Minutes of the proceedings of the **CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING** held at Hutton House, Chilton, on Tuesday 8 September 2026

Present: **Chair:** Councillor S. Reece (Mayor)
Councillors: D. Bright, E. Bruce, D. English (6.16pm), M. Smith, S. Zapert (until 7.49pm).
In attendance: C. Llewelyn, Town Clerk; K. Ward, Durham County Council Safer Places Officer.
Members of the public: None

The meeting commenced at 6.04pm.

452. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors P. Malpas (Vice Chair) and R. Hirst.
Councillor D. English had advised he would be late.

Resolved: the apologies were received.

Apologies were noted from County Councillor Bowron.

453. To receive declarations of interest

Councillor S. Reece declared an interest due to living near to a property which has a planning application on the agenda, with no material benefit to Councillor Reece.

454. To receive member dispensations

None received.

455. Public participation

K. Ward, Durham County Council Safer Places Officer, updated the Council about CCTV in Chilton. Town Councillors advised that the encampment behind Chilton Library has gone.

456. Mayor's Report

Mayor Councillor S. Reece presented a report, including updates on the children's dog mess campaign, the Council's bus trip and Chilton Show, and the Miners Welfare Trust's Bikes, Boards and Brushes project. She said the Mayor's Charity is focused on mental health charities.

Resolved: to note the Mayor's Report.

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

a) Chilton Town Council Annual and Ordinary Meeting held on 14 July 2026

Resolved: the minutes of the Town Council Annual and Ordinary Meeting held on 14 July 2026 and the recommendations therein be accepted as a true record, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Cllr Smith. All agreed.

Councillor English joined the meeting at this point.

458. County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Bowron had sent a report which included the layby near Chilton Academy, the traveller encampment, and a Section 106 funding application for the Church Hall.

Resolved: to note the County Councillor's Report.

459. To review the Resolution Log and Clerk's Report, including the Council's response to Durham County Council consultation on Selective Licensing

The Clerk provided an update including that the response to Durham County Council regarding Selective Licensing was submitted. It was also noted that the Community Grant Awards evening was held and grants paid, and that a flag raising event had been held with the Cubs to mark Merchant Navy Day.

Resolved: to note the update on the Resolution Log.

460. To consider correspondence received:

a) Durham County Council Plan Consultation

Resolved: Councillors to email the Chair and the Clerk by 18 September with any comments so a response can be submitted.

461. To approve the payment schedule

The Financial, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee had made recommendations to Council to make the payments in the Schedule.

Resolved: to approve the payments presented in the report and to approve the payments including floral bedding marquee repairs and a payment of interest to the Miners Welfare Trust which is from money it accrued, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

462. To note the detailed income and expenditure

The Financial, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee had recommended the income and expenditure report be accepted by Council.

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

463. To review earmarked reserves

The Financial, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee had recommended the earmarked reserves report be accepted by Council.

Resolved: to note the earmarked reserves report, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

464. To approve cyber security measures including insurance

The Clerk provided an update on the cyber security insurance renewal and the implementation of multi factor authentication for Officers and Councillors.

Resolved: to note the update and approve the renewal of the cyber security insurance, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

465. To consider postage arrangements

The Clerk provided a report on postage arrangements.

Resolved: to use the Pitney Bowes machine until either it no longer works or the end of the current contract, and then move to purchase of postage stamps as required, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

466. To consider a waste toner recycling contract

The Financial, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee had recommended the Council approve a contract.

Resolved: the Clerk to approve a waste toner recycling contract at £6.00 per month, proposed by Councillor Bright, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

467. To consider waste collections at Hutton House

Resolved: the Clerk to explore options and costs for waste collections at Hutton House and bring costs to the next meeting, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

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

b) Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee 20 July 2026

Resolved: to receive the draft minutes of the Allotment, Open Spaces and Cemetery Committee meeting held on 20 July 2026, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

c) Junior Town Council meeting held on 26 June 2026

Resolved: to receive the draft minutes of the Junior Town Council meeting held on 26 June 2026, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

d) Finance, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 1 September 2026

Resolved: to receive the draft minutes of the Finance, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 1 September 2026, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

469. To review the risk register in particular regarding financial matters

Resolved: to approve the plan to review risk register areas, and the relevant Committee and Council to review Finance and Outdoor Spaces areas in October.

470. To approve a risk assessment on use of play areas

The Clerk presented a risk assessment for consideration.

Resolved: to approve the risk assessment on use of play areas with the inclusion of monitoring repairs and damage, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Zapert. All agreed.

471. To approve the Scheme of Delegation

Resolved: the Clerk to make the changes detailed in the report to standardise Committee delegation with policies, and to circulate the updated Scheme of Delegation to Councillors.

472. To consider the Town Council's website arrangements

The Clerk presented a report.

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to ask Councillors to review the website and to suggest criteria they would like in a website.

(2) the Clerk to arrange online meetings with three providers.

473. To consider health and safety matters and expenditure, including the asbestos register

Resolved: the Clerk to approve update of the asbestos register and undertake sampling if required at Hutton House.

474. To consider cleaning of play areas, options and expenditure for playgrounds and potential funding, and the play inspection regime and required actions

Resolved:

(1) the play areas should be cleaned twice a year.
(2) the Clerk to arrange cleaning of the play areas as soon as possible.
(3) the Clerk to contact the Probation Service to ask about cleaning play areas.
(4) to note the report presented to the Financial, Audit, Risk and Health and Safety Committee.

