

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Burnhope Parish Council held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2025 in Burnhope Community Centre at 6.00 p.m.

**Present**

Councillor D Coates (Chair)

Councillors S. McCormick, C. Metcalf, G. Smith, H. Wilson and County Councillor A. Gray

**Apologies for absence**

Councillors T. Barras, L. Clarke, I. McKeag, D. Metcalf, L. Million, J. Stewart and Alderman O. Johnson.

**In Attendance**

Mr H. Barron, Burnhope Banner Group

**51. Police Report**

There was no Police report.

**52. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2025, were approved and signed as a correct record.

**53. Finance Report**

The following payments have been made since the last meeting:-

Easyweb – Domain Hosting – December	£ 36.96
British Gas – Power Supply to Christmas Tree – December	£ 33.00
Fortis Mazar – External Audit Fees	£552.00
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal – Poppy Wreath & Donation	£ 50.00
Inclusive Connections Durham CIC	£300.00
Clerk – Memorial Plaque for seat	£ 35.00
Derwentside Tree & Garden Services – Annual Payment	£4,092.68
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,099.64</b>

The following payment had been received :-

Memorial Seat Plaque Fee £72.00

#### **54. Parish Precept 2026/27**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council providing details of the Parish Tax base, together with a request for the Parish Precept for the financial year 2026/27. It was noted that the Local Tax Reduction Scheme Grant for 2026/27 was currently under review by the County Council and at risk of removal. It was **agreed that** the Parish Council write to the County Council to raise its concerns about the potential removal of this grant with so little warning. Details of the County Council's budget and whether the Grant would be reinstated would be announced in February, 2026.

The Clerk then provided details of the Parish Council's overall financial position, including future anticipated expenditure.

**RESOLVED that** the Parish Council agrees to a precept in the sum of £12,000 for the financial year 2026/27.

#### **55. Planning Matters**

Councillor Coates reported that he had attended the County Planning Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December where the application for a solar development, electrical sub station and associated infrastructure on land south of Wagtail Lane, Craghead had been determined. The application had been rejected on "well being" grounds. Cllr Coates believed that this rejection was likely to go to Appeal. Discussion took place about the Planning Committee's decision, after which it was felt that there needed to be a balance between solar energy, food security and land preservation for agricultural needs.

#### **56. Assertion 10 Compliance**

In order to strengthen the Parish Council's governance and compliance, which will be included in the 2026 External Audit the following policies were considered and adopted by the Parish Council.

Record Management Policy	<b>Agreed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Historic documents to be stored at The Story.</li><li>• A fireproof/waterproof container to be acquired for safe storage of current, working documents.</li></ul>
Social Media & Electronic Communications Policy	<b>Agreed</b>

Data Protection Policy	<b>Agreed.</b> Online Data Protection Training for Members to be held on Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March at 6.00 p.m.
IT Policy	<b>Agreed</b> Parish Councillor email addresses to be provided and set up on personal devices. The email addresses to be added to the Parish Council website.

## 57. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting, and was noted by the Parish Council.

Durham County Council -	Play area Inspection report – October
Durham County Council/ Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd	Consultation on Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy
Ethos Environmental Planning	Open Space Needs Assessment Consultation
Openreach	New telegraph pole installation, Langley Avenue
County Cnllr Alison Gray	Temporary road closures :- Peth Bank (4 days from 3 <sup>rd</sup> December) Greenwood Avenue – 12.1.26 – 23.2.26

## 58. Burnhope Miners Banner

Mr Barron attended the meeting to give an update on the Burnhope Miners Banner. He reported that the Banner Group had removed the Banner from the Community Centre to have repair works carried out. It was hoped that the repair works would strengthen the material and enable the Banner to be paraded through the village at the Centenary Gala event in May 2026. The ownership of the Banner, and responsibility for its insurance remained unclear and further investigations were to be made.

## 59. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting to be held on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2026 at 6.00 p.m.

Signed .....  .....

Date ..05/02/26.....