



Minutes of the proceedings of the **CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** held at
Hutton House, Chilton, on Tuesday 10 February 2026

Present: Chair: Councillor. S. Reece (Mayor)
Councillors: D. Bright; E. Bruce; D. English; R. Hirst.
In attendance: C. Llewelyn, Town Clerk
Members of the public: None

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm.

167. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from Councillors P. Herbert; P. Malpas; M. Smith; S. Zapert.

Resolved to receive the apologies, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Bruce.

168. To receive Declarations of Interest

None received.

169. To receive Member Dispensations

The Clerk had supplied further information on the dispensation request received from Councillor Hirst. Members discussed how the Council ensures wider discussions about matters are able to take place when some Councillors declare interests.

Resolved:

- (1) until the Council's Annual Meeting in May 2026 – **The dispensation will limit Councillor Hirst from participating in the discussion of and/or vote on the following matters which effect the allotment site on which they hold an allotment to a greater degree than any other allotment size within the parish:**
- a. **The eviction of an allotment holder on the West Chilton Allotment site;**
 - b. **The award of a grant/tender to the West Chilton Allotment site.**

(2) all dispensation requests should be reviewed at Annual Meetings each year, aligned to the vote for membership of Committees.

170. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

171. Mayor's Report

Councillor Reece presented a report and updated Members regarding a proposal that Avant homes would hold a public meeting; Chilton Elevate pop-up hub which takes place this week; the Heritage Project Drop in and volunteering opportunities; Chilton Bikes, Boards and Brushes Project, County Durham Day.

Councillor English declared an interest, as a resident, in Avant Homes.

Resolved: Members noted the Mayor's report.

172. To approve minutes of the following meeting and recommendations therein:

a) Chilton Town Council Meeting held on 20 January 2026

Resolved: the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2026 be accepted as a true record, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.

173. County Councillor's Report

The Clerk gave a report sent by County Councillor Bowron, which included the County Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and the planning application from Avant Homes. Members are able to send feedback on the planning application as residents on forms which the Town Council has provided.

Resolved: County Councillor Bowron's report is noted.

174. To review the Resolution Log

The Town Clerk reviewed the Resolution Log with Members.

Resolved:

- (1) Councillor Bright to be nominated for Buckingham Palace Royal Garden Party tickets in 2027. All agreed.**
- (2) to confirm the expenditure on the Charlie Wayman arch of £4,670.00, agreed at the Council meeting on 14 October 2025. All agreed.**
- (3) Members noted the actions from the Resolution Log. All agreed.**

175. Correspondence

Members expressed their thanks to the former Clerk J. Dickinson, and thanked her for the card she sent.

177. To approve the payment schedule

Councillors requested more information about Shildon Community Bus and costs for tables and chairs for the March meeting.

Resolved:

- (1) the Clerk to query the invoice for installation of Christmas decorations as Councillors expected to pay the quoted cost.**
- (2) the payment schedule is approved, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.**

178. To note the detailed income and expenditure

The Clerk spoke through the detailed income and expenditure. Councillors requested further information regarding Neighbourhood Plan earmarked reserves, and all other earmarked reserves which the Clerk will bring to the next meeting.

Resolved: to note the detailed income and expenditure. All agreed.

179. To consider action and expenditure to meet new Governance Assertion 10 requirements

The Clerk briefly explained the new requirements for audit and governance purposes.

Resolved: to note that expenditure may be required to meet new governance requirements and that policies will be brought to Council. All agreed.

180. To review and confirm an IT support Service Level Agreement from 1 April

Resolved: to approve the IT Support Service Level Agreement for the year from 1 April 2026, to be reviewed at the next renewal stage. All agreed.

181. To receive minutes from the following committee meetings:

- a) Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee Meeting held on 19 January 2026

Resolved: to receive the minutes of the Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee Meeting held on 19 January 2026. All agreed.

182. To approve obtaining a valuation of Hutton House for Council and insurance purposes

Resolved: to obtain a valuation of Hutton House for Council and insurance reinstatement purposes at the quoted cost, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

183. To consider the expenditure, supplier and winter arrangements regarding allotments water supply

The Clerk had sent information regarding expenditure, supplier and winter arrangements for the supply of water to allotments.

Resolved: the Clerk to seek quotes for management of the water supply, and to bring a cost benefit analysis to Council regarding water supply. All agreed.

184. To approve stress testing arrangements as required

Resolved: the Clerk to accept the best value quote for stress testing of lampposts and for stress testing of all hanging basket holders to take place in this financial year, which will exceed the budget allocation.

185. To receive the annual play park inspection results and approve any required actions

The Clerk is to clarify how invoices are supplied for the Town Council and the Miners Welfare Trust.

