



Hetton Town Council



Minutes of the Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on Monday 15 June 2026 at Easington Lane Community Access Point, Easington Lane, DH5 0LE

Present

Cllr K Angus, Cllr J Bonsall, Cllr D Brennan, Cllr P Dowell, Cllr L Gibson, Cllr J Lloyd, Cllr P Hall (Town Mayor), Cllr H Morton, Cllr K Rowham & Cllr D Thomas.

In attendance

L Hall (Town Clerk), Cllr J Lloyd (SCC), Cllr D Cowey (SCC) & 5 MoP

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Elvin (work commitment), Cllr R Meadows (unwell), Cllr C Willis (prior commitment), Cllr D Geddis (unwell), Cllr S Waterston (unwell), Cllr W Little (prior commitment) and Cllr J Defty (work commitment).

Resolved: That the apologies received be accepted.

No apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Holt, Cllr M Pigdon, Cllr J Green or Cllr S Woods-Brass.

Resolved: That the absences be noted as unapproved.

Members considered a request from Cllr D Geddis for approval of an extended absence from meetings due to ill health.

Following a vote, with 6 Members voting in favour and 4 against, it was:

Resolved: That, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, Cllr D Geddis be granted approval for his continued absence from meetings due to ill health for a period of three months, with the matter to be reviewed in September 2026.

2) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3) Public participation

A member of the public enquired about several outstanding issues.

- In relation to the proposed zebra crossing, Cllr Thomas advised that several emails had been sent; however, no response had been received and the matter had therefore been escalated.
- The Town Clerk advised that no update had been received regarding the possibility of extending the pedestrian safety barriers outside the Post Office.
- The Town Clerk also confirmed that there had been no progress regarding the fly-tipping reported at the allotments.

A member of the public raised concerns regarding vehicles parking near the entrance to the Methodist Church car park and enquired whether the double yellow lines could be extended to improve visibility and access. Concerns were also expressed regarding increasing levels of inappropriate parking within the area and a request was made for increased enforcement by parking wardens.

Members **agreed** to identify locations within their wards where parking issues are particularly problematic so that the concerns can be raised with the relevant authority.

Cllr D Thomas, seconded by Cllr K Rowham, proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the City Councillors to provide an update on the matter.

Following a vote, with 9 Members voting in favour and 1 against, it was:

Resolved: that Standing Orders be suspended to permit the City Councillors to respond.

Cllr D Cowey advised that Sunderland City Council was currently reviewing its enforcement policy and considering changes to the way enforcement activities were monitored and delivered. Cllr Cowey encouraged residents to continue reporting issues directly to Sunderland City Council, as reports helped to identify problem areas and inform future enforcement activity.

Signed:

Date:

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Members of the public requested an update on the planning application at 3 Alexander Drive. Cllr Gibson advised that she had contacted the Planning Authority regarding a determination date. Members also queried whether retrospective planning permission may be required for the loft conversion and the use of the additional bedrooms.

It was **agreed** that the Town Clerk would seek an update.

Members of the public enquired whether there had been any update regarding the future of the former Social Club. It was noted that no information had been received and no further developments were known.

4) Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 18th May 2026 were **agreed** and signed by the Town Mayor.

5) Sunderland City Councillors

There were no additional updates to report.

6) Reports from Members

Cllr Gibson raised concerns regarding the running of the café at Elemore Country Park by Elemore Collective CIC, citing a lack of transparency surrounding the decision-making process. Cllr Thomas had also raised concerns with Sunderland City Council and requested that the process be paused pending further clarification. It was noted that a Freedom of Information request had been submitted seeking information on when the decision was made and whether any funding had been provided to the CIC.

Resolved: that the Town Clerk write to Sunderland City Council on behalf of the Council outlining members' concerns and requesting further information regarding the arrangements.

It was also noted that several entrances to Hetton Lyons Country Park had locked gates, making access difficult and in some cases impossible, for wheelchair users and those with prams.

Resolved: that the Town Clerk write to the relevant authority requesting that access arrangements be reviewed to ensure the park is accessible to all users.

Cllr Angus raised concerns regarding bins associated with the betting shop at the bottom of Richard Street, which were reportedly obstructing the footpath and causing difficulties for pedestrians. Cllr Lloyd advised that the matter had already been reported to the relevant authority.

It was noted that the former Blacksmith's, is currently only open to the public two days each year and Cllr Angus felt that the site could provide an excellent educational resource for local schools and young people.

Resolved: that enquiries be made with the group responsible for operating the site to establish what would be required to facilitate more regular opening.

Cllr Rowham advised that she had become aware of a meeting held in Easington Lane regarding a proposed housing development near Clarence Court and queried why the Town Council had not been notified.

Resolved: that the Town Clerk write to the relevant authority requesting that the Town Council be informed of all future screening and consultation meetings relating to developments within the Town Council area.

Cllr P Dowell left the meeting at 8pm

Cllr Hall and Cllr Thomas reported they had attended a PACT meeting during which, it was suggested that there were currently no significant issues within the Hetton area.



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Members expressed concern that this did not reflect the range of concerns regularly raised with the Town Council by residents. It was therefore **agreed** that representatives from HALO be invited to attend a future meeting of the Town Council to discuss local issues and community safety concerns.

7) Planning Applications

Members were advised that planning application 25/01432/OUT for the erection of 255 dwellings on land off North Road, submitted by Gladman, had been lodged as an appeal. The appeal has been assigned reference 6008403.

Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the Town Council apply for Rule 6 status to participate fully in the appeal proceedings and present evidence on behalf of the local community.

City of Sunderland Parking Restrictions

Burdon Road, Sunderland

Members considered the proposal and raised no objections. However, it was agreed that should the pay and display system operate solely via a pay-by-phone method, the Council would object on the grounds that such a system is not accessible to all users and could disadvantage those without access to a mobile phone or digital payment facilities.

West Street, Sunderland

The council made **no objections**.

Update on Pay by Phone Objection, Bonner's Field, Sunderland

Sunderland City Council had responded to the Town Council's objection, setting out the rationale behind the proposal. Members considered the response but remained concerned that a pay-and-display system operating solely through a pay-by-phone method would disadvantage some users, particularly those without access to a mobile phone, digital payment methods or the necessary technological skills. The Council therefore **maintained its objection** and considered the proposal to be discriminatory and inaccessible to a section of the community.

8) Financial report:

8a: Town Council to consider the report and approve expenditure.

Income:

Bank Interest	£378.78
Sub-Total:	£378.78

Staffing expenditure:

Town Clerk net salary	£1,646.91
NEST (pension contributions)	£107.47
Sub-total:	£1,754.38

Other expenditure:

Lebara (Mobile Phone)	£3.95
BT (Broadband)	£45.53
Scribe (Monthly charge)	£58.80
Hetton Town Trust (Meeting Cover)	£22.50
Zurich (Insurance)	£313.56
ICO (Data Protection Fee)	£47.00
Eppleton FC (Grant)	£750.00
Hetton Jrs FC (Grant)	£750.00
Sub-total:	£1,991.34

Barclays Current account balance @ 15 June 26:	£3,800.22
Barclays Premium account balance @ 15 June 26:	£152,345.81

Signed:

Date:

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Town Mayor Fund

Income: NIL

Expenditure:

Hetton Town Trust (tablecloths)

£40.00

Sub-Total: £40.00

Co-op Account balance @ 15 June 26:

£8.61

8b: Community Grant Requests

A grant application for £750 had been received from Hetton Juniors Lazio. Members queried whether the team formed part of Hetton Juniors Football Club and were advised that, whilst they were affiliated to the club, they were responsible for their own fundraising activities. It was noted that the Town Council had previously awarded a grant of £750 to Hetton Juniors. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the Town Clerk seek clarification from K Turnbull regarding the relationship between Hetton Juniors Lazio and the wider club before any decision on the application was made.

8c: To discuss quotes for supports to illuminated motif

Two quotations had been received for the works. The first quote was for £485 including installation, whilst the second quote was for £960. Both quotations included an additional cost of £120 for painting.

Following consideration, it was **agreed** to accept the first quotation. It was further agreed that the posts be left galvanised rather than painted, resulting in a total cost of £485.

9) Town Mayor's Charities 2026/27

Cllr P Hall, Town Mayor, advised that her chosen charities for the year were the Bradley Lowery Foundation and ELCAP and invited fundraising ideas from Members.

It was also agreed that a policy be developed to clarify the purpose and permitted use of the Mayor's Fund.

10) Town Council Committees

Following discussion, it was **agreed** to dissolve the Staff, Employment and Training Committee. Members noted that there was significant overlap between the responsibilities of this committee and those of the Management, Policy and Finance Committee and felt that combining the functions would streamline the Council's governance arrangements and reduce duplication.

11) General Correspondence

Sunderland City Council had provided prices for Christmas trees.

Following discussion, it was **agreed** to order four 25ft Christmas trees for this year.

Members also **agreed** that a working group should be established to explore the feasibility of planting living Christmas trees in future years.

A quotation had been received for updating the honour boards in the Council Chamber.

Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the matter be referred to the Management, Policy and Finance Committee for further consideration and to make a recommendation to Council.

A member of the public had contacted the Council regarding rubbish being burnt to the rear of Byer Street. Members noted that this is an ongoing issue which the Council is already aware of and has been attempting to address in partnership with HALO and Gentoo.

It was suggested that a CCTV camera be installed in the area to help identify those responsible. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that HALO be contacted for an update on the matter and that a complaint be submitted to Environmental Health. Cllr Thomas advised



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that a multi-agency meeting had been arranged to discuss the ongoing issues and potential solutions.

Correspondence had been received from County Durham Association of Local Councils regarding the possibility of the Council hosting the next Forums Meeting on 16 July. The Town Clerk advised that the cost of room hire and refreshments would be approximately £60. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the Council would host the meeting.

Notification had been received that the Council's annual subscription to Campaign to Protect Rural England was due for renewal.

It was **agreed** to increase the Council's annual contribution from £36 to £50 in recognition of the support provided by the organisation and renew the subscription.

It was noted that the Annual Civic Miners' Service at Union Street Methodist Church would take place on Sunday 5 July 2026. Members further noted that 2026 marks the 75th anniversary of the Eppleton Colliery Disaster, making this years' service particularly significant.

A member of the public had contacted the Council seeking assistance with an ongoing housing-related issue. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the resident be advised to contact Occupational Health for support and guidance.

12) Town Clerk update

The Town Clerk reported that correspondence had been sent to Sunderland City Council requesting consideration of the introduction of an Article 4 Direction in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation. Cllr C Eynon had responded and agreed to pursue the matter with the relevant officers.

It was reported that concerns regarding the condition of pavements in Hetton had been raised with Sunderland City Council, with a request that the affected areas be inspected and any necessary repairs considered.

An issue relating to overgrown greenery at St Cuthbert's Close was reported. The Town Clerk advised that both Gentoo and Sunderland City Council had been contacted to establish ownership and responsibility for the land. Gentoo had responded and advised that, in their view, the land belongs to Sunderland City Council. No response had yet been received from Sunderland City Council.

A response had been received from Sunderland City Council to the Council's Freedom of Information request regarding the cost of repairs carried out on the A182. The information provided had been circulated to Members for their consideration. Following discussion, it was agreed that the matter be included as an item on a future agenda to allow for further discussion and consideration of any potential actions.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that the Council's Garden Competition closes at the beginning of August and encouraged Councillors to continue promoting the competition.

Armed Forces Day would take place on Sunday 28 June 2026. Town Clerk advised that the Armed Forces Day flag would be raised at Hetton Mini Park on Monday 22 June 2026 at 10.00am. Councillors were invited to attend should they wish to do so.

13) Date and time of next meeting

Monday 20th July 2026 commencing 6.45pm at **The Hetton Centre.**

Meeting closed at 8:50pm