarkson, D. Fraser, S. Fergus, S. W. Fergus, M. Vickers, W. Smith, A. Surtees

Staffing Committee – any six Members to be drawn from the Parish Council

Staffing Appeals Committee – remaining Members not serving on the Staffing Committee

4. REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the following Members be appointed to serve on the undermentioned external Committees/Organisations:

Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils – Councillors C. Smith, W. Smith

Area Association of Parish & Town Councils – Councillors L. Clarkson, D. Fraser

Regeneration Committee – Councillors M. Vickers, C. Smith, S. Bishop

Heritage Coast – Councillor C. Smith

Easington Local Area Network – Councillor L. Carr

Easington Colliery AFC – Councillors S. Fergus, S. W. Fergus, I. Foster, A. Cummings

Cricket Club – Councillors S. W. Fergus, I. Foster, A. Cummings, S. Fergus

Allotment Representative – Councillor I. Foster

Banner Committee – Councillor L. Clarkson

Easington Welfare Committee – Councillor S. Fergus

5. DATE & TIME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE EASINGTON COLLIERY PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED that meetings of Easington Colliery Parish Council be held bi-monthly on the third Tuesday of the month commencing at 6.00 pm with meetings being held in July, September, November 2026 and January, March and May 2027.

Meeting dates to be subject to change with the consent of the Chairman.

6. **THE MINTUES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 17 March 2026, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were confirmed.

Matters Arising

(i) **Corner Site – Bottom of Seaside Lane**

The Clerk advised that work was ongoing to look at options for this prominent corner site. It was anticipated initial suggestions would be available early June and the Clerk proposed a Special Meeting be convened to consider the proposals.

RESOLVED that the suggestion be agreed

(ii) **Service Level Agreement for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance**

Further to discussion at the last meeting the Clerk advised that for a number of reasons it would not be cost effective for the Parish Council to undertake grass cutting operations. Accordingly, and in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council, a decision had been taken to renew the County Council contract.

RESOLVED that this be endorsed.

7. **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS**

The Chair invited Parish Council Members to submit any County Council related matters to Councillor Penders.

The following items were raised:

(i) **Grass Verges Overgrowing Footpaths**

A number of areas were identified, and Councillor Penders was asked if representations could be made to have these areas either weed-killed or cleared.

(ii) **Dog Fouling**

Reference was made to the amount of dog fouling across the Parish area. The view was expressed this seemed to be on the increase. A request was tabled for the Dog Wardens to be more prominent in the Parish.

(iii) **Glenhurst Road – Road Sign**

A Member thanked Councillor Penders for ensuring that the road sign had been re-erected.

(iv) **Former Legion Pub**

A Member enquired whether approval had been granted to the planning application for the above premises as there now appeared to be people living at the property.

Councillor Penders agreed to investigate and advised that the necessary representations would also be made.

County Councillor Penders then provided Members with an update on County Council matters. Councillor Penders referenced that work had commenced on the former School Site. This was not directly related to the new build proposals but related to drainage assessment work. Members noted the position.

Councillor Penders also advised that two new benches had been provided at Glebe Terrace. Members were also informed of work activity in the Colliery Memorial Garden in anticipation of the 75 Anniversary Event. Whilst not all work had been undertaken to Councillor Penders satisfaction further work was proposed and it was hoped that existing work could be revisited.

The Chair thanked Councillor Penders for her support.

8. REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS MANAGER

The Work Activity Report in respect of the Cemetery, Welfare Park, Allotment and Open Space areas for the period 17 March to 19 May 2026, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member was considered.

The Operations Manager referenced an incident whereby a staff member had been injured at work whilst undertaking machine maintenance. It was explained that the necessary protocols had been followed and no further action was needed. The injury was minor in nature.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted and the action taken endorsed.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the letter received from Tony Roache, retired Priest, which paid tribute to the actions of Parish staff following a recent burial be noted. Members also commended staff on their efforts.

9. PLANNING MATTERS

The Clerk advised that no planning applications relative to the Colliery Parish area had been received by Durham County Council since the last meeting.

At this juncture the Chair invited Councillor Ramshaw to address Members. Councillor Ramshaw advised that East Durham Action Group wished to provide a presentation to Members in regard to solar panel/battery energy storage systems. The Chair advised that this was something that the Parish Council had already agreed to and that arrangements would be made for a presentation to be given to Parish Council Members once the Action Group were available to do so.

