THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF

THE SHOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 25th JANUARY 2026.

Present: Councillor R Hardy (Chair)
D Brooks, J Dale, S Maitland H Mountain, M Mountain.
County Councillor H Brown
Apologies: I Cochrane, L Hill,
County Cllrs L Taylor & L Penders

TIME SET ASIDE FOR QUESTIONS/ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Darren Ellis addressed the Parish Council commenting on the high level of drugs crime, ASB and arson in the village which seemed to have developed to a high level and there was a distinct lack of uniformed police presence.
It was noted that these matters are dealt with via the PACT however he had been unable to attend the last meeting due to illness.
Members considered that representations could be made to the local Inspector at Peterlee to try and get some progress and an action plan to redress these issues.
Mr Ellis was to forward his contact details to the Clerk and a representation of Members (R Hardy, D Brooks & S Maitland) together with Mr Ellis could take these matters up with the Police.
Mr Dixon Blakey addressed the Council and County Councillor H Brown on the following matters of concern involving DCC:

- Church walk lack of maintenance, street cleaning and no leaves being collected
- Station Road surface despite being resurfaced 4 years ago was in a terrible and dangerous state as well as manholes damaged throughout the village
- Fly tipping and non-reclaimed former tipping site near Edderacres Farm (former Council tip) rubbish and tipping was leaching into nearby beck!

The Clerk reminded everyone that such matters could be logged directly with DCC via their "Do it Online Portal" however Cllr H Brown confirmed he would also refer the matters to DCC officers for attention.
Members thanked the representatives for attending.

2010. **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
RESOLVED that the apologies for absence received on behalf of I Cochrane and L Hill be received and noted.
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2011. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
No declarations of interest were received.
RESOLVED that, the information given be noted.

2012. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24th NOVEMBER 2025**
RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th November 2025, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2013. **GROUNDSMANS REPORT**

Apologies were offered on behalf of the Groundsman

RESOLVED that the information given be noted

2014. **COUNCILLORS REPORTS OF THEIR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

No reports were received.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

2015. **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

County Councillor Howard Brown reported on the following matters:

- LCTRS arrangements for Local Councils (not applicable to Shotton)
- NetPark hopeful of attracting a major investor to the area (Lockheed)
- Horden Masterplan to go ahead
- DCC to purchase 2 tourist coaches to maximise tourism in the County, particularly East Durham
- DCC to undertake a review of public waste stations later in the year and noted importance to make representations to retain Thornley Crossings waste station
- Co-op planning application update on call in process and representations for change of use
- Area Networks - subject to further review and a formal update was expected quite soon

RESOLVED that, the information given be noted.

2016. **SHOTTON PARTNERSHIP AND AAP UPDATE**

Councillor R Hardy provided a progress report on recent matters and covered the following items:

Partnership

- Fun & Food programme over Christmas holidays had been a success
- Christmas activities included: Pantomime, party, visit to Christmas Northern lights and all children received a selection box
- Community Hub opened Christmas Eve to distribute 100 crates of vegetables and other items donated by ALDI
- Culture Hubs looking at providing a mural to the entrance to the Community Hub
- 43 meals distributed
- Adam was now training for his level 3 Youth Worker qualification funded through YIF
- Youth consortium- governance support had been received through YIF/SIB to establish an East Durham Youth consortium. Groundwork had confirmed having spoken to the Lottery that they were happy to receive an application for funding in the next few months
- Better Youth Spaces grant (successor to YIF) received +£20k to provide gaming room and improvements to outdoor facilities at SYC

RESOLVED that, the information given be noted and the report be received.

2017. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

i. Schedule of Payments & Bank Reconciliation -31.12.26

RESOLVED that the cheques and payments read out and detailed by the Clerk for December 2025 and January 2026 be endorsed and approved for payment and the bank reconciliation for 31 December 2025 be received and noted.

ii. Budget Update, Summary of Requirements and 2026/27 Precept

Detailed consideration was given to the 2025/26 updated budget and proposed budget for 2026/27 which was explained by the Clerk, paying particular attention to the major capital projects that were ending and provision for future projects e.g. pump track.

The circulated Summary of Requirements summarised the budget position and estimates of income and expenditure providing information to determine the Councils precept for 2026/27.

The budget had been prepared with savings included wherever possible however due to an increasing council tax base and no major impact from changes to the LCTRS grant for Shotton it would increase a Band D Council taxpayer by +1.47%.

RESOLVED unanimously that the budget and summary of requirements, copies of which were circulated to each Member be received and noted and that the Councils Precept for 2026/27 be £152,000.

Shotton Parish Council

Summary of Requirements & Precept 2026/27

(SPC 27 January 2026)

	Revised Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Total Expenditure	**£ 255,053**	**£ 186,010**
Total Income (Excluding Precept & Balances)**	**£ 44,732**	**£ 4,350**

Balance @ 31.3.2025	£ 122,794
Precept 2025/26	£ 147,000
LCTRS Grant	£ 0
Estimated Income 2025/26	£ 44,732
	£ 314,526
Less Expenditure 2025/26	£ 255,053
Estimated balances @ 31.3.2026	**£ 59,473**
2026/27 Precept	
Estimated Expenditure 2026/27	£ 186,010
Less Estimated Income 2026/27	£ 4,350
Less use of balances	£ 29,660
Budget Requirement	**£ 152,000**
Estimated balance @ 31.3.2027	£ 29,813

Local Council Tax Scheme Adjustment

Tax Base 2026/27 1179.60 *(2025/26: 1157.60)*

Current 2025/26 Band D Charge £126.99 *(2026/27 Band D Charge £128.86 **+1.47% +£1.87**)*

2026/27 DCC LCTRS Grant 0 *(2025/26 £327)*

(to date: -£30,140)

Shotton PC Budget Requirement	**£ 152,000.00**
Less LCTRS Grant	**£ 0.00**
TOTAL PRECEPT	**£152,000.00**

Equivalent to £5000 (3.4%) increase from £147,000 in 2025/26

iii. Interim Internal Audit Report – Period April – September 2025

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit report dated 25 January 2026 prepared by Mr WD Moore, (providing a substantial assurance opinion) a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, be received, and the recommendations be noted.

2018. **PLANNING MATTERS**

RESOLVED that the planning matters (applications, approvals, appeals and withdrawals) details of which had been circulated electronically when notified to all Members; be received and noted.

2019. **PROGRESS REPORT OF THE CLERK**

The Clerk reported on the following items:

a) YIF Community Outreach Youth Hub

All evidence had been submitted to SIB to close out the grant in November but were still awaiting formal confirmation. There had been similar issues to last year when reconciling the Councils evidenced expenditure to both YIF Capital & revenue streams.

The Clerk was chasing up Scottish Power the electricity provider as no energy had been recorded despite meter readings being provided.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted, the actions taken by the Clerk be endorsed and further developments be awaited.

b) Clerk Additional Hours

In December and January, 27 and 34 additional hours respectively had been worked by the Clerk.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

c) Shotton Parish Council Facebook Page

RESOLVED that Cllr R Hardy would be taking over the administration of the Facebook page from Kieran Wood

d) Vandalism to Christmas Tree

Councillor S Maitland gave a detailed account of events and actions taken because of the vandalism to the Christmas tree that received National media attention. The support from the community and from all over the country had been overwhelming. A temporary fix was made to re-install the existing tree over the Christmas period and New Year and arrangements were in hand for a new tree to be planted later in the year. Over £3k had been raised including the generous and offer of a replacement tree and cost of planting being made by a local businessman.

The Clerk confirmed that he had received numerous offers of financial support from all over the UK that had been referred to the just giving page and handed over some books of poems that had been donated to raise funds for the resident's association to utilise towards the tree.

Despite the negative impact of the damage, the event had really brought the community together in a very positive way and Members asked to record their thanks to all donors and volunteers as well as the resident's association for co-ordinating the actions undertaken.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted and the Councils thanks to the resident's association, all the volunteers and helpers that came together to deal with this as well as to all the people that generously donated.

e) Tácnbora Tour & Destination North East - Celebrating the North East's Heroes

The Clerk reported that he had submitted a nomination for Rona Hardy to be recognised as a Northeast unsung community hero as part of this initiative.

He was pleased to report that the nomination had been successful and that a film crew would be visiting all the nominees to record their story before attending the award ceremony.

The Tour will lead up to the Tácnbora Awards Ceremony in March, where they will highlight the incredible contributions of all the finalists and crown one individual with the prestigious Tácnbora (meaning Standard Bearer in old English) Award for 2026.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted and the Councils congratulations and best wishes to Councillor Rona Hardy for her deserved successful nomination.

f) Information Technology Policy, Council Website, IT Matters & AGAR Assertion 10 requirements

The website was now updated with all documentation to meet the transparency requirements. The IT systems were all updated other than the risk register software (LCRS) which was no longer supported beyond Windows 10 so had been exported and saved into an Excel spreadsheet.

Work was ongoing to meet the new Assertion 10 requirements (digital, data, accessibility and information governance requirements) including an update of the website to meet the accessibility requirements.
RESOLVED that the information given be received and noted.
FURTHER RESOLVED that the Shotton Parish Council UT policy, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member be adopted with effect from 26 January 2026

2020. **CORRESPONDENCE, BULLETINS & CIRCULARS**

- Civility & Respect Pledge- Certificate No 1997 had been received confirming the Councils commitment and pledge
- DCC Pension Fund (LGPS) Employers Contributions -with effect from April 2026 Employers pension contribution to reduce from 19.8% to 15.3%
- Quotation for MUGA line marking at Community Park – Coupe Line Road Marking Contractors quotation (12532) 28.10.25 confirmed until April 2026 for finer weather - £950 +vat

RESOLVED that the correspondence, bulletins and circulars, details of which were read out by the Clerk be received, and the information contained therein, be noted.

2021. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED that the next meeting will be held at the Community Hub on Monday 23 February 2026 at 6.00pm.

2022. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that, pursuant to section1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item

2023. **CLERK RETIREMENT & RECRUITMENT**

The Clerk confirmed his planned retirement date would be 31 March 2026 and that the vacancy had been advertised through NALC recruitment and via CDALC. He was prepared to provide a handover and ongoing support to the Council post-retirement subject to payment at his usual hourly rate as a consultant contractor which would save the Council Employer oncosts.
The deadline for applications for the post was 15th February 2026 and it was agreed that both he and the Chair would shortlist applicants for interview by the Council on a date to be determined,
RESOLVED that the information given be received and noted.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN .....
Date: 23rd February 2026