



Minutes of the proceedings of the **CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** held at
Hutton House, Chilton, on Tuesday 20 January 2026

Present: **Chair:** Councillor. S. Reece (Mayor)

Cllrs: D. Bright; E. Bruce; D. English; P. Herbert; R. Hirst (from 6.25pm); M. Smith; S. Zapert

In attendance: Town Clerk C. Llewelyn

Members of the public: L. Southern, Durham Diocese Interim Change Minister, Representative of St Aidan's Church, Chilton (for part of the meeting)

The meeting commenced at 6.05pm.

139. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from Councillor Malpas. Councillor Hirst had advised he would be late.
County Councillor Bowron had also sent apologies.

140. To receive Declarations of Interest

None received.

141. To receive Member Dispensations

A dispensation request had been received from Councillor Hirst.

Resolved: to defer a decision, and the Clerk to check all the relevant regulations.

142. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

Resolved: to bring forward agenda item 21 To consider a response to the proposed closure of St Aidan's Church by the Parochial Church Council to this point in the agenda, proposed by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Herbert. All agreed.

143. To consider a response to the proposed closure of St Aidan's Church by the Parochial Church Council

L. Southern was invited to address the meeting. She advised that a decision on the potential closure of St Aidan's Church will be considered by the local Diocese and then by the Church Commissioners and may be made this year, and there would be consultation. She said the Diocese is committed to a continuing presence in Chilton.

Discussion took place about the matter, and about historical items in the Church building which ideally would be preserved for the people of Chilton. L. Southern was thanked for attending, and she thanked Town Councillors. Councillor R. Hirst joined at 6.25pm during this discussion.

Resolved (1): under Standing Order 10.a(xi). 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 during consideration of the following item of business only, as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. All agreed.

Resolved (2): the Clerk to undertake the agreed action, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English.

All agreed.

144. Mayor's Report

Mayor Councillor Reece presented a report and updated Members: Durham County Council will consult on the Avant planning application, the issue of dog fouling and that dog bags can be bought from Hutton House will continue to be publicised, and mentioned the cemetery, Welfare Recreation Ground and County Durham Day.

Resolved: Members accepted the report, which is to be publicised.

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

a. **Chilton Town Council Meeting held on 11 November 2025**

Resolved: the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2025 be accepted as a true record, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Cllr Herbert. All agreed.

b. **Chilton Town Council Special Meeting held on 6 January 2026**

The Clerk recommended that an amendment be made to minute reference 136 to add resolution (4) to approve the draft budget with the amendments agreed at the meeting.

Resolved: the minutes of the special meeting held on 6 January 2026, with the amendment to minute reference 136 to add resolution (4) to approve the draft budget with the agreed amendments, be accepted as a true record, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Cllr Hirst. All agreed.

146. County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Bowron had sent a report to the Clerk, which included:

- the planning permission for new homes
- Durham County Council proposal to increase council tax by 3.1%
- cladding at West Chilton Terrace and Denebridge Row
- holding meetings about residents' concerns.

Resolved: County Councillor Bowron's report is noted.

147. To review the Resolution Log

The Town Clerk reviewed the Resolution Log with Members.

Resolved: Members noted the actions from the Resolution Log.

148. To submit names for the draw for tickets for Buckingham Palace Royal Garden Party

Resolved: Councillors Bruce and Bright are to be nominated for the draw for tickets to the Royal Garden Party. All agreed.

149. To consider nominations for County Durham Association of Local Council's Executive Committee

Resolved: Councillor Reece is to be nominated for the Larger Councils' Executive Committee, proposed by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Hirst. All agreed.

150. To approve the payment schedule

Craft Group money to be reported as Craft Group Funding. The Clerk is to investigate the expenditure and supplier of water on the allotments and the winter arrangements, and report back to Council.

Resolved: the payment schedule is approved, proposed by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Herbert. All agreed.

151. To note the detailed income and expenditure

The Clerk is to provide a more detailed report to the February meeting.

Resolved: to note the detailed income and expenditure, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Bright. All agreed.

- 152. To receive the Interim Audit Report for 2025 to 26**
The Internal Auditor had undertaken an Interim Report for the current financial year and advised that controls are adequate and made no recommendations.
Resolved: to receive the report, proposed by Councillor Hirst, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.
- 153. To review and update bank signatories**
Discussion took place about bank signatories. The Clerk gave information about the current situation and advised an update was required, and that some basic information was needed from all Councillors.
Resolved (1): Councillors will sign the forms for the basic identity check. All agreed.
Resolved (2): Councillors Bright and English and the Clerk to be added as signatories to all Town Council bank accounts, and any signatory no longer in post be removed, proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Bruce. All agreed.
- 154. Verbal update from Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Meeting held on 19 January 2026**
Councillor Bright gave a verbal update from the meeting held on 19 January, including the installation of a dog bin near the industrial estate, the cemetery and the disconnection of electricity to the building, and that policies for the allotments are to be reviewed. Play park inspection results are to be sent to all Councillors.
Resolved: the update is noted.
- 155. Update on Avant Housing Development**
Councillor Reece said that Members may wish to consider how the Council would want to comment on the application at a future meeting.
- 156. SCR/26/00001 Consideration of requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment, Land to the West of Lyndhurst Nurseries, Windlestone DL17 0RF**
Resolved: the planning application SCR/26/00001 is noted.
- 157. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan**
Councillor Reece provided an update. An Energy Audit team offered energy audit for businesses and individuals in Hutton House, and Durham County Council's Employability team is holding a pop-up event from 10 to 12 February.
- 158. To receive the Miners' Welfare Charity Report**
A meeting of the Trust was held on 19 January. Councillor Reece said that Charlie Wayman fields had been rated as Good in the latest Pitchpower report, and has been asked to be a case study. The update included the Heritage Lottery project, internal and external works and a public project launch. The costs for the arch are to be followed up.
Resolved: the report is received.
- 159. To receive an update from the Community & Events Working Group**
Councillors requested a meeting is organised as soon as possible. Events went well over Christmas.
- 160. To consider expenditure towards the repair of Chilton Miners' Memorial (owned by Durham Aged Mineworkers' Homes Association)**
The Clerk is to find out more information and investigate any liability for the Council.
Resolved: to defer the item to the next meeting, and the Clerk to present further information.
- 161. Consider a request for an event on Joe's Field in Summer 2026**
The request was discussed.
Resolved: the Clerk to find out information from other Councils and the business about financial arrangements.
- 162. 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.

163. To receive an update about the disputed land

The Clerk gave an update.

Resolved: the update is received.

164. To receive an update about the Livin Garages

The Clerk had circulated a brief report.

Resolved: the update is received.

165. To discuss an insurance matter

The Clerk gave an update on two separate insurance matters.

Resolved: the information is received.

166. Staffing Update and Recruitment

The Clerk said she will review this matter and add to a future agenda.

Meeting Closed at 7.51pm.

Signed:

Councillor Sue Reece, Mayor of Chilton Town Council

Dated: