

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
MONK HESLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 20th APRIL 2026**

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

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

mh25-26141 **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor R Bowes

mh25-26142 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor G Duddin declared a registerable interest in item 9, request for financial assistance from St Andrews Neighbourhood Outreach Group, as he holds a position on the management committee.

Councillor A Mason declared a non-registerable interest in item 9, request for financial assistance from St Andrews Neighbourhood Outreach Group as she attends the events provided by the group.

mh25-26143 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE
23rd MARCH 2026**

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

mh25-26144 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present

mh25-26145 **POLICE REPORT**

No report received

mh25-26146 **ESTATES MANAGER REPORT**

The Estates Manager provided a verbal update confirming that, despite ongoing pressures due to the long-term absence of a team member, all sporting facilities are prepared and ready for the summer season. The refurbishment of the war memorial is nearing completion and has enhanced the surrounding area.

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

The Council has received several requests for the use of football facilities at Blackhall Welfare Park. It has been confirmed that all existing teams wish to continue their use of the facilities for the 2026–27 season.

Members were asked to approve continued use by Blackhall Monks FC, Blackhall Cricket Club, and HUFC Youth Academy for the 2026–27 season. A list of applications will be maintained should circumstances change.

RESOLVED approval is given to the existing teams being granted use of the facilities for the 2026-27 football season

Open space to the rear of Attlee Avenue Blackhall Rocks

A resident has reported damage to the area, believed to have been caused by a bonfire. The site will be inspected and cleared by the team as soon as the work schedule permits.

Open space at Shaftesbury Avenue, Blackhall Colliery

Durham County Council has advised that they are currently unable to access this area to undertake grass cutting under the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA). Access is being obstructed by vehicles blocking the entrance gate. A sign has been ordered to address this issue, and it is anticipated that this will help resolve the problem.

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

mh25-26147

CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk informed members despite the forthcoming closure of Blackhall Methodist Chapel, it has been confirmed members of the clergy will continue to support the Council's Remembrance Services'.

RESOLVED the information is received and noted

mh25-26148

REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Councillor G Duddin declared a registerable interest and Councillor A Mason declared a non-registerable interest in relation to the following item and left the meeting

St. Andrews Neighbourhood Outreach Group

A request for assistance for £500.00 had been received and circulated to members for consideration.

RESOLVED that a donation of £500.00 be granted to Neighbourhood Outreach Group

LG Misc. Prov 1976 s19
Neighbourhood Outreach Group

Councillors Duddin & Mason returned to the meeting

Durham Miners Gala Brochure advert

RESOLVED to place a quarter page advert in the 2026 brochure

Guidance re approval of funding applications

The Clerk confirmed the Parish Council can only provide funding/grants under specific spending powers; however, further guidance should be considered, for example the type of organisation and the presence of appropriate governance documents. It was recommended that the Parish Council use the Durham County Council Local Network Welfare Fund guidance notes when assessing applications.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council adopts the Durham County Council Local Network Welfare Fund guidance notes as a basis for assessing funding applications, alongside its statutory spending powers

mh25-26149

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.

Expenditure

1.4.2026	Zurich Insurance	Annual renewal	£8377.19
1.4.2026	Mastercopy	Photocopying charges	£82.50
6.4.2026	Grenke Leasing	Quarterly photocopier charge	£123.19
6.4.2026	Right Fuel	Petrol/ Diesel	£68.88
9.4.2026	Co-op Bank	Charges	£7.82
13.4.2026	EE	Mobile telephones	£120.15
15.4.2026	Durham CC	Business rates - office	£336.68
15.4.2026	Durham CC	Business rates - Blackhall Cemetery	£198.80
15.4.2026	Durham CC	Business rates – Hesleden Cemetery	£53.32
15.4.2026	E-on Next	Final invoice B/Hall cem electricity supply	£37.61
15.4.2026	Corona Energy	Elec C/Green	£49.29
15.4.2026	Cleveland Timber	Timber - bowling green	£723.40
15.4.2026	Screwfix	Hose reels	£89.97
17.4.2026	Right Fuel	Petrol/Diesel	£154.39
17.4.2026	Corona Energy	Welfare Park	£173.27
17.4.2026	Corona Energy	Changing rooms	£167.48
17.4.2026	Corona Energy	Council office	£115.75
17.4.2026	Corona Energy	Elec pit wheel	£26.32
17.4.2026	BACS	LGPS/HMRC	£6893.49
19.4.2026	Right Fuel	Petrol/Diesel	£46.44
20.4.2026	Affordable Landscapes	War memorial renovation – Welfare Park	£3840.00
20.4.2026	CDALC	Annual Subscription	£1043.05
20.4.2026	JRB	Dog bags	£1950.12
20.4.2026	KCS	Cleaning – office C/Rooms	£364.80
20.4.2026	Pear Technology	Mapping subscription	£366.00

20.4.2026	Zurich Insurance	Motor ins- new ride mower	£267.25
20.4.2026	G Robinson	Materials	£146.96
20.4.2026	Blackfords	Bulbs/Topsoil	£193.00
20.4.2026	A1 trophies	Signs BLF bench	£54.00
20.4.2026	J T Dove	Timber/screws war memorial	£154.25
20.4.2026	Rialtas	Cemetery/accts software	£1010.40
20.4.2026	Pirtek	Hose repair - Toro	£280.53
22.4.2026	E-on Next	Elec Hesleden Xmas tree	£80.22
24.4.2026	Wages	April	£12931.11
27.4.2026	Right Fuel	Petrol/Diesel	£73.34
28.4.2026	Corona Energy	Gas supply – Office Park	£275.92
30.4.2026	NWL	Annual sewerage charge bungalow	£123.75
Income			
1.4.2026	Blackhall Bowls	Annual fees	£990.00
	Hpool Old Boys	Annual fees	£759.00
2.4.2026	Co-op Bank	Credit Interest	1526.97
6.4.2026	Durham County Council	Precept – April - Sept	£169383.50
10.4.2026	Dog bags	Dog bag sales	£80.00
12.4.2026	HMRC	VAT return 31/3/26	£8665.99
14.4.2026	Northern Powergrid	Rent payment	£60.00
21.4.2026	Stars CIC	Rent payment	£150.00
21.4.2026	Scott Memorials	Memorial fees	£245.00
22.4.2026	L Wardle	Hose reel	£35.99

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

Bank reconciliation had been distributed with the agenda showed combined bank balances of £517515.40 as of 31st March 2026, this was checked and signed by in accordance with financial regulations.

Bank transfers

Co-op to Barclays	£30,000
Co-op inter account	£150,000
Co-op to Barclays	£30,000

RESOLVED the information is received and noted.

c) To receive income & expenditure report @ 31st March 2026

A copy of the above report had been forwarded with the agenda for consideration by members, the Clerk confirmed expenditure will be below the agreed budget.

RESOLVED the report is received.

d) To approve Statement of Accounts@ 31st March 2026

A copy of the Council's statements of accounts as of 31st March 2026 had been distributed to members for approval.

RESOLVED the statement of accounts @ 31st March 2026 be received and approved.

e) To receive Internal Report @ 31st March 2026

The internal audit report for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 had been distributed with the agenda for approval.

RESOLVED the report is received and approved.

f) Approve of Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2025/26

A copy of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26 had been distributed to members with the agenda.

Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations, and Proper Practices that could have significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events, or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.
9. Not applicable

10. We have out in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.

RESOLVED Section1 - Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 be approved.

Section 2- Accounting Statements 2025/16

RESOLVED Section 2 - Accounting Statements for 2025/26 be received and approved.

g) To appoint internal auditor for financial year ending 31st March 2027

The Clerk advised an suitably qualified internal auditor has identified to undertake the audit for the next financial year at a cost of £500.00.

RESOLVED G Fletcher is appointed as internal auditor for the financial year ending 31st March 2027

h) To approve Durham County Council Payroll Service Level Agreement 2026-27

RESOLVED approval is given to the payroll level agreement for 2026-27 at a cost of £1011.03.

i) Approve quote to repair Council office car park boundary wall

RESOLVED approval is given to the quote of £960.00 to undertaken repairs to the boundary wall.

mh25-26150 **PLANNING**

No planning notifications

mh25-26151 **CORRESPONDENCE**

No correspondence received

mh25-26152 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED the next meeting will be held on Monday 18th May 2026 at 6pm in Council Office 68 Middle Street, Blackhall Colliery, TS27 4EA.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

Chairman

Date