

**ORDINARY MEETING OF EASINGTON VILLAGE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT 1830 Hrs ON MONDAY 13th July 2026**

Present: Cllr W Day (Chair)
Cllr J Lee (Vice Chair)
Cllr J Ramshaw
Cllr A Lumsden
Cllr S Gibbins
Cllr C Dale
Cllr R Godfrey

Staff: Mr Paul Moore (Clerk)

In Attendance: Cllr L Penders DCC
Cllr H Brown DCC
Mr Ian Myers – Durham & Cleveland Fire Brigade

Apologies: Cllr A Dent
Cllr N Fenwick
Mrs H Hall (Deputy Clerk)

Prior to the council meeting starting, Cllr Dale introduced Mr Ian Myers, a firefighter based at Peterlee station and a representative of Durham Fire Brigades Union, who gave an appraisal of concerns that the Fire brigade Union have regarding potential plans to re-locate crews to other stations around the county. This has the potential to reduce the amount of fire-cover available in the East Durham area and leave one of Peterlee's two pump units unmanned and thus unable to support the first pump unit in an emergency.

The Chair thanked Firefighter Myers for taking the time to come and brief the Parish Council on this important matter and assured him that the Council consider any reduction in fire-fighting capability in the local area to be an unacceptable risk to the public. Cllr Dale would endeavour to invite the Chief Fire Officer to the September meeting so that a balanced point of view could be taken into account.

EVPC 26/27/059 Exclusion of Press and Public

The Council **RESOLVED** that in accordance with Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public may be excluded from the meeting for any item of business to be transacted by reason of the confidential nature.

EVPC 26/27/060 Public Participation

None

EVPC 26/27/061 Declarations of Interest by members on items on the Agenda

None

EVPC 26/27/062 Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of Easington Village Parish Council held on Monday 08 June 2026

RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed as an approved and correct record, and as such were signed by the Chair.



EVPC/26/27/063

Minutes of the Cemetery & Grounds Committee Meeting held on Monday 06 July 2026

RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed as an approved and correct record, and as such were signed by the Chair.

EVPC/26/27/064

Durham Police Report (Easington PCSO's)

Easington Village crime statistics and Anti -social behaviour incidents from the 9th of June 2026 to 11th of July 2026

Burglary- 1

- 23/6/2026 – The Spinney – Attempt burglary

Theft and Handling- 0

Anti-Social Behaviour- 2

Personal – 0

Nuisance-

- 25/06/2026 – Rymers Close – Noise related nuisance.
- 07/07/2026 – Kings Mews – Persons being a nuisance / shouting in the street

Environmental - 0

Vehicle Crime- 0

Criminal Damage- 2

- 17/06/2026 – Thorpe Road – Graffiti, dens made and goal posts damaged.
- 19/06/2026 – Easington Academy – 3 youths enter site and set fire to small tree.

Of note:

- 30/07/2026 – Male arrested for threatening member of staff at Merrick House over parking issue.

Please be aware of opportunists trying home/ car door handles in and around Easington Village. Easington neighbourhood police team will make efforts to safeguard those that could have been affected by providing advice as well as reassurance.

The next PACT meeting will be held on Wednesday 15th of July 2026 at 6pm at The Parish Rooms, Crawl Road, Easington SR8 3LP.

PACT meetings are held for both the Colliery and the Village. PACT meetings are for Police issues and at this time are not joint meetings held with our local county councillor.

The next Drop-in session/Cuppa with a Copper will be held on Thursday 16th of July at Seaton Holme 2pm to 3pm.



Cllr Godfrey made note of an incident at Thorpe Road playing field on Friday 10th July when a youth fired an air rifle in her direction. The matter was reported to the police.

RESOLVED: That the information received is noted and accepted and that the Neighbourhood PCSO's and Neighbourhood Wardens be invited to future meetings.

EVPC/26/27/065

Report from Durham County Councillors

Cllr Penders DCC:

At the road safety meeting a resident mentioned the empty traffic sign pole outside of Delanoy's funeral directors on Stockton Road. I have asked for the sign to be replaced. It has been missing for quite a while, so I have suggested a SLOW sign.

In regard to the yellow lines – I'm expecting an update this week. The reason it's taken so long is because the primary school keep objecting the proposals. DCC is going to try and get this overturned due to the length of time it's taking.

Sunderland Road development – I have sent in a report about the state of the roads inside the site which is causing dust and debris to be moved by the wind and vehicles outside of the site. The dry weather may not be helping the situation but a clean-up inside the site wouldn't go a miss.

Planning issues with the new house on Clappersgate. I met with a neighbour of the property who raised several issues which evidently needed addressing. DCC came back to me with the following enforcement issues:

As of the 24th June 2026 Durham County Council has written to the property owner following a site visit and a review of the case. The letter sets out a number of outstanding breaches of planning control, including:

- The dwelling not being constructed in accordance with the approved plans, including alterations to the approved design, windows, doors, roof features and layout.
- Unauthorised development on land outside the approved site boundary, including the creation of a parking area that encroaches onto the village green.
- The installation of an unauthorised air source heat pump.
- Unauthorised excavation and engineering works within the garden area.
- Boundary treatments that differ from those approved by the planning permission.
- An access track that has been constructed wider than approved.

The owner has been advised that DCC cannot allow these unauthorised developments to remain unresolved and he has been given a period of 8 weeks either to submit the necessary planning applications to seek approval for certain works or to undertake remedial works to bring the development back into compliance.

DCC has also made it clear that, should satisfactory progress not be made within the specified timescales, formal enforcement action will be considered.



At this stage, DCC is monitoring the situation and awaiting either the submission of applications or evidence that the required remedial works have been completed. Once the compliance period has expired (19 August) the case will be reviewed and the next appropriate course of action determined.

Cllr Brown DCC:

The **Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025** (which was known as the Planning and Infrastructure Bill before passing) officially became law when it received Royal Assent on **18 December 2025**.

Instead of all rules changing on a single date, the Act is coming into force in **staged phases**:

- **18 December 2025 (Immediate):** Specific powers took effect right away upon Royal Assent. This included fast-tracked approvals for building reservoirs, grid connection prioritization for clean energy projects, and energy bill discount schemes for households near new pylons.
- **18 February 2026 (2 Months Post-Assent):** A second wave of provisions kicked in. This included enabling powers for the Secretary of State to set planning application fee surcharges and the formal rollout of Part 3 regarding Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs) managed by Natural England.
- **31 October 2026 (Upcoming):** The mandatory **National Scheme of Delegation** will come into force. This scheme shifts major chunks of routine planning decisions away from local councillor committees and places them directly into the hands of professional planning officers to speed up approvals.
- **Summer 2026 & Beyond (Gradual Regulations):** Many complex structural elements of the Act are being rolled out gradually via ongoing "commencement orders" and secondary legislation. For example, the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that aligns with this Act is scheduled to take effect in **Summer 2026**.

1. The National Scheme of Delegation

- The current practice where each Local Planning Authority (LPA) uses its own constitution to dictate which applications go before locally elected councillors is being dismantled. It is being replaced by a strict two-tier legal framework:
- **Schedule 1 (Mandatory Officer Delegation):** Routine, minor, or technical applications **must** be determined by professionally trained planning officers. Councillors are **legally barred** from reviewing these. This includes minor residential developments and applications to change existing planning permissions (Section 73 applications).
- **Schedule 2 (Committee Consideration):** Only major, complex, or highly sensitive applications can be referred to the full planning committee. This includes applications for large outline developments **exceeding 500 dwellings or 50,000 square metres of floorspace**.
- **End of "Member Call-ins":** Local practices like ward councillors single-handedly "calling in" an officer's decision to a committee or triggering automatic



committee reviews based purely on a set number of neighbour objections, **will no longer be permitted.**

2. Committee Size Restrictions

- To make committee meetings more efficient and less prone to political gridlock, the new regulations place a hard statutory cap on committee sizes. No local planning committee or sub-committee in England will be allowed to exceed a **maximum of 13 members.**

3. Mandatory Training and Certification

- Elected local councillors will no longer be allowed to sit on a planning committee or vote on applications simply by virtue of being elected.
- Under the new regulations, all committee members must undergo formal, standardized training in planning law and decision-making and hold a **valid certificate of completion** to participate.

4. Revised Implementation Date

- The implementation date for these regulations was originally targeted for September 2026. However, following widespread feedback from local councils regarding the time needed to overhaul their constitutions, the government formally pushed the start date back. The final regulations are being laid before Parliament, with the **National Scheme of Delegation and committee caps officially coming into force on 31 October 2026.**

RESOLVED: that the County Councillor Reports for July 2026 be noted and accepted.

EVPC/26/27/066

Member Reports – Attendance at meetings and events on behalf of the Parish Council

Cllr Fenwick and Clerk will attend the CDALC Smaller Councils Forum on Thursday 16 July 26 on behalf of council.

It was **RESOLVED:** that the information as received be accepted.

EVPC/26/27/067

EVPC Monthly Financial Report – June 2026

Bank Balance Report at 30/06/26

RESOLVED: that the Bank Balance Report be APPROVED

Bank Transfer Report to 30/06/26

RESOLVED: that the Bank Transfer Report be APPROVED

Expenditure Report to 30/06/26

RESOLVED: that the Expenditure Report be APPROVED.

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Income Report to 30/06/26

RESOLVED: that the Income Report be APPROVED.

EVPC/26/27/068

Withdrawal of DCC Payroll Service (Effective 31 March 2027)

The Clerk gave details of the notification by DCC that it will be withdrawing its payroll service SLA with effect of 31 March 2027. A number of town and parish councils are affected, and work is ongoing to find a suitable future payroll provider. An update will be provided as soon as it is available.

EVPC/26/27/069

Monthly Cash & Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED: that Cllr Dale would make a reconciliation of cash and bank during the week of 13 – 17 July 2026.

EVPC/26/27/070

Planning Applications

a. Planning Applications – Planning Weekly Lists June-July 26

List 11 June 26 – DM/26/014101/TPO Mill Cottage, Easington Village.
(Submitted by parish council) Requires an up to date tree survey which is being conducted on Tue 14 July following which this will be re-submitted.

DM/26/01416/FPA 5 Highgrove Court, Little Thorpe

List 18 June 26 – DM/26/00869/FPA 2 Lea Lane, Easington Village
DM/26/01445/FPA Club Motors, Seaside Lane
DM/26/01486/FPA South Grange Farm

RESOLVED: No objections.

b. Planning Decisions – Delegated List 03 July 26

DM/26/00604/FPA Eagle Crest, 2 Lea Lane, Easington Village (Approved)
DM/26/01043/FPA Delview, Stockton Td, Easington Village (Approved)

RESOLVED: No observations.

c. Planning Refusals – None to report.

d. Planning Applications Withdrawn – List 03 July 26

DM/26/00729/OUT – Land to north of 14 Shakespeare Terrace (Withdrawn)

e. Planning Appeals / Objections – None to report

f. Other Planning Matters:

BESS Sites / Solar Farm update. – Cllr Ramshaw gave details of the refusal to the proposed BESS / solar project at Hare Hill Farm.

RESOLVED: That this information be received and noted.

Roller Shutters on former village fish shop - The Clerk gave details of an enquiry made to DCC following an email received from a resident regarding planning permission for roller shutter to be installed on the former village fish shop which is in the village conservation area. In

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addition, the Clerk also made enquiries regarding planning permission for outdoor washing machines and courier delivery containers outside of the Go Local store which is within the village conservation area. An update is to follow.

RESOLVED: That this information be received and noted.

EVPC/26/27/071

EVPC Confirmation of Council Re-Commitment to Civility and Respect Pledge

DCC had recently urged Councils to commit to the Civility and Respect Pledge. The Clerk confirmed that EVPC ratified this document in 2024, however, if Council wished to re-affirm its commitment to the pledge this could be done.

RESOLVED: that this Council re-affirm its continued commitment to the Civility and Respect pledge.

EVPC/26/27/072

Thorpe Road Playing Field

Thorpe Road playing field had recently been vandalised and both goal posts were torn down rendering the field as non-playable for football or other sports. The goal posts had been removed at a cost to council and the cost of replacing the goal posts had been obtained. Marking of the pitch has been paused but it is still on the DCC grass-cutting plan. It is known that this location attracts a degree of anti-social behaviour which causes local residents to be disturbed, and several residents would like to see the land used for other purposes, however, the land is listed as a designated playing field.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk confirm the designation of the playing field and request the police to visit the area on a regular basis over the school holidays to help reduce anti-social behaviour in that area. A decision to replace the goal posts would be taken at a later date.

EVPC/26/27/073

EVPC Provision of Dog Bags

This Council provides free dog bags to residents on the basis that the provision of these items encourages responsible behaviour from dog owners. These are provided from a self-help dispenser located at the front of Seaton Holme. Dog owners are expected to only take what they immediately need, however, the rate at which the dog bags are being used is causing concern due to cost. It has been noted that less dog bags are used mid-week and more on a weekend, and in the last year this Council has spent over £1800 on dog bags. A sign has been placed on the dispenser to urge dog-owners to only take what they need and the situation will be monitored.

RESOLVED: A sign to be placed on the dispenser and notices placed of the Facebook and website pages.

EVPC/26/27/074

Golden Friends Lunch Club (Durham Aged Miners Homes Association)

Durham Aged Miners Homes Association held their first 'Golden friends' luncheon at Seaton Holme on Monday 29th June 26 from 1200 hrs to 1400 hrs. It is open to members of the public who pay a nominal £5 to attend.

Golden Friends was attended by 25 local elderly residents from both the village and colliery. They were treated to a pie and pea lunch followed by cream cakes and tea with a game of bingo and music. As this was a 'taster event' to see if it would work, EVPC staff assisted with setting up and running the event. There was a clear benefit to the well-being of those attending and they all said they would attend another.

DAMHA wish to book the use of the kitchen and Liddell Room every last Monday of the month for the rest of the year to hold a regular 'Golden friends' luncheon on the same basis of 2 hours – 1200 to 1400 hrs on one day per month.

RESOLVED: To approve the use of the Liddell Room and Kitchen by Durham Aged Miners Homes Association for two hours for one day per month at no charge.

EVPC/26/27/075

EVPC Representation to Durham & Cleveland Fire Brigade

Cllr Dale gave information on her aspiration to bring the Chief Officer of Durham and Cleveland Fire Brigade to speak with Council in order for Council to receive information from the force headquarters direct. She will try to achieve this for the September meeting.

RESOLVED: The information was received and noted..

EVPC/26/27/075

Verbal Report from the Clerk on matters not covered elsewhere.

EVPC Summer Fair Sat 25th July. As many Cllrs as possible are required to attend and help out.

Litter outside of school – the Clerk will write to the school and perhaps get another bin placed nearby.

It was **RESOLVED:** that the information is received be NOTED

EVPC/26/27/076

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Cemetery & Grounds Committee Meeting – Monday 07 September 2026 at 1100 Hrs

Events Management Committee Meeting – Monday 14 September 2026 at 1700 Hrs

Council Ordinary Meeting - Monday 14 September 2026 at 1800 Hrs.

All Council meetings will take place in the Milburn Room, Seaton Holme unless otherwise stated on the agenda.

RESOLVED: that the information given be NOTED.

EVPC/26/27/077

Exclusion of the Press and Public – In accordance with Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

None

The meeting closed at 2000 hrs.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

Chairman 

Date 14/9/26

Distribution / Publication:

All Easington Village Parish Councillors
EVPC Website
Councillor L Penders DCC
Councillor H Brown DCC
Councillor L Taylor DCC