

**Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council**  
**Wednesday 25 June 2025, 7.00 pm**  
**Hett Village Hall**

**Parish Council Members Present:**

Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor I Clark, Councillor G Hollingsworth, Councillor P Kerrison, Councillor D Pyle, Councillor A Smith, Councillor M Walker and Councillor I Watt.

**Also Present:**

County Councillor J Blakey was in attendance.

**22/25. Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor A Watt and County Councillors Genner and Hutchinson.

**23/25. Declarations of Acceptance of Office – Parish Councillor:**

Declarations of Acceptance of Office were signed by Councillors D Pyle and A Smith.

**Resolved: Councillor A Watt to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office under separate cover.**

**24/25. Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**25/25. Policing:**

The Clerk shared Policing crime stats: 9 incidents being recorded for the period April 2025 within the Parish. The next PACT Meeting is on Friday 18 July 2025, 6.00 pm, Croxdale Community Centre.

Clerk confirmed two PACT meetings for the remainder of 2025 have been arranged for early evening: July and October.

**Resolved: For Members' Information.**

**26/25. Public Participation**

A Hett resident was in attendance in relation to the planning application: Land at Porch House Farm, East Street, Hett, regarding the installation of a battery energy storage system, which was to be determined by Planning Committee on 2 July 2025. The resident requested if a Parish Councillor could attend and address the Committee on behalf of residents who had objected to the planning application.

Councillor Griffiths confirmed he was unable to attend due to work commitments and no other Parish Councillor also being available to attend. It was therefore proposed for Councillor Griffiths as Chairman, to write a letter to the Planning Committee which would be read out at the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. In addition, County Councillor Blakey will be present at the meeting as a member of the Planning Committee.

**Resolved: Councillor Griffiths to prepare supporting letter and the Clerk to arrange its issue.**



## **27/25. Minutes:**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 21 May 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## **28/25. Matters Arising:**

### **i. Hett Litter Pick:**

DCC confirmed June's litter pick took place on 17 June 2025.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

### **ii. Hett Village Green:**

A response was received from the PC Solicitor earlier today, confirming they are struggling to receive a response from one of the landowner's Solicitors and will continue to actively chase.

**Resolved: It was agreed for the Clerk to contact the landowner and their Solicitor direct to determine what the delay is.**

### **iii. Allotments:**

The following updates were provided by the Clerk:

- Allotment fencing, play park – works were complete on 6 June 2025 and are satisfactory.
- Wire Fencing, Poultry Centre – the PC is still awaiting confirmation from DCC on whether the fencing is their responsibility (from a highways perspective) or PC responsibility. In the interim, the cemetery maintenance contractor provided a quotation for additional works under the remit of cemetery maintenance contractor. The cost to repair/replace the wire fencing is £50.00 + VAT = £60.00 which includes materials (wire) and labour.

**Resolved: The cost of the fencing repair works was agreed which would be undertaken by the cemetery maintenance contractor in due course. It is believed that this area of land is the PC responsibility in any event.**

### **iv. Road Ownership, Rear of Front Street East, Croxdale:**

Confirmation was received from DCC on 10 June 2025, confirming the rear of Front Street East is not adopted and does not fall under the council's ownership; there are no known records to suggest otherwise. The liability to maintain rests with the property owners either side of the street. Councillor Kerrison questioned if roads in general which are owned by DCC, are determined if there's street lighting on the road/highway?

**Resolved: For Members' information. Clerk to clarify with DCC further.**

### **v. Funding for Boulders:**

Clerk currently awaiting contact from Tarmac to progress.

**Resolved: County Councillor Blakey agreed to follow up with Tarmac on the Parish Council's behalf.**

### **vi. Croxdale Inn Car Park Rent – 2025/26:**

Clerk confirmed payment of £765.00 was received on 29 May 2025.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**



**vii. Trustee – Hett Village Hall Association:**

Clerk contacted the Chair of HVHA on 22 May 2025, asking if this position is still required to be filled by a member of the Parish Council and is currently awaiting a response.

**Resolved: Councillor Griffiths agreed to contact the Chairman of HVHA direct.**

**viii. Replacement Fencing - Front Street, Croxdale:**

Clerk confirmed this was reported to DCCs Enforcement Team on 2 June 2025 as a possible planning breach for installation of replacement fencing to listed properties at numbers 20/21/24 Front Street. A response was received on 20 June 2025, confirming as a result of their investigation, there has been a breach of planning control. Investigations are currently ongoing in order to regularise the matters; which DCC will consider whether or not to instigate formal enforcement action. DCC confirmed property no. 26 does have the appropriate planning consent that was granted in 2020, therefore there is no breach of planning control in relation to this property.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

**ix. Tree Planting Scheme:**

Clerk contacted Rob George, Woodland Creation Officer, at DCC on 22 May and 17 June 2025 for an update, currently awaiting a response.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

**x. New / Replacement Bench, Salvin Street, Croxdale:**

Councillor Hollingsworth to confirm the exact location of the existing bench to determine ownership.

**Resolved: Councillor Hollingsworth to action and confirm location to the Clerk.**

**xi. Co-operative Banking – Account Mandate:**

Following the recent Elections, Clerk reminded Members the PCs banking account mandate and signatories is to be reviewed/updated and issued relevant forms for completion from all Parish Councillors.

