

Minutes of the Meeting of Bowes Parish Council

held at Bowes Hutchinson's School on 14 July 2026 7.30 p.m.

Present

Cllr Hughes (Chair), Cllr Thompson, Cllr White, Mr Ross Woodley (Clerk and RFO)

1. Apologies and declarations of interest

Cllr Carlisle sent his apologies. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of the Meeting

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held Tuesday 16 June 2026 (circulated as Appendix A of the agenda) were discussed. One typo was noted. Minute 4(a) referring to investment interest should say May rather than March. The Clerk agreed to correct this minute.

It was **resolved to accept the circulated minutes subject to the agreed correction. Proposed by Cllr Hughes seconded by Cllr Thompson.**

3. Matters arising (unless dealt with later in the agenda)

The Chair stated that he had prepared a poster soliciting interest in co-option on to the Council for the village Facebook page. Cllr White added that he had discussed the opportunity with a resident, but he had decided that he was too busy.

The Clerk confirmed that he met the relevant deadlines for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The AGAR is now with the external auditors (BDO) and the statutory period for the public to inspect the accounts had commenced. The Clerk has published the AGAR and public rights notice on the Council's website. The Chair and Clerk agreed and signed a letter responding to the initial consultation for the Hope Moor Wind Farm and submitted it to the developer by the relevant deadline.

4. Finance & Accounts – See summary below.

(a) Receipts since last meeting £108.39 Investment Interest (June)
£67.42 Bank interest (Q1)

(b) Expenses since last meeting £673.91 Balance on swing repairs – Playdale
£560.44 Clerk salary Q1 26/27 – R Woodley
£270.00 Grass-cutting (2 cuts) – R Toward
£172.52 Clerk overtime (16 hours) – R Woodley
£140.00 PAYE on Q1 salary – HMRC
£125.00 Internal audit 25/26 – J Linsley
£84.99 Microsoft 365 Renewal – reimburse clerk
£43.00 PAYE on overtime – HMRC
£11.99 Email accounts (June) – Hugo Fox
£7.00 Bank charges (June)

(c) It was **resolved to approve the following payments – Cllr Thompson proposed, and Cllr Hughes seconded:**

- £448.00 Insurance 2026/27 (premium unchanged) - Zurich
- £270.00 Grass-cutting (2 cuts) – R Toward

(d) Retrospective approval of urgent payments – all the expenses at (b) above were approved at the June 2026 meeting, or in the case of bank and email charges are monthly contractual payments.

(e) Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2026 (month 3)

The Clerk presented Appendix B for receipts and payments at month 3 of 2026/27

This indicates a 6% (£2,363) underspend against the profiled budget. However, this is due to the payments approved at the June meeting valuing £2,070 not being processed by the bank until 1 July 2026. If these had been processed a day earlier the underspend would have been just 1%. Accordingly, the Clerk forecasts a break-even outturn leaving reserves at £38,500 in line with the approved 2026/27 budget. Cllr Hughes welcomed the closeness to budget at the end of the first quarter. It was **resolved to accept the budget monitoring report – Cllr Thompson proposed, and Cllr Hughes seconded.**

(f) Bank reconciliation at 30 June 2026 (month 3)

The Clerk presented Appendix C, for the bank reconciliation at 30 June 2026 (month 3). This shows the balances on the Unity Trust bank accounts (£15,071) reconcile to the cash book without any reconciling items. It also shows the £32,000 long-term investment with Redwood Bank as a memorandum item. Cllr Hughes checked the reconciliation against the bank statements and cash book and signed the reconciliation. It was **resolved to accept the bank reconciliation – Cllr Thompson proposed, and Cllr Hughes seconded.**

5 Planning

Cllr Hughes declared that there were no planning applications within the Council's boundaries this month. See below for correspondence regarding a previous planning application, which the Council may wish to comment upon. Cllr Thompson asked when the next meeting of the Hope Moor Community Liaison Group was. Cllr Hughes replied that no date has been set and speculated that it would take some time for them to consider and reply to the consultation submissions.

6 Correspondence

- (a) Cllr Hughes remarked that a Boldron Parish Council resident has informed the Clerk that although the statutory consultation period regarding an application to site static caravans at Gallow Hill (DM/26/00685/FPA) ended before the Council discussed the application at its meeting in May, the Durham County Council planning portal is still accepting comments and objections. At the May 2026 meeting councillors indicated that they shared the resident's concerns about the safety of access to / from the site on a fast section of the A66. Accordingly, the Council may wish to consider a formal response to the application. It was **resolved that the Chair would submit a formal response to the Gallow Hill planning application suggesting that there should be no right turns permitted at the A66 access point if the development goes ahead as proposed – Cllr Hughes proposed, and Cllr Thompson seconded.**
- (b) Durham County Council have invited comments from parish councils on its Local Plan. The consultation period ends on 17 August 2026. The Local Plan is a significant document as it will guide where new homes, businesses and infrastructure will be built, while also protecting treasured green spaces and heritage. The Clerk asked the Council to consider commenting on the Local Plan. Cllr Hughes noted that he was not aware of any proposals targeted at Bowes and when parish councils had commented on county-wide issues in the past there had been no impact. It was **resolved that the Council would not submit a response to DCC's consultation on the new Local Plan. – Cllr Hughes proposed, and Cllr Thompson seconded.**

7 Cemetery & Village maintenance

Cllr Hughes asked the Council to consider an application to erect a memorial to Rev Canon Fisher. The Clerk shared a copy of the proposed design and inscription at the meeting. All agreed it looked very tasteful and in keeping with the cemetery. It was **resolved to accept the memorial application.** – Cllr Thompson proposed, and Cllr Hughes seconded.

8 Allotments

Cllr Hughes confirmed that there were no matters for consideration at this month's meeting regarding the allotments.

9 Play Park

Cllr Hughes said that he had inspected the play equipment and stated that there were no new issues arising. He completed and signed the previous three inspection sheets and handed them to the Clerk.

10 Footpaths

The Clerk confirmed that he has informed Durham County Council of the repair required to the steps leading down to the River Greta on the footpath from Back Lane, running west of Gilmonby Bridge. DCC have agreed to inspect the path and assess if urgent repairs are required.

11 Bank Mandate

The Clerk advised the Council to consider an additional authorised signatory for electronic and cheque payments because after the sad passing of Cllr Tipping, the Chair is the only remaining councillor who can provide the necessary dual authorisation for payments initiated by the Clerk. Cllr Thompson and Cllr White agreed to be added to the mandate. It was **resolved that the Clerk should attempt to add Cllr Thompson and Cllr White to the Unity Trust Bank Mandate.** – Cllr Hughes proposed, and Cllr Thompson seconded.

12 AOB

Cllr White said that there had been several power cuts in the village in recent months. All agreed that this did not need adding to the agenda of the next meeting as it was a matter for Northern Powergrid.

13 Date, time, and venue of the next meeting.

The Council agreed a 2026/27 meeting timetable at the last meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 15 September 2026.

Meeting closed at 8.15p.m. In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) the impact of resolutions on crime and disorder in the parish was considered but no significant impact was identified.