

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: 15

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 and D. Wright.

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: 15
Against: 0

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

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: 15
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.