



15th September 2026

Dear Councillor,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of **Peterlee Town Council** on
Monday 21 September 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 7 September 2026 (Copy attached)

5. Motion on Notice

Moved by: Cllr Diane Howarth

Seconded by: Cllr Karen Hawley

Motion:

“That Full Council reconsider Minute C59/26 – Proposal for the Development of a Splash Park at Woodhouse Park, as Members consider that insufficient detailed information was available when the matter was previously considered, and that further information and scrutiny are required before the Council proceeds further with the proposal.”

6. Peterlee Bus Station

To discuss the current state of Peterlee Bus Station and to decide the next steps Council want to take.

7. Completion of the 2025/26 External Audit Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

8. Peterlee Cricket Club Planning Consultation for Cricket Practice Facility

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Town Council** meeting held on **Monday 7 September 2026** at **6.30pm** in the Council Chamber, Shotton Hall, Peterlee.

Present: Councillor M. A. Cartwright (Mayor) and Councillors J Black, D. Burrell, B. Fishwick (Deputy Mayor), M-L Franklin, K. Hawley, D. Howarth, A. Laing, D. Meadows, I. Pygall, H Pygall, S. Simpson, and D. Wright.

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

The Deputy Chair, Councillor B Fishwick, opened the meeting. The Chair, Councillor Mary Cartwright, joined the meeting at 6.37pm and, thereafter, presided over the remainder of the meeting.

C.62/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Brown, P. Cartwright, S Franklin, D. Hawley, R. Moore.

RESOLVED: That the apologies be noted.

C.63/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared

C.64/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

C.65/26 MONTHLY UPDATES FOR DURHAM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

No updates were received from County Councillors.

C.66/26 MINUTES

- a. Council Meeting held on 17th August 2026

RESOLVED

1. That the minutes of Council Meeting held on 17th August 2026, be approved.
2. That a Notice of Motion be included on the agenda of a future Council meeting to allow Full Council to reconsider Minute C59/26.

C.67/26 PETERLEE COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to present three applications received under the Peterlee

Community Grant Scheme and to invite the relevant Ward Members to consider whether they wish to support the applications from their individual grant allocations.

Kinship - Concessionary Use of Room

Members considered an application from Kinship for concessionary use of a classroom at Woodhouse Park.

Members noted that the Council already has an established arrangement to offer groups that are new to using The Pavilion, Peterlee, a period of six months' concessionary room use.

Member K Hawley proposed that, rather than providing a separate concessionary arrangement, the group should be offered the existing six-month concessionary use offer, which is available at The Pavilion, to be used at the classroom at Woodhouse Park.

Member D Meadows seconded this motion.

Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues

The Town Clerk explained to Members that the supporting documents required when applying for funding were not provided as per the terms and conditions and so the application cannot be considered for funding at this time.

East Durham FC

Detailed consideration was given to the remaining application received under the Peterlee Community Fund. Members noted that a significant proportion of applications received since the launch of the Fund had been from local football teams.

Members discussed the importance of ensuring that all eligible community groups and organisations were aware of the funding available and had an opportunity to apply, with a view to encouraging a wider and more diverse range of applications.

Members, therefore, agreed that consideration of the remaining application under this agenda item should be deferred to a future meeting to allow sufficient time for further publicity to be undertaken and additional applications to be received.

Member S Simpson proposed that the application be deferred to a future meeting. The motion was seconded by Member K Hawley.

RESOLVED

1. That Kinship be offered six months' concessionary use of an appropriate room at The Pavilion, Peterlee, in accordance with the Council's existing concessionary arrangement for groups new to using The Pavilion, in lieu of concessionary use at the premises requested in the application.
2. That consideration of the application for Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues be deferred until the required supporting

documentation has been provided in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Peterlee Community Fund.

3. That consideration of the East Durham FC application be deferred to a future meeting to allow for further publicity and marketing of the Fund, with the aim of increasing awareness amongst eligible community groups and organisations and encouraging a wider range of applications.

C.68/26 LOWHILLS ROAD FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update following a request from Member D Howarth, who had received telephone calls from residents in the Lowhills Road area advising that the event was taking place.

Members were reminded that an item had been considered by Council on 1 June 2026 following a request from Peterlee Town Juniors AFC for permission to hold a 'Fun Day' on the football pitches at Lowhills Road. Members had expressed concerns regarding the request being outside the Council's adopted Events Policy and had subsequently declined permission for the event.

The Town Clerk advised that a football tournament had subsequently taken place at Lowhills Road on 29 August 2026. The football team had permission to hold the tournament as part of their existing hire agreement. However, food and coffee vans were also present at the event, for which permission had not been granted in accordance with the resolution made by Council on 1 June 2026.

Members considered the circumstances and discussed the need for greater clarity regarding the use of Council facilities for football tournaments and associated activities.

Members agreed that a specific policy or appropriate terms and conditions should be developed in relation to football tournaments held under hire agreements, including the use of additional traders and facilities.

Members agreed the matter needs to be reviewed and bring forward appropriate arrangements for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That a review of the current arrangements for football tournaments held under Council hire agreements and develop an appropriate policy or terms and conditions, including provisions relating to additional activities and traders, for consideration by Members.

C.69/26 2026/27 NATIONAL PAY AWARD LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to advise that an agreement had now been reached by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services on the 2026 pay award for employees covered by the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service ('Green Book'). The national agreement was confirmed on 24th August 2026.

RESOLVED:

1. That the nationally agreed 3.30% pay award for 2026/27, effective from 1 April 2026, be noted;
2. That provision for a 4% pay increase was included within the Council's approved 2026/27 budget and, therefore, the agreed increase can be met from existing budget provision, be noted; and
3. That arrangements were being made to implement the revised rates and associated back pay for eligible employees as soon as practicable, be noted.

C.70/26 2026/27 FINANCIAL YEAR FIRST QUARTER BUDGET SUMMARY REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to provide the Council with a budget summary report to the end of the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

A Member enquired about the electricity usage at the Eden Lane Depot as the workshops appears to be much, much more than the offices.

The Town Clerk explained that this is most likely due to the charging of battery operated machinery and that the lights need to be left on 24 hours per day to ensure that CCTV can capture footage every minute of the day.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of this report be noted.
2. That the Town Clerk will arrange for the electricity usage to be investigated.

C.71/26 FREE FUNCTION FRIDAY

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to seek Members' clarification regarding the treatment of existing bookings which fall within the three-month Free Function Friday, Saturday and Sunday trial period.

Members are specifically asked to determine whether customers who had already booked and paid the normal function room hire charge for functions taking place during the three-month trial should receive a refund.

RESOLVED:

That the free hire promotion apply only to new bookings made on or after 17 August 2026, which meet the eligibility criteria of the promotion, and that any bookings made before 17 August 2026 remain subject to the room hire charge agreed at the time of booking.

C.72/26 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the items to be discussed, the Council passed a 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 personal information contained in the report.

C.73/26 RENT REVIEW

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to provide Members with the additional financial information requested, to update Members on further professional advice received regarding the rent review, and to seek a decision on the Council's position before negotiations with the Club commence.

Member J Black proposed offering a reduction of 25% to the rent level. Member B Fishwick seconded the motion and a vote was taken:

During consideration of the item, it came to light that Councillor A. Laing had an association with the organisation connected to the matter. Councillor Laing declared an interest and took no part in the subsequent vote.

For:	11
Against:	0
Abstained:	1
Did not vote due to a declared interest	1

RESOLVED:

1. That the financial information provided and the further professional advice received regarding the rent review, be noted.
2. That a £25% reduction be offered on the level of rent, to be pursued through negotiations with the tenants.
3. That authority be given to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Council's professional property adviser, to progress negotiations with the Club, with any failure to reach agreement being reported back to Council before any further action is taken.

C.74/26 CLUB DEVELOPMENT, MEMBER SITE VISIT AND PROPOSED WORKS

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to update Members following the site visits undertaken at Peterlee Cricket Club and to seek a formal decision on whether approval should now be given for the Club to proceed with the proposed temporary loose gravel patio and low-level picket fence.

Member J Black proposed that Members only support the suggested approvals if the area surrounding the timber social building is paved, not gravelled, and that the exact picket fencing detailed in their proposal is used.

The motion was seconded by Member D Meadows and a vote was taken:

For: 13

Against: 0

RESOLVED:

1. That it be noted that Member site visits had taken place in accordance with the Council's resolution of 6 July 2026.
2. That the information provided by Peterlee Cricket Club during the site visits regarding the proposed patio area, picket fence and the Club's wider development aspirations, be noted.
3. That the request to use gravel on the area surrounding the timber social building is paved, be denied.
4. That approval be given to install paving to the area surrounding the timber social building is paved.
5. That approval be given for the exact low-level picket fence detailed in the original development plan be installed adjacent to the existing timber social building.
6. That authority be given to the Chief Officer & Town Clerk to progress the necessary Licence for Alterations and associated documentation in accordance with the Club's lease arrangements.
7. That any further development proposals, including additional buildings or changing facilities, will require separate consideration and approval by the Council together with any necessary statutory approvals.

Report to:	Peterlee Town Council:
Date:	21 st September 2026
Report of:	Ian Hall Chief Officer/Town Clerk
Subject:	Peterlee Bus Station Current Condition and Concerns
Report Purpose:	To enable Members to consider the current condition of Peterlee Bus Station and determine whether they wish the Council to make representations to Nexus.
Background:	At the meeting of Peterlee Town Council held on 7th September 2026, Members raised concerns regarding the current state and general condition of Peterlee Bus Station. Members requested that the matter be brought forward to a future meeting to allow the Council to discuss the condition of the bus station and consider whether it wished to raise the matter with Nexus.
Detail:	Peterlee Bus Station is an important transport facility for the town and is used by residents, visitors and those travelling to and from Peterlee for employment, education, shopping and access to services. As one of the principal public transport interchange points serving Peterlee, the appearance, condition, accessibility and general environment of the bus station contribute to the experience of people using public transport and to wider perceptions of the town centre. Members have expressed concerns regarding the current condition of the bus station and requested an opportunity for the Council to consider the matter further. Members are invited to discuss their concerns regarding the current condition of Peterlee Bus Station and determine whether they wish the Town Council to make representations to Nexus. Should Members wish to contact Nexus, the Council could seek information regarding matters such as the current maintenance and cleaning arrangements, any identified repair works, and whether any refurbishment or longer-term investment in the bus station is planned. Members may also wish to identify any specific issues or concerns that they would like the Town Clerk to include in any correspondence arising from the meeting.

Recommendation: Members are requested to consider the report, discuss the current condition of Peterlee Bus Station and determine whether they wish the Town Council to make representations to Nexus regarding the matters raised.

Appendix 1: Implications

Area	Implication
Finance:	No direct implications.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	No direct implications.
Equality & Diversity:	Peterlee Bus Station is an important facility for residents who rely upon public transport and contributes to accessibility and connectivity within the town and surrounding area. The condition and appearance of the facility may also have an impact on the experience of residents and visitors using Peterlee town centre.
Crime & Disorder:	No direct implications.
Consultation:	No direct implications.
Procurement:	No direct implications.
Legal:	The Town Council may make representations to relevant organisations and public bodies on matters affecting the local community.
Data Protection:	No direct implications.

Report to:	Peterlee Town Council:
Date:	21 st September 2026
Report of:	Ian Hall Chief Officer/Town Clerk
Subject:	Completion of the 2025/26 External Audit Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)
Report Purpose:	To inform Members that the External Auditor, Forvis Mazars LLP, has completed the limited assurance review of the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the financial year ended 31 st March 2026, to report the outcome of the review and to confirm completion of the required publication arrangements.
Background:	The Council is required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to prepare an Annual Governance and Accountability Return and submit this for external review. The Council approved the 2025/26 AGAR on 1st June 2026, following which the required documentation was submitted to the Council's appointed External Auditor, Forvis Mazars LLP. The External Auditor completed its limited assurance review on 4th September 2026, and the Council subsequently received the certified AGAR and completion letter.
Detail:	External Auditor's Opinion The Council has received a clean external audit outcome for the 2025/26 financial year. On the basis of its review of Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR, the External Auditor concluded that the information contained within the return was in accordance with Proper Practices and that no other matters had come to its attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. The External Auditor also confirmed that there were no other matters to bring to the attention of the Council. This means that the 2025/26 external audit has been completed with: • no qualifications; • no matters giving cause for concern; • no other matters raised by the External Auditor; and • no minor improvement issues identified.

Minor scope for improvement in 2026/2027

The External Auditor's completion letter specifically confirms:
"No minor issues identified."

This is an improvement on the previous year's audit, where a minor matter relating to generic Council email addresses was raised, although the Council subsequently advised the auditor that generic email arrangements were already in place.

There are therefore no specific corrective actions arising from the 2025/26 external audit.

The External Auditor has, however, drawn authorities' attention to the updated Practitioners' Guide 2026/27, including amended guidance relating to Section 2, Box 11 concerning trust fund transactions. Officers will ensure that the latest guidance is considered when preparing the Council's 2026/27 AGAR.

Publication Requirements

Following receipt of the completed audit, the Council published the required conclusion of audit documentation on its website on 8th September 2026.

This included the:

- The Notice of Conclusion of Audit,
- The certified AGAR (Sections 1–3), and
- The rights of public inspection.

The documentation was therefore published well in advance of the statutory deadline of 30th September 2026.

The AGAR will remain available for public access for the required period of at least five years.

These documents can be viewed at [Audit Information - Peterlee Town Council](#)

The completion of the 2025/26 external audit represents a positive outcome for Peterlee Town Council.

The External Auditor has confirmed that the Council's AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices, with no qualifications, no other matters raised and no minor improvement issues identified.

The required conclusion of audit documentation was published on 8th September 2026, completing the Council's immediate statutory requirements following conclusion of the audit.

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

1. Note the successful completion of the external audit of the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2025/26 and the clean audit outcome, with no qualifications, other matters or minor improvement issues identified; and
2. Note that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, certified AGAR and associated documentation were published on the Council's website on 8th September 2026, within the statutory deadline.

Appendix 1: Implications

Area	Implication
Finance:	The standard external audit fee will apply in accordance with the SAAA audit fee scale. The External Auditor has advised that the fee note will follow.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	Completion of the external audit provides assurance over the Council's financial governance arrangements. No additional risks or improvement matters have been identified by the External Auditor.
Equality & Diversity:	No direct implications.
Crime & Disorder:	No direct implications.
Consultation:	No direct implications.
Procurement:	No direct implications.
Legal:	The external audit has been completed, and the required conclusion of audit documentation was published on 8 th September 2026 in accordance with the statutory requirements. the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
Data Protection:	No direct implications.

Report to:	Peterlee Town Council:
Date:	21 st September 2026
Report of:	Ian Hall Chief Officer/Town Clerk
Subject:	Peterlee Cricket Club Planning Consultation for Cricket Practice Facility
Report Purpose:	To advise Members of a planning consultation received from Durham County Council in respect of proposed improvement works at Peterlee Cricket Club, Helford Road, Peterlee. To enable Council, as a consultee, to consider whether it wishes to submit any comments or observations to Durham County Council as the Local Planning Authority.
Background:	At the Annual Council meeting held on 18 May 2026, Members considered a request from Peterlee Cricket Club for landlord consent for proposed improvement works at the cricket ground. Following consideration, Council resolved to approve the installation of a two-lane all-weather cricket practice facility, within the parameters set out in the report presented to that meeting. The decision made in May related to Peterlee Town Council's position as landowner/landlord. Planning permission is a separate statutory process, with the planning application being determined by Durham County Council as the Local Planning Authority.
Detail:	Durham County Council has subsequently consulted Peterlee Town Council on a planning application submitted by Peterlee Cricket Club CIC. The application is for the: "Installation of new cricket training/practice nets and associated artificial playing surface, fencing/netting and ancillary works within the existing cricket playing field." The application relates to the Cricket Club, Helford Road, Peterlee, SR8 1ER. The consultation letter from Durham County Council is dated 7th September 2026. The proposed development is consistent in principle with the cricket practice facility previously considered and approved by the Town Council in its capacity as landowner.

Peterlee Town Council is being consulted on the application as the relevant town council. The responsibility for determining the planning application rests with Durham County Council.

Any representations submitted by the Town Council should relate to material planning considerations. Durham County Council's consultation correspondence confirms that only material planning considerations can be taken into account when determining the application.

Members may wish to take account of the fact that the principle of providing the two-lane all-weather cricket practice facility has already been considered by the Town Council in its separate capacity as landowner and was unanimously supported at the Annual Council meeting in May 2026.

The granting of landlord consent does not determine the Town Council's response to the planning consultation. Members should consider the application on its planning merits and determine whether there are any material planning observations they wish to submit.

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

1. Note the planning consultation received from Durham County Council in respect of the installation of cricket training/practice nets, associated artificial playing surface, fencing/netting and ancillary works at Peterlee Cricket Club, Helford Road;
2. Note that Council previously granted landlord consent for the installation of a two-lane all-weather cricket practice facility at its meeting held on 18th May 2026; and
3. Consider the planning application and determine whether the Town Council wishes to submit any comments or observations to Durham County Council as Local Planning Authority.

Appendix 1: Implications

Area	Implication
Finance:	No direct implications.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	No direct implications.
Equality & Diversity:	No direct implications.
Crime & Disorder:	No direct implications.
Consultation:	No direct implications.
Procurement:	No direct implications.
Legal:	Durham County Council is the Local Planning Authority responsible for determining the planning application. The Town Council's consideration of the planning consultation is separate from its role as landowner. Any comments submitted should, therefore, relate to relevant material planning considerations.
Data Protection:	No direct implications.