

## Conserving our Past: Building Our Future

### Chairman Cllr. Harvey Neve

Minutes of the Parish Meeting of Bishop Middleham Parish Council held  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025, in Bishop Middleham Village Hall at 7.00pm

**Present:** Cllr. G. Turner (Chair), Cllr. J. Brownlee, Cllr. G Jacobs, Cllr. E. Sparks, Cllr. V. Cooke  
Mrs. A. Hall (Parish Clerk)

Cllr. E. Peeke (County Councillor) arrived at 7.30pm  
2 members of the public were in attendance

ITEM NO.	MINUTES	ACTION
1.4/25	<b>Notice of Meeting</b> - It was moved by Cllr. Turner to open the meeting at 7.05pm	
2.4/25	<b>Apologies:</b> Cllr. Neve (Holiday), Cllr. MacCallam (Holiday)	
3.4/25	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> - None	
4.4/25	<b>Minutes</b> - The minutes of the meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 approved as a true record of the meeting. Proposed: Cllr. Cooke, Seconded: Cllr. Brownlee	
5.4/25	<b>Public Participation</b> - 2 members of the public were in attendance to raise concerns regarding the Anaerobic Digestion Plant at Sprucely Farm, which is currently in the Planning process at Durham County Council. Where it was acknowledged that a significant number of objections had been submitted, the residents felt that more could be achieved from Bishop Middleham. Their concern was around people who were not on social media and did not know what was going on. They had been knocking on doors and arranging for objection letters to be sent but had requested that the PC produce a leaflet to be sent to every house, giving details of the plan and how to lodge a comment with the Planning Portal.	
6.4/25	<b>County Councillor Report:</b> Cllr Peeke reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following numerous requests, Cllr Peeke had been informed that there would be no bin issued in the layby leading out of the village as it had been requested to be removed by the Parish Council years ago.</li> <li>- Cllr Peeke raised concerns about the need to clear a footpath in the village. A request was made to prioritise this task with DCC to ensure accessibility and safety for residents.</li> <li>- Discussions also included a meeting regarding The Green, focusing on options for its maintenance and potential improvements, which had taken place in March.</li> </ul>	
7.4/25	<b>Website</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Updates were shared about the council's website, including challenges with outdated photographs.</li> <li>- New photos are being collected from residents for the website.</li> <li>- Technical issues with council emails were noted, and support was offered to resolve access problems.</li> <li>- Members were shown the new website and felt it was more appropriate and congratulated the Clerk on get this in place.</li> </ul>	
8.4/25	<b>Community / Events / Outdoor</b>	

	<p>a) Events 2025 - The Clerk informed members that the following attractions had been booked for Michaelmas Fair on 27<sup>th</sup> September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Circus stills - which included stilt walkers to welcome guests to the event, workshops for all ages around circus skills and the stilt walkers at the end of the event</li> <li>b. Fairground rides - carousel, boat ride, race o'rama and giant slide had been booked for the event at a cost of £3,100</li> <li>c. Mobile bar and first aid had also been arranged</li> <li>d. Members were informed that A&amp;A Catering would be retiring and would not be available for our events this year. Members would like to wish them well and would hope to see them at the event as guests.</li> <li>e. Another provider had been looked at from Spennymoor.</li> </ul> <p>b) VE Day - following further discussed it was not felt feasible to hold an event for this occasion but felt it the Parish Council should mark the occasion and would request that the Chair of the Council would record making the proclamation and lighting the Lamp of Peace on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May.</p> <p>c) Footpath to Hardwick via golf course - to be deferred to a future meeting.</p> <p>d) Volunteer Hedge Laying - Members were informed that approval had been given by our insurers for this project to be covered under our cover providing all risk assessments and necessary precautions are taken. The volunteers have been in contact with the Clerk to say it was too late now but they would like to start it later this year.</p> <p>e) Hedgehog Signs - no response had been received from Durham County Council. Members requested that 6 signs are purchased before the next meeting.</p>	
9.4/25	<b>Planning</b> - Following the presentation by residents in Public Participation, Members felt this was appropriate and would work with the Clerk to produce an appropriate document to send out. It was also felt important that a public meeting be arranged for the same reason. It was agreed that Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> May would be appropriate for a meeting.	
10.4/25	<b>Finance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receipts and Payments information for February and March was tabled for Members. No issues were raised.</li> <li>- Members were informed that the Clerk would be starting a new system from May 2025, which ensured checks were made by Councillors for payments made. This was felt to be positive and would be explained further when the system is put into place.</li> </ul>	
11.4/25	<b>Councillor Vacancies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was confirmed that 7 members has been nominated for the Parish Council and therefore no election was required.</li> <li>- Notices for co-option of members should be made as soon as possible once the new Council has been set up.</li> </ul>	
12.4/25	<b>Policies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Public Participation at Meetings - This Policy was approved by all Members</li> <li>2) Scheme of Delegation - This Policy was approved by all Members</li> <li>3) Officer Member Protocol - This Policy was deferred until the next meeting to allow Members to read and understand it before the next meeting.</li> <li>4) Health and Safety Policy - This Policy was approved by all Members.</li> </ul>	
13.4/25	<b>Member Sharing</b> <p>VC - Raised the issue of speeding on High Road again - suggestion to look at how we get the Police Speed Check Van to visit (Clerk to research)</p> <p>JB - requested that signs be looked at to request people not to park on the grassed area opposite the village hall (Clerk to research).</p>	

	ES - Reported the railings on the steps down to Draker's Lane are damaged making it difficult to use the steps. Clerk to report to DCC.	
14.4/25	<b>Next Meeting:</b> The next meeting would be the Annual Assembly at 6.30pm, with the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm on Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 in the Village Hall	

The meeting closed 8.45pm

Signed: - Chair.

Date: