Minutes of the Belmont Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 9th July at 6:00pm
in Belmont Community Centre

Present: Councillors R. Hornby (Chair) E. Mavin (Vice-Chair) G. Chissell, P. Finley, D. Hodgson, M. Corrigan, J. Fletcher, C.A. Lattin, L. Mavin, and A.C. Walker.

Councillors observed a two-minute silence following the passing of former councillor Syd Inglis.

26.48 To Receive Apologies for Absence.
Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors T. Coll, C. Gray, F. Robinson, M. Watson and S. White.
RECEIVED.

26.49 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.

26.50 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

a) Parish Chair
The Chair expressed concern about the low attendance at committee meetings and requested that all councillors be notified of future committee meetings, rather than only the appointed members.

b) County Councillors
Councillor L. Mavin reported on the recent Cabinet on 10th June 2026, which discussed increased sickness absence, approved the County Durham Plan Scoping Consultation, and considered Lane Rental proposals (roadworks charges), and noted that Full Council had approved two political assistant posts: a full-time position for Reform UK and a part-time position for the Liberal Democrats.

c) Police – see attached PACT meeting notes*
The report included anti-social behaviour concerns, shoplifting incidents, and ongoing parking issues at Adolphus Place.

d) Members of the Public
Two residents of Herons Court reported hearing that New Durham Club was in financial difficulty and intended to sell. Councillor E. Mavin advised he had attended a recent meeting and confirmed the club is attempting to improve its position, with a ballot planned on whether to sell. He noted that a working party has been established and that no plans have been submitted. He provided his contact number to the residents and asked them to contact him directly rather than rely on hearsay.

A concern was noted from a member of the public regarding the Chair's handling of an agenda item at a previous meeting - the Chair apologised to the member of the public and explained that he was trying to follow the Council's rules to the best of his ability.

26.51 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of Minutes of the Full Parish Meeting held on 11th June 2026 – see attached*
AGREED with one amendment Councillor Corrigan was present.

Matters arising
Councillor Finley asked for an update on the zero-hours contracts for BCA staff, and Councillor L. Mavin said she was looking into it and will report back when further information is available.

26.52 Travellers
Councillor E. Mavin reported that he had spoken to the DCC Clean and Green Team, who advised they would double up the boulders next year, with the recently installed CCTV in front of the Community Centre and new locks on Moorfield now in place as additional deterrents.
AGREED.

26.53 To Receive Matters of Information, Clerk's Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for Information.
The Clerk reported a resident had raised a concern that the path at the entrance to the cemetery was uneven, making access difficult for mobility users and those with pushchairs. The matter to be looked into.

A further concern was raised from a resident that tree roots from the cemetery were compromising the foundations of his property's drive and conservatory. It was agreed to contact local tree services for advice.

An email was received from the Manager of Laurel Avenue Community Association regarding the Friday evening youth club at Belmont Community Centre, which currently incurs no room-hire charges. She requested a meeting with Councillor L. Mavin to discuss possible funding options should charges be introduced. Councillor L. Mavin confirmed she is happy to arrange a meeting with her.
RECEIVED.

26.54 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 July 2026 and has been incorporated into reports and presented to members.
AGREED.

26.55 To Receive Committee Reports included delegated decisions:
a) Finance and Assets Committee
The Chair asked Councillor Finley if he would be willing to serve as Chair of the Finance and Assets Committee following the resignation of Stephen White. Councillor Finley declined the role, stating he was too busy at present. It was agreed to send an email asking if any councillors would like the position.

To Receive receipts and payments for June 2026 - see attached reports*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

b) To Receive bank balance for for June 2026 - see attached reports*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

c) To Receive quarterly reporting for April, May, June 2026 - see attached*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.
A Finance and Assets Committee meeting is to be arranged.

b) Planning Committee(Councillor Hornby)
Note: A quorum was not achieved at the last Planning Committee meeting. The items for discussion at this meeting therefore need to be considered by Full Council

1. To Receive the weekly planning applications for June 2026 - see attached*
NO COMMENTS.

2. To Receive Countywide Delegated for June 2026 -- see attached*
NO COMMENTS.

3. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
The Chair reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group had met on Monday 6th July 2026 with Jo-Anne Garrick, Planning Consultant engaged by the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to support the development of our neighbourhood plan, and that it had been a very positive meeting.

A separate extraordinary meeting to be arranged.

c) Events and Communications Committee(Councillor Fletcher)
Note: Meeting postponed due to the number of apologies received.

Noticeboard
Councillor Fletcher reported that the Shell Garage noticeboard is not working and requires WD-40.

Memorial Planter
The memorial planter is to be placed in front of the Community Centre by Councillors L. Mavin and D. Hodgson, scheduled for Friday 10th July 2026.

Parish Newsletters
Councillor L. Mavin reported that some Parish Newsletters had been delivered outside the parish and that she would be speaking to the firm about the issue

d) Environment Committee
Chair and Vice-Chair have given apologies)
Minutes of the Environment Committee held on 17th June 2026 were circulated to councillors (see attached).

Kirkstone Drive Community Garden Project
The Kirkstone Drive Garden Project is now up and running.

Grass verges
Several residents have raised concerns about the condition of grass verges following reduced DCC groundwork. Councillor L. Mavin reported that Durham County Council are now back-tracking on this decision.

Northumbria in Bloom.
Councillor L. Mavin reported that the Northumbria in Bloom judging day had gone very well, with positive feedback received during the visit. She noted that the awards presentation ceremony will take place on 16th September 2026 at the Gateshead Federation Brewery, where results for this year's competition will be announced.

Benches
Councillor Chissell reported that the spray company is finding the existing bench coating difficult to remove, and he will follow up with them. He is also exploring dipping as an alternative method of stripping the coating, which may offer a more effective solution. Councillor E. Mavin will review the refurbishment costs, including stripping and recoating, against the cost of purchasing a new bench.

Drainage issues
An email has been received in response to Councillor Watsons letter to Northumbrian Water regarding drainage issues and recent foul flooding incidents affecting residents of the High Grange Estate, Gilesgate Moor. The matter has been assigned to the technical engineer for further investigation and an update to be provided on or before 20th July 2026.

Belmont Community Centre car parking bays.
New bay markings and yellow lines have been installed.
A resident has requested dropped kerbs to improve access, and Councillor E. Mavin is looking into this.

26.56 To Receive updates on Task and Finish groups.
Councillor Lattin proposed establishing a Task and Finish Group to explore creating a directory of local businesses, noting its value as a starting point despite comments that information can be found online. It was agreed that Councillor Lattin would seek views from members of the public and report back to Full Council in September.
It was noted that land use would be discussed at the next Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

26.57 To Consider quotation for rubber matting or soft pour cement Moorfield Park zip wire.
Councillor E. Mavin will obtain a quotation for the installation of rubber matting at the Moorfield Park zip wire, along with a comparative quotation for wet-pour surfacing Rubber matting is considered the preferred option at this stage due to its durability and suitability for the site.

26.58 To Receive an update in relation to the BMX track. (Councillor. E. Mavin)
Councillor E. Mavin said he had no further update regarding the BMX track and will chase this up, including contacting the relevant DCC officers to request a progress update.

26.59 To Consider any updates to the Belmont Emergency Plan in relation to flood risk
a) Councillor Hornby to provide an update on the Belmont Emergency Plan at the September Full Council meeting. Councillor E. Mavin offered to assist and requested a paper copy of the plan so he could start work on it.
AGREED.

b) Councillor Hornby confirmed he had sent a demonstration simulation email to all councillors regarding a power-cut notification on Wantage Road.

26.60 To Receive an update on parking and access issues on Renny's Lane

Rennys Lane

Councillor Walker reported that there was still no bin in situ, and the matter is to be reported to Durham County Council.

26.61 To Receive updates in relation to proposed highway infrastructure at the junction of Broomside Lane and Carrville High Street (Councillor E. Mavin).

Councillor E. Mavin reported that the road markings have now been installed and that Highways are in the process of drawing up plans. The works are being funded from Councillor Mavin's Neighbourhood Budget.

26.62 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Councillor Fletcher reported that the middle lock has been removed to allow disability access, and Northumbrian Water is preparing a special lock.

Mackintosh Court

Councillor Corrigan reported that there was no seat in Mackintosh Court. Councillor L. Mavin said she had reported the matter, but it may take a long time.

Birkdale Gardens

The gate at Birkdale Gardens is being replaced.

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

26.64 Date and time of next meetings

Full Council: Thursday 10th September 2026, 6:00pm.
Environment Committee: Wednesday 15th July 2026, 6:00pm
Planning Committee: Wednesday 22nd July 2026, 5:30pm
Communications and Events Committee: Wednesday 2nd September, 6:00pm (subject to confirmation)
Finance and Assets Committee: Monday 12th October, 6:00pm