**Resolved: All Members of the Parish Councillor to complete and return to the Clerk at the next PC Meeting.**

**xii. Quotes for Cemetery Hut Works / Funding Opportunities re Croxdale War Memorial:**

Clerk confirmed quotations are to be sourced for repair works of Croxdale's cemetery hut over the summer as previously agreed by way of making water tight (roof repairs and new guttering) as well as looking at funding opportunities in relation to the war memorial project.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

**29/25 Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:**

**(i) Community Benefit Deed - Hett Moor Solar Farm:**

The PC received the above related deed for signature on 24 June 2025 following agreement in February 2025 to accept the Community Benefit Offer which comprises of a single payment of £1,000 per megawatt.



**Resolved: The Chairman signed the Community Benefit Deed, with the Parish Clerk as a witness.**

**(ii) Financial Request – New Mayor – 2025/26:**

A request for financial assistance was considered from the Mayor of Durham; Members agreed a donation of £50.00 to go towards Councillor Hutchinson's Appeal Fund: St Cuthbert's Hospice.

**Resolved: Clerk to arrange donation accordingly.**

**(iii) Browney FC:**

Clerk advised Members of further correspondence received from Browney FC on 28 May 2025, and a response issued from the Clerk on 8 June 2025, which was shared with Members. No further comments were made from the PC to the points that were raised, however, Councillors Griffiths and Kerrison commented on the Clerk's time in responding to correspondence to date.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

**(iv) Dispensation Requests:**

The Clerk advised applications were received from Councillors Pyle and Walker for dispensation to speak and vote in connection with the PC allotments and garages.

**Resolved: The Parish Council considered the applications for dispensation and agreed to grant on the following grounds for the remaining term of office (May 2029):**

- i. **Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;**
- ii. **Without the dispensation, the number of persons may prohibit from participating in any business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.**

**Resolved: Councillors Pyle and Walker be granted the dispensation accordingly.**

**30/25. Financial Matters:**

**(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April – 31 May 2025:**

A financial update prepared by the Clerk was circulated to Members which included a detailed schedule of receipts and payments for the financial year to date and bank reconciliation to 31 May 2025. The current net bank balances totalled £72,523.49.

The following payments were approved for the period June 2025:

Parish Clerk	Clerk's Wages – June 2025	£472.59
HMRC	Tax Contributions	£118.20
Dave Dove	GDPR Email Accounts Fee – Monthly Charge	£28.00
ICO	2025/26 GDPR Fee	£47.00
Deerness Fencing	Allotment Boundary Fencing	£744.84
Destro	Cem Maint & Grass Cutting Apr-May and	£988.56
Landscapes	Hett Pond Maintenance	



**Resolved: For Members' Information. The above payments were approved for payment.**

**31/25. Allotment Works - Removal of Ash Trees, Poultry Centre:**

Four quotations had been sought in respect of the removal of x6 ash trees at the Poultry Centre:

- Contractor 1 = £750.00 + VAT = £900.00
- Contractor 2 = £1,200.00 + VAT = £1,440.00
- Contractor 3 = Unable to provide a quotation for the work required at this time
- Contractor 4 = £940.00 + VAT = £1,128.00

Councillor Pyle raised if the trees could be trimmed/reduced without the requirement to remove in full, which would be a cheaper option, however due to ongoing maintenance over the years, this wouldn't be cost effective. In addition, the allotment tenant requested removal due to the tree roots, resulting in most of the allotment being unusable.

Members reviewed each quotation and agreed to pursue with contractor 1 (based on value for money).

**Resolved: Clerk to contact the agreed contractor accordingly and schedule for the works to be undertaken as soon as practical (subject to bird nesting).**

**32/25. Planning Issues:**

The Clerk reported the Parish Council has received the following planning application(s) for consideration:

- a) DM/25/01365/FPA - DHM Padel Ltd – Unit 16, Thinford Park - Change the use from a trade storage and distribution Use Class B8 to a Padel Tennis business and small retail area;
- b) DM/25/01459/AD - DHM Padel Ltd – Unit 16, Thinford Park - Erection and display of 1no non-illuminated fascia sign to front and 1no non-illuminated fascia sign to rear;
- c) DM/25/01605/VOC - Gerard Salvin - Outbuilding and Greenhouse, Croxdale Hall - Variation of condition 2 to allow revised construction details and revisions to chimney and discharge of conditions 3 (materials and surface finishes), 4 (external joinery works, 5 (noise management), 6 (foul and surface water drainage), 7 (broadband details) and 8 (storage and collection of waste) relating to planning approval DM/21/03362/FPA.

**Resolved: No specific comments / objections were made with regard to the above planning applications.**

**33/25. County Councillor Reports:**

County Councillor Blakey provided an update in relation to a planning application at Thinford Park which has been refused on the grounds of sustainability. Training for all County Councillors are currently ongoing, in addition to service specific training to sit on relevant Committees. The priorities of the new administration are currently being reviewed.

**Resolved: For Members' Information.**

**34/25. AOB:**

**Grass Verges, Hett:**

Councillor I Watt commented on the maintenance schedule of grass verges on Hett roads.



**Resolved: County Councillor Blakey confirmed the maintenance is carried out on a planned route, with x2 cuts per year.**

**Dog Fouling:**

Councillor Hollingsworth reported there has been an increase of dog fouling within Croxdale and requested if targeted intervention could be in place via the Neighbourhood Wardens by way of a letter drop, increase of signage etc.

**Resolved: County Councillor Blakey agreed to action on the Parish Council's behalf. Clerk to investigate where the dog stencils had been placed following use by previous Parish Councillors.**

**35/25. Date and Time of Next Meeting:**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 30 July 2025 at 7.00 pm, Croxdale Community Centre.