



Hetton Town Council



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on Monday 19 May 2025 at The Hetton Centre, Welfare Road, Hetton le Hole, County Durham, DH5 9NE.

Present

Cllr K Angus, Cllr J Bonsall, Cllr D Brennan, Cllr J Defty, Cllr P Dowell, Cllr R Elvin, Cllr D Geddis, Cllr L Gibson, Cllr J Green, Cllr P Hall, Cllr S Holt, Cllr W Little, Cllr R Meadows, Cllr H Morton, Cllr K Pearson, Cllr M Pigdon, Cllr K Rowham, Cllr D Thomas, Cllr S Waterston (Town Mayor), Cllr C Willis and Cllr S Wood-Brass.

In attendance

L Hall, Town Clerk (TC)
Members of Public (MoP) x 3

Note - this meeting was audio recorded throughout by one member.

1) Election of Town Mayor:

(Town Council to elect the Town Mayor for 2025-2026)

Nominations were sought for the position of Town Mayor.

Cllr P Dowell was nominated by Cllr D Geddis, seconded by Cllr S Waterston.

Cllr W Little was nominated by Cllr D Thomas, seconded by Cllr S Holt.

There were no other nominations.

Town Mayor advised that the election would need to proceed to a ballot.

A proposal for a secret ballot was proposed by Cllr K Rowham. Cllr D Geddis noted that this proposal had been voted on and defeated on two separate occasions. TC advised that the new Standing Orders, which had been agreed by Council, stated voting was by show of hands. Cllr K Rowham requested the vote be recorded.

A ballot by show of hands was then conducted to elect the Town Mayor.

Votes for Cllr P Dowell: Cllr R Meadows, Cllr D Brennan, Cllr S Waterston, Cllr P Dowell, Cllr C Willis, Cllr P Hall, Cllr K Angus, Cllr D Geddis, Cllr M Pigdon, Cllr J Bonsall and Cllr L Gibson – total votes 11.

Votes for Cllr W Little: Cllr J Defty, Cllr R Elvin, Cllr S Holt, Cllr W Little, Cllr K Pearson, Cllr K Rowham, Cllr D Thomas, Cllr J Green, Cllr H Morton and Cllr S Woods-Brass – total votes 10.

Cllr P Dowell was **elected** Town Mayor for 2025-2026.

2) Declaration of Acceptance of Office:

(Declaration of Acceptance of Office to be signed by the Town Mayor)

Cllr P Dowell **signed** the acceptance of office which was witnessed and **signed** by L Hall, Town Clerk.

3) Apologies for absence:

Town Council to receive and consider approval of any apologies.

There were no apologies for absence.

4) **To record Declarations of Interest from Members for any items on the Agenda.**

There were no declarations of interest.

5) **Election of Deputy Town Mayor:**

(Town Council to elect the Deputy Town Mayor for 2025-2026)

Nominations were sought for the position of Deputy Town Mayor.

Cllr W Little was nominated by Cllr D Thomas, seconded by Cllr S Holt.

Cllr D Geddis was nominated by Cllr K Angus, seconded by Cllr D Brennan.

There were no other nominations.

Cllr D Geddis was **elected** Deputy Town Mayor for 2025-26.

6) **Election to Committees:**

Town Council to elect Members (8) to serve on each of the following Committees for 2025-2026.

Management, Policy & Finance; Planning and Development; Staff Employment & Training; Events & Special Activities.

Nominations were sort for the Management, Policy and Finance committee.

Following more nominations than seats, the Town Mayor moved to a vote.

Cllr H Morton left the meeting at this point.

Following a tied vote, Cllr R Elvin proposed, seconded by Cllr W Little that the committees be split 5/3. Cllr K Rowham proposed an amendment to the proposal, seconded by Cllr D Thomas, that each committee should include a member from a political party and the split should be 5/2/1.

A vote by show of hands defeated Cllr K Rowham's amendment to the proposal. A vote for Cllr E Elvins proposal was passed. Cllr K Rowham, Cllr K Pearson & Cllr D Thomas abstained from the vote.

Members to agree representatives and inform TC.

Management, Policy & Finance - Cllr J Bonsall, Cllr P Dowell, Cllr R Elvin, Cllr D Geddis, Cllr P Hall, Cllr K Pearson, Cllr D Thomas and Cllr S Waterston.

Planning and Development - Cllr K Angus, Cllr J Bonsall, Cllr D Geddis, Cllr L Gibson, Cllr S Holt, Cllr W Little, Cllr K Rowham and Cllr S Waterston.

Staff Employment and Training - Cllr D Brennan, Cllr P Dowell, Cllr D Geddis, Cllr W Little, Cllr R Meadows, Cllr K Pearson, Cllr S Waterston and Cllr S Wood-Brass.

Special Activities - Cllr K Angus, Cllr D Brennan, D Geddis, Cllr P Hall, Cllr H Morton and Cllr S Waterston.

7) **Appointments to outside bodies:**

Town Council to make Member appointments to the following:

The Town Council **resolved** to approve nominations to outside bodies as outlined below.

