

Minutes of the Meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 12th June 2025
in the Malcolm Caisley Meeting Rooms, Whitley Chapel Parish Hall

1. Present – Marge Rastall (Chair), John Austin, Nicola Matthews, David Flatman, Ed Parker, Roger Rutherford, County Cllr Colin Horncastle, Susanna Nixon (Clerk)

Apologies for Absence – Gill Whatmough, Lauren Kristensen

2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 08th May 2025 – Were Approved once the following amendments are made: Ed Parker & Roger Rutherford were present.

3. Declarations of Interest – NONE

4. Matters Arising

Patching of the road down to Dalton bridge had been carried out.
The school flashing warning sign on the approach to Whitley Chapel had been repaired.

5. Public Participation - None

6. Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councillor – Cllr Colin Horncastle explained that the May Election had returned 26 Conservative Councillors, Reform 23, Labour 8 with the remaining 12 seats divided between the LibDems, Greens and Independents. Therefore, the Conservatives would work with the smaller parties to run the County Council.
Increased lorry activity was reported at Windy Hill. A Meeting will be taking place in the near future to discuss the road at Windy Hill. John Austin will be invited to attend the meeting.
Cllr Colin Horncastle said he will speak with Glen Harrison immediately to chase the matter.
Councillors requested more information on the proposed development at Newbiggin as an initial request had been made in January and no update had been provided. Councillor Horncastle apologised for this failure and indicated he would follow up this concern.

7. Resilience Hub

7.1 –The annual Generator service is waiting to be done, and provision of adequate supply of fuel was discussed.

8. Correspondence

8.1 – Alex Campbell, Lilswood Caravan Site – An email was sent explaining that Legal Enforcement orders would be served that day (09th June 2025). No further correspondence was received. Cllr Colin Horncastle reported that legal enforcement orders had been served on the owners of Lilswood Caravan site to comply with planning conditions for the cladding and painting of the units. The problem of inadequate tree planting to comply with landscaping conditions was also raised.

9. Finance

9.1 – Matthew Hope Gardening Services £310 - APPROVED

9.2 – Whitley Chapel Parish Hall £67.50 outstanding - APPROVED

9.3 – AGAR Annual return will be circulated around the Councillors & will be online at www.hexhamshire.org.uk for public viewing from July 11th 2025.

10. Planning Applications – 25/01839/FUL Proposed Agricultural Building, Land East of Shawwood Farm Guards Lane – Parish Council Object on the basis it is not an agricultural farm and the proposed shed size is too large for the 2.5 Acre site. It is felt there is no need for a shed that size with no grazing land.

11. Highways, footpaths and BOATS

11.1 Gate at Lords Lots onto the Hexhamshire Common is a dangerous gate. It will be reported on FixMyStreet.

5. 11.2 Footpath Access across the Wetlands, FP525/010. A productive meeting had been held with the County Footpath Officer, councillors, representatives of the Willow Group plus local residents. The footpath on the definitive map currently goes through the willow area. Duncan Lovatt from NCC said he would monitor the route from the stile, along the fence separating the wetland from the

willow (on the wetland side) and if it did not become overly boggy in winter, he would consider proposing that the footpath be legally diverted. In any event they will replace the stile with a spring loaded gate.

12. Reports

12.1 Wetlands – Ditch repairs were done; it will be monitored to make sure this was effective.

12.2 Hall – The hall committee had discussed the need for added security with the option of installing a security camera to the rear. The Hall committee will organise signs that comply with GDPR and other legal requirements. The School will also be informed.

Sunday 07th December 2025 – Christmas Fair will be held in the Village Hall

12.3 School – None

12.4 Dukesfield Arches –

A proposal by the North Pennines National Landscape to take over the hosting of the Dukesfield website was approved. A link to the existing website would be created. Chairman Marge Rastall will write to Greg Finch (Dukesfield Project Team) stating that the Parish Council are in agreement with the proposal.

Grass cutting and a small repair to a fence will be needed. Greg will approach M Hope to do these works.

12.5 Sportsfield & Play Area – Stones are still being thrown onto the Tennis courts. Signs will be erected in the coming weeks to deter those from doing so. The school will also be contacted for to raise awareness of the issue and to remind children and parents to use the equipment respectfully and safely.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 – A volunteer for writing the Hexhamshire Notes in the Hexham Courant is still needed. This will be highlighted in the Parish Magazine and on the Website and Facebook.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm