

## Conserving our Past: Building Our Future

### Chairman Cllr. Harvey Neve

Minutes of the Parish Meeting of Bishop Middleham Parish Council held  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025, in Bishop Middleham Village Hall at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllr. H. Neve (Chair), Cllr. J. Brownlee, Cllr. V. Cooke, Cllr. G Jacobs,  
Cllr. E. Sparks, Cllr. G. Turner,

**Member of the Public :** 1

Mrs. A. Hall (Parish Clerk)

ITEM NO.	MINUTES	ACTION
1.6/25	<b>Notice of Meeting</b> - It was moved by Cllr. Neve to open the meeting at 7pm	
2.6/25	<b>Apologies:</b> No apologies	
3.6/25	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> - None	
4.6/25	<b>Minutes</b> - The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting. <b>Proposed:</b> Cllr. Neve, <b>Seconded:</b> Cllr. Brownlee. <b>Minutes</b> - The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting. <b>Proposed:</b> Cllr. Neve, <b>Seconded:</b> Cllr. Brownlee.	
5.6/25	<b>Public Participation</b> One member of the public was in attendance and wished to raise the following items: a) Bus Schedules - who was responsible for looking at the bus schedules for Bishop Middleham? <b>Action:</b> Details to be passed to Cllr Ian Catchpole who had been looking as transport b) Bench - could the bench in the wildlife garden (a the start of the far boardwalk) be provided with a shelter? <b>Action:</b> to be looked at and discussed at a future meeting. c) Who to contact regarding getting a signal booster for the village on the church? MOP was explained he would need to contact the church. <b>Action:</b> Inform Cllr MacCallam of the request. d) The Green - what was the current situation regarding the work to improve the central area of The Green. Discussed later in the meeting.	<b>AH</b> <b>AH</b> <b>AH</b>
6.6/25	<b>County Councillor Report:</b> Members were given a copy of the weekly report from Cllr Lines which gave information on: a) the new Durham County Council cabinet b) Local Networks - no new information provided, work is still ongoing to move these forward c) Anaerobic Digestion Plant proposal d) News relating to Sedgfield, Fishburn, Mordon, Bradbury and Thorpe Larches Cllr Catchpole sent his apologies for the meeting.	
7.6/25	<b>PCSO Jo Walbey</b> PCSO Walbey gave a brief outline of her current employment and the training that she had been undertaking in the role. She explained that she	

	<p>had been trying to visit different areas of the village and making contact with the community, which she felt had been very positive.</p> <p>Some areas that had been highlighted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking at the school – she had noticed that the markings on the road are faded</li> <li>Speeding – PCSO Walbey had yet to complete her speed watch training but had agreed to work with Cllr Cooke to progress this once her training had been completed.</li> <li>PCSO Walbey had suggested that a walkabout may be a good way for her to meet cllrs and get to know the area better. Members felt this was a good idea and they would look at a way to arrange this.</li> </ol>	
8.6/25	<p><b>Events and Outdoor Activities</b></p> <p>The following issues were raised:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Coronation Garden:</b> Members were show a plan of the new Coronation Garden following the members meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June. Members thought it was well thought out and appropriate for the site and prices should be sought to move this forward.</li> <li><b>Michaelmas Fair:</b> Plans are underway and most of the bookings have been confirmed. A meeting to be arranged for early in July to discuss Michaelmas Fair.</li> <li><b>Wildlife Garden:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members were informed of the damage caused to the ‘keep out’ signs on the middle boardwalk and the life ring had been detached and thrown into the water. This had been rectified but it was felt if there are more incidents, it should be reported to the Police.</li> <li>Members felt a professional assessment of the boardwalk was required. Clerk to arrange.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>The Green:</b> An overview of the history of the project was given to the member of the public and members. It was stated that this had been funded through ex County Council Peeke. This was now being looked at by Cllr Chris Lines. It was suggested that boulders could be used around the edge of the green to stop parking, bushes and other areas had rubbish accumulating, looking at the lighting of the area and removing hedges. <b>Action:</b> To contact Cllr Chris Lines to get an update on this project.</li> </ol>	<p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p>
9.6/25	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Internal Audit Report</b> – Gordon Fletcher had undertaken an internal audit on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Members had previously been issued with a copy of the report, which showed that there were no recommendations or issues raised in the report.</li> <li><b>Approve AGAR 2023/2024 (Section 1)</b> – Members considered Section 1 of the AGAR and approved. Proposed Cllr Neve, Seconded Cllr Turner</li> <li><b>Approve AGAR Accounting Statement (Section 2)</b> – Members reviewed and considered Section 2 of the AGAR and were satisfied that this was correct and approved. Proposed Cllr Neve, Seconded Cllr Turner</li> <li>Members were given Appendix 1 payments report with all payments from 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 to the date of the meeting. An explanation was given for this report, detailing the 3 sections – which were section 1 - payments to approve, section 2 – payments made that had been agreed previously or were in the budget and section 3 – regular direct debits payments. <b>This report was approved by all.</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>AH</b></p>

