



Hetton Town Council



Minutes of the Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on Monday 15 December 2025 at The Hetton Centre, Welfare Road, Hetton le Hole, County Durham, DH5 9NE

Present

Cllr K Angus, Cllr J Bonsall, Cllr R Elvin, Cllr D Geddis (Deputy Mayor), Cllr L Gibson, Cllr P Hall, Cllr S Holt, Cllr K Rowham and Cllr D Thomas.

In attendance

L Hall (Town Clerk), Cllr I McKinley (SSC) & 3 MoP

Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr D Geddis, chaired the meeting due to apologies received from the Town Mayor, Cllr P Dowell.

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr P Dowell (prior commitment), Cllr S Waterston (prior commitment), Cllr W Little (holiday), Cllr R Meadows (unwell), Cllr S Woods-Brass (family commitment), Cllr D Brennan (family commitment), Cllr J Green (working) & Cllr K Pearson (unwell).

Town Council **resolved** to approve apologies.

There were no apologies from Cllr J Defty, Cllr H Morton, Cllr C Willis or Cllr M Pigdon. Town Council recorded their absence as unapproved.

2) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3) Public participation:

A Member of the Public noted they were campaigning for a zebra crossing to be installed between Hollowdene and the Social Club and asked the Town Council how to proceed. It was **agreed** the Town Council write to SCC to request guidance on the correct procedure.

4) Minutes:

Town Council **resolved to approve** the minutes of the below meetings.

- Hetton Town Council held on 17 November 2025.
- P&D Committee meeting held on 9 December 2025.
- MP&F Committee meeting held on 11 December 2025.

5) Sunderland City Councillors:

The newly elected Sunderland City Councillor for the Hetton Ward, Cllr Ian McKinney, was welcomed by the Town Council and thanked for attending the meeting.

6) Reports from Members:

Cllr K Angus

- Provided an update regarding the Christmas tree at the Downs, which had been leaning and had uneven lighting. SCC had attended to inspect the issue.

Cllr D Thomas

- Noted comments made by Cllr M Burrell, SCC Councillor for Houghton ward regarding Hetton Town Council.

Cllr L Gibson

- Reported flooding outside Heron Foods in Hetton; however, SCC responded to advise that the land in question was not adopted.
Action: Town Clerk to contact SCC for clarification.

Cllr D Geddis

- Noted that Bellway, in Easington Lane, were not cleaning the roads, which were in a poor condition.
Action: Town Clerk to contact Bellway.



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7) Financial report:

7a) Town Council **approved** expenditure.

Income:

Barclays Bank (Interest)	£429.91
	£429.91

Staffing expenditure:

Town Clerk net salary	£1,555.64
HMRC	£439.46

Sub-total: £1,995.10

Other expenditure:

Adobe Ireland (monthly charge for Adobe Pro)	£19.97
Lebara (Mobile Phone)	£3.95
Hetton Town Trust (Meetings)	£157.50
Scribe (Monthly charge)	£58.80
Party Time Group (Grotto)	£366.30
Home Bargains (Christmas Fayre)	£2.71
R Mangles (Face Painting)	£330.00
F&S McGee (Santa)	£100.00
Broxap (Planters)	£3438.00
Legend on a Bench (Donation)	£500.00
The Centre Sport Café (Armistice)	£463.50
BT (Broadband)	£41.93

Sub-total: £5,482.66

Funds Transferred (Savings Account to Community Account):	£5000.00
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Barclays Current account balance @ 15 December 25:	£7,479.68
Barclays Premium account balance @ 15 December 25:	£141,635.87

Town Mayor Fund

Co-op Account balance @ 9 December 25:	£2,000.00
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7b) Bank Mandate and online banking access

The Town Clerk noted that at present only one Councillor had access to the online banking and advised that, to ensure business continuity, there should be at least two. It was **agreed** to add Cllr Geddis to the online banking mandate.

7c) To agree budget and precept request for 2026/27

Cllr Elvin, Chair of the MP&F Committee, explained the Town Council's budget position and the reasons for the proposed 2% precept increase, including uncertainty around the Local Council Grant, rent at the Hetton Centre, and other potential income reductions. The Town Council **agreed** to the increase, noting that it wished to keep increases to a minimum. The table below shows the annual increase for each Council Tax band.

Band	Council Tax 2025/26	Council Tax 2026/27	Annual Increase
A	£10.03	£10.23	£0.20
B	£11.71	£11.94	£0.23
C	£13.37	£13.63	£0.26
D	£15.05	£15.35	£0.30
E	£18.39	£18.76	£0.37
F	£21.74	£22.17	£0.43
G	£25.08	£25.58	£0.50
H	£30.10	£30.70	£0.60

Signed:

Date:

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8) Hetton Town Council News

Cllr Rowham provided an update on behalf of the Working Party to Full Council.
The information was noted.

9) Flower Planter Update

The Town Clerk noted that Eppleton and Easington Lane had agreed to assist with maintaining the planters. East Rainton had not responded to correspondence.
Cllr Gibson noted she had a contact within the school and agreed to seek a response.

10) The Hetton Centre

Cllr Elvin, Chair of the MP&F Committee, provided an update to Full Council.
Town Council **agreed** to the recommendations made by the MP&F Committee.

11) VCS meeting update – Cllr K Angus

Cllr Angus reported that the HALO team has been rebranded as the Community Safety Hub and now covers the whole Coalfields area, with Kayleigh Thomas managing the hub. Cllr Angus raised concerns about how residents should contact HALO and was advised that contact is currently online only. The Town Council **agreed** to write to HALO requesting an update and clarification on contact arrangements, noting that not all residents have access to the internet.

Cllr Angus also highlighted that Sharpe is operating as a Centre of Warmth throughout the winter and has Keep Warm packs available free of charge to households in need.

Cllr Thomas and ELCAP can also provide packs. Members of the public are encouraged to make contact if support is required.

12) Town Clerk Resources

The Town Clerk proposed that the Town Council purchase a subscription to ChatGPT Plus at £20 per month, replacing the current Adobe subscription at £19 per month. The Clerk noted that ChatGPT Plus offers advanced capabilities and provides greater overall benefit to council operations.

Town Council **agreed** to the proposal.

13) Planning Applications

25/02242/FUL

Rear 21 Houghton Road Hetton-le-Hole Houghton-le-Spring DH5 9PQ Erection of two detached dwellings with detached double garages, vehicular access, hardstanding areas and associated landscaping.

Town Council made **no objections**.

25/02818/FUL

Pollensa North Road Hetton-le-Hole Houghton-le-Spring DH5 9NN Extensions and alterations to dwelling comprising addition of first floor, two storey front and side extension, two storey and single storey rear extensions, single storey side extension with accommodation in roof space, and alterations to existing side garage

Town Council made **no objections**.

14) Illuminated Motif Update

The motif had been installed at Hetton Mini Park and was currently operating on a 24-hour cycle. Town Clerk had made enquiries regarding the installation of a timer. It was noted that one section of the motif does not appear to be working fully, and the company responsible for installation were looking to rectify the issue.



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15) Legend on a Bench Update

It was noted that there was a good turnout at the unveiling and that attendees were very positive about the project. There was a last-minute issue with the installation of the bench, which was temporarily installed for the unveiling on Friday 5th December. Town Clerk had received a quote of £235 to have the bench reinstalled with a concrete base. Town Council **agreed** to accept the quote.

16) Town Clerk update:

Elemore Park

HTC requested an update from SCC on the café tenancy and park development. SCC advised that the café letting was on hold pending a review of their Community Assets Transfer Policy. The transformation of Elemore Country Park was ongoing with the Links with Nature team, enhancing biodiversity and community wellbeing, alongside a programme of events actively promoted to the wider community.

Gentoo

Gentoo had written to the TC to share the programme of internal works due to take place 25/26 and noted the programme was not yet approved for 26/27.

Airbnb at Whitethroat Close

Persimmon had been contacted regarding the covenants attached to their properties concerning business use. Persimmon confirmed that they do not enforce these covenants, as they are intended for individuals to enforce against one another.

17) General Correspondence:

Footpath at Fox & Hounds

A member of the public contacted the Town Council regarding the condition of the footpath near the former Fox & Hound site following a fall. The Town Clerk advised that SCC should be contacted.

Action: Town Council to write to SCC highlighting the issue.

CDALC

Nominations were open for the Royal Garden Party and the Lord Lieutenant's retirement celebration.

The Town Council nominated Cllr K Pearson to attend the events.

The Big Spring Clean

The Big Spring Clean will take place in 2026 from 2 March to 4 May.

This will be added to the agenda for the next Events Committee meeting.

Christmas Service

Easington Lane Independent Methodist Church invited council members to attend their Christmas Service on Sunday 21 December at 5.30pm. Names of attendees to be provided to the Town Clerk.

18) Date and time of next meeting:

Monday 19 January 2026 commencing 6.45pm at **Moorsley Hut**.

Hetton Town Council extended its best wishes to all for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.