



2nd September 2026

Dear Councillor,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of **Peterlee Town Council** on
Monday 7th 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. Monthly Updates for Durham County Councillors

To receive an update from Durham County Councillors on relevant issues affecting Peterlee

5. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the following meeting:-

- a. Council Meeting held on 17 August 2026 (Copy attached)

6. Peterlee Community Fund

To consider applications received from:

- a) East Durham FC
- b) Kinship
- c) Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues

7. Lowhills Road Football Tournament

Verbal report from the Town Clerk

8. 2026/27 National Pay Award Local Government Employees

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

9. 2026/27 Financial Year First Quarter Budget Summary Report

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

10. Free Function Friday

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

11. 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.

12. Rent Review

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

13. Club Development, Member Site Visit and Proposed Works

Report of the Town Clerk (Attached)

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Town Council** meeting held on **Monday 17 August 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, D. Hawley, A. Laing, D. Meadows, I. Pygall, H Pygall, S. Simpson, M. Sanderson and D. Wright.

Also Ian Hall (Chief Officer and Town Clerk) and Louise Hudson (Democratic Services Assistant)

C.52/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M-L Franklin, S Franklin, K. Hawley, D. Howarth, R. Moore.

RESOLVED: That the apologies be noted.

C.53/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared

C.54/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3 members of the public were in attendance to observe only.

C.55/26 MINUTES

- a. Council Meeting held on 20th July 2026

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

C.56/26 PETERLEE COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to present two 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.

Peterlee Town Bowling Club

The following Eden Hill Wards Councillors supported the initiative:

Councillor M Cartwright	£450
Councillor M Sanderson	£450

Total – £900

Peterlee Town FC

The following Acre Rigg Wards Councillors supported the initiative:

Councillor P Brown	£200
Councillor D Burrell	£200
Councillor I Pygall	£200
Councillor S Simpson	£200
Councillor D Wright	£200

Total – £1,000

RESOLVED:

1. That Peterlee Town Bowling Club receive £900 for their initiative through the Peterlee Community Fund.
2. That Peterlee Town FC receive £1,000 for their initiative through the Peterlee Community Fund.

C.57/26 FREE FUNCTION FRIDAY TRIAL PAVILION FUNCTION ROOM HIRE

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Pavilion Sports & Community Manager, previously circulated, to seek Members' consideration of a proposal to introduce a three-month trial offering free room hire for selected private functions at the Pavilion under the initiative "Free Function Friday."

Member D Hawley proposed offering free hire not just on Friday's, but also Saturday's and Sunday's. Member H Pygall seconded the motion and a vote was taken:

For: 12
Against: 1

RESOLVED:

1. That a three-month trial be approved on Friday's, Saturday's and Sunday's, whereby room hire charges are waived for selected private functions held at the Pavilion.
2. That a further report be brought to a future Council Meeting, following the conclusion of the trial, setting out the financial performance, usage levels and any recommendations for the future continuation of the scheme.

**C.58/26 EDEN LANE PARK FEEDBACK FROM THE MOVING TOGETHER
PETERLEE ENGAGEMENT EXERCISE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Pavilion Sports & Community Manager, which had previously been circulated, to advise Members of the findings from Durham County Council's *Moving Together Peterlee* engagement exercise, which explored the experiences of women and girls using Eden Lane Park. The report provides an overview of the feedback received and highlights areas that may assist Members when considering future investment and improvements within the park.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of this report be noted.

**C.59/26 PROPOSAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SPLASH PARK AT
WOODHOUSE PARK**

Consideration was given to a report of the Neighbourhood Services Manager, which had previously been circulated, to seek Members' approval in principle to explore the development of a splash park within Woodhouse Park.

