

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
MONK HESLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 19th JANUARY 2026**

Present Chairman: G M Crute
Parish Councillors: R Bowes, S Childs, L Davison, O Deinali, S Deinali, G Duddin, A Mason, A Paterson, N Thompson

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

mh25-2699 **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor G Morris

mh25-26100 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None were received

mh25-26101 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE
17th NOVEMBER 2025**

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

mh25-26102 **TO CONSIDER CO-OPTION REQUEST**

Members were requested to accept an application from H A Smiles to be co-opted onto the Parish Council.

RESOLVED H A Smiles is co-opted onto the Parish Council and **FURTHER RESOLVED** the Clerk is requested to advise Durham County Council Electoral Services of the appointment

mh25-26103 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present

mh25-26104 **POLICE REPORT**

No report received

mh25-26105 **ESTATES MANAGER REPORT**

The Estates Manager provided a comprehensive report which had been forwarded with the agenda, key issues requiring approval -

Machinery Repairs and Replacement

The Estates Manager reported that machinery repairs had been undertaken over the past two months, with the majority completed in-house, resulting in savings to the Council. A 45-year-old Ransomes cutter has been deemed irreparable. A new replacement would cost £25,000; however, a three-year-old suitable second-hand machine has been sourced from a supplier at a cost of £6,000.

The machine has been used on a trial basis and was found to be in excellent condition, easy to operate, and suitable for daily operational requirements. The Clerk confirmed that the cost could be met from General Reserves.

RESOLVED Financial Regulation 5.8 be waived, as no other suitable machine can be secured at this price, **FURTHER RESOLVED** approval is given to the purchase of this machine.

Replacement Ride-on Grass Cutter (mh25-2695e)

A suitable machine has been secured at a purchase price of £18,906. The supplier offered a substantial trade-in value for the two existing machines. Under delegated authority, a decision was taken to repair the newest ride-on mower and to part-exchange the oldest machine, achieving a trade-in value of £5,800. This reduced the net cost of the new machine to £13,106.

RESOLVED approval is given to the purchase of this machine at a net cost of £13,106.

mh25-26106

CLERK'S REPORT

No report

FINANCIAL

a) 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
01.12.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£70.09
08.12.2025	Groundsman Industries	Ransome and Spiker Repair	£787.79
08.12.2025	Hutton Fire Protection	Fire Ext Services	£144.30
08.12.2025	Alice House Hospice	Grant	£200.00
08.12.2025	Stars Community Learning	Grant	£180.00
08.12.2025	Hesleden Residents	Grant	£100.00
08.12.2025	Speedy Hire Ltd	Barrier Hire F Works	£516.00
08.12.2025	Haswell Catering Services	Catering Rem Sunday	£644.00
08.12.2025	Turfcare	x2 Christmas Trees	£3,240.00
08.12.2025	Reaction Fireworks	Fireworks	£3,000.00
08.12.2025	Rickerby	Ransome Repair	£200.55
08.12.2025	Standard Security	CCTV Maintenance	£177.60
08.12.2025	Affordable Landscape	Grass Cut	£655.20
08.12.2025	KCS	x2 Cleaning	£729.60
08.12.2025	Babble	Tel Broadband	£18.00
08.12.2025	Screwfix	Builders line	£19.88

08.12.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£60.17
09.12.2025	COOP	BACS Fees	£7.82
10.12.2025	Screwfix	Inverter	£99.99
13.12.2025	EE	Mobile Phone	£111.05
15.12.2025	DCC	Hesleden Muga Rent	£100.00
15.12.2025	DCC	Trade Waste Bhall Cem	£113.93
15.12.2025	DCC	Trade Waste Welfare Park	£113.93
15.12.2025	DCC	Bus Rates Blackhall Cem	£289.00
15.12.2025	DCC	Bus Rates Hesleden Cem	£52.00
15.12.2025	DCC	Bus Rates Council Office	£324.00
15.12.2025	DCC	Dog Bins Grass Cut SLA	£1,210.52
15.12.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£57.67
17.12.2025	Eon	Elec Supply Xmas Tree	£160.71
18.12.2025	Durham County Council	Monthly Wages	£13,167.46
18.12.2025	Durham County Council	HMRC LGPS	£7,231.47
19.12.2025	Chapmans P H	Maint and Capping	£300.00
19.12.2025	Corona Energy	Elec Supply Xmas Tree	£22.84
19.12.2025	JT Dove	MUGA Paving	£128.40
19.12.2025	A Peace	Staff Xmas	£180.00
19.12.2025	Phoenix Garage	Battery	£160.00
19.12.2025	Spalding's	Leaf Blower	£624.00
19.12.2025	Sherriff	Weibang	£1,599.00
19.12.2025	NWG Wave	Water Changing Room	£240.75
21.12.2025	Corona Energy	Pit Wheel Elec Supply	£27.02
21.12.2025	Corona Energy	Elec Welfare Park	£156.69
21.12.2025	Corona Energy	Council Office	£112.66
21.12.2025	Corona Energy	Changing Rooms	£241.52
22.12.2025	NWG Wave	Water Supply Cricket Bowls	£629.06
22.12.2025	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£40.02
23.12.2025	Babble	Telephones	£104.54
26.12.2025	Corona Energy	Gas Supply	£333.65
28.12.2025	Document Solutions	IT Support	£1,502.42
29.12.2025	Mastercopy	Printing	£72.37
29.12.2025	NWG	Water Supply Council Office	£170.58
		Total	£40,428.25
Credit			
08.12.2025	Cricket Club	Rent/Utilities	£725.91
08.12.2025	Barclays	Bank Interest	£553.59