	<p>e. <b>Community Grant Application:</b> To support the creation of an 18mile "Five Churches Round" walk. Approved £100 towards the printing costs of map/flyer. <b>Proposed:</b> Cllr Turner, <b>Seconded:</b> Cllr Brownlee</p> <p>f. <b>Community Grant Application:</b> To support the continued activity of Pickle Ball in the village hall. Members discussed the application and agreed that the application did not meet all of the requirements. However, the Council were keen to support the activity and agreed to purchase some new equipment, upto the value of £450. Clerk to contact Mr Hosler to discuss. Regarding the other items mentioned in the application, it was suggested that Mr Hosler speak to Cllr Turner regarding the Sedgfield Charities group, who may be able to help.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p>
10.6/25	<b>Health and Safety:</b> No issues raised other than an assessment of the Wildlife Garden.	
11.6/25	<p><b>Policies:</b> The following policies were reviewed and approved by the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Officer / Member Protocol</li> <li>b) Equality and Diversity</li> <li>c) Risk Management Policy (The Park)</li> </ul> <p><b>Proposed:</b> Cllr Neve, <b>Seconded:</b> Cllr Turner</p> <p>d) Members discussed future approval times for policies and agreed that in the May meeting, when Standing Orders, Code of Conduct and Financial Regulations are approved, a list of all current policies be tabled for discussion. If no amendments are needed, all to be approved for another year. Any policies that requirement amendments or new policies would be tabled for discussion at individual meetings and added to the list and the website.</p> <p><b>Proposed:</b> Cllr Neve, <b>Seconded:</b> Cllr Turner</p>	<b>AH</b>
12.6/25	<p><b>Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) DM/25/01138/FPA - Conversion of existing detached garage to gym and golf simulator room. Members felt this was appropriate and new comment was required.</li> <li>b) DM/24/00903/WAS - Members were informed that this planning appeal was going to be heard at an informal hearing, date to be agreed. This would give relevant parties the opportunity to put forward their objections in person, with prior arrangement. Residents / businesses were still encouraged to put their comments to the Appeals Committee. Details available from the planning authority (Durham County Council) or via social media.</li> </ul>	
13.6/25	<b>Councillor Vacancy:</b> Members were informed there had been 1 application to be part of the team. To be discussed later in the meeting.	
14.6/25	<b>Correspondence:</b> Letter received from St Michael's Primary School regarding the use of the football field for an event. Members felt this was an excellent idea. No charge would be made to use the field. Clerk to contact the school to confirm and as if there is anything else we can help with and to request a mention in publications and see any photographs of the event.	<b>AH</b>
15.6/25	<b>Member Sharing:</b> Deferred to next meeting due to the items left to be discussed.	
<b>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:</b> To RESOLVE that under Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.		
16.6/25	<b>Options for opening / closing park gates</b> - all options had been exhausted to find a solution to allow resident to carry out this activity. Unfortunately, no resolution could be sought. Clerk to call resident to explain current situation.	<b>AH</b>

17.6.25	<b>Co-option Application:</b> Today marked the closing date for Co-option applications. Members were informed that one application had been received. As there are currently two vacancies and only one applicant, there were no grounds for refusal. It was viewed positively that the applicant represents an area of the parish that is not currently represented on the Council. Member had requested the Clerk to arrange an informal meeting with the applicant prior to officially signing up.	
18.6/25	<b>Next Meeting:</b> The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall	

The meeting closed 9.10pm

Signed: - Chair.

Date: