

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes of Hurworth Parish Council, Annual Meeting held on Thursday 7th May 2026, starting at 6.30pm, held at Hurworth Grange Community Centre, 41 Hurworth Road, Hurworth, Darlington, DL2 2BN

Attendees

Parish Councillors Present:

Chair: Cllr Fiona Lennox, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr Angela Allan, Cllr John Howard, Cllr Karen Mann, Cllr Janine Foster, Cllr Mick Feeney, Cllr Dorothy Oughton,

Official

Mrs Dianne Rickaby: Locum Parish Clerk

Darlington Borough Council Ward Councillors Lorraine Tostevin and Paul Walters and members of the public were also present.

1. Election of Chairman 2026/27

Proposals for Chairman for the forthcoming year were invited.

Cllr Angela Allan was proposed by Cllr Karen Mann and seconded by Cllr Fiona Lennox.

A vote was taken: 6 in favour, 3 opposed and 2 abstentions.

Congratulations were extended to Councillor Allan, and the Declaration of Acceptance was duly signed witnessed by the Locum Parish Clerk.

RESOLVED

Councillor Angela Allan be elected as Chairman for the civic year 2026/27.

2. Chairmans Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and announced the following:

- **Housekeeping**

3. Apologies for Absence

None received.

4. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion relating to the agenda.

5. Minutes of the Annual Meeting dated 1st May 2025

Councillors were asked to approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 1st May 2025 as a true and accurate record.

RESOLVED

That the above minutes, a copy of which has previously been circulated to each member, be approved, and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

6. Election of Vice Chairperson 2026/27

Proposals for Vice Chairperson for the forthcoming year were invited.

Cllr Janine Foster was proposed by Cllr Karen Mann and seconded by Cllr Lennox.

Cllr Fiona Lennox was proposed by Cllr Mann and seconded by Cllr Angela Allan.

A vote was taken: 3 votes for Cllr Foster and 5 votes for Cllr Lennox and 1 abstention.

Congratulations were extended to Cllr Lennox, and the Declaration of Acceptance was duly signed witnessed by the Locum Parish Clerk.

RESOLVED

Cllr Lennox be elected as Vice Chairperson for the civic year 2026/27.

7. Representatives of working groups 2026/27

Councillors were asked to consider representatives of working groups.

The following Councillors were proposed and votes taken:

Committee/Subgroup/Working Group	Councillor
Finance Committee	All members of the council
Trees	Cllr Foster
Police Liaisons	Cllr Oughton
Environment & Open Spaces	Cllr Lennox
Highways & Traffic	Cllr Oughton

Planning Matters	Cllr Allan
Parish Pathways, Parish Walks & Rights of Way	Cllr Foster
Press Officer to include Village Calendar and website	Parish Clerk
Youth Activities	Cllr Finney & Cllr Howard

RESOLVED

Representatives of working groups for 2026/27 agreed.

8. Date/Venue/Time of monthly meetings 2026/27

Councillors were asked to approve the meeting schedule for 2026/27.

It was agreed the first Thursday of every month, excluding August, at Hurworth Grange or Hurworth Village Hall starting at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated. Council Ward Surgeries, per rota, starting at 6.30pm. PACT meetings are at 6.00pm.

RESOLVED

Councillors approved the meeting schedule for 2026/27.

The meeting was closed at 6.51pm.

Signed **Date**

Chairman of Hurworth Parish Council

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes of Hurworth Parish Council meeting, held on 7th May 2026, starting at 7.00pm, held at Hurworth Grange Community Centre, 41 Hurworth Road, Hurworth Darlington, DL2 2BN

Attendees

Parish Councillors Present

Chair - Cllr Angela Mann, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr John Howard, Cllr Janine Foster, Cllr Mick Feeney, Cllr Dorothy Oughton, Cllr Fiona Lennox

Official

Mrs Dianne Rickaby: Locum Parish Clerk

Darlington Borough Council Ward Councillors Lorraine Tostevin and Paul Walters and **members** of the public were also present.

1. Chairmans Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and announced the following:

- **Housekeeping**
- **Introduction of Locum Parish Clerk**
- **Councillor vacancies**
- **Annual Town Assembly 28th May 2026, starting at 7.00pm, Hurworth Grange Community Centre**

2. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence

None received.

3. To receive any declarations of interest and consider requests for dispensations

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion relating to the agenda.

4. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd April 2026

Councillors were asked to approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2026 as a true and accurate record.

Point 6 – Ward Councillors rock compliant footpath resurfaced not accessible for wheelchairs. Highways agreed needed to be repaired.

Point 18 – Current website not fully compliant. 18b procedure on going. 18c website not compliant.

RESOLVED

That the above minutes, a copy of which has previously been circulated to each member, be approved, and signed as a correct record by the Chairman. Amendments to minutes as above pending adjustments all approved.

5. Hurworth PCSO – Introduction the new PCSO

PCSO Rachel Heard gave an update regarding current village issues. Regular patrols are being carried out by officers. An officer will be attending PACT monthly meetings.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

6. Items arising for discussion

Hunters Close – possible tree root issue – Cllr Howard

Following dialogue with the Environment Agency the insurance claim is in the initial stages. A site visit has been undertaken by an engineer to investigate the tree root issue.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

7. Outstanding matters:

- **Salt Bin installation – Cllr Howard**

The installation of the salt bins has been delayed. Discussion took place on the proposed siting of the bins in October prior to the winter weather period.

- **River Tees safety precautions – Cllr Howard**

The Water Board has been contacted regarding erection of signage in the area, and a response is currently awaited.

- **Land at the Spar Corner**

Consultation has commenced no further updates.

- **Fox Close trees – Cllr Howard**

In respect of the tree's insurance claim a new loss adjustor has undertaken a site visit to the bungalow, and a report has been produced. An arborist has recommended that the trees are removed. **Action: Quotations to be obtained for the tree removal, and to arrange a structural engineer to visit the site.**

- **Hurworth Scouts – Cllr Howard**

Funding previously awarded to the Scouts for the rebuilding of the scout hut has not been utilised for that purpose. The scouts are to be asked either to return the funds or to use the monies for approved equipment purchases.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

8. Reports from Darlington Borough Council Ward Councillors

Cllr Paul Walters gave a verbal update on a request for a dropped kerb in Linden Drive as residents are turning into incoming traffic.

Darlington Borough Council events in 2026 include:

- 23rd May 11am-5pm Donkey Festival
- 26th May 11am-3pm Tractor Tuesday
- 26th – 29th May 10am-3pm Steam train rides. Rides cost £7.50

Darlington Borough Council's new weekly food waste recycling collections and revamped weekly recycling service will commence in the week of Tuesday 2nd June 2026.

Cllr Lorraine Tostevin gave a verbal update on the current hog weed situation at the riverbank. Signage is to be installed by the Environment Agency outlining the implications and associated risks. The Environment Agency have sprayed the affected area; however, this remains an ongoing issue.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is holding a second consultation on new ward boundaries for Darlington Brough Council, running from 28th April to 6th July 2026. Proposals include reducing councillors from 50 to 41 and restructuring to 18 wards.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

9. Public Participation

A member of the public raised the following issues:

- Concerns for dog walkers in respect of the hog weed opposite the Comet pub (south side – Hurworth Road).
- The possibility of the Parish Council sponsoring the wood carver's
- Footpaths to be repaired

The Chairman advised that all funding requests must be submitted in writing in accordance with the Councils Grants Policy. The Locum Parish Clerk advised that requests must be received at least seven days prior to the meeting to allow inclusion on the agenda for consideration by the Council.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

10. To receive, review and approve the payments schedule for April 2026

The schedule of payments for the month of April 2026, have not been produced due to the absence of the current clerk.

The Locum Parish Clerk asked councillors to consider granting delegated authority to enable invoices to be processed and paid. A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed that delegated authority be given to the Locum Parish Clerk to pay invoices and to circulate a payments schedule at the next meeting of the Council. A brief discussion took place on indemnity for the Locum Parish Clerk who is not employed by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED

Locum Parish Clerk be given delegated authority to pay accounts for April 2026.

11. Hurworth Parish Plan 2025-30

No further updates.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

Planning applications

Members were asked to consider any comments on the planning applications for the month of April.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted. No objections to applications.

12. Tree Report – Cllr Williamson

No further updates.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

13. Open Spaces & Environment Report – Cllr Lennox

The bench at Manor Fields is waiting installation. Eight dog waste bag dispensers have been installed and anti-bac hand soap dispenser. Positive feedback has been received from residents. A resident has reported that a dog bin has been damaged near the Grange. The hogweed along the green opposite the Comet pub has been treated.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

14. Allotments Report

Councillors agreed to remove this item from the monthly agenda.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

15. Highways & Traffic Report

Cllr Oughton gave a detailed report of the traffic volumes and speeds at locations being monitored for the month of April 2026.

Mecca Bridge	Total vehicles	24.905
	Max. speed	65mph
	Av. speed	25.3mph
Hurworth Road	Total vehicles	56.610
	Max.speed	51mph
	Av. speed	23.6mph
Linden Court	Total vehicles	136,090
	Max. speed	63mph
	Av. speed	28mph

Roundhill Road	Total vehicles	56,639
	Max. speed	57mph
	Av. speed	57mph

The issue of parking on Westfield Drive has been reported to the Police.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

16. Crime and Security Report – Cllr Oughton

Two incidents of ASBO on Butterfield Drive involving youths riding off road bikes. An incident of ASBO on Westfield Drive involving an electric bike weaving in and out of the traffic. Incident in Green Acres individual a youth knocking on a resident's door at 4am. Youths on bikes in Roundhill Road.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

17. Rights of Way and Parish Walks – Cllr Foster

No further updates.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

18. HPC Contingency Plan – Cllr Howard

No further updates.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

19. Elder Brook Farm Estates - Cllr Mann

No further updates.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

At this point Cllr Willis left the meeting (8pm)

20. Other matters – new website update – Cllr Mann

The current website could be used for the uploading of agendas and minutes; however, the site requires upgrading, particularly in relation to accessibility issues. Companies have been contacted regarding potential upgrades, and the matter will be discussed further at future meetings.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

21. Correspondence – for information only

None received.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

The meeting was closed at 8.10pm.

Signed **Date**

Chair of Hurworth Parish Council