

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
MONK HESLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 2nd March 2026**

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

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

mh25-26112 **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors' R Bowes & S Childs

mh25-26113 **TO ACCEPT COUNCILLOR RESIGNATIONS**

Councillors' L Davison and G Morris had submitted their resignations from the Council.

RESOLVED the resignations are accepted and **FURTHER RESOLVED** the Clerk is requested to advise Durham County Council electoral services of the vacancies

mh25-26114 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor S Deinali declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 11a - due to her connection to Stars CIC

Councillor Crute declared a Non-Registerable Personal Interest in item 15 – annual appraisal recommendations due to a relative connection

mh25-26115 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE
19th JANUARY 2026**

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

mh25-26116 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present

mh25-26117 **POLICE REPORT**

A police report was distributed detailing the reported incidents for the previous month

RESOLVED information was received

mh25-26118 **CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk had prepared a joint report with the Estates Manager-

- All staff except for one had successfully undertaken safeguarding training

- Details of the improvements made in-house to the outside area adjacent to Blackhall Cricket Social Club
- High number of burials January & February 2026, which were challenging due to the prolonged periods of rainfall
- Bradley Lowery Foundation requesting permission to install a memorial bench alongside a small “Post Box to Heaven” (mh25-26110) – location agreed, and bench installed
- Installation of new planters at Blackhall Cemetery, completed in-house
- Request approval given to repairs to the storage building at Blackhall Cemetery roof at a cost of £1700.00

RESOLVED the information is received and **FURTHER RESOLVED** approval is given to the repairs to the storage building.

Road traffic accident

The Clerk provided details of a road traffic accident resulting in serious injuries to an employee and extensive damage to a ride-on mower. The police have confirmed the employee was at no fault and the third party is to be prosecuted.

The employee is recovering at home, and a claim has been lodged with the Council’s insurers.

RESOLVED the information is received and **FURTHER RESOLVED** best wishes are sent to the member of staff

mh25-26119 **REVIEW OF COUNCIL RISK REGISTER & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT**

A copy of the Council’s risk register & financial risk assessment had been issued with the agenda together with a copy of the proposed risk register action plan.

RESOLVED the risk register and the financial risk register are received and approved.

mh25-26120 **REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

Documents had been circulated with the agenda for members’ consideration. The Clerk drew attention to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the current year, noting that it now includes a new requirement—Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance. The Clerk confirmed that the council meets all obligations under this assertion, enabling the council to confidently record a “Yes” response.

The Clerk advised that the current internal auditor has given notice that he will no longer be available to undertake future audits. There is currently a shortage of suitably qualified individuals to carry out this role within County Durham. The Clerk is therefore working with the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) to identify a suitable solution.

RESOLVED the review of internal audit is received and approved and **FURTHER RESOLVED** the information regarding the internal auditor is noted

FINANCIAL**Councillor S Deinali declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this item and did not take part in the discussion or resolution****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
02.02.2026	DVLA	Van Tax	£345.00
02.02.2026	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£50.12
04.02.2026	Wave	Cem Water	£23.35
07.02.2026	Cathedral Hygiene	Hygiene	£70.20
09.02.2026	ABR	Chimney Repair	£72.00
09.02.2026	Affordable Landscapes	Xmas Tree Erection Removal	£300.00
09.02.2026	Babble	Tel/broadband	£16.63
09.02.2026	Blackfords	Topsoil	£66.00
09.02.2026	Corona	Chickens Green Elec	£24.51
09.02.2026	JT Dove	New Planters	£471.32
09.02.2026	Krystal Cleaning	Cleaning	£364.80
09.02.2026	T Sherriff	Dennis Cutter	£7,200.00
09.02.2026	Wykeham Estate	Cherry Tree	£130.00
09.02.2026	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£42.34
09.02.2026	Corona Energy	Elec Pit Wheel	£27.45
09.02.2026	Corona Energy	Elec Council Office	£134.74
09.02.2026	Corona Energy	Changing Rooms	£237.38
09.02.2026	Corona Energy	Elec Welfare Park	£168.58
09.02.2026	Co-Operative Bank	BACS Fees	£7.82
12.02.2026	Wave	Cem Water	£81.39
13.02.2026	EE	Mobile Phones	£107.42
15.02.2026	Durham County Council	Trade Waste Bhall Cem	£114.00
15.02.2026	Durham County Council	Trade Waste Welfare Park	£114.00
15.02.2026	Document Solutions	IT/ Tel B Band	£354.69
16.02.2026	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£48.13
18.02.2026	Durham County Council	HMRC LGPS	£6,925.47
23.02.2026	Aitkens	Fertiliser	£263.52
23.02.2026	Charles Dickens	Combi Drill	£92.37
23.02.2026	Corona Energy	Elec Supply Chickens Green	£25.05
23.02.2026	G Robinson	Materials	£228.83
23.02.2026	J T Dove	Timber	£395.07
23.02.2026	Krystal Cleaning	Cleaning	£364.80

23.02.2026	Pear Technology	Update Cem searcher	£114.00
23.02.2026	Streetscape	Replacement play equipment	£194.00
23.02.2026	Vision ICT	Domain Hosting Fee	£372.30
23.02.2026	Stars Community CIC	Catering - Training	£70.00
23.02.2026	Right Fuel Card	Fuel	£74.63
24.02.2026	Durham County Council	Salaries	£12,587.59
26.02.2026	A Peace	MOT Reimbursement	£148.00
26.02.2026	Ways Transport	Kubota recovery	£50.00
26.02.2026	P J Horticultural	Ransomme repair	£391.00
26.02.2026	Thomas Sheriff	Dennis Ultra service	£773.73
26.02.2026	Babble	Final call charge invoice	£3.60
		Total	£33,645.83
Credit			
02.02.2026	Stars Community CIC	Storage Hire	£150.00
06.02.2026	Co- Operative Funeral Service	Burial Fee	£240.00
09.02.2026	R G Bennett	Burial Fee	£4,275.00
24.02.2026	Scott Memorial	Memorial Fees	£215.00
		Total	£4,880.00

b) To receive bank reconciliation @ 31st January 2026 & bank transfers

Bank reconciliation had been distributed with the agenda showed combined bank balances of £596513.82 as at 31st January 2026.

Co-op Bank inter account transfer £48,000

Co-op Bank to Barclays account £30,000

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

c) Review of BAC's facility

Approval was requested to increase the Council's individual BAC's limit to £15000.00 with immediate effect, there is no requirement to increase the total monthly limit of £25000.

RESOLVED approval is given to increase the individual limit to £15000.00

d) To approve Durham County Council Service Level Agreements

- HR advice & support - £280.00 pa 5% increase
- Provision of fixed play equipment & maintenance - £1081.92 pa 5%
- Provision of grounds maintenance and street cleansing - £8496.64 pa 5%

RESOLVED all service level agreements shown above are approved

e) To approve annual insurance renewal

The Parish Council has an active long-term agreement with current providers which expires 1st April 2026. A new long-term proposal has been received and it is recommended in view of the current outstanding claim the

Council does not change providers.

RESOLVED Financial regulation 5.8 is waived in view of the current outstanding claim, **FURTHER RESOLVED** the Clerk to be given delegated authority to agree a long-term agreement with the current provider.

mh25-26122

PLANNING

Durham County Council Applications Received

DM/26/00135/AD	Coast Road Coffee 40 Middle Street Blackhall, TS27 4EA	To display No1 non illuminated 2d sign above the window of the premise facing out into middle street
DM/26/00192/FPA	Mr James Willis 19 Glenholme Terrace Blackhall TS27 4HU	Removal of existing hedge and construction of a 1.6m brick wall with pillars and access gate, together with a 2m front boundary wall incorporating timber fencing and pillars

Durham County Council Applications Approved

DM/25/02960/FPA	Phoenix Service Station Coast Road Blackhall Rocks TS27 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/25/02716/FPA	Mr L Jones 12 Welfare Crescent Blackhall Hartlepool TS27 4LU	Demolition of existing rear extension and conservatory with erection of replacement two storey side and rear extension.
DM/25/03066/FPA	Mr V Subramani 91 Middle Street Blackhall TS27 4ED	Demolition of boundary wall, side and rear single storey extension to existing 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
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.

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

mh25-26123 **CORRESPONDENCE**

E-mail received from RSPCA dedicated Pet Community Support Coordinator giving details of the launch of the Preventing Pet Relinquishment Project to help local families keep their pets despite the cost-of-living crisis.

RESOLVED the information is noted and **FURTHER RESOLVED** this service is to be promoted by the Parish Council

mh25-26124 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960
EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that the following items are classified as being of a confidential in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

mh25-26125 **TO CONSIDER ANNUAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Councillor Crute declared a Non-Registerable Personal Interest in this item and took no part in the discussion or resolution with regards to one individual.

The Clerk reported that annual staff reviews had been completed for all positions except two, which remain outstanding. It was recommended that all completed reviews be awarded a scale point increment, in accordance with the council's agreed staffing structure.

RESOLVED the report is received and recommendations approved

mh25-26126 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED the next meeting will be held on Monday 23rd March 2026 at 6pm in Council Office 68 Middle Street, Blackhall Colliery, TS27 4EA.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

Chairman
Date.....