

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
MONK HESLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 17th NOVEMBER 2025**

Present Chairman: G M Crute
Parish Councillors: R Bowes, S Childs, S Deinali, G Duddin, N Thompson

Officer L Wardle (Parish Clerk)
A Peace (Estates)

mh25-2684 **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Parish Councillors' L Davison,
O Deinali, A Mason, G Morris, A Paterson

mh25-2685 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor Deinali declared a pecuniary interest in item 10 – Stars Community Learning

mh25-2686 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE
20th OCTOBER 2025**

RESOLVED the above minutes be confirmed and approved as a true record

mh25-2687 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present

mh25-2688 **POLICE REPORT**

An e-mail detailing police statistics for October 2025 had been circulated to members for information.

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

mh25-2689 **MEMBERS REPORTS OF ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS/EVENTS ON
BEHALF OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Several members attended the annual fireworks event and Remembrance Services at both Blackhall & Hesleden

RESOLVED the information is received

mh25-2690 **ESTATES MANAGER REPORT**

The Estates Manager provided a verbal report which included enhancements to the planting scheme opposite Hesleden Cemetery and also the number of machinery repairs undertaken in-house.

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

mh25-2691 **CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk had distributed a report with the agenda –

Anti-social behaviour

Abusive voice mail call received on office phone, reported to Police. Recorded as an incident of section 127 of the communications act which is an offence to send offensive messages via a network.

Staff continue to experience abuse at Blackhall Welfare Park from a small group of young people. Members were asked to consider issuing an exclusion letter to one individual involved. It was further recommended that the Council explore providing a body-worn camera to key staff members, along with an appropriate policy governing their use.

It was agreed that the Welfare Park should continue to be closed to the public due to anti-social behaviour and social media should be used to advise residents of closures.

RESOLVED the information is received and **FURTHER RESOLVED** the Clerk investigates the purchase of a body worn camera and provides a report at a future meeting.

mh25-2692 **EVENTS REVIEW**

Annual fireworks display

A well-attended event, with feedback from residents requesting an earlier start to better accommodate families with young children.

Remembrance Services

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the event, highlighting the organisation required on the day at the Blackhall event - ensuring that the order of service is followed precisely, providing teas and coffees, and welcoming residents to the cricket club on behalf of the Parish Council.

Work had been undertaken in-house to improve accessibility at the Blackhall War Memorial which, due to circumstances beyond our control, did not resolve the issue identified in 2024. It was agreed a more substantial scheme of works would be required to ensure the area is fit for purpose in 2026.

Once again there were issues with regards to attendees not being able to hear the service, steps have been put in place to address this issue in future years.

RESOLVED the information is received and **FURTHER RESOLVED** delegated approval is given to the Estates Manager to undertake a scheme to address the accessibility issues

mh25-2693 **REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

A request for funding from Alice House Hospice had been circulated with the agenda

RESOLVED a payment of £200.00 is approved

LGA 1972 S137 Alice House Hospice £200.00

Councillor S Deinali declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item Stars Community Learning and left the meeting

A request for funding from Stars Community Learning had been circulated with the agenda

RESOLVED a payment of £180.00 is approved

LGA 1972 S145 Stars Community Learning £180.00

Councillor S Deinali returned to the meeting

A request for funding from The Hesledens Residents Association had been circulated with the agenda

RESOLVED a payment of £150.00 is approved

A request for funding from The Hesledens Residents Association had been

LGA 1972 S145 The Hesleden Residents Association £100.00

mh25-2694

TO AGREE & REVIEW

a) Sporting club terms & conditions

The Clerk advised there have been no amendments to the current terms and conditions.

RESOLVED sporting club terms and conditions received

b) Review of one-off hire of sporting facilities

The Parish Council are receiving numerous requests for hire of the sporting facilities at Blackhall Welfare Park.

RESOLVED block bookings cannot be accommodated; however, one-off hires will be considered subject to availability.

c) Cemetery rules & regulations

A copy of the updated rules and regulations had been circulated with the agenda, together with photographs of prohibited installations on graves. Grave surrounds of this nature are extremely difficult to maintain, and strimming can be hazardous. It is recommended that the rules be amended to allow a small kerb set to be offered to residents as a compromise. Further measures are being put in place to better inform grave owners of the rules and regulations.

RESOLVED the information is received and approved

FINANCIALa) To endorse invoices for payment & receive income report

To endorse the following invoices for payment, including agreed direct debits and payroll and received details of income received

Date	Payee	Description	Amount
03.11.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£92.05
04.11.2025	NWG	Water Supply Cem	£4.68
06.11.2025	EON	Meter Removal	£145.71
07.11.2025	Cathedral Hygiene	Hygiene	£70.20
10.11.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£33.60
10.11.2025	Corona Energy	Elec	£1.05
11.11.2025	NWG Wave	Cem Water	£84.81
13.11.2025	EE	Mobile	£111.05
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	Council Office Business Rates	£324.00
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	Hesleden Cem Business Rates	£52.00
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	Blackhall Cem Business Rates	£289.00
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	Trade Waste Welfare Park	£113.93
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	Trade Waste Blackhall Cem	£113.93
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	Dog Bins Grass Cuts	£1,210.52
15.11.2025	Durham County Council	High Hesleden Rent	£100.00
17.11.2025	Blackford's Nurseries	Bulbs	£83.00
17.11.2025	Blackhall ATC	Donation	£125.00
17.11.2025	Charles Dickens	PPE	£147.69
17.11.2025	Blachere	Xmas Tree Lights	£2,128.00
17.11.2025	GNG Waste	Skip Hire	£720.00
17.11.2025	JT Dove	Muga Cricket Fence	£295.22
17.11.2025	IOS	Stationery	£125.46
17.11.2025	Horns Garden Centre	Gravel	£65.00
17.11.2025	Peart Fencing	MUGA Gate Fence	£11,676.00
17.11.2025	Regal Print	Order of Service	£206.00
17.11.2025	Ripon Farm Services	Pole pruner repair	£123.22
17.11.2025	Safechem	Toilet Rolls	£30.59
17.11.2025	W D Moore	Internal Audit	£300.00
17.11.2025	Wybone	Bin	£635.98
17.11.2025	Lloyds	Kubota Investigation	£150.00
17.11.2025	Blackford's Nurseries	Shrubs	£220.00
17.11.2025	Aitkens	Grass Seed	£240.00
17.11.2025	J T Dove	Post Fix	£39.60

17.11.2025	Amazon	Bolt Pack	£34.90
17.11.2025	Amazon	Hydraulic Oil	£49.99
17.11.2025	RBL	Donation	£180.00
17.11.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£100.08
17.11.2025	Aitkens	Grass Seed	£240.00
17.11.2025	Blackford's Nurseries	Shrubbs	£220.00
17.11.2025	J T Dove	Post Fix Cap Rail	£61.16
17.11.2025	GNG Waste	Skip Hire	£360.00
17.11.2025	G Robinson	Materials	£161.69
17.11.2025	HAGS	Muga Retention Payment	£1,785.00
18.11.2025	Durham County Council	HMRC LGPS	£6,990.35
24.11.2025	Durham County Council	Salaries	£12,782.91
25.11.2025	Charles Dickens	Hardware	£129.35
25.11.2025	Peter Janes	Ransome Repair	£111.00
25.11.2025	Medics UK	First Aiders	£220.00
25.11.2025	MKM	Gravel	£119.95
25.11.2025	Affordable Landscapes	Grass Cuts	£1,310.40
26.11.2025	Corona	Gas Supply	£197.64
26.11.2025	Babble	Telephone/B Band	£104.54
30.11.2025	Mastercopy	Copies	£72.37
30.11.2025	Document Solutions	IT Support	£221.42
		Total	£45,510.04
Income			
03.11.2025	Aitkens	Refund	£180.00
03.11.2025	Durham County Council	Grant CC Crute	£500.00
06.11.2025	Firework Ticket Sales		£1,431.00
07.11.2025	Durham County Council	S106 Monies	£12,576.98
19.11.2025	Dignity	Memorial Fees	£40.00
25.11.2025	RG Bennett	Burial Fees	£2,200.00
26.11.2025	Water Reimbursement		£126.88
		Total	£17,054.86

b) To receive bank reconciliation @ 31st October 2025 & bank transfers

The Clerk had distributed a bank reconciliation as of 31st October 2025 which showed combined bank balances of £668,284.06 as of 31st October 2025.

Co-op Bank inter account transfer £30,000

Co-op Bank to Barclays account £40,000

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

c) To accept Interim Audit Report @ 30th September 2025

A copy of the internal audit report had been distributed with the agenda for receipt and approval.

RESOLVED the Interim Audit Report is received and noted

d) To approve Durham County Council SLA, play area inspections 2025-26

RESOLVED the SLA is received and approved

e) Budget setting & precept approval

In view of the impending Government budget and the late notification from Durham County Council regarding the withdrawal of the Parish Council's Local Taxation Support Grant for 2026–27, it is difficult to provide members with the information needed to set the budget and agree the precept.

RESOLVED the budget & precept meeting is postponed until the next meeting to be held on 19th January 2026

A replacement ride-on grasscutter is required as the two current machines are not fit for purpose. After discussion with the Estates Manager and the team it has been agreed the council will be able to operate with one good quality machine and dispose of the other two machines.

Three machines have been identified and prices received-

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|---------------|---------|
| 1) Iseki | £15,500 |
| 2) John Deere | £19,997 |
| 3) Kubota | £17,450 |

The Clerk advised there is sufficient budget in general reserves to fund this purchase, and the cost may be reduced depending upon any trade in value.

RESOLVED approval is given to expenditure of £20,000 for this purchase and **FURTHER RESOLVED** delegated approval is given to the Clerk and Estates Manager to source the most suitable machine and negotiate the best trade in price.

f) Council fees & charges

A copy of the proposed cemetery fees for 2026-27 had been distributed with the agenda.

RESOLVED the proposed fees for 2026-27 are received and approved

Regarding the sporting club fees, further information has been requested from all users to enable a report to be prepared on the estimated cost of providing these services and facilities. This will provide a basis for the Council to set appropriate fees for 2026–27.

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

Durham County Council Applications Received

DM/25/02695/FPA	Mr A Newhouse 13 Oak Avenue Blackhall TS27 4HZ	1.8M High boundary fence.
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Durham County Council Applications Approved

DM/25/02025/FPA	Kiras Kebab House 75 Middle Street Blackhall TS27 4ED	Replace the existing timber shopfront with new powder coated frame and installation of roller shutter.
DM/25/02026/AD	Kiras Kebab House 75 Middle Street Blackhall TS27 4ED	Signage – Backlit 3d lettering on aluminium composite sign tray.

RESOLVED the Parish Council has no comment to make with regards to the above applications

Durham County Council – Notification approval of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights to allow the conversion of dwelling houses into small Houses in Multiple Occupation for between 3-6 residents without planning permission. The Direction will come into force on 17th August 2026.

CDALC – notification of Larger Councils Forum 20th November 2025 at Stanley Town Council

RESOLVED the next meeting will be held on Monday 19th January 2026 at 6pm in Council Office 68 Middle Street, Blackhall Colliery, TS27 4EA.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

Chairman

Date