Resolved:

- (1) the Clerk to agree costs with the fencing supplier as they had not supplied sufficient fencing and to ensure the work is completed, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.
- (2) the Clerk to sign the Durham County Council Service Level Agreement for the current year for play inspections.
- (3) the Clerk to investigate other contractors who carry out playground inspections.
- (4) the Clerk to arrange the work and make expenditure to remove all identified moderate risks and take action where appropriate on lower risks, as soon as possible.

186. To consider membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks

Resolved: to approve membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks, to be reviewed at the end of the year.

187. DM/26/00024/FPA Land To The West Of Lyndhurst Nurseries, Windlestone, DL17 0RF

Matters including traffic, infrastructure, amenities and Section 106 monies were raised. The Clerk advised the Planning Officers had agreed the Town Council can submit any comments by the end of February.

Resolved: Councillor Reece will draft a neutral response to be confirmed by Councillors before submission by the Town Clerk; this will be a neutral, factual response reflecting the community's needs and wishes. All agreed.

188. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Reece gave an update about the Neighbourhood Plan, including providing details of the Employability Hub taking place in Hutton House this week which responds to the community's expressed interest in advice and information about employment and skills.

189. To receive the Miners' Welfare Charity Report

Councillor Reece said the Trust has established a reserves pot in line with Charity Commission requirements. Trustees had a briefing on conflicts of interest. The Heritage Lottery Project is on target. Service Level Agreements have been approved with the croquet, bowling and football clubs. The risk register has been amended, reducing risk levels regarding reserves and under-utilisation.

190. To approve decisions in the action log from the Community and Events Working Group including expenditure on events and the fireworks display

The action log from the Working Group had been circulated. Expenditure on the road closure for Miners Gala Day is already approved. The Clerk is awaiting costs for other road closures and will progress these.

Resolved:

- (1) to approve expenditure in the log on fireworks for the November display, and band and falconry for Chilton Show, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Bright. All agreed.
- (2) to approve the decisions in the Community and Events Working Group action log, and expenditure on displays for Chilton Show, within the budget allocation. All agreed.

191. To consider a response to the proposed closure of St Aidan's Church building by the Parochial Church Council, and to consider the Council applying for registration of the Church building as an Asset of Community Value and/or a Non Designated Heritage Asset

Information had been circulated regarding Non Designated Heritage Assets and Assets of Community Value. Councillor Reece explained the designations and what the Neighbourhood Plan stated about heritage buildings in Chilton.

Resolved (1): to make progress towards requesting designation of the Church building as a Non Designated Heritage Asset, which may offer some protection to the building itself should it be sold. All agreed.

Councillor Hirst declared an interest as a participant in meetings of a local community group as an individual.

Resolved (2): in accordance with Standing Order 3(w), the meeting time be extended beyond the two-hour limit, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Hirst. All agreed.

Resolved (3): Councillor Reece to seek further information from the Diocese and the Parochial Church Council and what options may be available including costs. All agreed.

Resolved (4): the Clerk to contact the Catholic Church to ask if they would host an ecumenical service on Remembrance Sunday if St Aidan's Church is not available. All agreed.

192. To consider expenditure towards the repair of Chilton Miners' Memorial (not owned by Chilton Town Council)
The Clerk had circulated a report including insurance advice, and said that any expenditure should be under Section 137 of the Local Government Act.

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to seek further clarification regarding ownership of the Miners' Memorial. All agreed.

(2) to provide information for the public, that the Town Council is working to establish ownership, and is prepared to contribute funds to its repair, once this is agreed with the owners. All agreed.

193. Consider a request for an event on Joe's Field in Summer 2026

The Clerk had sent a report. She has obtained template forms.

Resolved: a letter to be sent to nearby residents, and a poster for tenants of the allotments, requesting feedback.

194. To RESOLVE that under Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public 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

Resolved: to ask any or all members of the press and public to leave the meeting in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

195. To receive an update and consider action on unauthorised activity on Town Council land

Resolved: the Council agrees there is no objection to the proposed course of action.

196. To receive any update about the disputed land

No update had been received.

197. To receive any update about the Livin Garages

The titles had been received and circulated to Councillors. These are to be reviewed against the original agreement and agreed conditions including ensuring no asbestos is present.

Resolved: to approve the legal deed once reviewed, effecting the transfer of the agreed garages and gardens from Livin to the Town Council, to be executed on behalf of the Council as per Standing Orders, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

Meeting Closed at 8.25pm.

Signed:

Councillor Sue Reece, Mayor of Chilton Town Council

Dated: