



Minutes of the proceedings of the **CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** held at
Hutton House, on Tuesday 10th June 2025

Present: -- Chair - Cllr. S. Reece (Mayor)

Cllrs: - D. Bright, E. Bruce, D. English, P. Herbert & S. Sutherland

Town Clerk (TC) - Mrs. Joanne Dickinson

Member of the public- One

County Councillor – S. Bowron – left the meeting at 6.50pm

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm

1. **Apologies for Absence** –Cllr Malpas- apologies accepted
2. **Declarations of Interest**- Cllr Sutherland for agenda item 20, minute number who will speak on the matter but will leave the meeting when the agenda item is discussed.
3. **Member Dispensations**- None received
4. **Public Participation**- No questions from the member of the public
5. **Mayor's Report** – See Appendix 1 for the update from the Mayor which is attached to the minutes. Members accepted the report
6. **Approve minutes of the following meeting and recommendations therein-**
 - a. Chilton Town Council Meeting held on 20th May 2025
RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed.
 - b. Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15th April 2025
RESOLVED- Cllr Bright proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.
 - c. Cemetery Committee Meeting held on 15th April 2025
RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed.
 - d. Community Committee Meeting held on 15th April 2025
RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Bright. All agreed.
7. **Allotment Committee Meeting held on 14th April 2025**- This was unable to be agreed at the most recent Allotment Committee Meeting due to numbers of Members at the committee meeting.
RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Reece. All agreed.
8. **County Councillors Report**- Cllr Bowron informed Members of the Committees he has been elected to for Durham County Council and completed his training; An application for Chilton to be in the Selective Licensing Scheme has been submitted but have to wait 12 months to hear back; Currently

working with 2 residents groups over the cladding issues at West Chilton Terrace and Denebridge Row and 17 houses have had work started on them; attended a residents meeting at the Catholic Club where residents advised of issues at the 5 Rows of Houses; Meeting on Friday with the Neighbourhood Warden and the Local Police Officer to look at issues in the area.

A Member asked if that was the official multi- agency walkabout that had been previously carried out which Cllr Bowron confirmed was initiated by him and he invited Town Councillors to attend.

A Member had been contacted by residents to ask Cllr Bowron how he is dealing with the planning around his manifesto promises of stopping the boats, fixing the NHS and repairing the potholes. Cllr Bowron confirmed that they were part of his party manifesto and not his manifesto.

Members agreed to accept the report

9. Consider a request from County Councillor Bowron for a dog walking area to be installed on Joe's

Field - Cllr Bowron has looked at potential locations in Chilton and had identified a section of Joes Field to be utilised for this potential project. Members queried if the playing field was exclusively for recreation use only and whether an enclosed area would be beneficial as it is already utilised as a popular dog walking space. Other areas may be better for this potential project such as the DCC land near to the church. A Member had sought information from Ferryhill Town Council as they have recently set one up. There are concerns about the amount of dog fouling within the enclosed space and that it may not be being used regularly. A Member is currently working on feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan Community Engagement. Part of this process is to identify areas within the locality for specified projects and this would be part of the feedback and the next steps to the plan.

RECOMMENDATION- The Town Council are not against looking at a dedicated enclosed dog walking area but would need to ensure there is a prior public consultation on the best potential location. If Joe's Field has been dedicated as a Sports Field then it would not be allowed to be used for any other purpose.

10. Approve and adopt the Internal Auditors Report for 2024/2025 –

The Mayor advised that all Members had been sent the information prior to the meeting and had the opportunity to meet with the Town Clerk to review any information prior to the meeting. The information will be published on the council website as part of full transparency.

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the council approve and adopt the Internal Auditors Report for 2024/2025. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

11. Approve the end of year financial statements for 2024/2025 – Town Clerk advised Members that this relates to the 3 reports previously circulated. The Financial Report provides 5 options to carry out transfers into Earmarked Reserves prior to closing the end of year accounts. Members were given information about the General Reserves and were advised that they will need to agree a policy for General Reserves. Members were given the opportunity to ask the Town Clerk any questions on the three reports. Members agreed the 5 following options-

- I. Transfer £6800 from 4155, Hutton House Repair and Maintenance into a new EMR for Hutton House Repair and Maintenance.
- II. Transfer £9300 from 4155, Allotments Repair and Maintenance into a new EMR for Allotments Repair and Maintenance.
- III. Transfer £17000 from 4410 Maintenance A167 Street Lights into a new EMR for Maintenance A167 Street Lights.
- IV. Transfer £4850 from Playgrounds Repair and Maintenance into a new EMR for Playgrounds Repair and Maintenance.
- V. Transfer £250 from 4113, Youth Council into a new EMR for Youth Council

RESOLVED- Cllr Herbert proposed the council approve the aforementioned transfers. Seconded by Cllr Bruce. All agreed.

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the council approve the amount of General Reserves of £108570. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the council agree a General Reserves Policy with a minimum of 4 months contingency. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the council approve the end of year financial statements for 2024/2025. Seconded by Cllr Sutherland. All agreed.

12. Approve and adopt Section 1 of the AGAR Annual statement of accounts

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the Council approve and adopt Section 1 of the AGAR Annual statement of accounts. Seconded by Cllr Bruce. All agreed.

13. Approve and adopt Section 2 of the AGAR Annual statement of accounts

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the Council approve and adopt Section 2 of the AGAR Annual statement of accounts. Seconded by Cllr Bruce. All agreed.

14. Approve the timeframe for the exercise of elector's rights to review the financial accounts for

2024/2025- Town Clerk that the dates will be from 18th June 2025 to 29th July 2025

RESOLVED- Cllr English proposed the council approve the timeframe for the exercise of elector's rights to review the financial accounts for 2024/2025. Seconded by Cllr Bright. All agreed.

15. Agree the Internal Auditor for 2025/2026

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the council agree Gordon Fletcher as the Internal Auditor for the council in 2025/2026. Seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed.

16. Review and agree the contractor from the quotations received for the weekly watering of the

hanging baskets- Town Clerk advised that 2 quotes had been received for the watering of the hanging baskets. One is for £65 per visit (to be confirmed) and the other is £150 per visit. Thinford Nurseries advised that the watering requires experience in order that they are not under or over watered.

RECOMMENDATION- Members agreed that a second quote to be provided and the decision on the contractor to be agreed by email.

17. Discuss funding options that may be available from external organisations – Cllr Reece had

circulated information about Tarmac Funding which we are within the locality of their guidelines which is 4 miles within their sites. Maximum project amount is £250k. Members to consider ideas and for the matter to be included for discussion at the next council meeting. Members asked to email Cllr Reece and Town Clerk with thoughts and ideas.

18. Discuss quotations received to carry out maintenance work on the Memorial at Hutton House and the Miners Memorial – Town Clerk has received quotes for the repairs to the 2 memorials but there had been a query on ownership of the Miners Memorial.

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the council agree to provide funding of £850 plus vat for the repairs to both Memorials subject to receiving permission from the Durham Miners Association for repairs to the Mineworkers Memorial. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

19. Approve the recommendation from the Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee at a meeting held on 2.6.25 to approve the quotation of £2090 for the railings and gate work at the

cemetery. Town Clerk advised there is no second quotation for this work which is a specialist company. Town Clerk informed Members that the paint the contractor uses is a primer and an overcoat in one which is specially mixed for him. Members agreed it was a reasonable quote.

RESOLVED – Cllr Sutherland proposed the council agree to waive the requirement for a second quote due to the specialist nature of the work. Seconded by Cllr Bruce. All agreed.

RESOLVED- Cllr English proposed the council approve the quotation of £2090 for the railings and gate work at the cemetery. Seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed.

20. Discuss quotations obtained for fencing at the Hambleton Way Allotments at the bottom of Joe's Field- Cllr Sutherland provided background information and a picture to Members of the land that this relates to which is where a timber 6ft fence was installed a few years ago half way down the field. This was not extended at the time due to the tenancy of the plot. Cllr Sutherland confirmed that the land on the field to be opened up has been cleared by him regularly.

Cllr Sutherland left the meeting prior to Members discussing this matter due to an aforementioned declaration of interest.

Cllr Bowron left the meeting at 6.50pm

The Town Clerk provided Members with the 3 quotations of which £2600 was the lowest price for timber fencing. Members agreed it should be in 2 stages- first is to install the fence along the allotment line and then secondly to remove the fencing that is on Joe's Field.

RESOLVED- Cllr English proposed the council approve the funding of £2600 for the fencing of the Hambleton Way Allotments at the bottom of Joe's Field. Seconded by Cllr Bright. All agreed.

Town Clerk asked to speak to grounds maintenance contractor and ask what the additional cost would be to cut the grass once opened up again.

21. Agree the Terms of Reference for the Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee and the Community and Events Working Group-

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the council agree the Terms of Reference for the Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee. Seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed.

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the council agree the Terms of Reference for the Community and Events Working Group with the addition of the following- 'Delegation for spending- It is authorised to spend up to £1000 on funding pre-authorised in the budget. It cannot spend more than £500 on a single item nor can it spend any money not budgeted for or a spend which would take the committee over budget'. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

22. Consider a request from Elemore School for the council to be a central point for residents to collect fresh food (this is part of an initiative working with Neighbourly)- Cllr Reece informed Members that the school have the opportunity to work with Neighbourly to collect none perishable food to share with the community. The school have asked the Town Council as Hutton House would be a central collection point. The frequency of collections is to be confirmed. Members discussed that there may be a need to refrigerate the goods which would limit the amount that could be delivered to the council.

RECOMMENDATION- Members agreed that they support the request in principle further to more information being ascertained which will be circulated by email to Members.

Neighbourly to be asked if they could confirm who is responsible for the storage of the goods for any public liability issues and be asked for guidance.

23. Consider if the council would like to ask for a Community Governance Review to reduce the number of Town Councillors for Chilton Town- Town Clerk informed Members that there has been no further

response from Electoral Services. Town Council has 5 vacancies currently and that nationally there is a shortage of numbers of people applying for the councillor vacancies. Town Clerk to contact Electoral Services to ask for an update.

24. Agree the Co-option Policy taking into account skills/knowledge that would be useful for the Miners Welfare Trust and agree next steps for the Town Councillor vacancies- The Town Clerk informed Members that this policy has been discussed several times and it was agreed at a recent meeting for the policy to include a section about the skills/knowledge recommended by the Miners Welfare Trust. **RESOLVED-** Cllr Sutherland proposed the council approve the Co-option Policy with the additions recommended by the Trust which will be added in as section b on page 3 and the current section b will be amended to section c. In addition to include the Mission, Vision and Values of the Council. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

Members agreed that the updated policy be advertised with the current vacancies. Clerk advised that due to annual leave this will be carried out w/c 16th June 2025.

25. Agree a programme for light colours on the outside of Hutton House linked to a list of upcoming occasions/events in 2025- Town Clerk provided Members with a schedule of dates and colours that could be used to light up the building which has been agreed by Stockton Town Council. This follows on from previous discussions carried out by the council.

RESOLVED- Cllr Reece proposed the council agree the programme for light colours on the outside of Hutton House linked to a list of upcoming occasions/events in 2025. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

Members asked that the reason for the colours be advertised on Facebook/Website in order to update residents as to the reason for the lighting colours.

26. Receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan- Cllr Reece advised that the review of the feedback is ongoing and that the DCC Officers have been contacted to check if there have been any changes to their support following on from the recent changes and to ask advice on planning for Town Centres that is being carried out locally.

RECOMMENDATION- Cllr Reece recommended that she puts out a statement in the public domain that the feedback will be circulated in due course once further information has been obtained.

27. Receive the Charity Report- The S106 application for drainage works has been submitted and awaiting a response. Phil Sheepy from FSL has been in touch to ask if we would like a post proposal review meeting and the date will be circulated to Trustees. Football Club have signed their SLA and the first training session took place on Sunday. Progress is being posted on social media which has been received positively locally. Elemore School recently provided assistance with children helping with a litter pick on the Charlie Wayman field.

28. Receive an update from the Community & Events Working Group- Members discussed the options for using a gazebo(s) at the Chilton Show. Members discussed the pros and cons of setting up a gazebo as a council due to the limited number of volunteers and the timeframe that a hired gazebo would be installed on the field. Asking the Scouts to be involved would benefit the Town Council and the Scouts as part of their badge exercises.

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed that Cllr English look into the costs of hiring 2 gazebos from the scouts with their support to put them up and down on the day. The number of tables and chairs to be considered and see what the cost would be to purchase them and also contact the church to see what the cost would be to hire their tables and chairs. Seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed that that under Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public, Cllr Herbert and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the

meeting during consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

Cllr Herbert left the meeting at 7.40pm

29. Receive an update, if received regarding the disputed land - Town Clerk advised there has been no update.

Members received the information

30. Receive an update from Livin regarding the proposed transfer of garages and small gardens- Town Clerk advised that Livin has replied to confirm the garages will be inspected prior to transfer.

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed the council accept the request from Livin to inspect the garages and proceed with the transfer. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

31. Discuss the information regarding the Cemetery Extension and the Tenancy Agreement for the Farmer on the land- Town Clerk advised that the Planning Application relating to the housing development linked to the cemetery extension transfer has a 10 year start period which is from 16th October 2017. The geological survey contractor has advised the report will be able to be used for a going forward. The Farmer has confirmed that he would still like to lease the land. The cost to Savills for setting up the tenancy agreement will be £400 to £600. Town Clerk advised she has minimal experience of setting up a tenancy agreement. Town Clerk to put together a report for Full Council regarding the Cemetery Extension.

RECOMMENDATION- The council try and carry out the work in house through the Town Clerk and the tenancy agreement to be for 2 years or less.

Cllr Herbert returned to the meeting at 7.47pm

32. Consider a report from the Town Clerk-

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the information included in the report and then left the meeting prior to any discussion and then left the room.

Members agreed to have a Special Meeting to discuss the report.

Meeting Closed at 7.57pm.

Cllr Sue Reece,
Mayor of Chilton Town Council,
8th July 2025