475. Expenditure on allotment site clearance

Councillor Reece presented a report. It was noted that Councillors may establish a Working Group if agreed at a meeting.

Resolved:

(1) Councillors Bright, English, Bruce, Reece, Zapert and Malpas to form a Working Group, with the purpose of reporting on conditions of vacant allotment plots identified by the Clerk. All agreed.
(2) the Clerk to seek any guidance from the National Allotment Society regarding the letting of plots.
(3) if advice is required particularly regarding any asbestos, the Clerk has delegated authority to set limits, or a special meeting may be called.

476. Expenditure on a shelter structure at the cemetery

Resolved: the Council approves the structure at a cost of £2,000.00, plus expenditure on a plaque, proposed by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor Reece. All agreed.

477. DM/26/01338/FPA 41 Pennine Way Chilton DL17 0QE

Resolved: the Council notes the planning application and would act on behalf of residents if representations were made.

478. DM/26/01469/FPA 3 West Close Cottages Chilton DL17 0PQ

Resolved: the Council notes the planning application and would act on behalf of residents if representations were made.

479. DM/26/01998/FPA 15 Hambleton Way Chilton DL17 0RB

Resolved: the Council notes the planning application and would act on behalf of residents if representations were made.

480. Section 106 Application Chilton Parish Church Hall

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to respond to point out that the application is in the name of Chilton Parochial Church Council and not Chilton Parish Council, for the avoidance of any confusion, and to ask whether the group meets the criteria for Section 106 funding and to ask whether the group is established as an organisation able to receive Section 106 funding.
(2) the Clerk to circulate any response and Councillors will consider their response.

Standing agenda items

481. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan including the registration of the Church building as a Non Designated Heritage Asset

Councillor Reece advised the Neighbourhood Plan had been used as part of the response to the County Durham Local Plan consultation, and that there will be other opportunities to comment. Councillor Reece also said there has been no update on whether the Government will provide further grant funding for neighbourhood planning.

Resolved:

(1) the Clerk to circulate the response to the County Durham Local Plan consultation to Councillors.
(2) this item to be removed as a standing agenda item.

482. To receive the Miners' Welfare Charity Report

Councillor Reece said the Trustees had met the night before and provided an update, including that works at the Pavilion Park were close to completion, and that the planting looks good. Further Service Level Agreement is planned

with Coxhoe United and bookings are coming in. There had been no issues with the External Audit Report. The dropped kerb is to be installed.

Resolved: to note the Miners' Welfare Charity Report.

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

The Clerk advised she had received confirmation of representatives from St Aidan's Church for both the Remembrance Service and the Civic Carol Service.

Resolved: to note the update.

484. To receive any update regarding the future of St Aidan's Church building

Councillor Reece said she is awaiting confirmation of a meeting about the future of St Aidan's Church. There is a meeting with the Church Commissioners in November or December, and they will advise if representations can be made.

Resolved: to note the update.

485. To receive any update regarding the request from the Parochial Church Council for Town Council involvement in discussions regarding St Aidan's Church Hall

No further update.

486. To consider feedback regarding the approved event on Joe's Field in July 2026

The Clerk presented feedback received from consultation with nearby residents.

Resolved:

(1) to note the feedback received.
(2) the Clerk to advise respondents that overall, the feedback raised points to pass on to the Showman, but that there was not sufficient negative feedback to discourage the Council from allowing future events.
(3) The Clerk to ask the Showman for feedback on the fair.

487. 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 Bruce. All agreed.

488. To receive any update about the disputed land and consider associated expenditure including legal representation

Discussion took place.

Resolved: the Clerk is to provide a plan, a background report and a risk assessment regarding this matter, to consider at the next meeting, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor English. All agreed.

Councillor Zapert left the meeting at this point.

489. To receive an update about the Livin Garages

The Clerk provided information and a response from Livin regarding the garages, and a recommendation. Councillors said Livin should have taken down any vacant garages.

Resolved: the Council to press ahead with the transfer, proposed by Councillor Reece, seconded by Councillor Bruce.

490. To consider options for payroll provision

The Clerk presented an update, as Durham County Council is to cease providing payroll services therefore a new payroll provider is required from April 2027.

Resolved:

(1) to wait until the County Durham Association of Local Councils Forum Meeting to see if there is any update on Durham County Council payroll.
(2) if there is no change reported at the Forum Meeting, the Clerk to commission the best value company who quoted, to undertake payroll for the Town Council from April 2027. All agreed.

491. Staffing: to note and consider Cleaner recruitment, arrangements between the Council and the Miners Welfare Trust, and staffing matters and the pay award

Resolved:

(1) to note a new Cleaner was recruited and started work in August.
(2) the agreement between the Council and the Miners Welfare Trust is to be brought to the October meeting.
(3) to delegate to the Human Resources Committee to agree staff cover if required.
(4) to note that the pay award had been received and will be applied as it is a contractual matter.

492. To receive a report on complaints received by the Town Council

The Clerk provided a report on two complaints received, and a further matter raised to the Clerk, and the actions taken.

Resolved: to note the Clerk's Report on complaints and matters received, and the actions taken.

493. To consider operational matters for the Town Council

The Clerk provided a report on operational matters.

Resolved: to receive the report from the Clerk on operational matters.

Meeting Closed at 8.04pm.

Signed:

Chair of Meeting

Dated: