

Minutes of a meeting of Haswell Parish Council held in the Community Centre, Windsor Terrace, Haswell, County Durham, DH6 2DY, on Wednesday 29th April 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllrs. O. Gray (Chair); H. W. Brown; S. Brown; I. Cochrane; A. P. Nixon; W. Ramsay; L. Taylor.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. K. Murray-Hetherington (Parish Clerk); and seven members of the public.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Members of the public raised questions and concerns about matters that did not relate to the Parish Council's role and responsibilities (e.g. school bus service and parking on grass verges) and they were pointed in the right direction for assistance. It was agreed that the Parish Council shall write to Durham County Council to strongly oppose the removal of the school bus service.

Minute No.	Agenda item
026/060	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: RESOLVED: That an apology and reason for non-attendance shall be accepted from J. K. Gordon (unwell).
026/061	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Cllr. A. Nixon declared a personal interest and withdrew from any discussions or votes affecting the Community Centre. Cllr. Cochrane declared an interest in an item affecting Shotton Parish Council's section 106 money.
026/062	MINUTES: On the motion of Cllr. Cochrane, seconded by Cllr. Ramsay, it was unanimously RESOLVED: To approve as a correct record and authorise the signing of the minutes of the previous parish council meeting held on Wednesday 25th March 2026.
026/063	VACANCY: [Cllr. A. Nixon declared a personal interest and left the room during discussion and voting on this item]. Two candidates were in attendance to tell members why they would like to serve as a co-opted parish councillor. It was unanimously RESOLVED: That Karina Metcalfe shall fill the vacancy for the Haswell parish ward by co-option. The candidate signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Ricky Carter was thanked for his interest.
026/064	CLERK'S REPORT: The Clerk reported that the sum of £1,800.00 had been received from Durham County Council Neighbourhood Budget Grant (2023) for two history boards and solar lights (Haswell Colliery Engine House). RESOLVED: That the Parish Council intends to deliver this project. The action log recording agreed tasks was updated and all completed tasks removed.
026/064.1	RESOLVED: To reluctantly refuse a request for work experience because working in a ground maintenance setting was considered high-risk and dangerous, requiring strict adherence to disproportionate additional health and safety protocols and safeguards.
026/065	POLICE REPORT: A written report was received from the Neighbourhood Policing Team. RESOLVED: To ask Durham Police whether there are any plans for further mobile camera enforcement in the parish.
026/066	FINANCIAL MATTERS: RESOLVED: To receive the schedule of monthly income and expenditure and approve payment of invoices which were presented to the meeting. Cllr. Gray verified the bank reconciliation and signed the schedule of income and expenditure.
026/066.1	Members received an update on the annual governance and accounting statements for 2025/2026. RESOLVED: To approve the appointment of Halfpenny Accountancy as the independent internal auditor.
026/067	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL (DCC): County Councillors L. Taylor and H. Brown each gave a report on issues relating to DCC, including plans for litter picking on Spring Bank Holiday Monday 4th May 2026; and the proposed closure of Thornley Household Waste Recycling Centre. Cllr. Nixon agreed to give a history talk to a small group of residents. Cllr.

Chair's Signature:



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Brown reported that an application for section 106 funding (£15,212.07) for a new car park had been considered by the most recent meeting of DCC's section 106 Working Group and the application had been approved.

- 026/068** **REPORTS:** Cllrs. Gray and Taylor had attended a meeting of the Banner Group at Redhills (Durham) and the Clerk had completed and returned the form which required even if the banner group will not be accompanied by a brass band or pipe band (up to £1,000 allowance available).
- 026/069** **PLANNING:** Members considered a planning application DM26/00920 and DM/26/00921/ASD: Royal City Takeaway, 54 Front Street East, Haswell. DH6 2BL.
- 026/070** **EVENTS:** Cllr. Taylor gave an update and confirmed arrangements for upcoming community events: attendance at Durham Miners' Gala with Haswell Colliery Lodge banner on Saturday 11th July 2026 (140th anniversary); Summer coach trips [*Cllr. Cochrane declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and withdrew from any discussion or votes affecting Cochrane's Coaches*]; Summer Carnival on Saturday 22nd August 2026 between 12 noon and 6:00 p.m. Halloween house competition; Christmas tree lights switch-on [*Trimdon band arriving at 4:45 p.m. on Saturday 5th December 2026*].
- 026/071** **CONSULTATION EVENT:** The results of a community consultation event held in Haswell and Haswell Plough Community Centre were still being collated by the Chair of the Community Centre's trustees.
- 026/072** **HASWELL AND HASWELL PLOUGH COMMUNITY CENTRE:** There had been no progress in considering all the outstanding matters arising from a meeting with representatives from the Community Centre.
- 026/073** **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING: RESOLVED:** That the Annual Parish Meeting of local government electors shall be held on Wednesday 27th May 2026 commencing at 6:00 p.m.
- 026/074** **ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL: RESOLVED:** That the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council shall be held on Wednesday 27th May 2026 commencing at 6:30 p.m. or directly after the close of the preceding Annual Parish Meeting.
- 026/075** **NEXT MEETING: RESOLVED:** That an ordinary meeting shall be held on Wednesday 27th May 2026 commencing directly after the close of the preceding Annual Meeting of the Council.
- 026/076** **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC:** It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** That the public and the press shall be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the next items of business due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely terms of commercial tenders; and negotiations for contracts or leases.
- 026/077** **STANDING ORDERS:** At 8:00 p.m. it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To suspend Standing Order 3x [a meeting shall not exceed a period of two hours].
- 026/078** **CAR PARK: RESOLVED:** To approve the lowest tender from the three suitable suppliers to resurface the car park adjacent to the community centre, which represented the best value for money (VFM) based on a specification which was the same for all three suppliers. [*Cllrs. Cochrane and Ramsay abstained*].
- 026/079** **CONCLUSION OF MEETING:** The meeting closed at 8:25 p.m.



Chair's Signature:

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