9TH October 2025 MEETING MINUTES

WEST BEDLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL Bedlington Community Centre Front Street West Bedlington NE22 5TT



ELECTION OF CHAIR (MAYOR)

Ahead of the first item, members elected Councillor S. Denny as the Meeting Chair for the first agenda item only.

1.	Election of Chair (Mayor)	Councillor B. Denny elected.
		Voted for by councillors Austin, B. Denny, S. Denny and Roberts. Voted against by councillors Henderson, Hogg, Taylor and Thompson.
		As Meeting Chair, Councillor S. Denny had the casting vote in favour of B. Denny.
2.	To receive the Mayor's Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Received.
3.	Election of Deputy Mayor It is at the Council's discretion whether to elect a yor or not	Councillor Austin elected. Voted for by councillors Austin, B. Denny, S. Denny and Roberts. Voted against by councillors Henderson, Hogg, Taylor and Thompson.
4.	To receive the Deputy Mayor's Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Received.

The meeting will be suspended by the Chair to allow public agenda-related questions to the Council.

AGENDA-RELATED QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS

- A resident sent a question in via email regarding the value of the CCTV in the town and the Town Council agreed a
 written response would be sent to the resident and they would be invited to discuss issues in more detail at a future
 Town Council meeting, should they wish to attend.
- A resident wanted to know if any budget would be spent on regalia for the Town Council Mayor and was advised that there were no plans to do so.
- A resident wanted to know why the Equalities Policy was amended (based on comments raised in September's meeting) and was told that this policy has not been amended as the policy changes are still in review.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations for this meeting.

PART A - ATTENDANCE

Min ref		Attendance/declarations/last meeting's minutes	Determination
25/234		Attendance	Councillors Austin, B. Denny (Chair), S. Denny, Henderson, Hogg, Taylor, Thompson, and Roberts. Town Clerk S. Young, Assistant Town Clerk M McTeer, and thirteen (13) members of the public.
25/235	a.	Apologies for absence	
		 To receive and note any apologies for absence from councillors. 	i. Apologies for absence from Councillor Chapple.
		ii. To consider and determine any dispensations for absent councillors.	ii. There were no dispensations for this meeting.
25/236	b.	Declarations of interest i. Unless already entered in the Council's Register of	i. None for this meeting.
		Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 12th July 2012.	1. None for this meeting.
		ii. To consider any requests for dispensations.	ii. No requests for dispensation.
25/237	C.	Meeting minutes To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held on 11 th September 2025.	RESOLVED that the minutes of the West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held on 11 th September 2025 are APPROVED as a true record.

PART B – MATTERS FOR DECISION

•		Matters for discussion / decision	Determination
25/238	a.	Funding applications	None for this meeting.
25/239	b.	Finance	
		i. Internal controls To APPROVE:	i. (1, 2, 3) APPROVED
		Updated Internal Controls (revisions highlighted) *	It was agreed to look
		Review of Financial Risks ((revisions highlighted) *	at no.2 in a future
			meeting to incorporate

		3. Review of Financial Governance (the Council needs to be satisfied AND demonstrate that it has appropriate systems / procedures in place to cover the following statutory requirements — all of which require a positive declaration). *	the 5x5 risk matrix methodology.
		 ii. Audit arrangements - 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) To NOTE the external auditors' certification of the Annual Return of Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2025. There were no matters which came to the attention of the Auditor that required the issuing of a separate additional issues report, and the notice of conclusion has been published on 25th September 2025. * 	ii. NOTED
		iii. Quarterly finance update To REVIEW the current year's expenditure against its current year's budget and (if appropriate) make recommendations to bring both inline. * (Currently, there are no new areas of significant overspend or unplanned spending for future projects).	iii. REVIEWED - no amendments made.
		iv. 2026-27 budget and precept preparation To APPROVE the DRAFT schedule of meetings for the 2026-27 budget and precept requirement. (Draft schedule of meeting distributed to members together with an illustrative budget for 2026-27 to help with preparation).	iv. APPROVED
25/240	C.	Governance	
		 i. Policies with no amendments To APPROVE the following policies which, after review, are unchanged. 1. Policy No 4. Complaints Policy 2. Policy No 25. Third-Party Request for CCTV 3. Policy No30. Charitable Donations Policy 	i. (1, 2, 3) APPROVED
		 ii. Policies for review To APPROVE the following updated policies (revisions highlighted). 1. Policy No 1. Standing Orders * 2. Policy No 11 Advertising Policy * 3. Policy No 19. DBS Checks Policy * 4. Policy No 21. Asset Register Policy * 5. Policy No 27. Memorial Plaques on Public Seats * 6. Updated Pandemic Risk Assessments * (Reworded to reflect any future pandemic). 	ii. (1, 2, 4, 5, 6) APPROVED. No.3 – it was decided that enhanced DBS checks would be appropriate, so no changes were made to the policy.
		iii. New policy To APPROVE the creation of a policy that will authorise time off with pay for employees (who are union members) to meet with their union representatives.	iii. APPROVED
		 iv. Deletion of current policy To APPROVE the deletion/removal of Policy No.31 Tree Planting Policy and Procedure* 	iv. REJECTED . It was decided that the existing policy would remain.
25/241	d.	Services	
		i. Meadowdale play area	

		Consider and APPROVE alternatives (if any) to the current contractor service for the locking and unlocking of the play area gates.	i. No changes made.
		ii. Remembrance - poppies on lampposts on Bedlington Front Street To APPROVE who will put up and take down the Remembrance poppies and the dates to do both.	ii. AGREED that councillors B. Denny and Austin will install poppies on 31.10.25 and Councillor Chappel will remove on 16.11.25.
		iii. Christmas tree To APPROVE that the Christmas tree will go up w/c Monday 17 th November to allow 10 days before switch-on event on 29 th November.	iii. APPROVED
		iv. Defibrillators To APPROVE a renewal of the current leasing arrangements for six Community Defibrillators and Cabinets. *	iv. APPROVED
25/242	e.	Events strategy	
		To APPROVE the draft events strategy. *	APPROVED (with small amendments to wording, not context).
25/243	f.	Residents' Panel	
23/243	١.	To APROVE the following suggestions from the Residents' Panel:	i, ii and iii APPROVED
		 To create a PDF of Bedlington's history and include this on our website. This will use lots of the information from the heritage guide which was produced in 2014 and potentially include other areas of Bedlington's history. (No print cost, just in-house research, writing time, and design, which could be done with a PowerPoint template internally). 	
		ii. Ask Northumberland County Council if they have any ideas to prevent the life-saving rings at the river being stolen or damaged.	
		iii. Contact West Bedlington's four primary schools to refresh eight bus shelters in the town with artwork and/or poems about what makes Bedlington great. Indicative cost (for the 12 bus shelters for VE Day 80, the cost was £1400).	
25/244	g.	Consultation - Local Transport Plan Programme 2026/27	AGREED to include:
		To AGREE which three areas the Town Council wants to put forward as its priorities for inclusion into Northumberland County Council's Local Transport Plan Programme 2026/27. *	1. Speed-calming measures on the B1331 from Netherton Village into Bedlington.
			2. Restricted parking along Catholic Row for primary school children and their carers' safety.
			3. To create a safe, sustainable cycle

					route along Hartford Road.
25/245	h.	is asked to discuss and to the planning appli	s – where comments have been r nd decide if it wishes to make any ications received for comment.	comments in relation	
		Ref	Description	Response date **	
		25/03179/FUL	Proposal: Utility room, 111 Hartland's, Bedlington, Northumberland, NE22 6JH.	30 th September 2025	No comment
		25/03213/PRUTP	Proposal: Tree Preservation Order: Removal of Trees 1,2,3,4,6,7 - Ash trees, Tree 5 - Windblown Oak and Tree 9 - Pine. Humford Mill Country Park, Church Lane, Bedlington, Northumberland, NE22 5RT.	2 nd October 2025	A comment will be submitted to SUPPORT this application, and the Town Council will ask Northumberland County Council to plant replacement trees in the town.
		25/02008/FUL	TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 APPEAL UNDER SECTION 78. Proposal installation of roller shutter to shop front (Retrospective). Location: 46 Front Street East, Bedlington, Northumberland, NE22 5AB.	Any further comments to The Planning Inspectorate within 5 weeks of 24 th September 2025	No comment
		extension has been a	ere the response date is before the agreed to allow consideration of to the comments.	_	
25/246	j.	Working groups / o	committees		Nothing for this
		i. APPROVE any reco elsewhere on the a	mmendations from working grou agenda).	ps (not included	meeting.
		•	information from working group	Chairs.	
25/247	k.	Bank reconciliation To APPROVE a check	ed bank reconciliation as of 30 th S	September 2025, a	APPROVED
		current account bala	nce of £10,656.62, a deposit acco	ount balance of	

PART C - MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

RESOLVED to **NOTE** sections a. to g. Section d is not part of the agenda and is included for information only.

25/248 a. Chair's update and external invitations/consultations

To NOTE any announcements from the Chair, and to discuss invitations, consultations and external meeting feedback since the last Council meeting.

- Invitation to attend Northumberland County Council's 2026-30 corporate plan meeting on 2nd October in Cramlington. Open to all.
- The Annual General meeting of the Northumberland Association of Local Councils will be held on Saturday 15th November, 10:00am at County Hall Morpeth. Please note the change of date previously advertised as 20th September. The guest speaker will be Rob Murfin.
- Local Transport Plan Programme guidance workshops attendance confirmation due by 12th September.
- Annual General Citizens Advice Northumberland Meeting on Monday, 1st December 2025, from 12 noon to 2.30pm. The AGM will be held at the Community Hub, Woodhorn Rd, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, NE64 6HG. Open to all.

25/249 b. Schedule of payments and receipts

Details of payments and (receipts) to be noted since last Council update. All payments gross of VAT.

Payee	Amount (£)	Description
Deposit Account to Current Account	-10,000.00	Internal Bank Account Transfer
CCLA Deposit Fund	-783.91	Interest Received
Northumberland County Council	9,048.91	Election Costs
Chevron Traffic Management	1,380.00	Street Fair Traffic Management
Widescope Web Design	74.29	.gov email accounts
Smart Office Systems Ltd	48.67	Printer Costs
The Festive Lighting Company Ltd	253.20	Deposit on new Christmas lights
The Festive Lighting Company Ltd	253.20	Deposit on new Christmas lights
The Festive Lighting Company Ltd	703.20	Deposit on new Christmas lights
Northumberland County Council	-149,129.00	2 nd Precept Receipt
Society of Local Council Clerks	360.00	Subscription Costs
Reay Security Ltd	809.64	CCTV Costs
Jo-Anne Garrick Ltd	84.00	Neighbourhood Plan Consultancy
CCLA Deposit Fund Transfer	25,000.00	Internal Bank Account Transfer
CCLA Deposit Fund Transfer	100,000.00	Internal Bank Account Transfer
House of Hamilton	1,300.00	Halloween and Christmas Event
		Deposits
Reay Security Ltd	446.40	Meadowdale Gates
Talk Talk Business	62.92	Telephone + Internet
Bedlington Community Centre	32.00	Room Hite Presentation Evening
1p Mobile	1.00	Mobile Phone Debit Card
		Authorisation
Orangutan Landscapes Limited	1,795.50	Front Street Flower Pots
Reay Security Limited	83.04	CCTV Costs
M & D Burkinshaw	1,194.00	Christmas Tree
Widescope Web Design	143.86	Software Upgrades
Northumberland County Council	7,129.43	Payroll Costs August

			Lloyds	8.50	Bank Charges	
			Reay Security Ltd	83.04	CCTV Costs	
		Wi	reless Logic Limited	555.36	CCTV Sim Card Costs	
		Northumberl	and County Council	6,332.44	Payroll Costs Septembe	r
			Nettl of Bedlington	1,146.86	Newsletter	
			I.T Governance Ltd	250.80	Online Training	
			Viking Payments	142.61	Stationery	
25/250	c.	Other planning appli	cations			
		Where comments have	· 			
		Ref	Description			
25/03057/CLPROP Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development - Proposed property. 18 Clitheroe Gardens, Hazelmere, Bedlingto 6NZ.						
		25/03256/MISC	NEW 10M LIGHT Wo Northumberland.	OODEN POLE lan	d east of 109 Hartlands, Bedl	ington,
25/251	d.	Planning decisions notified to West Bedlington Town Council by Northumberland Count				County Council
		Ref		Descript		Decision
		25/02574/FUL	Beaufront Park, Bedl	ington, Northum		GRANTED
		25/01302/FUL	Proposed 2 storey fla Bedlington Bears Nu Northumberland NE	rsery 2 - 4 Forste	to existing nursery er Avenue Bedlington	GRANTED
25/252	e.	Police report				
		Police report NOTED . The next scheduled report is for the December 2025 meeting. A meeting on 6 th October 2025 with councillors and the Police took place and it was noted from this meeting that that crime rates are relatively low in Bedlington.				
25/253	f.	Matters for informati	ion only			
		To NOTE any matters pertaining to the Council, that members would like to bring to the attention of other members and residents. For information only, no proposals or voting on these matters. i. Councillor – any matters for information only. ii. Town Clerk – any matters for information only. Reminder to councillors to respond to Community Governance Review - Parish Pre-Consultation Questionnaire and Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission.				
25/254	g.	Date of next meeting				
		NOTED the next scheduled meeting of the Council will be on Thursday 13th November 2025 at 6.30pm in Bedlington Community Centre, Front Street West, Bedlington. The agenda for this meeting to be issued on Wednesday 5 th November 2025.				

SUSPENSION OF MEETING TO FACILITATE FURTHER QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL

• A resident wanted to know if the damaged fences in Humford Woods could be replaced and was informed this was a responsibility of Northumberland County Council, and Councillor Taylor, in her capacity as a

- Northumberland County Councillor, told the resident that the issue had already been raised with Northumberland County Council.
- A resident wanted to know if an independent code of conduct review could be looked into regarding the events that led to Councillor Taylor stepping down as Chair in September 2025's meeting. They were told that this would have to be directed to County Council's Monitoring Officer, not the Town Council.
- A resident acknowledged the support and commitment of Councillor Taylor and Councillor Thompson over
 the years, requested a Pride event, and wanted to know if the Town Council had any updates about the
 removal of flags in the town. They were advised the lampposts are Northumberland County Council's
 assets, and Councillor Taylor, in her capacity as a County Councillor, said the issued had been raised.

MEETING REINSTATED

PART D – EXEMPT BUSINESS

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

		Matters for discussion / Decision / Information
25/255	a.	 i. APPROVED to use the current event organiser until the end of December 2026. ii. APPROVED to release the funds (minute ref 25/208) for the successful appointment of Bedlington Community Centre's new manager. iii. APPROVED to provide an interest-free loan up to the value of £10,000 to support the Centre in obtaining a new central heating system.

25/256	b.	Close of meeting
		The Chair closed the meeting at 8.06pm.
		The exempt business part of the meeting closed at 8.36pm.

^{*} Supporting documentation distributed to members before the meeting.

WEST BEDLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL - COUNCILLORS:

Trevor Austin, Dave Chapple, Brian Denny, Sian Denny, Cath Henderson, Adam Hogg, Al Roberts, Christine Taylor, Victoria Thompson.

Signed by Chair	Date