

Minutes of the Belmont Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 6:00pm in Belmont Community Centre.

Present: Councillor E.S. Mavin (Chair), Councillor L. Mavin (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors T. Coll, M. Corrigan, J. Fletcher, R. Hornby, G. Chissell, D. Hodgson, M. Watson and S.C. White.

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Parish Clerk).

Members of the Public (2)

25.62 To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from P. Finley and A.C. Walker.  
Received

25.63 To Receive Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda.

To Consider Risk Management in Relations to Items on the Agenda. If Members are aware of a personal prejudicial interest in relation to any item on the agenda this be disclosed at this stage or when the interest becomes apparent during the consideration of an item in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members. This item is linked to your Declaration of Members Interest forms please consult these forms when reading these Notes on agenda items to ensure compliance with this item.  
Received

**The Chairman suspended Standing Orders.**

25.64 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

a) Members of the Public

To Discuss Broomside Pit Tub Land

The member of the public reported that he had distributed a letter to over thirty residents regarding the green spaces on the north side of Broomside Lane, between the former Leamside railway bridge/Pittington Lane and Poplar Road (Travellers Rest). The member of the public noted concerns regarding the poor maintenance of the area over recent years and requested clarification on land ownership and responsibility. It was confirmed that the green spaces are owned by Durham County Council, with the Parish Council owning only one area. The member of the public highlighted issues including fly-tipping, parking problems, and the need for fencing. He proposed the formation of a residents' working group to address these matters and requested the Parish Council's support in establishing it. Councillors Lattin and Watson both expressed their willingness to be involved in the working group.

The Chair thanked the member of the public for his report.

To Receive update on site meeting at Rennys Lane.

Councillor E. Mavin provided an update regarding Rennys Lane:-

The boom gate is secured with a lock, with the key held by Northumbrian Water Limited. The Parish Office will be issued a combination number to enable access.

The installation of boulders to deter e-bike access is expected to be effective.

Graffiti concerns have been reported to Durham County Council for further action.

### Dragonville Junction – Site Meeting & Review

A site meeting was recently held at the Dragonville traffic lights, following concerns raised by a member of the public regarding the difficulty large vehicles face when turning left at the junction. Councillor L. Mavin reported that no issues were observed during the visit.

Durham County Council is continuing to investigate the matter further.

A proposal to relocate the stop line further back has been suggested by the member of the public and will be considered as part of the ongoing review.

### Dragonville Pedestrian Crossing Review

A previously raised concern regarding insufficient crossing time for slower pedestrians at the Dragonville pedestrian crossing was discussed. The issue centres on the dwell time, which some residents feel is too short for those with limited mobility. One suggestion put forward was to introduce a one-way traffic system in the area. This measure aims to enhance pedestrian safety and ease traffic flow, and will be considered alongside other potential solutions as part of the ongoing review by Durham County Council.

### b) Police

A PACT report was circulated to councillors for information which included the following issues, Antisocial behaviour, Thefts, Dog fouling and a serious incident involving a vehicle that crashed through a hairdresser's window on Willowtree Avenue. As a result of the vehicle incident, two safety measures were proposed, Installation of bollards at the crash site to prevent future incidents, in addition to the bollards, a placement of a kissing gate at the entrance to the Vennel to deter e-bikes, off road bikes & quad bike vehicles has been requested. The next PACT meeting will take place in Belmont Community Centre on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October at 1:00pm.

### **The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.**

#### 25.65 To Receive update on Belmont Community Association.

Councillor L. Mavin reported that two members of staff at the Community Centre had resigned. In response, Councillor Mavin will temporarily assume responsibility for the day-to-day running of the centre to gain insight into its operations until the vacancies are filled. This will include reviewing current policies, overseeing financial matters, managing cleaning arrangements, promoting the centre, and addressing maintenance requirements.

#### 25.66 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2025 – see attached\*

Amendments- Page 1 25.49 – Declarations of Interest add Councillor Hornby for Belmont War Memorial

Page 2 25.49 Legacy Recognition **remove** (Anonymous Donor **to** Dave Drinkwater.  
Minster Court Page 3 change residents **to** landlords

Councillor Hornby requested the July Minutes were amended to reflect that there was not a member of the public present when he met with John Adamson.

Councillor Hornby proposed

Councillor Lattin seconded.

Agreed

Matters arising

Co-opted Members: It was suggested that the current co-option vacancy be publicly advertised.

Speeding – Rennys Lane

Councillor Hodgson stated that it was impossible to speed along Rennys Lane due to the nature of the road. Councillor Mavin will report the concern to Durham County Council.

25.67 To Receive Matters of Information, Clerk’s Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for Information.

The Clerk reported that the external audit of the Parish Council accounts for the financial year 2024/2025 has been completed. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) have been published on the Parish Council website for public inspection.

Councillor Watson reported that three transients had been seen in the cemetery. The police have carried out checks. Café Church has since provided them with food and water. It was advised that while food and water may be handed over, the individuals should not be allowed access to the parish hall.

25.68 To Consider Risk Management in Relations to Items on the Agenda.

Members Please Note: - this is a standard item. If Members are aware of a personal prejudicial interest in relation to any item on the agenda this should be disclosed at this or when the interest becomes apparent during the consideration of an item in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members. This item is linked to your Declaration of Members Interest forms please consult these forms when reading these Notes on agenda items to ensure compliance with this item.

Received.

25.69 Remembrance Sunday Arrangements Refreshments

The Council approved a donation of £100.00 to the Parochial Church Council to support refreshments following the event.

Wreath laying

A budget of £50.00 was allocated for the wreath on behalf of Belmont Parish Council. It was agreed that Councillor Hornby will lay the wreath on behalf of Belmont Parish Council.

It was agreed Councillor Coll will lay the wreath on behalf of Durham County Council

25.70 Conclusion of External Audit 24/25.

The Clerk reported that the external audit for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/2025 has been successfully concluded. No major issues were identified during the audit process.

25.71 Moorfield Access Control – Site Meeting Update

Councillor Mavin reported that a site meeting was held at Moorfield with Parish Councillors, County councillors, Durham County Council Officer, Police, and the Neighbourhood Warden to discuss access control measures. Following the meeting, a quote was received from Durham County Council for works to prevent e-bike access and further

damage to the field. Funding for the proposed measures will be provided from Councillor E. Mavin's Neighbourhood Budget.

25.72 To Receive Committee Reports

a) Finance Committee Councillor White (Chair)

Minutes from the Finance and Assets Committee - see attached\*

Budget Planning 2026/2027

Councillor White reported that the budget for the financial year 2026/2027 is nearing completion. A further meeting will be scheduled for early December to finalise the budget, ahead of its approval at the December Full Council meeting.

To Receive receipts and payments during the month of September - see attached\*

Agreed.

To Receive monthly bank balance during the month of September - see attached\*

Agreed.

To Receive quarterly reporting for July/August/September - see attached\*

Agreed.

b) Planning Committee Councillor Hornby (Chair) - see attached\*

Councillor Hornby provided an overview of the weekly planning applications received during September. Members were informed of the ongoing Durham County Council Budget Consultation, which is scheduled to close on 14th November. It was agreed that a collective meeting will be arranged for councillors who wish to submit comments or feedback regarding the budget consultation.

Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

Councillor Hornby reported that the first draft of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is on schedule to be presented at the November Parish Council meeting. He requested a fifteen-minute slot on the agenda to present the draft, followed by discussion on initial amendments. It was noted that a wider consultation phase involving councillors and the general public is planned to commence at the start of 2026.

c) Communications

Update from Councillor L. Mavin (Chair)

Parish Newsletter Distribution

Councillor L. Mavin reported that the Parish Newsletter is awaiting delivery, with support from the Durham Scouts assisting in the Gilesgate area.

A risk assessment document has been completed, and the activity description will be amended to read 'Newsletter Deliveries'.

Meeting Pack Distribution Preference

Councillors were asked to indicate their preferred method of receiving meeting packs — either by email or in hard copy format. Councillors Lattin, Watson, Hodgson, White and E. Mavin requested they would like a hard copy format.

Agreed.

d) Environment Committee- see attached\*

Update from Councillor Watson (Chair)

Councillor Watson reported that research into the implementation of rain planters is still ongoing. The initiative aims to explore sustainable drainage solutions and enhance local environmental resilience. Further updates will be shared as the research progresses.

Councillor Watson will invite the member of the public who previously raised concerns about the area to attend the next scheduled litter pick.

Spring Bulb Planting

Spring bulb planting is scheduled to commence on Sunday 26th October at Kepier Crescent, following approval from nearby residents.

Tree Concerns – Carrsway

Councillor Chissell reported that he had received no response from the Durham County Council Tree Officer regarding his request for a report on the trees located behind Carrsway. The request relates to concerns raised by residents about loss of light caused by the trees Councillor E. Mavin to pursue via Members Support.

Friends of Belmont Scrambles

Councillor White said he and Ken Neat went down to the Scrambles and were happy no trees were storm damaged.

25.73 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Gilesgate Moor

Councillor Lattin raised a concern regarding visibility at the slip road leading from Kepier Woods car park, heading towards the BMW Garage and turning into High Grange Estate. It was noted that pedestrians are unable to clearly see the colour of the halt signal on the traffic lights at this junction, posing a potential safety risk. The Council agreed to refer the matter to the relevant highways authority for assessment and possible remedial action.

Councillor Watson raised a concern about the amount of litter on the slip road from Kepier Woods car park towards the BMW Garage and High Grange Estate. The matter to be reported to Durham County Council.

Councillor Mavin requested that, due to time restraints, councillors raise any ward concerns via email.

25.74 Council business (any item which has been brought to the attention of the Chairman for discussion during the meeting for approval or otherwise).

Councillor Coll thanked councillors for their advice in selecting suitable tree species, which she had requested assistance with.

25.75 Date and time of next meeting Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6:00 pm.