- Co. Durham Association of Local Councils Executive - Cllr D Geddis
- Larger Councils Forum – Cllr D Thomas, Cllr D Geddis & Cllr S Waterston

Following more nominations than seats, Cllr R Elvin proposed a 2/1 split, seconded by Cllr W Little. **Agreed** by the Council.

- Hetton Town Trust – Cllr K Pearson & Cllr C Willis

Following more nominations than seats, Cllr R Elvin proposed an equal split, seconded by Cllr L Gibson. **Agreed** by the Council.

- Sunderland City Council Standards Committee - Cllr D Geddis & Cllr D Thomas
- Sunderland City Council Coalfield Area Committee - Cllr P Dowell
- Eppleton Quarry Liaison Committee - Cllr D Geddis
- Sunderland VSA - Cllr K Angus
- Hetton Colliery Railway 200 Committees
 - Technology; Learning & Events - Cllr K Angus
 - Lectures - Cllr W Little
 - Publications and Exhibitions – Cllr S Waterston
 - Partnerships & Hetton Heritage Partnership – Cllr S Holt

8) **Calendar of meetings:**

Town Council to consider approval of the schedule of meetings for 2025-2026.

TC referred to the previously circulated meetings calendar.

Meeting start times - March - October 7.15pm/November - February 6.00pm

19 May 2025

16 June 2025

21 July 2025

15 September 2025

20 October 2025

17 November 2025

15 December 2025

19 January 2026

16 February 2026

16 March 2026

20 April 2026

18 May 2026 Annual Meeting of Town Council

Annual Town Meeting: Thursday 14 May 2026

Committee meetings to be convened on an ad hoc basis in line with established arrangements; with the exception of Planning & Development Cmtee subject to a planned schedule (TBD).

Town Council **resolved** to approve the proposed dates and start times of Full Council meetings.

9) **Public participation:**

Questions to be taken from members of the public for a maximum of 30 minutes in line with the Council's Public Participation policy.

A MoP representing local Veterans thanked the Town Council for their efforts as part of the VE Day celebrations.

A MoP complained about a rat problem near Scotts Terrace and the old nurse as well as wet leaves causing a slip hazard near the Union Street Bungalows. TC to **report** these issues to SCC.

10) **Minutes:**

- a) To receive and consider approval of the draft minutes of the meeting of the Staff, Employment & Training Committee held on 20 February 2025.

Town Council **resolved** to approve the draft minutes and recommendations of the Meeting of the Staff, Employment & Training Committee held on 20 February 2025.

- b) To receive and consider approval of the draft minutes of the meeting of Hetton Town Council held on Tuesday 22 April 2025.

Town Council **resolved** to approve the draft minutes of the meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 22 April 2025.

11) Reports from Members: Ward matters to be investigated.

Cllr K Rowham noted concerns regarding the stream at Bog Row which had been filled it. Cllr D Geddis noted SCC had issued a statement stating it was a temporary measure whilst drainage works were completed. It was **agreed** that the Town Council write a letter of concern to SCC.

Cllr S Waterston had received complaints regarding dust from Eppleton Quarry and proposed the Town Council sought to restart the quarterly meetings with representatives from the Quarry. **Agreed**, TC to write to Eppleton Quarry.

Cllr D Geddis had been contacted via Facebook regarding a proposed planning development off North Road, Hetton-le-Hole. TC noted she had received an email from Gladman requesting a closed meeting with the Town Council. **Agreed** to take this matter to the planning committee.

Cllr K Pearson had been approached by a MoP regarding the public toilets in Hetton, noting that the disabled toilets light was not working. Cllr K Angus had also received complaints that the toilets were being locked by 3pm. It was also noted that the Town Council had previously requested baby changing facilities.

Cllr K Rowham noted that the New Inn pub was looking very run down and suggested the Town Council approach SCC to request SCC purchase it possibly to knock down and create additional parking for the school.

Cllr K Rowham requested an update regarding installing the new Town Council photograph in the Council Chamber. TC noted that the request had been made to HTT and was awaiting a response.

Cllr L Gibson requested an update on Elemore Country Park. Cllr J Defty noted that SCC had posted on Facebook that the café would be reopening shortly on a weekend.

Cllr L Gibson requested an update regarding the old Hetton Nursery building. Cllr D Geddis noted SCC had the property up for sale.

Cllr S Woods-Brass requested an update for Easington Lane clock as it was still not working. A four-week window had been given which has now passed.

Agreed TC to report these matters to SCC and request updates.

12) Sunderland City Councillor(s) - Hetton and Copt Hill wards:

City Councillors will be invited to attend.

There were no Sunderland City Council Councillors in attendance.

13) Update from Town Clerk including local issues.

Report of G Keedy, former Town Clerk

- * Photo ID badges, holders and lanyards received and being distributed.
One missing - requested from supplier and production confirmed.
- * Internal notice boards: existing in foyer to be relocated to Mall and sited alongside another currently held in storage. Quote received from SCC and order placed for installation.
- * A request has been made to Clean-It, Green-It (Springboard) for the repaint of Memorial benches x 2 in Mini Park, and coal wagon sited in Interchange.
In abeyance pending Springboard recruitment.
- * Barclays mandate change forms for new Town Clerk submitted in advance of GK

departure to ensure continuity. Barclays has confirmed (12 May) that processing is at an advanced stage.

- * New accountancy software package (Scribe) ordered as previously agreed.
- * Request made to Hetton Town Trust for permission to display artefacts and photos in Council Chamber. Acknowledged and trustees are considering.
- * Locksmith has attended to gain access to locked vintage tambour cabinet in TC office. Empty!
- * SCC has now given permission for planters to be located at various sites.
1 x site is Gentoo and their permission previously given.
New TC to arrange ordering, installation and identify potential contractor for planting and ongoing maintenance.
- * Response received from CDALC re NE Mayor engagement with the local council sector. (circulated 14 05 25).

Town Council **resolved** to note the Town Clerk's update.

14) Financial report:

Town Council to consider the report and approve expenditure.

Town Council **resolved** to approve the financial report and expenditure outlined below.

Income:	NIL
Staffing expenditure:	
Outgoing Town Clerk net salary (add. hours April only)	£647.28
New Town Clerk net salary (hours worked to date)	£248.10
HMRC (Combined employer/employee liabilities)	£286.57
NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions)	DD £21.05
Sub-total:	£1203.00
Other expenditure:	
T & A Dixon Accountancy Services (payroll services 6 Oct 24 - 5 April 25)	£70.00
Adobe Ireland (monthly charge for Adobe Pro)	DC £19.97
Amazon UK (plate stands and table decs for VE Day 80 event)	DC £35.47
BT (monthly broadband charge)	DD £41.93
Hetton Town Trust (staff cover for 22 April 25 meeting)	£60.00
Town & City Gift cards (gift card prizes for VE Day event)	DC £78.50
EE (mobile phone - 4 May 25)	DD £12.04
Photography by Jess (group photo of Members 24-25)	DC £40.00
Carol Croft (VE Day 80 cake)	Cash £110.00
Pricewise Bargains (cable ties for decals)	DC £14.95
Superior Gifts Ltd, Hetton (VE Day 80 decorations)	DC £30.49
Sharon Cardno (entertainer - VE Day 80 event)	Cash £125.00
B Willis Agriculture Services Ltd (provision of fencing for beacon)	DC £50.00
Harle Peel Gas Supplies (propane for VE Day 80 beacon)	DC £40.00
Centre Spot Café (Catering for VE Day 80 event)	£827.20
Hetton Town Trust (tablecloth hire for VE Day 80 event)	£60.00
Hetton Centre Trading Ltd (teas and coffees for VE Day 80 event)	£30.00
Kevin Hosking Photography (attendance at VE Day 80 event)	£80.00
Westoe Gallery (picture framer - Member group photo 24-25)	Cash £45.00
Amazon UK (decorations for VE Day 80 event - Member reimbursement)	Cash £28.45
C Naylor Locksmith (access to locked tambour cabinet)	Cash £25.00
Flagpole Express (2 x Union Jack flags incl. delivery)	DC £79.74
Post Office Ltd (8 x 1 st class postage stamps)	DC £13.60
Transfer to Town Mayor Fund (Co-op Account)	£2000.00
Konica Minolta (Printing)	£68.71
Sub-total:	£3986.05
	Total: £5189.05
	£129,250.19

Barclays Current account balance @ 12 May 25:

Signed:

Date:

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Anticipated current account balance if all paid:	£124,129.85
Barclays Premium account:	
Balance @ 12 May 25:	£29,237.76

Town Mayor Fund

Income:	Nil
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Expenditure:	
Culture for Hetton (donation)	£887.50
MS Trust (donation)	£887.50
Co-op Account balance @ 12 May 25	£1775.00
Co-op Account balance (after payment)	Nil

15) General correspondence: Up to date list to be tabled for consideration.

Town Council **resolved** to take action as indicated below:

SCC – Notice of premises to rent at Elemore Country Park – **TC request update from SCC**

CDALC – Training opportunities and new “how to respond to planning document” – **TC to email information to all members**

Gladman – Planning proposal North Road – **Schedule Planning and Development Committee.**

MoP – Thanks for VE Day celebrations – **Noted**

MoP – ASB & Fly Tipping near Perkins Close/Downs Lane – **TC to contact SCC**

16) Date and time of next meeting: 19.15 hrs on Monday 16 June 2025.

The meeting was closed to MoP 8.40pm.

Confidential Business: Members of the public and press to be excluded (Exclusion under the Admissions to Public Meetings Act 1960)

17) The Hetton Centre:

Town Council to receive an update.

TC had received independent advice and noted the response. Town Council **resolved** to leave this matter with TC to pursue further.

18) Hetton Town Trust:

Town Council to receive an update re trustee issue.

TC advised the Town Council of the response for the Charities Commission. The information was **noted**.

The meeting was closed at 8.55pm.