



ESTABLISHED 1894

Evenwood & Barony Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council held in the Randolph Community Centre, Stones End, Evenwood, Bishop Auckland, DL14 9RE, on Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 8:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Bolden (Chairman); R. Spraggon (Vice-Chair); A. Breeze; J. Cosslett; A. Deakin; C. Hodgson; A. Marshall; E. Pettit; R. Potts.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. K. Murray-Hetherington (Parish Clerk); and two members of the public.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: There were no members of the public in attendance.

Minute No.	Agenda item
025/264	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: There were no apologies for non-attendance.
025/265	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.
025/266	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: On the motion of Cllr. Spraggon, seconded by Cllr. Cosslett it was RESOLVED: To approve as a correct record and authorise the signing of the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Tuesday 8th April 2025.
025/267	MATTERS ARISING: Cllr. Marshall raised concerns about rumours that a donation of £1,000.00 to Evenwood and Ramshaw Community Projects Group had been approved whereas the actual amount was as recorded in the previous minutes meeting (£200.00).
025/268	CLERK'S REPORT: The Parish Clerk gave a report on progress of WJP Software Ltd. (Active Councils) new website and a .gov.uk domain and official website addresses.
025/269	FINANCIAL MATTERS: RESOLVED: To receive the schedule of monthly income and expenditure and approve payment of those invoices which were presented to the meeting.
025/269.1	On the motion of Cllr. Cosslett, seconded by Cllr. Marshall, it was RESOLVED: To approve a £300.00 donation to Evenwood Primary School towards VE Day celebrations.
025/270	REPORTS: Cllr. Spraggon gave a report on the Allotments Working Group. RESOLVED: To allocate vacant allotment plots to the applicants whose names had reached the top of the waiting list on a first-come-first-served basis.
025/271	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL: Cllr. Potts gave a report on issues relating to DCC.
025/272	ITEMS REQUESTED BY MEMBERS: RESOLVED: That Cllr. Cosslett shall discuss a damaged bus shelter on Evenwood Lane opposite Fairfield with the complainant.
025/273	PLANNING: There were no valid planning applications to consider.
025/274	ACTION LOG: RESOLVED: To update the action log recording agreed tasks and to remove all completed tasks. Action was required to obtain from an alternative local contractor a quote for the cost of replacing damaged timber bollards at the village green. A letter of thanks would be sent to Paul Clarke (Shildon) who had installed new war memorial plaques free of charge.

Chairman's Signature..... Date: 13th May 2025.....

025/275 **NEXT MEETING: RESOLVED:** To confirm the date of the next ordinary meeting: Tuesday 10th June 2025.

025/276 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC:** On the motion of Cllr. Marshall, seconded by Cllr. Spraggon, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and the press shall be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the next items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, i.e. employment matters and negotiations for contracts or leases.

Chairman's Signature..... Date: 13th May 2025.....

PART II - PINK PAPER MINUTES

Confidential/exempt information relating to business to be conducted at meetings will be provided to councillors on pink paper, clearly stating the category of confidential/exempt information. Councillors should ensure that any confidential/exempt information is not shared with members of the public or the press.

- 025/277** **STANDING ORDERS: RESOLVED:** To suspend Standing Order 3x for as long as the following matters were under discussion.
- 025/278** **LANDS VILLAGE HALL:** Members considered the situation regarding Lands Village Hall and discussed the challenges it faced due to funding shortages and lack of local volunteers. [*Cllr. Deakin declared an interest, left the room, and took no part in the discussion and vote*]. It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council is not in a position to take on responsibility for the Lands Village Hall charity as a sole trustee. Members acknowledged Cllr. Deakin's efforts in trying to maintain a community centre.
- 025/279** **STAFFING:** Members considered the contents of a report on employment matters. [*The Parish Clerk left the room, and was not present during the discussion and vote*].
- 025/279.1 **RESOLVED:** To decline Local Council Consultancy's (LCC's) quote for undertaking an independent job evaluation at the price quoted (£650.00, excluding VAT and any expenses). It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Clerk's working hours shall be extended from 7 hours per week to 10 hours per week in line with an increase of the council's general workload and recognising extra responsibilities not included in the original contract and job description.
- 025/279.2 It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To note that the Parish Clerk has moved his home address and the approved business mileage at the rate of 45 pence per mile will now rise to 80 miles, an increase of £16.20 per meeting.
- 025/279.3 It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To approve payment of the sum of £120.00 set aside within the current budget for 2025/2026 for use of the Parish Clerk's telephone line/internet/broadband.
- 025/279.4 It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To pay the sum of £21.00 per month to reimburse the Parish Clerk as a depreciation donation for wear and tear for the use of a privately owned computer and equipment for parish council business, payable from 1st April 2025.
- 025/279.5 It was unanimously **RESOLVED:** To pay a tax-free working from home office allowance of £26.00 per month to help to defray the cost of heating/lighting due to working from the private premises of the Parish Clerk, payable from 1st April 2025. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk shall carry out and employee/staff health and safety self-assessments to evaluate any health and safety risks, including using display screen equipment (DSE).
- 025/280** **CONCLUSION OF MEETING:** The meeting closed at 9:35 p.m.

Chairman's Signature..... Date: 13th May 2025.....