



14th July 2026

Dear Councillor,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of **Peterlee Town Council** on
Monday 20th July 2026 In the **Council Chamber, Shotton Hall,**
Peterlee, SR8 2PH, at 6.30pm

Mr I Hall
Town Clerk

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. Public Participation

Members of the public will have an opportunity to put questions to the Council. This item of business to last no more than 15 minutes, as per Council Standing Orders.

4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the following meeting:-

- a. Council Meeting held on 6 July 2026 (Copy attached)

5. GSM Emergency Communication Upgrade Passenger Lifts, The Pavilion

A report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

6. Appointment of Internal Auditor 2026/27 to 2028/29

A report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

- 7. Durham County Council Consultation Proposed New Selective Licensing Scheme (2027–2032)**
A report of the Town Clerk (Attached)
- 8. Exclusion of Press and Public**
To resolve that in view of the confidential nature of the items to be discussed, the committee pass the formal resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 & the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, Part 1, due to the commercial and/or personal information contained in the report.
- 9. Licensing Act 2003 Representation**
A report of the Town Clerk (Attached)
- 10. Rent Review**
A report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Town Council** meeting held on **Monday 6 July 2026** at **6.30pm** in the Council Chamber, Shotton Hall, Peterlee.

Present: Councillor M. A. Cartwright (Mayor) and Councillors P. Brown, D. Burrell, P. Cartwright, B. Fishwick, M-L Franklin, S Franklin, K. Hawley, D. Howarth, D. Meadows, R. Moore, I. Pygall, S. Simpson, M. Sanderson and D. Wright.

Also Ian Hall (Chief Officer and Town Clerk), Deborah Woodhall (Resources Manager) and Louise Hudson (Democratic Services Assistant)

C.30/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Black, D Hawley, A. Laing, H Pygall and M Tough

RESOLVED: That the apologies be noted.

C.31/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared

C.32/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public was in attendance to observe only.

C.33/26 MONTHLY UPDATES FROM DURHAM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

County Councillor S Franklin updated Members on Durham County Council's Article 4 Direction, explaining that from October 2026, any property development with a total of 499 planned properties or less, will no longer be required to be reviewed by the Planning Committee and will simply follow the normal planning application process.

C.34/26 PETERLEE & HORDEN RUGBY CLUB PRESENTATION

Chairman, Paul Greener, and Treasurer, Ian McClean, introduced themselves to Members.

Ian McClean provided an update on the progress of Peterlee & Horden Rugby Club. He explained that the Club took over the former Peterlee New Town Football Club building on Eden Lane in 2016. Five years later, the Club was granted a 99-year lease and, since then, has undertaken extensive renovations and improvements, supported by approximately £2 million in investment and National Lottery funding. This has included the creation of the Eden Hill People's Centre, a Deaf Club and facilities for the Ladies' Guild.

Approximately £400,000 was invested in employing youth and community workers, while a further £1 million was used to improve the changing facilities, install perimeter fencing and replace the floodlights. An additional £500,000 funded the construction of an extension. Through a combination of the Club's

own funds, crowdfunding and grant funding, the heating system was upgraded and around 100 solar panels were installed, enabling the site to become carbon neutral.

The Club currently has three senior men's teams with over 100 members, a senior women's section with more than 35 members, and junior teams ranging from Under-6s to Under-18s, with a total junior membership of 244. It was noted that 98% of the Club's members lived in the SR8 area, 68% of which are Peterlee residents.

Ian emphasised that junior rugby is at the heart of the Club's ethos and that every effort is made to ensure the sport is accessible to all. Junior membership costs just £1 per week, which provides children with a range of benefits, including:

- A meal provided every Wednesday evening and Sunday.
- Access to a 'kit bank' of playing kits, training clothing and boots, ensuring that no child is prevented from participating due to financial circumstances.
- Social events, including pizza nights and trips.
- Additional Maths and English tuition for the Under-16 boys' team to help prepare for their GCSE examinations. Ian advised that this initiative had been highly successful and was now being considered by other clubs.

The Club is supported by around 70 coaches, helpers and volunteers, all of whom give their time free of charge. The Eden Hill People's Centre also hosts a variety of community activities and services, including fun days and events, as well as organisations such as Citizens Advice, Wellbeing for Life and Smoke Free Durham.

Members were advised that the Club was originally established in 1926 and operates as a mutual organisation rather than a charity or business. The Club previously benefited from seven years of National Lottery funding, which enabled the purchase of a minibus used by both the Club and the wider community. However, as this funding has now come to an end, alternative fundraising, including crowdfunding, will be required over the coming years to help sustain services.

Ian explained that the current economic climate has significantly affected hospitality income, resulting in a reduction in profits of approximately £33,000.

In closing, Ian said that the Club was extremely proud of everything it had achieved and thanked Peterlee Town Council for its continued support and partnership over the years.

Member K. Hawley thanked those Councillors who had supported the partnership with Peterlee & Horden Rugby Club when the opportunity first arose and for placing their confidence in the Club.

Member B. Fishwick praised the Club, describing it as one of the friendliest and most welcoming places in the area, and commended everyone involved for their commitment and achievements.

C.35/26 MINUTES

- a. Council Meeting held on 15th June 2026

Additional Comments

Member D Meadows updated Members, explaining he had contacted a Durham County Councillor about the Council's concerns about Ridgemount House and Lee House. He received a response explaining the Councillor was unable to meet until September 2026 and that the Council needs to approach Durham County Council's Pride in Place to seek help.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the above meetings be approved.

C.36/26 FLEET REPLACEMENT

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Neighbourhood Services Manager, which had previously been circulated, to seek Council approval, in principle, to allocate a proportion of the capital receipt arising from the proposed sale of Shotton Hall towards the replacement of ageing Neighbourhood Services vehicles and equipment, subject to the successful completion of the property sale and the Council's Financial Regulations.

Member K Hawley proposed deferring this item until Shotton Hall was sold, as she feels it would be more beneficial to make a list of all of the improvements which need to be made throughout Peterlee Town Council prior to making any commitments.

Member R Moore seconded the proposal.

A vote was taken:

For: 14

Against: 0

RESOLVED: That the proposal to replace the ageing Neighbourhood Services vehicles and equipment, be deferred until after Shotton Hall is sold.

C.37/26 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S GLYPHOSATE USE

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, previously circulated, requesting that Members review the current blanket prohibition on the use of glyphosate on Peterlee Town Council land and consider replacing the existing ban with a controlled policy permitting its use in limited operational circumstances where no practical alternative exists.

Members sought further information from the Town Clerk regarding the alternative products currently being used, the challenges experienced by the Neighbourhood Services Team since the prohibition on glyphosate was introduced and suggested a number of other possible alternatives.

Member R. Moore expressed opposition to the proposal, citing concerns regarding the potential carcinogenic properties of glyphosate.

The Town Clerk explained that the current alternative product remains effective for only approximately one month and is supplied in 25kg containers, making it cumbersome for staff to transport and use. It was further explained that while alternatives such as AdBlue had been suggested, these products can affect surrounding vegetation rather than solely the targeted weeds and are therefore not considered a suitable solution.

Member K. Hawley proposed that the use of glyphosate products be permitted in appropriate operational areas, such as car parks and around buildings, where no practical alternative exists. She further proposed that glyphosate should not be used in children's play areas or in locations that are important for pollinators or are regularly used by dog walkers.

Member S Franklin seconded the proposal.

A named vote was taken:

For: P. Brown, D. Burrell, M. A. Cartwright, P. Cartwright, B. Fishwick, M. L. Franklin, S. Franklin, K. Hawley, D. Howarth, D. Meadows, I. Pygall, M. Sanderson, S. Simpson

Against: R. Moore

RESOLVED:

1. That the current blanket prohibition on the use of glyphosate on Peterlee Town Council land be replaced with a controlled policy.
2. That approval be given to permit its use only in limited operational circumstances where no practical alternative exists, specifically in areas such as car parks and around Council buildings.
3. That Glyphosate shall not be used in children's play areas or in areas identified as important for pollinators or those regularly used by dog walkers.

C.38/26 FUTURE GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION OF HILL RIGG HOUSE

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to update Members on the current position regarding Hill Rigg House following the vacation of the building by Innovation, and to seek a decision on the preferred operating model for the future management of the building.

Member K Hawley suggested Option 2 would be best.

A vote was taken:

For: 14
Against: 0

7 Members volunteered to be Trustees: P. Brown, D. Burrell, M. A. Cartwright, B. Fishwick, K. Hawley, D. Howarth, D. Meadows and S. Simpson

RESOLVED:

1. That the current position regarding Hill Rigg House be noted.
2. That Innovations had vacated the building, but no formal correspondence had been received confirming the termination of its occupation, be noted.
3. That Option 2 be the Council's preferred future operating model for Hill Rigg House.
4. That authority be given for the Chief Officer & Town Clerk to liaise with Durham Community Action (Durham Enable) to progress the Council's preferred option and undertake all necessary preparatory work to establish the agreed governance and operating arrangements for Hill Rigg House, with any matters requiring further Council approval being reported back to Members.
5. That the Town Clerk will continue attempts to obtain formal confirmation from Innovations regarding the surrender of the premises.

C.39/26 PETERLEE CRICKET CLUB DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to provide Members with an update following a meeting held with representatives of Peterlee Cricket Club on 19th June 2026, to outline the Club's revised development strategy, and to ask Members to reconsider their previous decision regarding the installation of a temporary loose gravel patio and low-level picket fence.

Member K Hawley proposed asking Peterlee Cricket Club to mark out the specific areas and to arrange a visit.

Member M Sanderson seconded the proposal.

A vote was taken:

For: 14
Against: 0

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk make arrangements for Members to visit Peterlee Cricket Club to view the area proposed for installation of a temporary loose gravel patio and low-level picket fence.

C.40/26 LOWHILLS ROAD CAR PARK, PROPOSED RESURFACING WORKS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to seek Members' approval in principle to undertake resurfacing works to the Council-owned car park at Lowhills Road due to its continued deterioration and to provide Members with background information relating to the historic sale of the adjoining Acre Rigg Social Club and the associated maintenance covenant.

RESOLVED:

1. That the resurfacing of the Lowhills Road car park be approved in principle.
2. That authority be given to officers to obtain competitive quotations for the proposed resurfacing works in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
3. That authority be given to officers to seek legal advice regarding the enforceability of the maintenance covenant contained within the transfer of the former Acre Rigg Social Club and, if appropriate, pursue a contribution towards the cost of the resurfacing works from the current landowner.
4. That a further report be brought to Council detailing the estimated project costs, and the outcome of the legal advice before any works are commissioned.

C.41/26 DEBT MANAGEMENT ADVICE CITIZENS ADVICE SERVICE (CAS)

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to review the Council's continued support for the delivery of Debt Management Advice by Citizens Advice Service (CAS) from The Pavilion Sports and Community Centre.

RESOLVED:

1. That Option A, to bring the current concessionary arrangement to an end by providing Citizens Advice Service with one month's written notice, be approved.
2. That should Citizens Advice wish to continue operating from The Pavilion, rooms could be hired in accordance with the Council's approved schedule of fees and charges, subject to availability.

C.42/26 PAVILION OFFICE CONVERSION UPDATE

The Town Clerk updated Members on the progress of the procurement process being undertaken with Durham County Council, advising that the tender period had closed on 29 June 2026 and that no submissions had been received.

As the procurement exercise had been unsuccessful, the Council is now able to progress the project through Durham County Council's Construction Services. Members were advised that a surveyor would be appointed to prepare design proposals at no cost to the Council as part of the procurement process. Once the designs have been completed, the Council will have the option of appointing Durham County Council to undertake the works or proceeding with a separate tender exercise.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 20th July 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer & Town Clerk

Subject: **GSM Emergency Communication Upgrade Passenger Lifts, The Pavilion**

Report Purpose: To provide Members with the additional information requested following the deferral of this item at the Council meeting held on 1st June 2026 and to seek a decision regarding the appointment of a contractor to undertake the GSM emergency communication upgrades to the passenger lifts at The Pavilion.

Background: At its meeting on 1st June 2026, Council approved the replacement of the main hoisting belts on both passenger lifts but deferred consideration of the GSM emergency communication upgrades pending further information regarding the proposed systems, future maintenance arrangements and whether the Council would be tied to a particular supplier.

Following the meeting, officers contacted each of the contractors who submitted quotations together with an independent communications provider to obtain clarification on the operation of their proposed systems and the Council's future flexibility.

Detail: **Pickerings Lifts**

Pickerings have confirmed that their proposed GSM communication unit operates using an open protocol system.

No proprietary software or specialist tooling is required, and the Council is free to procure its own SIM card or communications provider. Future maintenance and programming can be undertaken by any suitably qualified lift engineer.

Schindler Ltd

Schindler have confirmed that emergency telephone numbers can be updated by replacing the SIM card and reprogramming the GSM autodialler in accordance with the Operation and Maintenance Manual supplied with the lift.

They have confirmed that this work may be undertaken by any competent lift engineer and does not require attendance by Schindler personnel.

Ascendant Lifts

Ascendant have advised that their proposed GSM communication equipment also operates using an open protocol system.

They have advised that, unlike some proprietary systems, the Council would remain free to change communication providers and appoint any lift contractor to maintain the equipment in the future.

Following the Council's decision to award the Managed IT Support Services contract to Document Solutions, discussions took place regarding the GSM emergency communication systems for the passenger lifts.

During these discussions, officers explained that Council had deferred a decision on the GSM communication upgrades pending further information on available solutions and future communication arrangements.

Document Solutions advised that they were able to provide a complete digital lift communication solution and subsequently attended The Pavilion to inspect the existing installation and confirm compatibility with the Council's requirements.

Following their site visit, Document Solutions submitted a quotation to undertake the works.

Summary of Quotations

Contractor	One-off Cost (Excluding VAT)	Ongoing Charges
Company A	£4,355.68	Supplier managed service
Company B	£3,316.46	SIM/communication service to be arranged separately
Company C	£4,338.91	SIM/communication service to be arranged separately
Company D	£1,380.00	£10.00 per month

Members will note that the additional quotation from Document Solutions was not available when the original report was presented to Council. The quotation arose following discussions with the Council's newly appointed IT provider after the Managed IT Support Services contract had been awarded. As a result, Members now have the benefit of considering an additional compliant quotation alongside the three quotations originally obtained from specialist lift contractors before reaching a final decision.

Recommendation:

Members are recommended to:

1. Note the additional information obtained following the Council's decision to defer consideration of the GSM emergency communication upgrades at the meeting held on 1st June 2026.
2. Note the written responses received from Schindler Ltd, Pickerings Lifts and Ascendant Lifts regarding the operation and future flexibility of their proposed communication systems.
3. Note the additional quotation submitted by Document Solutions following a site visit to The Pavilion.
4. Consider the quotations and supporting information contained within this report.
5. Determine which proposal they consider representing the most economically advantageous solution for the Council, taking into account cost, operational requirements, compatibility with the existing lift installation, future flexibility and long-term value for money.
6. Delegate authority to the Chief Officer to place the necessary order and arrange the works in accordance with the decision of Council.

Appendix 1: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	The cost of the approved option will be met from Council reserves. Ongoing communication or connectivity costs will apply depending on the supplier selected. VAT will be reclaimed in the normal manner where applicable.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	Failure to upgrade the lift emergency communication systems may result in the emergency telephones becoming incompatible with the UK's digital telephone network, potentially affecting emergency communications and passenger safety. The proposed upgrade will help ensure continued compliance and operational resilience.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	Maintaining fully operational passenger lifts and reliable emergency communication systems supports accessibility and ensures continued safe access to The Pavilion for all users, particularly those with disabilities or mobility impairments.
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	Additional technical information has been obtained from the original contractors following Members' request, together with a further quotation from Document Solutions, to enable Council to make an informed decision.
Procurement:	Three quotations were originally obtained in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Following the deferral of the matter, an additional quotation was received from Document Solutions after discussions arising from the award of the Council's IT Support Services contract and a subsequent site visit to The Pavilion. Members are asked to determine the most economically advantageous solution, taking into account cost, compatibility, operational requirements and long-term value for money.

Legal:

The Council has a duty under health and safety legislation to maintain its lift installations and associated emergency communication systems in a safe and serviceable condition. Any works undertaken should comply with the relevant lift safety standards and emergency communication requirements.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 20th July 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer & Town Clerk

Subject: **Appointment of Internal Auditor 2026/27 to 2028/29**

Report Purpose: The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the appointment of Clive Owen LLP as Peterlee Town Council's Internal Auditor for a further three-year period covering the financial years 2026/27 to 2028/29.

The report outlines the statutory requirement for the provision of an effective internal audit function, summarises the current position and explains the reasons why Officers recommend the reappointment of Clive Owen LLP.

Background: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require every local authority to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, governance and internal control arrangements. The Internal Auditor therefore plays a vital role in providing independent assurance to Members that the Council's financial and governance systems are operating effectively and that public funds are being managed appropriately.

Following Durham County Council's decision to cease providing Internal Audit services to Town and Parish Councils, Peterlee Town Council undertook a procurement exercise during 2023 to appoint an alternative provider. Following consideration of the available options, Full Council resolved at its meeting on 21 August 2023 to appoint Clive Owen LLP as the Council's Internal Auditor for a three-year period covering the financial years 2023/24 to 2025/26. A formal Letter of Engagement was subsequently entered into setting out the responsibilities of both parties.

The current appointment concludes following completion of the 2025/26 Internal Audit programme and submission of the Internal Audit Report as part of the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). It is therefore necessary for Members to consider arrangements for the appointment of an Internal Auditor from the commencement of the 2026/27 financial year.

Detail: Throughout the current three-year appointment Clive Owen LLP have successfully delivered the Council's Internal Audit Plan and have established a thorough understanding of the Council's governance framework, Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, internal control environment and operational arrangements.

During this period the audit team has provided independent assurance together with constructive recommendations which have supported continuous improvements to the Council's governance arrangements and internal control environment. Officers have established an effective working relationship with the audit team, enabling audits to be undertaken efficiently whilst maintaining the independence required of the Internal Audit function.

Officers have been satisfied with the quality of service provided and consider that the Council has benefited from maintaining a consistent Internal Audit provider throughout the current appointment.

Procurement Considerations

Officers have considered the options available for securing Internal Audit provision for the next three-year period. These included undertaking a competitive procurement exercise, seeking provision from another local authority, appointing an independent self-employed Internal Auditor or reappointing the existing provider.

In considering these options Officers have been mindful of the continuing shortage of suitably qualified Internal Auditors with specific knowledge and experience of the Town and Parish Council sector. This issue has been recognised nationally and has resulted in a limited marketplace for specialist providers. Durham County Council no longer provides Internal Audit services to Town and Parish Councils due to recruitment difficulties, further reducing the number of available providers.

Officers have also considered procurement approaches adopted by other larger Town Councils. In one recent example, despite attempts to identify alternative providers, only Clive Owen LLP was both willing and suitably experienced to undertake the work, with other organisations confirming that they did not provide specialist Internal Audit services to Town and Parish Councils.

Taking account of the specialist nature of the service, the limited number of experienced providers and the successful delivery of the current contract, Officers consider that reappointing Clive Owen LLP represents the most appropriate, proportionate and cost-effective approach.

Proposal

Clive Owen LLP has submitted a proposal to continue providing Internal Audit Services to Peterlee Town Council for the financial years 2026/27 to 2028/29. The proposal demonstrates the firm's continued commitment to providing independent assurance together with specialist governance and audit services to Town Councils and other public sector organisations.

The proposal provides for a comprehensive Internal Audit service, including preparation of a risk-based three-year Internal Audit Plan, delivery of the agreed annual audit programme, production of detailed

Internal Audit reports, completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report required for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, attendance at Audit Committee meetings where required and ongoing professional advice throughout the contract period.

Clive Owen LLP has proposed a fixed fee of £10,350 plus VAT for the 2026/27 financial year, £10,825 plus VAT for the 2027/28 financial year and £11,350 plus VAT for the 2028/29 financial year. The total value of the proposed three-year appointment is £32,525 plus VAT. These fees include delivery of the agreed Internal Audit Plan, preparation of audit reports, management review, completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report and attendance at Audit Council meetings where required.

During the current contract Clive Owen LLP has demonstrated professionalism, independence and technical competence whilst establishing an excellent understanding of the Council's governance arrangements, financial systems and internal controls. This experience places the firm in a strong position to continue providing effective assurance without the additional time and cost that would inevitably arise through appointing a new provider.

Officers are satisfied that the proposed fees represent good value for money when considered against the specialist nature of the service, the continuity of provision and the limited availability of suitably qualified providers with demonstrable experience of undertaking Internal Audit work within the Town and Parish Council sector. Reappointing Clive Owen LLP will also avoid the additional costs and officer time associated with appointing and familiarising a new provider with the Council's systems and procedures.

Recommendation: Members are requested to consider the contents of this report and:

1. Approve the appointment of Clive Owen LLP as Peterlee Town Council's Internal Auditor for the three-year period commencing 1 April 2026 and ending 31 March 2029.
2. Approve the proposed contract value of £32,525 plus VAT, comprising annual fees of £10,350 plus VAT for 2026/27, £10,825 plus VAT for 2027/28 and £11,350 plus VAT for 2028/29.
3. Authorise the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to enter into the necessary Letter of Engagement and any associated contractual documentation on behalf of the Council.

Appendix 1: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	The financial implications associated with this proposal are set out in this report. Provision for the Internal Audit Service has been included within the Council's approved revenue budget and no additional budget provision is required.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	The absence of an effective Internal Audit function represents a significant governance risk. The appointment of Clive Owen LLP for a further three-year period would ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations while providing Members with independent assurance over the effectiveness of governance, financial management and internal controls.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	No direct implications
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	No direct implications
Procurement:	The proposed appointment is for a specialist professional service. Officers are satisfied that the appointment of Clive Owen LLP represents an appropriate procurement decision, taking into account the limited number of suitably qualified providers and the successful delivery of the current contract.
Legal:	The Council has a statutory duty under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to maintain an effective Internal Audit function. Failure to appoint an appropriately qualified and independent Internal Auditor could adversely affect the Council's governance arrangements and its ability to complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 20th July 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer & Town Clerk

Subject: **Durham County Council Consultation Proposed New Selective Licensing Scheme (2027–2032)**

Report Purpose: To inform Members of Durham County Council's consultation on the proposed introduction of a new Selective Licensing Scheme for privately rented properties and to seek a decision on whether Peterlee Town Council wishes to submit a corporate response to the consultation.

Background: Durham County Council currently operates a Selective Licensing Scheme for privately rented properties within designated areas of the county. The current designation expires on 31st March 2027.

Under the Housing Act 2004, any replacement scheme must be treated as a new designation and cannot simply be renewed. Durham County Council is therefore required to undertake a public consultation before determining whether to introduce a new scheme from 1st April 2027.

The consultation closes on Wednesday 12th August 2026.

Detail: Selective Licensing is a statutory power available to local housing authorities under the Housing Act 2004. Where designated, landlords of privately rented residential properties are required to obtain a licence from the local authority before letting their properties. The licensing process enables the authority to ensure that landlords are meeting their legal responsibilities and that properties are being managed to an appropriate standard. Where landlords fail to comply with the requirements of the scheme, the local authority has powers to take appropriate enforcement action.

Durham County Council advises that the proposed scheme seeks to improve the quality and management of privately rented accommodation, support responsible landlords, improve neighbourhoods experiencing housing-related issues and help reduce anti-social behaviour associated with poorly managed private rented properties. The Council has identified areas where it considers the statutory criteria for Selective Licensing are met and is seeking views on the evidence supporting those proposals, together with the proposed licence conditions and associated licence fees.

Peterlee and surrounding communities are included within the consultation area. Durham County Council has advised that it is particularly keen to receive responses from private landlords, private tenants, residents and other stakeholders who may be affected by the proposals.

Whilst Peterlee Town Council has no statutory responsibility for the implementation or enforcement of the scheme, Members may wish to consider whether the Council should submit a corporate response to the consultation. A response would provide an opportunity for the Council to comment on the proposals and highlight any local issues affecting Peterlee and its residents. Members may also wish to encourage local residents, landlords and tenants to participate in the consultation to ensure that Durham County Council receives a broad range of views before reaching a decision.

Recommendation: Members are requested to consider the contents of this report and:

1. Notes the contents of this report
2. Considers Durham County Council's consultation on the proposed Selective Licensing Scheme
3. Determines whether Peterlee Town Council wishes to submit a corporate response before the consultation closes on 12th August 2026.

Appendix 1: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	No direct implications.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	No direct implications.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	No direct implications.
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	This report relates to a public consultation being undertaken by Durham County Council on the proposed introduction of a new Selective Licensing Scheme. The consultation closes on 12 th August 2026. Should Members wish to submit a corporate response, the Council's views will be communicated to Durham County Council before the closing date. Members may also wish to promote the consultation through the Council's communication channels to encourage participation from residents, private landlords and private tenants within the Peterlee area.
Procurement:	No direct implications
Legal:	The proposed consultation is being undertaken by Durham County Council in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 relating to the designation of Selective Licensing Schemes.