10.12.2025	Milgreen Memorials	Mem Fees	£80.00
17.12.2025	Graveside Memorials	Memorial Fees	£165.00
		Total	£1524.50

b) To receive bank reconciliation @ 30th November 2025 & 31st December 2025 & bank transfers

Both bank reconciliations had been distributed with the agenda showed combined bank balances of £600,906.48 as of 31st December 2025, both were checked and signed by Cllr Childs.

Co-op Bank inter account transfer £30,000

Co-op Bank to Barclays account £30,000

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

c) To receive income & expenditure reports @ 31st December 2025

RESOLVED report received and noted

d) To agree fees & charges 2026-27

A report was provided with the agenda for members' consideration.

A discussion took place regarding the estimated costs of continuing to provide the sporting facilities at an affordable cost to users, bearing in mind the financial challenges faced by the Council.

RESOLVED

- Sporting club fees are increased by 10% for the financial year 2026-27
- One- off hire charge for use of facilities, subject to availability £110.00
- Meeting room hire £18 per hour

mh25-26107

TO AGREE COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2026-27

A detailed report had been distributed with the agenda, setting out the proposed budget for 2025–26 together with a summary of requirements. These figures included the withdrawal of the Local Council Tax Reduction Grant of £18,500 by Durham County Council.

RESOLVED the information is received and the proposed budget for the financial year 2025-27 is approved

mh25-26108

TO DETERMINE THE PARISH PRECEPT FOR 2026-27

The Clerk provided a detailed report outlining options for Members' consideration. The withdrawal of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant will result in a loss of income of £18,500.91. Although the Council had anticipated a phased reduction over three years, confirmation that the grant will be withdrawn in full in 2026–27 presents a significant challenge in balancing the budget.

After careful consideration and considering the loss of the LCTRS grant, Members agreed that there was no alternative but to increase the precept request by 4% to ensure that current services and facilities can continue to be provided to residents.

RESOLVED the precept requirement for 2026–27 is set at £338,767.00, representing an increase of 4%.

mh25-26109

PLANNING

Durham County Council Applications Received

DM/25/02615	Believe Housing 22 Marine Crescent Blackhall Rocks TS27 4DB	Change of use from former community centre to two bed dwelling.
DM/25/02960/FPA	Phoenix Service Station Coast Road Blackhall Rocks JTS27 4AQ	Change of use to store parked cars in association with the garage and erect a 2.4m fence along the rear and side boundary of the site (part retrospective)
DM/25/03504/FPA	Mr D Oram Cavell House Hesleden Road Blackhall TS27 4LG	Installation of 1.6m high spearhead metal railings and a matching sliding access gate to the front boundary.
DM/25/03066/FPA	Mr V Subramani 91 Middle Street Blackhall Hartlepool TS27 4ED	Demolition of boundary wall, side and rear single storey extension off- licence, alterations to fenestration and doors and roller shutters.
DM/25/03488/AD	Rock a Bye Baby 35-37 Middle Street Blackhall TS27 4EE	3no Fascia Signs

Durham County Council Applications Approved

DM/25/02695FPA	Mr A Newhouse 13 Oak Avenue Blackhall TS27 4HZ	1.8m high boundary fence.
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RESOLVED the Parish Council has no comment to make with regards to the above applications

mh25-26110 **CORRESPONDENCE**

Durham County Council – proposed diversion of public footpath no17 Monk Hesleden

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

E-mail received from resident praising the team for cutting back the boundary hedge at Hesleden Cemetery

E-mail received from Bradley Lowery Foundation requesting permission to install a memorial bench alongside a small “Post Box to Heaven” in Blackhall Welfare Park. The Foundation would take full responsibility for overseeing and regularly emptying the post box and ensure it is maintained.

Members requested further information regarding the proposed installation, including the location, design of the post box, the approved memorial bench to be installed.

RESOLVED That the Clerk be requested to obtain this information and report back to the next Council meeting for consideration

mh25-26111 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED the next meeting will be held on Monday 2nd March 2026 at 6pm in Council Office 68 Middle Street, Blackhall Colliery, TS27 4EA.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

Chairman

Date