



**Minutes of a meeting of East Bedlington Parish Council held on Tuesday 1 July 2025
at East Bedlington Community Centre**

PRESENT:

Councillor Dawn Crosby
Councillor Keith Grimes (Chairman)
Councillor Paul Hedley
Councillor Mary Murphy
Councillor Keith Scantlebury
Councillor Caroline Rogers
Councillor Len Smith
Councillor Roger Spriddell
Councillor Grant Ward
Councillor Rebecca Wilczek

In attendance:

Jenny Tindale – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
11 Members of the public.

		ACTION
	The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.	
CO35/25	PUBLIC SESSION A member of the public enquired about the possibility of moving the bus shelter outside Premier Stores to nearer Station Walk to facilitate a bus shelter. The Clerk advised that the Council awaited a decision from NCC on replacement screens for the existing bus shelters. She added that his views regarding the relocation of the bus shelter were in line with the thinking of the Parish Council but as previously reported NCC have appointed external consultants to make recommendations on improving the street scene and a report is not expected until quarter two of 2026/27. She added that the Parish Council would lobby for full community consultation and suggested that he submit a written request to the Council.	
CO36/25	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were noted from Councillor Allan Stewart (previous engagement) RESOLVED: (i) The apologies be noted.	Clerk
CO37/25	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING RESOLVED: That;	

	(i) The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 13 May be agreed as a true record. (ii) The minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 13 May 2025 be signed as a true record. (iii) The minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting held on 17 June 2025 be signed as a true record.	
CO38/25	Clerk & Officers Update The Clerk had circulated a written report prior to the meeting. In addition to the information provided she added the Nocturnal Bat Survey had been cancelled due to wet weather. It was hoped that this could be re-arranged very quickly to ensure the new planning date was preserved. Members were invited to comment on the intention to engage a hospitality consultant to prepare a business plan for the proposed Café / Bistro at a cost of £300 per day. The work is likely to take 2 days. RESOLVED: That; (i) The Clerk and Officer Report be noted. (ii) A business plan be prepared for the Café / Bistro utilizing an external hospitality professional.	
CO39/25	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION There were no disclosures or requests.	
CO40/25	POLICE REPORT A report prepared by Sgt Cook had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that he is leaving his role to take up a post in Sunderland. The Clerk added that she had received earlier in the afternoon, notification that the Neighbourhood Team intended to cease the pop up police station initiative. Resolved: That; The Clerk write to the Neighbourhood Inspector and express the Council's disappointment in the withdrawal from engagement and seek clarification on what type of engagement they expected to achieve. Correspondence to be copied to Crime Commissioner.	
CO41/25	NCC COUNCILLOR REPORTS Councillor Austin submitted a detailed report which was circulated to Members. The Chair referred to a meeting held at Earth Balance and asked Councillor Spriddell, who had been present to elaborate.	

	Councillor Spriddell added that the Cancer Treatment Plant is scheduled to reopen and the plans for a Health Village, retail units, pub, social housing and therapy centre were still being discussed. RESOLVED: That; Thanks be noted to Councillor Austin for his report and that the report be noted.	
CO42/25	CORRESPONDENCE RESOLVED: (i) That the correspondence be noted.	
CO43/25	PLANNING RESOLVED: That; (i) The planning applications and determinations be noted. (ii) Comments on the BESS application be added to the portal – support on the proviso that there is greater biodiversity offer and that tree planting could take place elsewhere in the Parish. (iii) That there be no objections to application 25/02269/FUL .	
CO44/25	FINANCE REPORT The Responsible Financial Officer presented the suite of reports explaining the relevance for the benefit of new members. RESOLVED That the, (i) Schedule of receipts and payments for the month ended 30 June be approved. • Cleared balances as 30 June of £ 16,459.29 • Deposit account £00.12 • CCLA Investment account 350,000 be noted. (ii) Budget report for as at 30 June 2025 be noted. (iii) Detailed Income and expenditure for the month ended 30 June 2025 be noted. (iv) Balance Sheet for the month ended 30 June be noted.	
CO22/25	WORKING GROUPS Minutes of the working groups held since the last full council meeting were circulated prior to the meeting for information. That; The minutes of (i) The Staffing Committee held 27 May 2025 (ii) Planning & Economic Regeneration held 10 June 2025 (iii) Services Working Group held 17 June 2025 , and,	

	(iv) Finance & General Purposes Working Group held 24 June 2025 be noted.	
CO46/25	RISK REGISTER Members reviewed the risk register, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The amendments were duly recorded in the minutes of the Finance & General Purpose Working Group. The Chairman noted that the greatest amendment is the change to Risk 14 and the challenges facing East Bedlington Community Centre. RESOLVED: That; Members note the review of the Risk Register.	
CO47/25	SMALL GRANTS & DONATIONS The Chairman reported on the work of the Charity and commented on its achievements in recent years. Members were unanimous in agreement to support the recommendation of the Finance & General Purpose Working Group. RESOLVED: That; A grant of £500 be awarded to Escape Family Support	
CO48/25	MATTERS FOR DECISION (i) Members were requested to form a task and finish group to agree any changes to be made to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, with a recommendation to be prepared for submission to Full Council 1 September. (ii) The Staff Continuity Plan had been circulated for member approval. It was considered a measured and robust plan. (iii) It was explained that the appointment of an apprentice is part of the continuity plan to allow an opportunity for a young person to build qualifications in business administration and develop a career as a parish council officer. (iv) Members discussed a proposal put forward by an absent member. Concerns were noted that the proposal would create extra work for the officers, that members could not discuss confidential or financially sensitive matters with members of the public present, that members views may be misrepresented outside the meeting and aspirations raised before decisions had been made by the Full Council. It was also noted that there were many more methods to engage with the Community and that the matter had not been raised by a member of the community. It was also noted that residents of the parish had elected members to act on their behalf. Members were unanimous in their decision.	

	RESOLVED: That; (i) A task and finish group consisting of Councillors Grimes, Spriddell, Smith and Wilczek be appointed to review Standing Orders & Financial Regulations. (ii) Members approve and adopt the Staff Continuity Plan as recommended by the Staffing Committee and Finance & General Purpose Working Group (iii) Members approve the engagement of an apprentice as per the Staff Continuity Plan. (iv) Members of the Public should not be in attendance at Parish Council Working Groups.	
CO29/25	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Tuesday 2 September 2025	

Signed: **Chairman** **Date:**