

**BRANDON & BYSHOTTLES PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN**  
**THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 6, GOATBECK TERRACE,**  
**LANGLEY MOOR, DURHAM, DH7 8JJ**  
**ON FRIDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025 AT 6.30 PM**

**Present:**

Councillor J Jamieson (Chair)

Councillors P A Askell, D Bell, A Bonner, J S Burt, J C Chapman, L Clegg, P A B Elmer, J Grantham, D Hindmarsh, J E Hirst, S Leckenby, D Rowland, E H Simpson, F D Simpson, C J Smith, P Stoddart, J A Turnbull, M Wall

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mrs C Dixon (Clerk), Mrs S Cash (Assistant Clerk), Mrs S Shippen and 10 members of the public.

**54. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Hughes.

No apologies were received from Councillor D Bregazzi.

**RESOLVED:** to **APPROVE** the apologies.

**55. Declarations of Interest & Requests for Dispensations**

Declarations of interest were received from the following:

Item 6 – Councillor J Grantham Brandon Carrside - Committee Member;

Item 6 – Councillor S Leckenby - Brandon Carrside - Committee Member;

Item 6 – Councillor J Turnbull - Brandon Carrside - Committee Member;

Item 10 - Councillor J Jamieson - UMAG - Committee Member

**RESOLVED:** to **RECEIVE** the declarations of interest.

**56. Public Participation**

There were no representations from the public.

**57. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025.**

**RESOLVED:** Agenda Item 21: It was agreed that an amendment be made to include the establishment of a working group to further address this matter.

Agenda Item 22: It was agreed that the four County Councillors will meet to discuss who was going to give the joint report.

That the minutes of the Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were then **CONFIRMED** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**58. Presentation of Donations**

**RESOLVED:** The Chair presented cheques to Mayor of Durham for £600, Friends of Addison Park for £500, New Brancepeth Banner for £300, Ushaw Moor Action Group for £500, Browney Residents Association for £300, New Brancepeth Revellers for £500 and the Brandon Banner for £300.

**59. Brandon Carrside Youth and Community Project**

Council received a written report from Brandon Carrside Youth and Community Project.

**RESOLVED:** To **RECEIVE** the report.

**60. County Councillor Report**

**RESOLVED:** Councillor Elmer was unable to give a report and is to try and obtain further information regarding the County Councillors reports.

**61. Planning Applications**

Planning application lists relevant to the parish between 20<sup>th</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 were considered.

**Week ending 15 June 2025**

DM/25/01531/AD - Aldi Stores Ltd - Installation of 2no. internally illuminated fascia signs and 2no. internally illuminated free standing signs. Depot, Mill Road, Langley Moor, Durham, DH7 8HL

**Week ending 22 June 2025**

DM/25/01572/FPA - Mrs Joanne Arrowsmith - Single storey rear infill extension. 9 Weatherhill Way, Browney, Durham, DH7 8LJ

**Week ending 29 June 2025**

There were no planning applications this week.

**Week ending 6 July 2025**

DM/25/00825/FPA - Mr Anthony Bimbi - Single storey and first floor extensions to the front and side elevations of existing dwelling with associated hard landscaping. The Flat, Old Bridge House, Croxdale, Durham, DH6 5JL.

**RESOLVED:** To raise no objection to any of the applications.

**62. Donations**

Council considered requests for donations:

- a) **Building Better Community partnerships** – Requesting funding towards costs of service.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to pledge support in principle, however, the item is to be **DEFERRED** until the September meeting to allow time for up to date bank statements to be obtained.

- b) **St Andrews Church** - Requesting funding for the repair and replacement of the male and female toilets

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to pledge support in principle, however, the item is to be **DEFERRED** until the September meeting to allow time for up to date information to be circulated to Councillors.

- c) **The Browney** – Requesting funding to help improve the courtyard.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to **DECLINE** the funding request on the grounds that funding cannot be granted to a business for commercial gain.

**63. Invoices for Payment**

Authorisation was requested to pay accounts for £39,704.36.

**RESOLVED:** To authorise payment of the accounts amounting to £39,704.36 to be checked and verified by Councillors P Stoddart and D Bell.

**64. Civic Functions**

To consider the attendance for the chair at the civic functions.

**RESOLVED:** To **APPROVE** the chairs attendance and costs in relation to the civic functions.

**65. Business Cards / Councillor Photo ID Cards Policy**

To consider the draft policy.

**RESOLVED:** To **APPROVE** the policy presented to the Council. Members are requested to confirm if they would like business cards and the wording to be used.

**66. Information and Data Protection Policy.**

To consider the draft policy.

**RESOLVED:** To **APPROVE** the policy presented to the Council.

**67. Calendar of Meetings Personnel Committee 2025-2026.**

**RESOLVED:** To **APPROVE** the calendar of meetings for the Personnel Committee 2025/26.

**68. Browney Village Green**

To consider the clerks report.

**RESOLVED:** to send correspondence to residents to politely request that there is no parking on the grass, that the concrete base is removed due to health and safety and that no parking signs are installed. The situation will then be monitored.

**69. Insurance Renewal**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the insurance has been renewed for the final year of a three year agreement.

**70. Energy Audit of the Parish Council Offices.**

Members considered the motion.

**RESOLVED:** It was **APPROVED** that a working group be established, and that the Clerk will make initial enquiries about the cost of obtaining an EPC, the findings of which will be brought to a meeting of the group.

**71. Non Designated Heritage Assets**

Members considered the motion.

**RESOLVED:** It was **APPROVED** that this matter be carried out by the Non Designated Heritage Assets.

**72. Mobile Phone Contract**

Report considered.

**RESOLVED:** It was **APPROVED** for officers to obtain a mobile phone which would best suit their needs as soon as possible.

**73. Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the LGA 1972, ss 100 and 102, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of a report presented to the council by Mrs Sam Shippen due to the confidential nature of the business.

Following that report, the press and public were invited back into the meeting to agree the following;

**a) Internal Audit Report** – To review the issues identified in the Internal Audit Report as set out below, and agree to implement actions.

**1.4** The key issues from the LGRC review is detailed in the report, and an action plan should be agreed and implemented by the Council.

**RESOLVED:** To note the LGRC review and to implement its findings.

**4.1.4** There is a Community Highways Worker who is employed by Durham County Council under a Service Level Agreement on annual hours per annum, the hours worked is to be confirmed by the Clerk. There is a program of work based on the various wards of the Council, to be carried out and further work can be requested by Councillors and coordinated by the Clerk. There does not appear to be any review of the work carried out.

**RESOLVED:** That a meeting be arranged with Durham County Council to review the current Community Highways Worker (CHW) programme, with a view to evaluating completed work, confirming hours worked, and revising the programme of work across all Council wards. Future coordination and requests from Councillors will continue to be managed by the Clerk.

**4.1.5** The Council also employs a Cleaning Contractor engaged 4 hours per week to clean the office; no timesheets are completed.

**RESOLVED:** that a meeting be arranged with the cleaning contractor to discuss the above and implement the necessary paperwork.

**4.2.1** During the LGRC review it was established that the agendas sent out do not attach the list of payments. The list of payments and the invoices are only seen at the meeting if required where 2 Councillors initials the invoices. It was observed by the Locum Clerk that the invoices were not examined.

**RESOLVED:** Invoices are now brought to Council meetings for scrutiny, and two Councillors attend the office to examine and sign the invoices prior to approval.

**4.3.3** Meeting agendas and minutes are published on website, however, no supporting papers are included with the agendas.

**RESOLVED:** Agendas, minutes and supporting documents are now published on the website.

**4.3.5** The Council has policies agreed throughout the year when required, there is no list of all policies which show when they are agreed and when they are to be reviewed.

**RESOLVED:** the clerk is currently reviewing policies and creating a list.

**4.4.6** The Business select Instant access account often shows a balance which is over the Financial Services Protection Scheme and the Council's monies would not be fully protected.

**RESOLVED:** The clerk is to investigate moving the money into the CCLA account.

**4.5.1** The Council recorded all income and expenditure in a cash book, which was found to be incomplete when the Governance review took place.

**RESOLVED:** the council has purchased Rialtas Accounting Software.

**4.5.5** Given the level of annual income/expenditure, the Council should be on an income/expenditure method of accounting, which will include accounting for prepayments and accruals at year end. It is thought that accounting is not currently being done on this basis.

**RESOLVED:** the council has purchased Rialtas Accounting Software.

**4.8.2** The Ward budgets are given an annual allocation and balances are subject to carry over at year end, and therefore should be subject to annual review.

**RESOLVED:** Ward Budgets to be discussed at the next Finance Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

**4.8.5** The Council does not currently have a Strategic Business Plan.

**RESOLVED:** The Council has discussed and proposes to implement a business plan in the near future.

**b) Annual Governance Statement** – Mrs Sam Shippen advised the council of their responsibilities which would allow them to make an informed decision of whether to answer yes or no to the following statements;

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **NO** to this statement.

2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **NO** to this statement.

3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **NO** to this statement.

4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **YES** to this statement.

5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **YES** to this statement.

6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **YES** to this statement.

7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **NO** to this statement.

8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.

**RESOLVED:** To respond **YES** to this statement.

9. Trust funds (including charitable). In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.

10. **RESOLVED:** To respond **N/A** to this statement.

**RESOLVED:** To **APPROVE** the annual governance statement and that the Chair and Clerk sign the statement and record as the appropriate minute.

**c) Annual Accounting Statement** – The LGRC consultant advised that the accounts for 2023/24 had been restated and noted the absence of a balance sheet. Members were also advised to consider the differences between the original and restated

accounting figures. The Council was asked to consider approval of the restated figures for 2023/24 and the Accounting Statement for 2024/25.

**RESOLVED:** the Council **APPROVED** the recommendations made by the LGRC consultant regarding the restatement of the 2023/24 accounts, and further approves the Accounting Statement for 2024/25. It was also agreed that the Chair will sign the approved statement and that the appropriate minute reference be inserted into the official record, in accordance with audit requirements.

**d) Notice of Electors Rights**

**RESOLVED:** To **APPROVE** the dates for the electors rights period as being 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025, and the appropriate notice being placed on the website on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025.

The meeting closed at 19.37 pm

Signed .....

Date .....