

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINGATE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 13th JULY 2026

Present: Councillors M Whiting (Chair), A Bowden, E Mason, C Ryan, P Mason, J Hogg, D Clogg

2026/07/13/01

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Holy Trinity Church

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Doris Binks, Mrs Jean Hutchinson and Mr Roger Mugleton, three representatives of the Holy Trinity Church who were in attendance to discuss a social media post from the Parish Council relating to the potential closure of the Holy Trinity Church which was said not to be correct. It was outlined that a meeting at the Church on the following Tuesday was to discuss Church Council arrangements at the Holy Trinity Church and churches at Shotton, Haswell and Wheatley Hill.

The Clerk advised that the information included in the social media post had come from someone associated with the Church for many years and someone with a close relationship with the Parish Council. It was noted that since the original post further information had been received from a representative of Durham Diocesan which had also outlined the purpose of the meeting to be held at the Church.

General discussion followed and the Clerk apologised for any misunderstanding and that a social media update had been posted. The three representatives of the Church left the meeting and discussion followed regarding the future of the Church when it was recognised that without the support of the community there was still a risk to the long term future of the Church.

The Chairman outlined his intention to attend the meeting at the Church and following further general discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

Wingate Over 40s

The Chairman welcomed Mr Paul Cotgrave, a representative of the Wingate Over 40s football team who outlined he was in attendance to discuss concerns about the park football pitches. Mr Cotgrave outlined that he thought summer maintenance works had been undertaken too late and the pitches were unlikely to recover in time for the commencement of the 2026/27 season. Mr Cotgrave also outlined that stones were spread over the pitches.

Discussion followed including a query what work schedule the Park Keeper was working to and why the summer maintenance work had commenced so late. The Clerk agreed the work had started late although a lack of water was hindering pitch improvements. The Clerk also outlined the stones had been mixed with the top dressing when lifted from the car park area into the spreader by an external contractor. He stated that he would liaise with the Park Keeper to ensure the stones

were removed.

Following further general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

2026/07/13/02

RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR COLLINS

Following an update from the Clerk it was **RESOLVED** that it be noted that Councillor Collins had resigned from the Parish Council due to work commitments.

2026/07/13/03

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS held on 8 June 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

2026/07/13/04

POLICE AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

Th Clerk presented a report from the Police summarising crime and anti-social behavioural issues for June 2026 which included 96 incidents.

ASB

Quad bike/off road bikes x 3.

Youths knocking on doors x 3.

Fireworks being set off.

Youths throwing stones at busses.

Criminal Damage

Smashed windows x 2.

Vehicle Crime

Bus window smashed by youths.

Vehicle scratched.

Substance thrown over a vehicle

Vehicle fire x 2.

Smashed car window.

Thefts

Thefts from the Co-Op x 6.

Theft of a dumper truck.

Extra patrols were noted in relation to off road bikes and quads. The stolen dumper truck was noted as being recovered in Trimdon. An opportunity to take part in a future speed watch was noted.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

2026/0713/05

PROGRESS REPORT

(1) Football Changing Room

The Clerk advised that formal Section 106 and Local Member funding applications had been submitted. The panel meeting relating to Section 106 monies was noted as taking place on 28 July and so there would be no outcome until after that. The Football Association grant was noted as needing to be finalised on an electronic portal.

The Clerk further advised the lowest bidding contractor had agreed to the revised contract price based on the amended schedule of works although commencement of works could not take place prior to October 2026.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the information given be noted.

(2) Football Pitches

The Clerk advised that in accordance with the Football Association pitch maintenance grant received the previous year, summer maintenance works had been undertaken at the park football pitches including weed killer spraying, scarifying, seeding and top dressing. While works had gone to plan there had been a lack of rain.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

(3) Fun and Food Summer Activities

The Clerk advised that Fun and Food summer activities were to commence on 22 July with eight sessions at the park spread over the summer holidays. Sessions were noted as being between 10am to 2pm and were being delivered by an external organization, Creative Youth with sessions targeted at children from 6-11 years.

Budget details were shared which potentially included expenditure that would exceed the Fun and Food grant although the expectation was that the budget would cover most costs. It was noted that up to that point there had only been 7 registrations for the activities.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.:

(4) Summer Away Day

RESOLVED the Clerk be authorized to organise a summer away day to South Shields at a date to be arranged in August.

2026/07/13/06

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Following lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that Christmas light column decorations not be installed in 2026 and the Parish Council continue to erect a Christmas Tree.

2026/07/13/07

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no applications to consider.

2026/07/13/08

CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised there no correspondence to consider other than a matter relating to the Holy Trinity Church which had already been considered.

2026/07/13/09

PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Authorisation of Payments

RESOLVED that authorisation be given for the following payments:

1A Shutters and Grills- Bowls Rollert Shuutter Doors

Cheque No. 407012	£240.00
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Smith of Derby- Clock Repairs

Cheque No. 407013	£397.20
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Radius Business Solutions- Petrol

Cheque No. 407014	£9.32
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Macfarlane Packaging- Dog Bags

Cheque No. 407015	£1707.60
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Radius Business Solutions- Petrol

Cheque No. 407016	£16.82
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Anglian Water- Park

Cheque No. 407017	£809.45
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Npower- Pit Wheel

Cheque No. 407018	£56.31
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Jeff Dinning- Internal Audit

Cheque No. 407019	£470.00
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Steadfast Security Systems- CCTV Monitoring and Response

Cheque No. 407020	£803.71
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DCC- Machine Repairs

Chequ No. 407021	£126.00
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Horns Garden Centre- Mlsc Supplies

Cheque No. 407022	£92.25
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Clerk- Line Rental and Calls

Cheque No. 407023	£45.00
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Park Keeper- Line Rental and Calls

Cheque No. 407024	£45.00
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Zurich Insurance- Main Insurance	
Cheque No. 407025	£6667.64
Zurich Insurance- Motor Insurance	
Cheque No. 407026	£442.52
Durham CC- Nursery land Licence	
Cheque No. 407027	£1.00
TSL- Seen and Fertilizer	
Cheque No. 407028	£2438.40
Clerk- Postage Refund	
Cheque No. 407029	£59.15
Par Petroleum- Diesel	
Cheque No. 407030	£282.80
TSL- Spraying of Football Pitches	
Cheque No. 407031	£576.00
TSL- Top Dressing of Pitches	
Cheque No. 407032	£5904

(a) Financial Update

The Clerk presented a bank reconciliation for the period to 31 May 2026 which showed a balance of £247966 and outlined that the Parish Council was in a healthy financial position.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

2026/07/13/10

REPORTS

(a) **The Clerk**

There were no reports from the Clerk.

(b) **Members**

(1) Defibrillator at the Co-Op

A Member raised the fact that a defibrillator should be installed in the area of the Co-Op. It was suggested that this be something the Co-Op should be asked to do.

RESOLVED the Co-Op be contacted regarding the potential of installing a defibrillator.

(2) Park

A Member raised concerns about the general condition of the park and particularly to the fact that there had been recent complaints about the bowling green and football pitches. Hedge cutting and bin emptying was referred to.

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the potential introduction of timesheets and a work schedule to help provide more transparency regarding work activities at the park. Reference was made to a previous Parks and Allotment Sub-Committee to manage park activities.

Following further discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) Weekly timesheets be introduced for both the Park Keeper and Assistant with details to be included summarising work activities undertaken each day;
- (b) A work programme for the park be developed for consideration at a future meeting; and
- (c) Further consideration be given to the reintroduction of a Parks and Allotment Sub Committee.

(3) Workload of the Clerk

A Member raised concerns about the workload of the Clerk, particularly in relation to the operation of the Community Centre. He reminded colleagues that as an employer the Parish Council had a duty of care. It was suggested the Clerk should be paid a bonus. The Clerk advised that the increased workload and the fact a lot of work was now unpaid was the reason for him leaving the role particularly as there had been an impact on his health and wellbeing.

Following further general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

(4) North Road West- Nuisance Property

RESOLVED that County Councillor Franklin be once again asked to assist a resident experiencing problems from a neighbouring property.

(5) North Road West- Criminal Damage

RESOLVED that recent criminal damage in the area of North Road West be noted.

(c) County Councillor

A written report was presented by the Clerk on behalf of County Councillor Husband. It was noted that the footpath design at Gulley Road had been completed and a Section 106 monies were awaited to be able to undertake the necessary works. It was noted that permission was still awaited to be able to install a kissing gate at Plantation Walk.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

2026/07/13/11

SCHEDULE OF ONGOING MATTERS

RESOLVED that the details included in the schedule of ongoing matters be noted.

2026/07/13/12

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded for the following item of business under the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 (as amended) due to the disclosure of financial information.

2026/07/13/13

RECRUITMENT OF CLERK TO THE PARISH COUNCILROOM

Consideration was given to a draft advert and job description circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the position of Clerk was a generic title for the statutory roles of Proper Officer to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer, roles which could only be undertaken by an Officer and not Members of the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that he had since liaised with the Payroll Department at Durham County Council to confirm the exact salary points and salary relating to the role. The discussions had highlighted that both the Clerk and Park Keeper had not been paid national pay awards since 2020 with the Payroll Department suggesting this was an administrative error due to the Clerks salary points structure having been changed, something the Clerk was unaware of. It was noted that Clerk and Chairman had subsequently met a representative of the Payroll Department and had matters explained to them. Written confirmation had also been received.

Discussion followed on the issue of the monies owed to the two employees with Members agreeing monies owed should be paid. One Member queried whether the Payroll Department was in fact correct with other Members querying whether the Member felt the Payroll Department was not being honest.

A Member suggested the tax implications of paying the monies owed be queried so that employees were not unnecessarily disadvantaged.

It was also suggested that a recruitment panel be established to deal with the subsequent recruitment.

Following ongoing discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Clerk be authorised to liaise with Durham County Council and arrange for monies to employees to be paid;
- b) The Clerk liaise with Durham County Council regarding any potential tax implications;
- c) The Clerk be authorised to advertise the role of Clerk to the Parish Council based on the advert and job description circulated with the agenda and the subsequent salary information outlined at the meeting; and
- d) The full Parish Council deal with the recruitment with further details

to be awaited.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN

DATE