



28th May 2026

Dear Councillor,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the **Governance & Performance Committee** on **Thursday 4th June 2026** in the **Council Chamber, Shotton Hall, Peterlee, SR8 2PH**, at **10.00 am**

Mr I Hall
Town Clerk

Membership: Councillor R. Moore (Chairman),
Councillor I Pygall (Vice-Chairman); and
Councillors P Brown, M Cartwright, S Franklin and A Laing

Members of the public are very welcome to attend our meetings. We have a limited number of designated public seating in our Council Chamber and so any members of the public wishing to attend to observe the meeting are advised to contact the Council in advance so that we can reserve a seat for you: council@peterlee.gov.uk or (0191) 5862491.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. To receive declarations of interest

Members are reminded of the need to disclose any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. Please seek advice from the Town Clerk **prior to the meeting** if in doubt. Members are reminded that they can check their published declaration of interests here: <https://bit.ly/2wVyeLA>

3. Reviews of Policies

To review the Council's following policies (Copies attached):

- a) Memorial Benches and Trees Policy



Memorial Benches and Trees Policy

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this guidance is to provide additional information and support for Memorial Benches and Trees.

Version 1: May 2026

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Policy and procedure for Memorial Benches and Trees

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a clear, fair, and consistent framework for the provision, installation, and maintenance of memorial benches and trees within council-managed public spaces. It aims to balance commemorative opportunities with environmental sustainability, accessibility, and the amenity of shared spaces.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all parks, open spaces, highways, and public land owned or managed by the Council.

3. Guiding Principles

- Ensure public spaces remain inclusive and accessible for all users
- Maintain aesthetic and environmental quality
- Manage long-term maintenance responsibilities sustainably
- Provide equitable access to memorial opportunities
- Avoid over-proliferation or clustering of memorial items

4. Memorial Benches

4.1 Eligibility

Applications may be made by individuals, families, or community groups wishing to commemorate a person or event.

4.2 Locations

- Locations will be approved by the Council based on suitability, safety, and existing site plans
- Preference may be given to designated memorial areas to prevent over-concentration
- Benches will not be installed where they obstruct pathways, maintenance access, or sightlines

4.3 Design and Materials

- Benches must conform to Council-approved designs and materials to ensure durability and consistency
- Recycled or sustainably sourced materials are encouraged, however these must meet British safety standard 8415:2018 and be FSC compliant (FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL)
- Personalised designs are not permitted unless explicitly approved

4.4 Inscriptions and Plaques

- Wording must be appropriate, non-offensive, and subject to Council approval
- Plaques must follow standard size and format guidelines
- The Council reserves the right to refuse or request amendments to inscriptions

4.5 Costs

- Applicants are responsible for full costs, including purchase, installation, and administrative fees
- A maintenance contribution may be required

4.6 Maintenance and Lifespan

- Benches are typically maintained for a fixed term e.g., 10years
- After this period, the Council may remove, replace, or offer renewal options
- The Council retains ownership of all installed benches

5. Memorial Trees

5.1 Eligibility

Applications are open to individuals, families, or groups wishing to plant a tree in memory of a person or event.

5.2 Locations

- Tree planting will align with the Council's tree strategy and biodiversity goals
- Locations will be determined based on ecological suitability and long-term planning
- Ad hoc planting requests may be declined in favour of planned planting schemes

5.3 Species Selection

- Species will be selected by the Council based on site conditions, climate resilience, and ecological benefit
- Native species are preferred

5.4 Plaques and Markers

- Discreet ground-level plaques may be permitted where appropriate
- In some cases, no physical marker will be allowed to protect the natural setting

5.5 Costs

- Applicants are responsible for costs including tree purchase, planting, and establishment care
- A contribution toward long-term maintenance may be required

5.6 Maintenance and Replacement

- Trees will be maintained as part of the Council's tree management program
- If a tree fails within an agreed establishment period, replacement may be offered
- The Council does not guarantee indefinite survival

6. Application Process

- Applications must be submitted using the Council's official form
- Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis
- Approval is subject to site inspections and compliance with this policy

7. Refusal Criteria

Applications may be refused if:

- The proposed location is unsuitable or unsafe
- The site has reached capacity
- The request conflicts with broader planning or environmental objectives
- The inscription is deemed inappropriate

8. Removal and Relocation

- The Council reserves the right to remove or relocate memorials due to redevelopment, safety concerns, or environmental management
- Where possible, applicants will be notified in advance

9. Equality and Accessibility

- Memorial installations must not impede accessibility
- The Council will ensure equitable access to memorial opportunities across communities

10. Review and Monitoring

- This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and relevant
- Records of memorials will be maintained in a central register

11. Contact Information

For further information or to submit an application, please contact the Council's Neighbourhood Services Team.

Any queries regarding this Policy please contact either Town Clerk or the Neighborhood Services Manager, or telephone 0191 5862491.

Author of Policy;	Neighbourhood Services Manager
Date effective from;	May 2026
Policy review;	May 2027
Version Control;	V1