

The Annual Meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on  
Wednesday 14th May 2026 6:00pm in Belmont Community Centre.

Present: Councillor R. Hornby, (Chair), Councillor E.S. Mavin (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors, T. Coll, P. Finley, J. Fletcher, D. Hodgson, C.A. Lattin, L. Mavin, F. Robinson,  
M. Watson and A.C. Walker.

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Parish Clerk).  
Members of the Public (1)

- 26.01 Election of Chairperson for 2026/2027. (Declaration of Office to be signed by the Chair).  
Councillor Lattin proposed Councillor Hornby.  
Councillor Coll seconded Councillor Hornby.  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.
- 26.02 Election of Vice- Chairperson for 2026/2027.  
Councillor L. Mavin proposed Councillor E. Mavin for Vice-Chair.  
Councillor Hornby proposed Councillor E. Mavin for Vice-Chair.  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.
- 26.03 To Receive Apologies for Absence.  
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Chissell, C. Gray and S. White.  
RECEIVED.
- 26.04 To Receive the Chairpersons Report for 2025 – 2026\*  
Councillor E. Mavin read out his report to councillors and reflected on the previous year. He awarded the Community Champion Award to Councillor L. Mavin for her outstanding contribution over the past year in supporting the Parish Council, the Belmont Community Centre Association, in addition to setting up a play group and a lunch club, and for her involvement with several groups in the parish. Councillor E. Mavin was thanked for his valued chairmanship over the past year, and Councillor L. Mavin was also thanked for her support in her role as Vice-Chair. Councillor E. Mavin suggested that the award could be continued annually.  
RECEIVED.
- 26.05 To Receive Declarations of Interest on 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 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.  
There were no Declarations of Interest received.  
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- 26.06 To Confirm the Chairman's Discretionary Fund.  
Councillor E. Mavin proposed increasing the Chair's Discretionary Fund from £50.00 to £100.00

Seconded by Councillor Watson,  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.

26.07 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

a) Police

A PACT report was circulated to all councillors. Councillor E. Mavin provided an update on recent crime in the area, including:

- Deans Walk: A bogus caller approached an elderly resident offering work for £200 and stole further items from the property.
- Indecent Exposure: The suspect involved in the incident has been arrested.
- Network Rail: Councillor Watson has contacted Network Rail requesting concrete barriers at West Rainton to deter off-road bikes. A site visit to the Scrambles will take place on Friday 15 May at 10.00 am at the Cheveley Walk entrance, with Network Rail, Councillor Hornby and a representative from Friends of Belmont Scrambles attending.
- Parish Newsletter: Dates for upcoming PACT meetings will be included on the back page.

b) Neighbourhood Wardens

There were no wardens present.

c) Members of the Public.

Mark Tallentire, representing Emmanuel Church, provided an overview of his proposals to support youth and community engagement within the parish. He outlined plans to establish after-school clubs in collaboration with Belmont Primary School, Gilesgate Primary School, Dragon Park and The Duffy. He also expressed an intention to deliver detached youth sessions incorporating sports, stories and games with a Christian message. The next community litter pick is scheduled for Sunday 24th May and will include participation from students at Durham University.

The Council noted that Kirkstone Drive requires weeding, and it was suggested that the Committee Room at Belmont Community Centre be repainted as part of ongoing improvement work. Permission was granted for Mr Tallentire to use Cheveley Play Park for youth activities. The Chair requested that he provide further clarification by email regarding the specific activities he intends to undertake.

26.08 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026. \*

AGREED.

Matters arising.

PG 1 25.142 To Receive Miscellaneous reports - Members of the Public

BMX Track – No update has been received; Councillor Watson will follow up on the matter.

PG 2 - 25.144 – Dave Drinkwater – A large floral planter is being installed next week in front of the Community Centre, together with a memorial plaque, both in memory of the late Dave Drinkwater.

Eddie Malarkey – The birdbath has now been installed in the cemetery in memory of the late Eddie Malarkey, and a memorial plaque is also being arranged.

PG 4 – 25.150 – Sports Pavilion – Councillor E. Mavin has spoken to Durham County Council regarding deterrents to prevent pavilion users from driving their vehicles on the

footpath near the pavilion. A fence will be installed once the target-hardening works have been completed.

26.09 To Receive Matters of Information, Clerk's Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for Information.

Cemetery Tap Request

The Clerk reported that she had received a request from a grave owner for a water tap to be installed within the cemetery. It was agreed that this matter would be referred to the Finance and Assets Committee for further consideration.

RECEIVED.

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

Members please note: - this is a standard item. Risk Management has been considered when compiling these notes for May 2026 and has been incorporated into reports and presented to members.

AGREED.

26.11 To Approve the following documents – emailed to all councillors\*

Standing Orders – approved and agreed.

Code of Conduct – approved and agreed.

Model Publication Scheme – approved and agreed.

Cemetery Rules and Regulations – referred to the next meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee for review.

Financial Regulations – approved and agreed.

Disciplinary Policy – approved and agreed.

Grievance Policy – approved and agreed.

Data Protection Policy – approved and agreed.

IT Policy – approved and agreed.

Complaints Procedure – approved and agreed.

Health & Safety Policy – approved and agreed.

Risk Management Policy – approved and agreed.

Privacy Notice – approved and agreed.

Assertion 10 – approved and agreed.

26.12 To Approve Appointment of Internal Auditor 2026/2027.

APPROVED: GORDON FLETCHER.(C.M.I.I.A).

26.13 To Approve Internal Audit Report 2025/2026.

APPROVED AND AGREED.

26.14 To Approve Internal Audit Plan.

APPROVED AND AGREED.

26.15 To Consider, Approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement 2025/2026 (National Auditor).

APPROVED AND AGREED.

26.16 To Consider, Approve and sign the Accounting Statement 2025/2026 (National Auditor).  
APPROVED AND AGREED.

26.17 To Approve date for Exercise of Public Rights.  
The Clerk confirmed that the date for the Exercise of Public Rights has been set for Wednesday 3rd June. The notice will be displayed on the parish noticeboards and the website.  
APPROVED AND AGREED.

26.18 To Approve Calendar of Meetings for 2026/2027. \*  
APPROVED AND AGREED.

26.19 To Appoint Representatives of Outside Bodies and Organisations County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC).  
Councillor Watson proposed Councillor Fletcher.  
Councillor E. Mavin seconded Councillor Fletcher.  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.

Councillor. L. Mavin confirmed that the next meeting of the CDALC Larger Councils Forum is to take place on 21 May at 10am.

26.20 To Discuss CCTV Belmont Community Centre. Moorfield / Target Hardening  
Councillor E. Mavin reported that he had attended a site meeting at Moorfield with the Police regarding target hardening. The Police recommended the installation of two metal gates, the planting of prickly shrubs in the gaps, and the provision of CCTV coverage at Belmont Community Centre. It was noted that the additional gates could also be beneficial to prevent small children running into the car park in an unsafe manner.  
Councillor Mavin advised that he had contacted Joy Allen, Durham Police and Crime Commissioner, to request financial support, but had not yet received a response. He asked whether Belmont Parish Council and the Belmont Community Association could jointly fund the CCTV. The Chair advised that the matter should be referred to the Finance & Assets Committee for further discussion, that maintenance contracts should be considered and that the terms and conditions of the Data Protection Policy should also be reviewed in the context of the above proposal.  
AGREED.

26.21 To Discuss Refurbishment of Memorial Benches.  
The Council discussed the refurbishment of the memorial benches. It was agreed to obtain pricing for a metal replacement seat and to proceed with refurbishing one bench initially, as a trial, before committing to further work.  
A local contractor will be asked to assess the condition of the bench on Moor Crescent and provide an initial evaluation of the bodywork required. John Mavin and Councillor Chissell will take this matter forward and refer it to the Environment Committee for further consideration.  
AGREED.

26.22 To Discuss Moorfield access and also access to Scully Park

Moorfield Access

Councillor L. Mavin raised concerns regarding vehicle access issues on Moorfield and stressed the related risks to public safety. Durham County Council advised that a padlock is to be installed on the gate and confirmed that the matter is expected to be resolved soon.

Scully Park

Councillor Watson reported that residents have been opening the fence to walk dogs and play on the site of the former Gilesgate Comprehensive School, and he wondered whether this could be made a designated area. Councillor E. Mavin raised concerns, noting that the site is private land owned by Durham County Council and that currently accessing it constitutes trespassing. He stated that he would email Durham County Council to ask what their intentions are for the site and would report back once a response had been received.  
AGREED.

26.23 To Receive Committee Reports:

a) Finance

Election of Chair

Councillor E. Mavin proposed Councillor White.  
Councillor L. Mavin seconded Councillor White.

Committee Members

Councillors P. Finley, E. Mavin, L. Mavin, J. Fletcher, F. Robinson and S. White.

To Receive Receipts and Payments during the month of April – see attached\*  
RECEIVED AND AGREED with corrected spelling.

To Receive bank reconciliation during the month of April – see attached\*  
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

A Finance & Assets Committee meeting will be arranged shortly.

b) Planning (Councillor. E. Mavin in the Chair for this item)

Election of Chair

Councillor R. Hornby confirmed he was willing to serve as Chair. Agreed unanimously.

Committee Members

Councillors M. Corrigan, D. Hodgson, C. Lattin, L. Mavin and M. Watson.

Planning Minutes.

RECEIVED.

Planning updates.

Appeals

DM/25/00966/FPA – 53 Frank Street, Gilesgate Moor, Durham – appeal dismissed.  
DM/25/02844/DRC – 43 Oak Avenue, Sherburn Road Estate, Durham – appeal allowed.

Approved.

DM/25/02844/DRC – Land to the East of Unit 7, Dragonville Retail Park, Dragon Lane, Durham.

DM/25/03596/FPA – 2 Abbots Row, Gilesgate, Durham.

DM/26/00537/FPA – 14 Gloucestershire Drive, Belmont, Durham.

DM/25/03430/TCA – Pear Tree Cottage, Bent House Lane, Durham.  
DM/26/00386/FPA – 10 Sherburn Road, Durham.  
DM/26/00535/FPA – 39 Sunderland Road, Gilesgate, Durham.

#### Withdrawn

DM/26/00673/FPA – 21 Kepier Crescent, Gilesgate Moor, Durham.

#### New Applications

The Chair invited councillors' views on the new applications and suggested an objection for DM/26/00991/FPA (10 Nuns Row), with no action proposed for DM/26/01072/CEU (21 Young Street) or DM/26/00959/HPN (1 Yorkshire Drive). DM/25/03521/FPA (4 Goodyear Crescent) was noted.

#### Planning Report

RECEIVED.

#### Consultations

Consultation on Household Waste Recycling Centres noted; link to be circulated:

<https://letstalkcountydurham.co.uk/en-GB/projects/household-waste-recycling-centres>

Councillor E. Mavin reported that Councillor Hodgson and himself had attended a meeting at New Durham Club regarding possible further developments on the site. Councillor Hornby noted that the Council will refrain from making comments on any plans until they have formally been received by the Council but would strongly recommend that any developer engages formally with the Parish Council during pre-application consultation.

The next meeting of the Committee has been scheduled for 27th May at 6:00pm.

#### c) Communications

##### Election of Chair

Councillor L. Mavin proposed Councillor Fletcher; Councillor E. Mavin seconded.

AGREED.

UNANIMOUS.

##### Members

Councillors M. Corrigan, P. Finley, J. Fletcher, E. Mavin, R. Hornby and F. Robinson.

##### Parish Newsletter

Councillor L. Mavin provided a verbal report and confirmed that she had decided to produce the newsletter as an extended version of the Chair's Report.

##### Delivery of the Newsletter

A quotation had been received for £2,600 for the printing and delivery of the parish newsletters, which would remove the need for manual distribution.

AGREED: That the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee for further consideration.

d) Environment

Election of Chair.

Election of Chair Councillor Hodgson proposed Councillor Watson, Councillor Coll seconded.

AGREED.

UNANIMOUS.

Members

Councillors T. Coll, G. Chissell, C. Gray, D. Hodgson, M. Watson and S. White.

Environment Committee Minutes

RECEIVED.

Network Rail / Site Visits

Councillor Watson reported that he had asked Network Rail to review and improve the concrete barriers at the Moorhouse Leamside Line crossing, West Rainton, up the railway line from the Scrambles area, to prevent quad and off-road bike access. He has arranged a site meeting with Network Rail to review any further measures to prevent vehicle access to the Scrambles from the Sherburn/Shincliffe direction. The Chair of Belmont Scrambles will attend.

Litter Pick

The Belmont Parish Council and Gilesgate Residents Association litter pick held on 29 March was very successful. The next litter pick will take place on Sunday, 14 June. The Chair of the Friends of Belmont Scrambles suggested that children assisting should receive some form of recognition, and Councillor Watson has arranged for medals and ribbons to be provided.

The next meeting of the Committee has been scheduled for 20 May at 6:00pm.

26.24 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Renny's Lane – Gate Lock

Councillor E. Mavin reported that the new lock installed on the gate at Renny's Lane had only remained secure for two days before someone removed it.

Renny's Lane

Councillor E. Mavin requested that the wooden fence be removed and replaced with thorny bushes to deter anti-social behaviour.

Birkdale Gardens

Councillor Mavin has asked Durham County Council if a new barrier has been approved for Birkdale Gardens and, if not, whether a replacement barrier can be ordered.

Litter Bin – Missing

Councillor Walker reported that the litter bin located at the top of Renny's Lane needs replacement. Durham County Council to arrange for a new bin to be sourced and installed.

Fellside Gardens

Concerns were raised regarding the condition of the road surface and road markings at Carrville High Street near Fellside Gardens.

- 26.25 Council business (any item which has been brought to the attention of the Chairman for discussion during the meeting for approval or otherwise).
- 26.26 Date and time of next meeting Thursday 11th June 2026.