It was explained that the Council had already determined that this would not be via a Parish Council Meeting but rather a presentation that would be provided to Members. This was so that any future planning application submission could be submitted on merit.

RESOLVED that arrangements be made for a presentation to be given to Parish Council Members.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Paysheet

RESOLVED that payment in respect of the following accounts be endorsed:

Ref	Payment Method	Amount	Description	Accounts Ledger	Amount (Ex VAT)	VAT	Total Paid
398	Direct Debit	Everflow water	Water – All Sites	Wel/Cem/Allot	£ 407.59	£ 0.00	£ 407.59
399	BACS	ECPC Employees	Wages 20/03/26	Admin	£ 14,151.32	£ 0.00	£ 14,151.32
400	BACS	GMB Union	Union Subscriptions	Admin	£ 83.60	£ 0.00	£ 83.60
401	BACS	JACS Accountancy	Payroll Admin Services	Admin	£ 100.00	£ 20.00	£ 120.00
402	BACS	DCC Pension Fund	Pension Fund Contributions	Admin	£ 3,911.70	£ 0.00	£ 3,919.70
403	BACS	HMRC	Tax & NI	Admin	£ 5,300.73	£ 0.00	£ 5,300.73
404	Card	Screwfix	Cutting Disc	Welfare	£ 9.85	£ 1.97	£ 11.82
405	BACS	JACS Accountancy	Pension Report	Admin	£ 33.00	£ 6.60	£ 39.60
406	Card	Park Road Group Ltd	Fuel 27/03/26	Welf/Cem	£ 76.21	£ 15.24	£ 91.45

407	BACS	Microshade	Software Hosting Fee	Admin	£ 44.95	£ 8.99	£ 53.94
408	BACS	JRB Enterprise Ltd	100,000 dog bags	Open Soaces	£ 1,251.00	£ 250.20	£ 1,501.20
409	BACS	A1 Trophies & Engraving	Speed Limit Signs	Welfare	£ 95.00	£ 19.00	£ 114.00
410	BACS	Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd	Soil Enhancer	Welfare	£ 1,216.95	£ 243.39	£ 1,460.34
411	Direct Debit	OneCom Ltd	Telephone/ Broadband	Welf/P.Hall	£ 158.52	£ 31.70	£ 190.22
412	BACS	MKM B.S. (Peterlee) Ltd	Topsoil	Cemetery	£ 216.12	£ 43.22	£ 259.34
413	BACS	North East War Memorials Proj.	Annual Membership	S137	£ 15.00	£ 0.00	£ 15.00
414	Bank	Coop Bank	Sweep Fee	Admin	£ 30.00	£ 0.00	£ 30.00
415	Card	Pennywise	Consumable Cleaning Products	Welfare	£ 11.74	£ 0.00	£ 11.74
416	Direct Debit	Smartest Energy	Electric Changing Rooms	Welfare	£ 809.52	£ 40.48	£ 850.00
417	Direct Debit	Yu Energy	Electric Cemetery Office	Cemetery	£ 37.32	£ 1.87	£ 39.19
418	Direct Debit	Yu Energy	Electric Welfare Bungalow	Welfare	£ 46.14	£ 2.31	£ 48.45
419	Direct Debit	Yu Energy	Electric Bollard	Welfare	£ 47.36	£ 2.37	£ 49.73
420	Direct Debit	Yu Energy	Electric (Cricket) Pavilion	Welfare	£ 285.78	£ 57.16	£ 342.94
421	Direct Debit	Corona Energy	Electric Parish Hall	Parish Hall	£ 59.37	£ 2.96	£ 62.33
422	Direct Debit	EE Ltd	Sim Card Charges Bollard (13/4/26)	Welfare	£ 19.60	£ 3.92	£ 23.52
423	Direct Debit	Smartest Energy	Gas Parish Hall	Parish Hall	£ 409.81	£ 20.49	£ 430.30
424	BACS	Npower	Street Lighting (April 25 – March 26)	Open Spaces	£ 1,569.19	£ 78.46	£ 1,647.65
425	BACS	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	Software Licences and support for Finance System	Admin	£ 360.00	£ 61.20	£ 367.20
426	BACS	ECPC Employees	Wages 17/4/26	Admin	£ 14,185.47	£ 0.00	£ 14,185.47
427	BACS	GMB Union	Subscriptons	Admin	£ 83.80	£ 0.00	£ 83.80
428	BACS	JACS Accountancy Ltd	Payroll Services	Admin	£ 103.20	£ 20.64	£ 123.84
429	BACS	DCC Pension Fund	Pension Fund Contributions	Admin	£ 3,285.84	£ 0.00	£ 3,285.84
430	BACS	HMRC	Tax & NI	Admin	£ 5,321.02	£ 0.00	£ 5,321.02
431	BACS	Direct Debit	Water All Sites - 17/04/26	Welf/Cem/ Allots	£ 629.80	£ 0.00	£ 629.80
432	BACS	Microshade	Software Hosting Fee 1-31/04/26	Admin	£ 44.95	£ 8.99	£ 53.94

433	BACS	Border Tank Services Ltd	Fuel Nozzle	Cemetery	£ 130.00	£ 26.00	£ 156.00
434	BACS	CS North East Ltd	Machine Repair Mowers	Welf/Cem	£ 232.02	£ 46.80	£ 280.82
435	BACS	CS North East Ltd	Machine Repair & Service Allett Cylinder Mower	Welfare	£ 760.26	£ 152.06	£ 912.32
436	BACS	GNG Waste Management Ltd	Skip Hire PO8485	Welfare	£ 310.00	£ 62.00	£ 372.00
437	Direct Debit	OneCom Ltd	Telephone/Broadband	Welf/P.Hall	£ 170.11	£ 34.02	£ 204.13
438	Card	Workwear Express Ltd	Protective Clothing (Annual Issue)	Welf/Cen	£ 1,215.30	£ 219.21	£ 1,434.15
439	Card	Park Road Group Ltd	Fuel 01/05/26	Welf/Cem	£ 77.07	£ 15.41	£ 92.48
440	BACS	Border Tank Services Ltd	Repair Leaking Fuel Bund	Cemetery	£ 606.00	£ 121.20	£ 727.20
441	BACS	Hydrochem Group	Safewater Check April 2026	Welf/Cem	£ 106.66	£ 21.33	£ 127.99
442	BACS	Kraftwerx	Fabrication Works	Cemetery	£ 130.00	£ 26.00	£ 156.00
443	BACS	North East Automation	Bollard Call-Out	Welfare	£ 187.00	£ 37.40	£ 224.40
444	Card	Toolstation Ltd	Sand/Polishing Kit	Welf/Cem	£ 9.57	£ 1.91	£ 11.48
445	Direct Debit	Smartest Energy	Electric Football Changing Rooms 1-30 April 26	Welfare	£ 1,031.07	£ 51.56	£ 1,082.63
446	Direct Debit	Yu Energy	Electric Cemetery Office 1-30 April 26	Cemetery	£ 36.052	£ 1.80	£ 42.42
447	Direct Debit	Yu Energy	Electric Welfare Bungalow 1-30 April 26	Welfare	£ 52.78	£ 2.41	£ 55.19
448	Direct Debit	YU Energy	Electricity – Welfare Bollard 1-30 April 26	Welfare	£ 47.93	£ 2.40	£ 54.90
449	Direct Debit	YU Energy	Electric Bowls (Cricket) 1-30 April 26	Welfare	£ 105.15	£ 5.26	£ 110.41
450	Direct Debit	EE Ltd	Saim Card Charges Bollard (10/5/26)	Welfare	£ 19.50	£ 3.90	£ 23.40
451	BACS	Paul Russell (P&TCAS)	Internal Audit 25/26	Admin	£ 295.00	£ 0.00	£ 295.00
452	BACS	DCK Accounting Solutions	Year End Closedown Rialtas System	Admin	£ 357.50	£ 71.50	£ 429.00
453	Card	DVLA	Road Tax – Van	Welf/Cem	£ 360.00	£ 0.00	£ 360.00

453	BACS	CS North East Ltd	Servicing, Repair, machinery parts	Welf/Cem	£ 984.98	£ 196.99	£ 1,181.97
454	BACS	ECPC Employees	Wages 15/05/26	Admin	£ 14,131.17	£ 0.00	£ 14,131.17
455	BACS	GMB Union	Union Subscriptions	Admin	£ 83.80	£ 0.00	£ 83.80
456	BACS	JACS Accountancy Ltd	Payroll Services	Admin	£ 103.33	£ 20.67	£ 124.00
457	BACS	DCC Pension Fund	Pension Fund Contributions	Admin	£ 3,269.84	£ 0.00	£ 3,269.84
458	BACS	HMRC	Tax & NI	Admin	£ 5,292.57	£ 0.00	£ 5,292.57
459	Direct Debit	Smartest Energy	Gas Parish Hall 01-30/04/26	Parish Hall	£ 153.28	£ 7.66	£ 160.94
460	Direct Debit	Corona Energy	Electric Parish Hall -1-30/04/26	Parish Hall	£ 55.03	£ 2.75	£ 57.78
461	BACS	Turfcare Specialists Ltd	3 Tone Root Zone Football Pitch	Welfare	£ 450.00	£ 90.00	£ 540.00
462	BACS	Cutting Edge Grounds Maintenance Ltd	End of Season Pitch Renovations on Football Pitches	Welfare	£ 8,941.00	£ 1,397.00	£ 10,338.00
				May-26	£ 94,941.00	£3,558.41	£ 97,639.16

(b) **2025/26 Financial Outturn**

The Clerk provided a report for Members information which detailed the Year-end outturn position for the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the information contained within the report, be noted.

(c) **Requests for Financial Assistance**

(i) **Miners Picnic**

Members were advised that the shortfall of funding for the event was circa £500. The overall cost of the event was given as £5000.

A Member advised the Regeneration Committee had surplus funds and would be happy to make a financial contribution to the event. The Parish Council therefore, agreed to provide the balance of funding once the Regeneration Partnership had confirmed the extent of funding they were to provide. It was also noted that the Church of Ascension were to be the recipients of the funding.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council provide the gap funding to enable the event to proceed.

(ii) **Miners Gala Brochure – 140th Miners Gala – Saturday, 11 July 2026**

Members considered correspondence received in relation to the above.

RESOLVED that the Council take out a quarter page advert at a cost of £200.00 for the Brochure but make no further financial contribution to the event itself in 2026.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to make the necessary payment.

(iii) **Friends of Easington Colliery Primary School**

Members considered an application for assistance from the School towards the cost of a Halloween/Autumn Disco in 2026.

The School advised that the cost of disco would be £300.00 and funding was being sought to cover all of this expense from the Parish Council.

The Council **RESOLVED** to support the application to the sum of £150.00 if the nschool were able to raise the remaining funds. Given other financial commitments the Parish Council were unable to contribute the full funding requested.

(d) **Internal Auditors Report 2025/26**

Members gave consideration to the Report of Parish and Town Auditing Services who had undertaken the Internal Audit for the year ended March 2026.

The Clerk also advised that the recommendations made within the Report had all been actioned. These were minor in detail and no concern had been voiced in relation to the governance arrangements the Parish Council had in place.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the Report and thanked the Clerk for his endeavours throughout the year.

(e) **AGAR 2025/26 - Section 1**

The Council reviewed the statements in Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2026.

RESOLVED that the Statement be approved with all ascertains answered yes with the exception of Section 9 which was not applicable and that Section 1 be signed by the Chair and Clerk

(f) **AGAR 2025/26 Section 2**

The Clerk/RFO presented the completed Section 2 – Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Members reviewed the figures and noted that the Clerk/RFO had certified the Statement prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED that Section 2 – the Account Statement be approved and signed by the Chair.

(g) **Appointment of Internal Auditor 2026/27**

RESOLVED that Parish and Town Council Auditing Services be appointed to undertake the 2026/27 Internal Audit.

(h) **Bank Reconciliations – March and April 2026**

The Clerk submitted the bank reconciliations for the period ended 31 March and 30 April 2026. The balance as per the cash book for March stood at £594,508.65 and April £798,810.53. The significant increase was as a result of the first half years precept being added to the Council's accounts.

11. **ALLOTMENT MATTERS**

(i) **Allotment Applications**

The Clerk advised that three applications had been received for the following plots 16 Holmehill, 106 Holmehill, 57 & 58 Holmehill.

RESOLVED that the applications be approved as they were policy compliant and no concerns had been raised in regard to the applications.

(ii) **Other Matters**

Reference was made to complaints received in relation to Townfield Hill Allotments where a goat had been escaping and causing damage to adjacent plots. Members were advised that the Clerk was to correspond with the tenant to request that the goat either be kept within the confines of the garden or a request for it to be removed.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

12. **CORRESPONDENCE**

(a) **Royal British Legion – Cenotaph Inscription Request**

Members considered a request submitted by the Royal British Legion for the inscription of the name Rifleman Daniel Wylde Second Battalion of the Rifles on the Easington Colliery Cenotaph located within the Cemetery. Supporting information confirming the individual's eligibility for commemoration was reviewed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the request be approved and that the arrangements be made for the name Daniel Wylde to be added to the Cenotaph in accordance with normal protocol. The Operations Manager to liaise with the appointed stonemason to progress the work and report back in due course.

(b) **Focus Easington – Request to Use Former Bowling Green**

Councillor Angela Surtees declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item and took no part in the voting which ensued thereon.

The Council considered a request to use the old bowling green at the Welfare Park on 31 July to hold a youth sports day and a foam party. The event was to take place between 11.30 am and 4.30 pm.

Members had no objections to the request. The Clerk and Operations Manager noted toilet access would not be possible. Conversations were however ongoing with the Cricket Club in an attempt to allow access to their toilets.

RESOLVED that the application be approved.

13. **COMPLAINTS/REPORTS/OTHER MATTERS**

(a) **Parish Council Members (Non-County related matters)**

(i) **Seaside Lane – Parking/Highway Related Matters**

Concern was voiced about the number of vehicles that were being parked along Seaside Lane which presented road safety issues for pedestrians/other vehicles. Councillor Ramshaw, who was in attendance from the Village Parish Council, advised of an initiative they were promoting which could be extended down Seaside Lane.

It was suggested that the two Councils may wish to join forces to fully examine the extent of any requirements.

Members thanked Cllr Ramshaw for advising of this and **RESOLVED** to join with the Village Parish Council with the view to a wider extent of highway being surveyed to determine what if any action was needed.

(ii) **New Londi – Seaside Lane**

A Member expressed concern that the area at the front of this property was not being kept appropriately maintained and rubbish etc was evident.

RESOLVED that representations be made seeking the installation of a litter bin at this location..

(b) **Clerk**

(i) **Governance Framework and Policies Review**

Members were advised that the Governance Framework Report presented by the Clerk set out how the Parish Council ensured lawful transparent and effective operation. It also consolidated all statutory recommended and operation policies into a single structured reference document suitable for audit compliance and day to day management. The Report identified that a structured review cycle would also ensure policies remain current and compliant and in this respect it was recommended that statutory policies be reviewed annually, best practice policies bi-annually as well as operation policies being reviewed bi-annually. For the purposes of the current year's policy review all documents were reviewed with the following recommendations being made:

Financial Regulations be updated to account for the change in procurement protocols as outlined in the Internal Audit Report.

Members Allowance Policy to remain unaltered with the financial remuneration level remaining the same.

Asset Register to be updated to include 2025/26 purchases.

All other policies to remain as is with the approval date being May 2026.

RESOLVED that for future reports the Health and Safety Statutory documents be included.

(ii) **75th Anniversary of the Colliery Disaster – Arrangements Update**

Members were advised that both the temporary road closure order and the licence to occupy the Memorial Garden site had been approved/granted by Durham County Council. The Order of Service pamphlet remained outstanding, and it was hoped this would be provided shortly to enable printing to be undertaken. Necessary public notice had now been issued throughout the colliery and on the Council's website and other third party social media.

A PA system had been obtained for the event, with the kind assistance of Easington Village Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the action taken endorsed.

(iii) **Safe Water Inspection**

Members were advised that Hydrochem Group had provided a Service Agreement for 2026/27. To undertake monthly inspections the total contract price was £1,343.96.

RESOLVED that the quotation be accepted.

14. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds personal/confidential information would be disclosed.

15. **SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT**

Members considered the Report of the Clerk and Operations Manager in this regard.

RESOLVED that the information contained therein be noted.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN

Date