

WINDLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held 18th February, 2025 at Hutton House, Chilton

Present:	Councillor Dave Willshaw (DW) (Chair) Councillor Derek Cattell (DC) Councillor Phil Woods (PAW) Councillor Allison Morris (AM) County Councillor Jullie Cairns (JC) Karen Younghusband, Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (KY) Kate Ward, Senior Safer Places Officer, Durham County Council (KW) 5 Members of the Public were also in attendance.	ACTION
50/24-25	Apologies Councillor David Oliver	
51/24-25	Declarations of Interest No declarations of Interest were received.	
52/24-25	Presentation by Kate Ward, Senior Safer Places Officer for Durham County Council The Chair welcomed Kate Ward to the Meeting. Kate, who is an ex-Police Officer, introduced herself and explained her role as the Senior Safety Officer for Durham County Council, covering the South of the County, from Peterlee to Weardale, and also linking across the border with Cumbria. Kate reminded residents of the importance of reporting incidents to the Police using either the 101-phone number or the online chat facility. Kate reported on matters previously raised in relation to the concrete bollards at the end of Eden Gardens and the cut at the end of the Cottages, which youths on motorbikes were frequently using as a cut-through. Unfortunately, both issues were problematic to address, as consideration needed to be given to disabled access. The cut was not wide enough to support the installation of a kissing gate that could accommodate a wheelchair/pushchair. Similarly installing a crash barrier in place of the concrete bollards, would prevent access by wheelchair/pushchair users. With no clear solution, Kate offered to keep the matter on record, and if the issue with motorbikes persisted then it could potentially be re-assessed.	
53/24-25	Approve Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held 27th November 2024 Members agreed to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Windlestone Parish Council held 27 th November 2024.	
54/24-25	Matters Arising from the Minutes Councillor Woods reported that the Public Footpath Sign to Mill Woods (near to the North Side Bus Stop) had finally been reinstated. The Clerk reported that the Police had been invited to attend the meeting, but, were unable to attend on this occasion. A written report had, however, been provided by PCSO 7707 David Evans, which the Clerk proceeded to read out. Since the beginning of the year there had been 223 incidents reported in the Windlestone, Rushyford, Chilton and Ferryhill Station area. Only 18 of these	

	<p>related to the parish of Windlestone, with 13 of the reports pertaining to road-related incidents. Of the remaining 5 reports, only 1 had any real significance and related to a male trying house/car doors at Windlestone Park. On this occasion residents were extremely vigilant and managed to detain the person until the Police beat team could attend to arrest them.</p> <p>PCSO Evans also offered to provide regular reports for the Parish Council, which was much appreciated.</p> <p>Kate, who had access to the Police systems offered to look into the road related incidents referred to in PCSO Evans' report, to try and provide more details on individual cases. This would be reported to the Clerk in due course.</p> <p>KY reported that a link to the DCC Definitive Map had been added to the Parish Council's website, and that the History page provided by Councillor Woods would be added to the website as an additional page within the next few days.</p>	KW
<p>55/24-25</p>	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Five members of the public were present at the meeting. It was agreed to permit members of the public to join in discussions under individual Agenda Items as appropriate.</p> <p>A member of the public queried what was happening with the public seat at Mill Cottages, that had been hit by a vehicle and removed. The Clerk confirmed that she had reported the missing seat to the Local Authority on several occasions since it was removed in March 2024. Residents expressed how well used the seat was, and how important it was that it be reinstated. Councillor Cairns offered to chase the matter up with the Highways Team at DCC. The Clerk would provide the report reference number (FS Case Number), to make it easier to trace.</p> <p>Residents raised concerns regarding the stolen Post Boxes at Rookery Gardens and Mill Cottages. It was understood that both boxes had recently been replaced but not commissioned. KY would chase this up with Royal Mail as a matter of urgency.</p>	JC KY
<p>56/24-25</p>	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>There was no correspondence to report.</p>	
<p>57/24-25</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>There were no finance matters to report.</p>	
<p>58/24-25</p>	<p>Planning</p> <p><u>Application for Removal of Royal Mail wall mounted post box (wall box) and remediation and reinstatement of aperture in locally sourced and matched Blaxter stone and 2mm lime pointing</u></p> <p>Councillor Cattell had previously declared an Interest in the application, but as there was no disclosable pecuniary interest involved, dispensation had been granted to allow Cllr Cattell to take part in discussions about the planning application.</p> <p>There had been some confusion regarding the postbox, as Royal Mail in its email to the Parish Council, had stated that it had no intention of decommissioning the postbox. This contradicted the information provided to the Planning Department. Residents of Windlestone Park had expressed their disappointment at the proposed removal of this community facility, as there was no other easily accessible postbox within walking distance. Residents had also expressed concern that although Royal Mail considered the postbox a low graded heritage</p>	

	<p>asset and therefore not rare, they felt that as the postbox had been in-situ since 1902, that locally it was considered of heritage value.</p> <p>Discussions took place regarding why the postbox couldn't form part of the new wall, or at least be relocated within the parish, so that it would not be lost. Members agreed that in order to represent the views of residents, the Parish Council should object to the application, even though it was likely to be approved. It was considered that the onus was very much on Royal Mail to provide residents with an alternative postbox facility. It was agreed that the Parish Council contacts Royal Mail to determine the way forward.</p>	DW/KY
<p>59/24-25</p>	<p>Update on The Eden Arms</p> <p>The lessee of the Eden Arms had been invited to attend the Council Meeting, to outline their future plans for the property. Despite confirming their attendance, they were unfortunately not present at the meeting. KY agreed to approach the lessee again, inviting them to future meetings of the Parish Council.</p> <p>Residents reported that the lessee was currently offering parking spaces and the yard at the rear of the Eden Arms for rent.</p>	KY
<p>60/24-25</p>	<p>Proposal to Install an additional Noticeboard in the vicinity of Eden Gardens</p> <p>KY reported that a funding application had been submitted to the AAP for £2,000 from County Councillor Julie Cairns Neighbourhood Budget monies, to enable a new noticeboard to be installed in the vicinity of Eden Gardens. Once a formal Offer Letter had been received, the noticeboard would be ordered and installed. Members and residents conveyed their thanks to Councillor Cairns for contributing the funds required to cover the project costs.</p>	KY
<p>61/24-25</p>	<p>Update on Windlestone Hall</p> <p>Residents present at the meeting were impressed by the work that had taken place at the Hall so far. Photographs of the works were available to view on the Windlestone Hall Instagram page.</p> <p>A query was raised regarding the start date for the enabling development, as it had been quite a long time since the trees had been felled to make way for the works. It was questioned whether the Planning Permission on the development had now expired. The status of the planning approval was not known, but it was likely to be renewed when required.</p>	
<p>62/24-25</p>	<p>Update on Changes to Rushyford Roundabout</p> <p>Chair, Councillor David Willshaw gave an update on the meeting held with Mark Jackson, Head of Transport and Dave Lewin, Strategic Traffic Manager from DCC, which was also attended by the Clerk and Mayor of Chilton Town Council.</p> <p>Despite Members of Windlestone Parish Council putting forward persuasive arguments for installing pedestrian crossings at Rushyford, providing residents with a safe method of crossing the road, to access essential services in Chilton, the Local Authority Officers maintained their previous position. DCC Officers reported that in order to meet the threshold for installing pedestrian crossings, at least 40 people per hour would need to be using the crossings, which was a figure unlikely to be met. In DCC Officer's professional opinion a new crossing facility could not be accommodated at Rushyford without creating new and greater risks to wider road safety. An email from Dave Lewin explaining the County Council's position was shown to residents, so that they could fully take on board the Local Authorities position.</p>	

	<p>After some discussion, Members considered that there may still be merit in pursuing a speed reduction from 60mph to 40mph in the approaches to the roundabout but agreed that the likelihood of ever getting a pedestrian crossing in this vicinity was highly unlikely.</p>	
<p>63/24-25</p>	<p>Other Important Matters – Chilton Neighbourhood Plan KY informed residents about the Neighbourhood Plan that was currently being produced by Chilton Town Council. A Public Meeting had been arranged for <u>6.00pm on Wednesday, 5th March at Hutton House</u>, especially for residents of Windlestone, to enable them to give their views and opinions on important matters affecting the parish. KY handed round a flyer about the Meeting and encouraged residents to attend, and to circulate the flyers to their neighbours.</p>	
<p>64/24-25</p>	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting KY agreed to book Hutton House (Chilton Town Hall) for the next meeting of the Parish Council, which would be after the Elections, and would include the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council as well as the Annual Parishioners Meeting as follows: <u>Tuesday, 13th May, 2025</u> 6.00pm - Annual General Meeting of Windlestone Parish Council 6.15pm - Annual Parishioners Meeting Ordinary Parish Council Meeting to follow Annual Parishioners Meeting</p>	<p>KY</p>

With no further business to discuss, the Chair declared the meeting officially closed at 7.30pm.

SIGNED: (Chair) **DATE:**