Minutes of the proceedings of the **CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING** held at Hutton House, Chilton, on Tuesday 9 June 2026

Present: **Chair:** Councillor S. Reece (Mayor)
Councillors: P. Malpas (Vice Chair), D. Bright, E. Bruce, D. English, R. Hirst, S. Zapert.
In attendance: G. Fletcher, Internal Auditor; C. Llewelyn, Town Clerk
Members of the public: None

The meeting commenced at 6.02pm.

305. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from County Councillor Bowron.

306. To receive declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made under this item.

307. To receive member dispensations

No member dispensations had been received.

Resolved under Standing Order 10(a)vi: to bring forward agenda items 11 to 13 to this point in the meeting, proposed by Councillor Hirst, seconded by Councillor Bruce. All agreed.

308. To receive the report of the Internal Auditor for the year 2025 to 26

G. Fletcher was invited to present his report. He explained the internal audit process, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and his minimum tests. Councillors were invited to ask questions. Town Councillors expressed thanks to G. Fletcher.

Resolved:

(1) the Internal Auditor's Report for the year 2025 to 26 was received.

(2) it is agreed that an interim audit will take place around November 2026.

G. Fletcher left the meeting at this point.

309. To approve Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement 2025 to 26) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Annual Governance Statement had been circulated to Councillors. The Chair spoke through all ten assertions on Section 1 as follows:

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

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

3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential noncompliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.

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

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

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

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

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 authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.

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. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.

Resolved: the Council agrees the above systems of internal control, and approves Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement 2025 to 26) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. All agreed.

The Chair signed Section 1 of the Annual Return at this point in the meeting.

310. To approve Section 2 (Accounting Statement 2025 to 26) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Resolved: to approve Section 2 (Accounting Statement 2025 to 26) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. All agreed.

The Chair signed the Section 2 of the Annual Return at this point in the meeting.

311. Public participation

No members of the public were present.

312. Mayor's Report

Mayor Councillor Reece presented a report which included dealing with residents' concerns, dance performance, Traffic Regulation Order and volunteers' week.

Resolved: to note the Mayor's Report.

313. To approve minutes of the following meetings and recommendations therein:

a) **Chilton Town Council Annual and Ordinary Meeting held on 12 May 2026**

Resolved: the minutes of the Town Council Annual and Ordinary Meeting held on 12 May 2026 and the recommendations therein be accepted as a true record, proposed by Councillor Malpas, seconded by Cllr Bright. All agreed.

314. County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Bowron had sent his apologies and a written report, which included updates regarding cladding issues, poles for CCTV, and highways and parking matters.

Resolved: Councillors noted County Councillor Bowron's report.

315. To consider Co-option to the Town Council

The Clerk said that Durham County Council has advised that following the resignation of Pam Herbert and the Notice of Vacancy, co-option can now take place.

Resolved:

(1) another coffee morning and information event is to be arranged, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor Malpas. All agreed.

(2) posters can be used again for noticeboards, social media and the Chapter. All agreed.

316. To review the Resolution Log including:

a) To consider an update on the repair of the Miners' Memorial (not owned by Chilton Town Council)

The Clerk gave an update which included the repair to the Miners' Memorial, the flowerbeds to the front of Hutton House and that Community Grant applications have started to be received.

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to query action on the flower beds to the front of Hutton House with the Grounds Maintenance Contractor.

(2) to receive the Resolution Log.

317. To consider correspondence received:

a) Letter from Brain Tumour Research

A thank you letter was received from Brain Tumour Research following the lighting of Hutton House in support of raising awareness of brain tumour research.

Resolved: To receive the letter, and the Clerk to publish a post thanking Brain Tumour Research for its letter.

b) Traffic Regulation Order for Chilton Way

An updated proposed Traffic Regulation Order had been received from Durham County Council.

Resolved: the Clerk to confirm that the Town Council supports the response of the Miners' Welfare Trust.

Councillor Malpas declared an interest in Livin Garages.

318. To approve the payment schedule

Resolved:

(1) to consider a virement for the waste removal at Joe's Field.

(2) to approve the payments in the schedule, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Malpas. All agreed.

319. To note the detailed income and expenditure

The Clerk provided an update including actual and projected overspends in the budget.

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to investigate the budget and expenditure for emails and report back to Council next month.

(2) to note the detailed income and expenditure, proposed by Councillor Malpas, seconded by Councillor Bright. All agreed.

320. To review earmarked reserves

The Clerk provided an update.

Resolved:

(1) to note that £1,642 has been added to an earmarked reserve for events as agreed by Council.

(2) the Clerk to further investigate an earmarked reserve which is leftover funding and could be used for allotment gates.

(3) Allotment key deposits are to be transferred to an earmarked reserve.

(4) Craft group money is to be transferred to an earmarked reserve.

(5) the Clerk to transfer money raised for the Mayor's Charity to an earmarked reserve if appropriate.

321. To approve a photocopier contract for the Town Council

The Clerk provided three quotes for consideration.

Resolved: the Council accepts the quote from Provider 1.

322. To approve a Solicitor to undertake legal work

Resolved: to defer this matter to a future meeting, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor Malpas. All agreed.

323. To receive minutes from the following meetings and approve actions therein:

a) Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee 18 May 2026

Resolved: to receive the draft minutes of the Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee meeting held on 18 May 2026.

b) Junior Town Council 24 April 2026

Town Councillors said the Junior Town Councillors are a brilliant group of young people.

Resolved: to receive the draft minutes of the Junior Town Council meeting held on 24 April 2026.

324. To consider and approve the following Town Council Policies

a) Amendment to Awards and Gifts Policy

Resolved: to allow more flexibility by amending the Awards and Gifts Policy to add that in addition to flowers, a long service recognition award can be issued and a relative(s) invited to receive it, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

325. To receive an update and consider expenditure regarding health and safety matters, furniture requirements and works required at Hutton House

The Clerk provided an update.

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to bring costs and options to the Working Group and to arrange purchase of tables for Hutton House.

(2) to approve the replacement and purchase of fire extinguishers as presented by the Clerk. All agreed.

326. To appoint the Chair and Vice Chair of the Miners' Welfare Trust Charity

Resolved:

(1) to appoint Councillor Reece as Chair of the Miners' Welfare Trust Charity, proposed by Councillor Malpas, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

(2) to appoint Councillor English as Vice Chair of the Miners' Welfare Trust Charity, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Hirst. All agreed.

327. To consider options for a badge for the Mayor's Consort

Resolved: to defer this matter to a future meeting, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

328. To consider purchase of new flags for the flagpole in front of Hutton House

The Clerk gave details of flags and costs.

Resolved: to purchase a new Union Flag and a new Chilton Town Council flag. All agreed.

329. To consider advice provision funded by the Town Council

Resolved: the Clerk to write a letter to Ferryhill Ladder Centre confirming that the Council will continue with the provision for the current year, on the same basis as last year.

330. To consider options and expenditure for West Chilton play area

Resolved:

(1) to look at existing equipment and its condition, to consider a refurbishment plan.

(2) the Council will consider what funding may be available.

331. To agree a programme for light colours on the outside of Hutton House for occasions and events

Resolved: to agree the presented programme of light colours for the outside of Hutton House, with the addition of Brain Tumour Awareness, VE Day and Earth Hour.

332. To consider the Council's watering agreement

The Clerk presented costs from potential contractors.

Resolved: that the contract be awarded to Contractor 1, as identified in the report, and that the Clerk confirm that all planters are included in the contract and that the contractor holds the licence for the work to be undertaken.

333. DM/26/01324/FPA 15 Pennine Way, Chilton DL17 0QE

Resolved: to note there are no current objections, but the Town Council would take note if any residents asked them to raise objections on their behalf. All agreed.

334. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan including:

a) To consider an update on the registration of the Church building as a Non Designated Heritage Asset

Councillor Reece gave details from the latest County Council guidelines. The Government has advised of an overhaul to the planning framework. Neighbourhood Planning should be aligned to the new policies.

Resolved:

(1) to receive the update on Neighbourhood Planning.

(2) to note that Councillor Reece has requested an update from Durham County Council about the registration of the Church building as a Non Designated Heritage Asset.

335. To receive the Miners' Welfare Charity Report

Councillor Reece said that the Miners' Welfare Trustees requested that the Town Council considered multi-factor authentication for emails, that devices are up to date with security and to consider training on cyber security. Councillor Reece said everything is on track with the budget and financial standing of the Trust, the gate on Charlie Wayman field is almost ready and a small ribbon cutting event will be arranged.

Resolved: to note the Miners' Welfare Charity Report.

336. To approve decisions and expenditure on contractors and events in the Community and Events Working Group action log

Resolved:

(1) to note that it may be necessary to make extra expenditure for the Show on a marquee.

(2) to approve £300.00 for a quiet minibus for the Coach Trip.

(3) to approve the road closures for the fireworks and Christmas Light Switch on events.

(4) to note the Community and Events Working Group log.

All resolutions proposed by Councillor Reece and seconded by Councillor Malpas. All agreed.

337. To receive draft proposals regarding the future of St Aidan's Church building and consider a response to the proposed closure of St Aidan's Church building by the Parochial Church Council

Councillor Reece said the Town Council has been asked to facilitate a public meeting to help with a response to the Church Commissioners. The meeting is agreed for Thursday 18th June at 6.30pm at Hutton House.

Resolved: to note the update. All agreed.

338. To consider a request from the Parochial Church Council for Town Council involvement in discussions regarding St Aidan's Church Hall

An update is expected after an external meeting with the Diocese representatives.

339. To consider arrangements for the approved event on Joe's Field in July 2026 including correspondence received

A letter was received from a resident, with some other signatures.

Councillor Reece said she and the Clerk had met with the resident and explained the background and decision. The event will be reviewed afterwards with residents.

Resolved: to note the report.

340. 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 for the following items of business in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Hirst. All agreed.

341. To receive any update about the disputed land and consider associated expenditure

The Clerk provided an update.

Resolved: to note the update about the disputed land.

Councillor Malpas had declared an interest, and left the meeting for the next agenda item, and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

342. To receive an update about the Livin Garages

The Clerk had sent an update, including a proposed indemnity clause.

Resolved: the Council wishes to include the indemnity clause in the agreement with Livin, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

Councillor Malpas returned to the meeting at this point.

343. To consider the future facilities and infrastructure needs of the Town Council

Councillor Reece said she will circulate the outcome of a meeting held with Councillors and will propose next steps, including a further working group meeting for Councillors.

Resolved: to note the update.

Meeting Closed at 7.55pm.

Signed:

Councillor Sue Reece, Mayor of Chilton Town Council

Dated: