

Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council meeting
Held on Thursday 6th February 2025 starting at 7.00pm



Attendees

Parish Councillors Present:

Cllr. Andrew Leigh, Cllr. Dave Crisp, Cllr John Howard, Cllr. Peter Willis, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr. Fiona Lennox, Angela Allan, Graham Wylie.

Peter Allan (Parish Clerk), Cllr. Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr. Paul Walters and 23 members of the public.

1. Chair's Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed the attendees

1. **Council Vacancy.** The two vacancies have now been filled, and we welcome Angela Allan to the Parish Council, and welcomed Graham Wylie on his return to the Parish Council.

However, due to three resignations received in January, we have three new vacancies. Anybody who may be interested in joining the Council, please contact the Clerk by email, letter, or telephone.

2. The Chair stated that the public would be able to raise matters during Public Participation, but should not intervene during other items on the Agenda, when Councillors are giving their reports. He also said that he would re-open the Public Participation at the end of the meeting, as he was aware that several residents wish to raise topics regarding planning applications.

2. Apologies for Absence

Peter Foster, Cllr Bree Stamp;

3. Declaration of Interest

Cllr. Crisp – Allotments

Cllr Wylie – Hurworth Grange CIO

4. Minutes from Meeting Held on 2nd January 2025

The Draft Minutes for the meeting held on 2nd January were accepted, proposed by Cllr Crisp, seconded by Cllr. Howard and passed unanimously.

5. Matters Arising – Outstanding Issues

No items which are not on this Agenda

6. Ward Councillors Update

Ward Councillors Report ... February 2025

Bellway Estate

At the last parish council meeting it emerged that many residents were amenable to having their driveways dug up in order to facilitate the outstanding work on the pavements and roads. This is contrary to what Bellway had told DBC so DBC were going to ask for a list of homeowners who were refusing to allow access to their properties. To date there has been no further action.

Miller Estate

DBC confirmed that the adoptions team had spoken to Millers regarding completion of the remedial work required and whilst they are not disputing the remedial work they are struggling to find a contractor to carry out the work. They are going to speak to Bellway to see if they can share their contractor.

In terms of the dog waste bins requested by residents on the new estates it was confirmed that no bin could be placed until the site was adopted but also there was difficulty finding a suitable location to site a bin. Streetscene have looked on the Land registry and Highways and cannot find any suitable green space which DBC own. There have been complaints in the past if dog bins are sited directly outside resident's homes so that is best avoided.

Roundhill Road

Following the Survey the original contractor is awaiting the results and as soon as these are received DBC will be meeting with them to agree an action plan. It will depend on the results as to what the actual treatment to the road will be but it is envisaged that the works will be completed end of March /early April time.

It appears that residents are sending e mails suggesting DBC have signed off inferior works and this is not the case, as all works carry a warranty period and as such will be rectified at the contractor's expense.

In the interim Roundhill Road is being inspected daily for potholes and these are being actioned as emergency i.e. within 24hours and this will continue until the road is repaired by the contractors.

Footpaths

Following numerous complaints about the state of the boggy footpath between Blind Land and Rockcliffe, DBC agreed to place wood chippings on the path to try and improve the surface. The Landowner Mr Ward then contributed by placing a substantial tonnage of wood chip down and we are pleased to report that the pathway is now temporarily much improved.

The footpath behind the Grange is also in need of attention and the landowner is due to visit sometime during March and it is hoped a meeting can be arranged with him and the tenant farmer.

Volunteering Fair

This week a volunteering fair was held at the Dolphin Centre and it attracted a lot of support and a lot of opportunities. It was good to see a representative from Hurworth which was Martin Staudt promoting the listening post. Martin and colleagues organise one to one listening sessions for youths (age 10-19 years) and if anyone is interested in volunteering for the listening post then please get in touch with Martin by telephoning 07717 336183 or e mail listeningpost@dacym.co.uk

Home security aids

At the last PACT meeting our local Police team showed us a range of security aids which were available free of charge and particularly suitable for elderly and vulnerable residents. The aids include shock alarms, sensor alarms and vibrating window alarms. If anyone would like any of these alarms then please contact ourselves or Rachel Hird PCSO directly. (Rachel.hird@durham.police.uk)

Hopetown

This new attraction in Darlington is gearing up for the 2025 railway celebrations. If you have not already visited Hopetown then please do so as you won't be disappointed. It is particularly good for family outings and entrance to the museum is free with small charges for the Play Park and Lego Park. There are 2 additional and special events running until the end of March; a curator's tour (£10) and an immersive 3D ride experiment (£5). There is also plenty of parking and a lovely café.

Jobs Fair

On February 13th a jobs fair is being held in the Dolphin Centre between 10.00am and 2 pm. There will be a lot of employers present to talk to you about jobs and career opportunities; this is an event not to be missed if you're seeking employment or career advice.

Matt Vickers MP

Our MP has enquired about holding a Surgery in Hurworth Ward and we have suggested the Grange Community Centre as a suitable location; this will provide residents with an opportunity to meet their MP and discuss any local concerns.

7. Public Participation

A resident raised the problems still outstanding on the Bellway estate. He questioned what is the deadline for the work to be finished.

Cllr Tostevin responded telling him that she has no further information. However our MP is visiting Darlington, and she will arrange for him to try to intervene to hurry up the progress. Cllr Tostevin said that she will continue to apply pressure and get an update.

A second resident complained that the Bellway estate driveways are not completed and not up to the British Standards

8. Planning Application

Cllr Willis, said that he was having discussions with Cllr Tostevin and the Parish Clerk regarding the presentation and discussion which the Council will adopt at future meetings.

Planning Application report.

Cllr Willis reported that there were four new applications in January, as follows: -

37 Hurworth Road

Hurworth House School

9 Grange Avenue

31 Friars Pardon

9. Tree Report

The Chair read out the tree report for January 2025. The Tree surveys have now been sent to the DBC and Zurich Insurance Company

- Eowyn storm brought one tree down and damaged two others in Hurworth Grange
- There is concern about two trees at West End, where the large trees appear to be disturbing an 80 year old wall
- A resident of Woodlands Way has expressed concern about the large oak tree in the Grange grounds, which appeared to be moving at ground level during storm Eowyn. This tree has a TPO on it.
- A meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 12th February =with the Head Arborist of DBC and ourselves.
- We will be planting three replacement trees at the end of February, in Hurworth Grange

10. Open Spaces & Environment Report

Fiona Lennox gave the following report: -

Open Spaces and Environment – Fiona Lennox – 6th February 2025

Big Spring Clean 2025

Durham County Council's Civic Pride Team are again preparing for their annual anti-litter campaign "The Big Spring Clean". This runs from 5th March to 5th May 2025. The focus is on reducing litter in County Durham whilst engaging with local businesses, volunteers, and schools and hosting a series of organised litter picks across the area. The aim is to encourage people to take more pride in where they live.

They are looking for local businesses to be involved in the campaign. Involvement can be attending a litter pick, spreading the word to staff, providing workforce, funding equipment, or anything else.

I have contacted the lady in the team who reached out to us, to discuss more and get dates for organised litter picks near us, etc. Once we know more, we can publicise on our social media for people or local businesses to get involved if interested.

Tees River Trust

In the past we have contributed £1000 each year to Tees River Trust to support the work they do. They spray the hogweed along the Riverside in Hurworth at least twice a year and more if needed. It comes from the Open Spaces budget and has done for the last 6 years.

I would like to Propose that we continue to support them with £1000 for financial year 25/26 to keep our River area (Rockliffe to Newbus Grange) clear of hogweed issues. The proposal was Seconded by Cllr Wills, and the vote was unanimous in favour.
Action Clerk to complete.

11. Highways & Traffic Report

Cllr Wylie addressed the meeting.

More extensive details are available on the HPC web site.

Cllr Oughton has left the Council and Cllr Angela Allan will be taking on the role of Traffic.

We are very pleased to confirm the Mr John Hedley has agreed to continue to collect the data and send the statistics to Cllr Wylie, who will put the details onto the web site, and provide the report for Cllr Angela Allan. The January report shows that the average speed throughout the village is below the speed limit. The council thanks Mr Hedley for his support.

The monitor on the Green is faulty and requires attention. **Action Clerk**

12. Youth Activities Report

In the absence of Cllr Stamp there was no report: -

13. Crime & Security Report

Cllr Angela Allan will be taking over the police liaison, and will be making future reports. She also intends to attend the PACT meetings.

14. Rights of Way & Parish Walks

No report.

15. Allotments Report

Cllr Crisp reported that there were four people on the Strait Lane Waiting List, and

Three have already been reassigned, and the fourth has been offered to a resident.

Almost all of the annual rents have been received, and those who have not yet paid, have been contacted.

16. Roads & Pathways Report

Cllr Forster reported that there has been some further road works outside the school, but these now been completed.

A large tree fell on Neasham Road, during the Eowyn storm. DBC removed this quickly.

The A66 was closed between 8:0pm and 6:00am for a week, while road maintenance was being carried out.

Roundhill Road has been receiving attention to repair potholes as they occur.

17. Correspondence & Matters of Interest

1. The Chair reported that Barclays Bank have confirmed that two additional signatories have been added to the HPC accounts.

2. DBC Electoral Dept. have been informed that we have filled two vacancies, but have also received three resignations.

18. Projects 2024-2025

Cllr Forster addressed the meeting saying that the Tree carving project is now complete.

The group, which includes several community groups in Hurworth, including the scouts and Hurworth House School wis to continue and take on new projects.

As requested at the last meeting, Cllr Forster submitted a detailed cost schedule, which the Chairman circulated.

Potential Projects include:

- Maintenance and general upkeep of existing artworks
- Adding to existing artworks in keeping with current design
- Replace wooden barrier adjacent to the tree with permanent artistic solution
- Trail of artworks into surrounding grounds

Budget

35 Community Workshops led by arts practitioner @ £150 half-day session

Including design and prep time

- 25 sessions - Hurworth residents woodcarving group £ 3750
- 5 sessions - Hurworth scouts £ 750
- 5 sessions - Hurworth House School £ 750

Materials £ 1750

- Wood
- Wood protection - oils and stains
- Sundries - sandpaper, brushes etc
- Siting - Fixings and concrete

TOTAL £ 7,000

The plan is to apply for a grant from Point North for this amount.

However, in order to preserve the continuity of the group, she would like the Council to award £1,000, pending a grant application and outcome.

A proposal was tabled by Cllr Forster, Seconded by Cllr Willis, the vote was 7 in favour, 1 against.

19. Accounts for Payment

The schedule of payments made in the month of January 2025, having been distributed to all Councillors, were formally accepted by the meeting.

Accounts for Payment January 2025

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Cancelled	104106	Cancelled	0.00
G Wylie	104107	Posters	15.66
CDALC	104108	Training courses	50.00
Hurworth Grange CIO	104109	Church newsletter & paper	64.79
P Robinson	104110		562.60
P D Allan	104111	Salary	1220.60
Inland Revenue	104112	PAYE	364.80
P D Allan - Amazon	104113	Name plates	139.30
BT	DD	Communications	48.13
P D Allan	104114	Administration expenses	53.62
Total payments			£2,519.50

20. Financial Reports

The Financial Accounts as at 31st January 2025, having been distributed to all Councillors, were formally accepted by the meeting.

Financial Report 31st January 2025											Ringfenced funds £11,689
	<u>1st December</u>	<u>May-24</u>	<u>Jun-24</u>	<u>Jul-24</u>	<u>Aug-24</u>	<u>Sep-24</u>	<u>Oct-24</u>	<u>Nov-24</u>	<u>Dec-24</u>	<u>Jan-25</u>	<u>Feb-25</u>
Revenue											
Precept	65000										
Litter Picker ref & VAT				1230	4370						4800
Rent & Interest			1559		100	329	169		277	70	
Grants		750							2780		
Allotment rent		20								780	360
Total Revenue	65000	770	1559	1230	4470	329	169	0	3057	850	5160
Expenditure											
Salaries & NHI	2148	2148	2302	2348	3344	2897	2231	2485	2302	2148	2110
Gen. Admin Expenses	1378	347	216	85	2	293	174	474	433	288	250
Trees	0		2250	693	517	828	1467	1170	792		700
Open Spaces	1000	51	180	220	0		84	130	614		1400
Section 137	1752	20	4008	1750	1500	1400	250	545			1000
Projects	0	60						1350			300
Repairs & Maint			600								
Newsletters & Posters	60	74	74		84	60	73	889	13	73	120
Youth Activities											
Paths/ RoW			4960				0				
Allotments			634			125	449	320	23		100
Highways			20						931		400
Handyman									280		100
Hurworth Grange support											
Capital & Legal exs	760			575	258	575	64				258
VAT	438	3	575	115	5	152		125	73	11	
Total Expenses	7536	2703	15819	5786	5710	6330	4792	7488	5461	2520	6738
Funds in Hand less ringed	67360	124824	122891	108631	104075	102835	96834	92211	84723	82319	80649
Revenue less expenses	57464	-1933	-14260	-4556	-1240	-6001	-4623	-7488	-2404	-1670	-1578
Funds in Hand	124,824	122,891	108,631	104,075	102,835	96,834	92,211	84,723	82,319	80,649	79,071

21. Association Reports

1. Village Hall

Cllr Crisp reported the Village Hall had a busy month starting with the Sunday movie, with soup and bread luncheon. On 23rd February there will be an informative presentation entitled 'Crime and Punishment'.

There are a range of classes and groups using the hall, and the hall is now an attractive venue.

Cllr Crisp reflected on the very successful Christmas tree event held on the Green. He wished the Council to consider making this a Village Hall annual event. The Chair asked whether this has been discussed with the PTA who have been involved for three years, regarding it as their event. It was agreed that a discussion between the two groups is required, and then this could be raised again.

2. Hurworth Albion F

Cllr Leigh reported that the season has been hit by bad weather, with some matches cancelled.

The Club has tightened up on traffic and parking at the grounds, but it is still not perfect.

1. Hurworth Grange

Cllr Wylie reported: -

January was a quiet month at The Grange, with Elvis having to cancel and the insurance costing £9,000. However, we had some progress with a few new windows and a door replaced around the patio area.

Things are now getting back on track, as Elvis performed on 1st February to a sell-out crowd and will be returning next year.

Looking ahead, we have the Beer Pigs performing on 22nd February. They're a fantastic tribute band and always a hit. Next year, we'll explore bringing in new bands to keep things fresh.

Unfortunately, the stable block roof project may need to be put on hold, as our grant application was unsuccessful. We'll discuss the best way forward at the upcoming CIO meeting.

Finally, the Classic Car and Motorcycle Show is set for 11th May, always a popular event we're looking forward to.

22. Any Other Business

There were no items of Any Other Business.

23. Public Address

The Chair now opened the meeting for the public to raise any further planning application matters.

Conversion of the **Hurworth Fisheries**, 12 Church Row, Hurworth. Application **24/00427/FUL**. Several residents have lodged comments on the DBC web site, principally expressing concern about parking congestion. The Council decided to 'make no comment'.

A spokesperson addressed the meeting highlighting the problems that the planned restaurant would cause in an already congested parking area.

There were several speakers lodging adverse comments, covering night time noise, parking, and concern that out of the village visitors to the shop

and restaurant would be detrimental to the residents. The Village Hall already takes several parking places, and whereas the existing fish and chip shop attracts customers, they only parked for a very short time, whereas going for an evening meal could take a long time.

A resident questioned who had written an article in the church newsletter inferring that the planning permission was a done deal, and hence not highlighting the residents' objections. The clerk said that he had written the paragraph in the church newsletter hoping to start the New Year with an uplift of the more than 3000 residents would be getting a second shop, and also as almost all the public houses in the village had disappeared, a new restaurant would be welcomed.

The Chairman emphasised that all residents who wished to make a 'comment' should put it directly on to the DBC Planning portal. DBC will take these comments into consideration when the consultation is held. He further stated that the parish Council had lodged a 'No Comment' on the DBC portal, and that the revised application did not alter that decision.

The Chair finished the meeting by thanking the three councillors who had resigned, and showed the council's appreciation for the voluntary work that they had done for the community.

The chairman closed the meeting at 8.00pm.