The report also seeks approval to commission a detailed feasibility study, undertake public consultation and investigate external funding opportunities before any final decision is made regarding the project

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposal to explore the development of a splash park within Woodhouse Park, be approved.
2. That it supports, in principle, the development of a splash park as part of the future enhancement of Woodhouse Park.
3. That approval be given for Officers to commission a detailed feasibility study, including concept designs, technical investigations and estimated project costs.
4. That Officers should undertake public consultation with residents and key stakeholders as part of the feasibility process.
5. That Officers should explore appropriate external funding opportunities to support the potential delivery of the project.
6. That a further report, detailing the findings of the feasibility study, funding opportunities and the full financial implication, be brought to a future Council Meeting before any decision is made regarding the progression of the project.

C.60/26 LOWHILLS ROAD CAR PARK RESURFACING QUOTATIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to present Members with the quotations received for the resurfacing of the Lowhills Road Car Park, following the Council's resolution on 6th July 2026 to obtain competitive quotations and report back before any works are commissioned.

RESOLVED:

1. That the three quotations received for the resurfacing of the Lowhills Road Car Park, be noted.
2. That, in principle, Company A, Youll Construction Ltd be awarded the contract for the resurfacing of the Lowhills Road Car Park, upon completion of legal advice regarding the maintenance covenant and, where appropriate, seek to recover any contribution due towards the cost of the resurfacing works from the adjoining landowner.
3. That the allocation of the necessary funding from the Council's General Reserve (or appropriate earmarked reserve) to meet the cost of the resurfacing works, subject to the final contract value, be approved
4. That the Chief Officer/Town Clerk will continue to pursue legal advice regarding the maintenance covenant and, where appropriate, seek to recover any contribution due towards the cost of the resurfacing works from the adjoining landowner, be noted.
5. That the Chief Officer & Town Clerk be authorised to finalise the necessary contractual arrangements and instruct the successful contractor in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

C.61/26 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS FOR COUNCILLORS UNDERTAKING VOLUNTARY ROLES

Detailed consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had previously been circulated, to consider whether Peterlee Town Council Councillors should introduce a process for assessing the need for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for Members who undertake voluntary roles on behalf of the Council, or organisations associated with the Council, where those roles may involve working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Member D Burrell advised he was currently in the process of completing an Enhanced DBS check for a voluntary role and asked if this could be used. The Town Clerk confirmed that each DBS check is relevant to its role and so a new DBS check would be needed for when representing Peterlee Town Council.

RESOLVED:

1. That approval be given to the introduction of a process, whereby any Councillor undertaking a voluntary role on behalf of Peterlee Town Council, Hill Rigg House or any other organisation supported by the Council, is assessed against the statutory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) eligibility criteria.
2. That where a role is found to be eligible under the relevant legislation, the appropriate level of DBS check may be obtained before the Councillor undertakes those duties.
3. That approval be given to the Chief Officer to prepare a DBS and Safeguarding Procedure for future consideration, setting out a consistent and legally compliant approach to safeguarding and DBS eligibility for Councillors undertaking voluntary roles.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 7th September 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer & Town Clerk

Subject: **Peterlee Community Grant Applications**

Report Purpose: To present two applications received under the Peterlee Community Grant Scheme and to invite Acre Rigg Ward Members to consider whether they wish to support the applications from their individual grant allocations.

The report also provides Members with an update on the amount already committed from each Acre Rigg Ward Member's allocation and the balance remaining.

Background: At its meeting held on 15th June 2026, the Council resolved to reintroduce the former Neighbourhood Engagement Project Grant Scheme under the new title of the Peterlee Community Grant.

Members also agreed to increase the annual budget to £22,000, providing each elected Member with an individual allocation of £1,000 to support constituted community groups and organisations that provide benefit to the residents of Peterlee. The existing eligibility criteria, application process, monitoring arrangements and publicity requirements remain in place.

The purpose of the scheme is to enable local Members to support projects within their wards that enhance community life, encourage participation, improve local facilities and provide lasting benefits to residents.

At the Council meeting held on 17th August 2026, Acre Rigg Ward Members agreed to support an application from Peterlee Town FC for £1,000. Each of the five Acre Rigg Ward Members contributed £200 from their individual allocation towards the award.

The current position is therefore:

Acre Rigg Ward Member	Original Allocation	Already Allocated	Remaining
Cllr Pauline Brown	£1,000	£200	£800
Cllr Dennis Burrell	£1,000	£200	£800
Cllr Irene Pygall	£1,000	£200	£800
Cllr Sheila Simpson	£1,000	£200	£800
Cllr Diane Wright	£1,000	£200	£800
Total	£5,000	£1,000	£4,000

Details:**Application 1 - East Durham FC Winter Jackets**

An application has been received from East Durham FC requesting £910 towards the purchase of winter jackets.

The total cost of the project is £910 and the applicant has advised that no match funding is being raised.

The application explains that the football team is about more than simply playing football and seeks to provide young people with opportunities to improve their physical fitness, mental wellbeing, confidence and social development.

The applicant considers that being part of a football team provides children with regular exercise while also allowing them to make friends, develop teamwork and communication skills and feel part of a team.

The application also highlights the benefits of providing young people with a safe, structured and positive activity outside of school and helping to reduce the financial pressures associated with participation in grassroots football.

The applicant has agreed to provide Peterlee Town Council with a written report within six months of receiving any funding explaining how the grant has been used.

Amount requested: £910

Acre Rigg Ward Members Contribution

Cllr Pauline Brown	£
Cllr Dennis Burrell	£
Cllr Irene Pygall	£
Cllr Sheila Simpson	£
Cllr Diane Wright	£

Total Grant Awarded: £ _____

Application 2 - Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues New Home Kit

An application has also been received from Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues requesting £700 towards the purchase of a new home playing kit.

The total cost of the project is £850, with the team providing £150 in match funding, leaving £700 to be met through the requested Community Grant.

The application advises that 21 local children will benefit from the project and that approximately five volunteer hours per week across three days are provided in support of the team.

The team currently plays its matches and undertakes training at Lowhills Road in Peterlee. The applicant explains that this provides local children with the opportunity to participate in the sport they enjoy within Peterlee.

The funding would enable the team to purchase a new home kit to complement its existing away kit, which has been sponsored by Smyths Toy Superstore.

Amount requested: £700

At the time of preparing this report, the required supporting information for this application has not been fully received. It is, therefore, proposed that Members consider whether they wish to approve the application in principle, subject to the outstanding supporting information being received and being satisfactory in accordance with the requirements of the Peterlee Community Grant Scheme.

No grant payment would be released until the Chief Officer & Town Clerk is satisfied that the required supporting information has been provided and the application meets the requirements of the scheme.

Acre Rigg Ward Members Contribution

Cllr Pauline Brown	£
Cllr Dennis Burrell	£
Cllr Irene Pygall	£
Cllr Sheila Simpson	£
Cllr Diane Wright	£

Total Grant Awarded: £_____

If both applications were supported in full, the total amount awarded would be £1,610, leaving £2,390 collectively available within the Acre Rigg Ward Members' allocations for the remainder of the financial year.

Recommendation: Members are requested to consider the applications detailed within the report and agree whether they wish to support them from their individual Peterlee Community Grant allocations.

The Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues application to be supported in principle, subject to the required supporting information being received and being satisfactory.

Appendix 1: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	Each Acre Rigg Ward Member has an annual Peterlee Community Grant allocation of £1,000. Following the contribution of £200 from each Member towards Peterlee Town FC on 17 August 2026, each Member currently has £800 remaining. The total remaining Acre Rigg allocation is therefore £4,000. If both applications contained within this report are supported in full, £1,610 would be committed, leaving £2,390 collectively available.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	There is a risk of perceived inconsistency or inequity if grant applications are not considered in accordance with the agreed Peterlee Community Grant Scheme. Maintaining a transparent decision-making process and accurate records will mitigate this risk. No payment in respect of the Peterlee Town U15 Evo Blues application will be made until the required supporting information has been received and verified.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	Both applications seek to support grassroots sporting activities involving local young people and promote participation, health, wellbeing and community involvement. Funding decisions should continue to be made fairly and consistently in accordance with the approved grant criteria.
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	Successful applicants will be notified of the Council's decision and grant awards will be publicised in accordance with the Peterlee Community Grant Scheme.
Procurement:	No direct implications
Legal:	The Council has powers to award grants where expenditure benefits the area or its inhabitants, subject to the appropriate statutory powers.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 7th September 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer & Town Clerk

Subject: **2026/27 National Pay Award Local Government Employees**

Report Purpose: Members are advised that agreement has 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.

Details: The agreement provides for an increase of 3.30% on NJC pay rates, effective from 1st April 2026 and covering the period 1 April 2026 to 31st March 2027.

The revised national pay spine has been issued as part of the national agreement.

The agreement also provides for a 3.30% increase to locally determined pay points above the maximum of the NJC pay spine but graded below Deputy Chief Officer, where applicable.

The relevant national allowances have also been increased by 3.30%.

Implementation: The national agreement encourages employers to implement the pay award as swiftly as possible.

Officers have therefore been instructed to arrange for the revised pay rates to be implemented for applicable Council employees at the earliest available opportunity.

Eligible employees will also receive the appropriate backdated pay from 1st April 2026.

The Council's payroll records and salary scales will be updated accordingly.

A separate national agreement has also been reached by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers/Executives of Local Authorities.

This agreement also provides for a 3.30% increase to individual basic salaries, effective from 1st April 2026.

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

- Note the nationally agreed 3.30% pay award for 2026/27, effective from 1 April 2026;
- Note 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; and
- Note that arrangements are being made to implement the revised rates and associated back pay for eligible employees as soon as practicable.

Appendix 1: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	The nationally agreed pay award is 3.30% with effect from 1st April 2026. During the Council's 2026/27 budget-setting process, provision was made for a 4% increase in employee pay costs. The agreed increase is therefore within the provision already included in the approved budget. The revised salaries and associated back pay from 1st April 2026 can therefore be met from existing staffing budgets. The impact of the award, including associated employer National Insurance and pension contributions, will continue to be monitored through the Council's normal budget monitoring arrangements.
Staffing:	The revised NJC pay rates will apply to eligible employees with effect from 1st April 2026. Officers are arranging for the revised rates and associated back pay to be processed through payroll as soon as practicable.
Risk:	There is a low financial risk associated with implementation as the Council has already budgeted for a 4% pay increase, compared with the nationally agreed award of 3.30%. Prompt implementation will also reduce the risk of unnecessary delays in making payments due to employees.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	No direct implications
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	The pay award has been agreed nationally through the appropriate NJC collective bargaining arrangements. Employees will be informed of the agreed increase and arrangements for implementation and back pay.
Procurement:	No direct implications

Legal:

The pay award has been agreed nationally through the National Joint Council for Local Government Services and forms part of the nationally agreed terms and conditions applicable to relevant employees.

The Council should implement the revised pay rates in accordance with the national agreement.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 7th September 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer & Town Clerk

Subject: **2026/27 financial year first quarter budget summary report**

Report Purpose: 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.

Background: This budget report is intended to satisfy the requirement of s5.8 of the Council's Financial Regulations to provide Council with a report on income and expenditure against the Council's budget heads on a quarterly basis.

The working process that enables this report is as follows:

- End of Quarter budget report produced and circulated to Budget holders by Finance Team;
- Variance report produced and discussed with each budget holder;
- Report to Council for discussion and approval.

This report represents the Council's position at the end of the first quarter of the 2026/27 Financial Year, i.e. as at 30th June 2026.

Q1 Summary: The 2026/27 quarter 1 overall budget outturn per budget head is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

Key issues to bring to Members attention include:

Energy costs continue to remain a significant operational expenditure for the Council; however, quarter 1 expenditure has reduced again compared with the previous financial year. A comparison of quarter 1 utility expenditure is provided below:

Financial Year	Electricity	Gas	Total
2024/25	£29,077	£6,826	£35,903
2025/26	£16,408	£4,882	£21,290
2026/27	£14,424	£3,181	£17,605

The reduction in utility expenditure has continued into 2026/27. Quarter 1 electricity and gas expenditure totals £17,605, a reduction of £3,685 compared with the same period in 2025/26.

The Pavilion has continued to operate broadly within its phased budget during the first quarter. Net expenditure before transfers from earmarked reserves was £105,885 against a phased budget of £113,912. Income of £46,322 was £4,514 above the phased income budget, with hire income and activity income performing particularly well. There remain individual expenditure pressures, including repairs and decoration, casual bar wages and activities/events expenditure.

Neighbourhood Services and open-space budgets remain generally below the phased budget at quarter 1. Sport & Leisure net expenditure was £39,862 against a phased budget of £50,145, while Parks General net expenditure was £57,910 against a phased budget of £65,583. As in previous years, expenditure is expected to increase through quarters 2 and 3 in line with seasonal grounds maintenance activity.

The Council's overall operational financial position at quarter 1 remains stable. The detailed report records total expenditure of £572,686 against a phased budget of £767,127. The precept of £1,070,895 was received during quarter 1 and materially affects the headline income position. Earmarked reserve movements are shown separately in the detailed financial report.

Q1 variances: A number of individual budget heads have variances in excess of the 'material' 15% limit prescribed in the Financial Regulations. Summary explanations for these material variances are provided in Appendix 2 to this report.

Recommendation: Members are recommended to note the content of this report.

Appendix 1: 2026/27 quarter 1 variance table by budget heads

N.B. Members' attention is drawn in particular to columns F and H which provide the pro rata (i.e. quarter 1 position) variances.

* The detailed phased report records the precept when received but does not show the corresponding annual/phased income budget against cost centre 105. This cost centre is therefore excluded from the percentage variance assessment.

A: Code	B: Budget Head	C: 2026/27 Budget	D: Q1 budget	E: Q1 Actual	F: Q1 Variance	G: % of Budget	H: pro rata variance %
101	Central & Civic HQ Costs	£713,151	£242,418	£214,834	£27,584	30%	11%
102	Democratic Costs	£31,500	£9,000	£7,627	£1,373	24%	15%
103	Corporate Management	£26,391	£6,398	£6,679	£-281	25%	-4%
105	Other Costs and Income	£500*	£125*	£-1,070,895	n/a	n/a	n/a
221	The Pavilion Sports & Community Centre	£468,261	£113,912	£105,885	£8,027	23%	7%
240	Sport & Leisure (pitches & equipment, etc)	£197,242	£50,145	£39,862	£10,283	20%	21%
241	Hill Rigg House	£32,282	£11,662	£8,800	£2,862	27%	25%
242	Lowhills Road Bowling Club	£-4,445	£-1,111	£-2,223	£1,112	50%	100%
261	Eden Lane Community Facility	£-7,001	£-7,000	£-6,988	£-12	100%	0%
262	Eden Lane Depot	£41,978	£13,151	£12,413	£738	30%	6%
263	Eden Lane Bowling Club	£1,707	£427	£1,578	£-1,151	92%	-270%
280	Woodhouse Park	£98,075	£26,629	£22,713	£3,916	23%	15%
290	Sports Development	£0	£0	£0	£0	n/a	n/a
301	Parks General	£262,434	£65,583	£57,910	£7,673	22%	12%
325	Cemetery & Burials	£53,035	£13,260	£13,976	£-716	26%	-5%
350	Allotments	£16,701	£1,133	£-1,694	£2,827	-10%	250%
410	Town Activities	£8,000	£1,250	£630	£620	8%	50%
430	Town Events	£32,580	£6,700	£4,932	£1,768	15%	26%
901	Capital Projects	£33,000	£300	£250	£50	1%	17%

Appendix 2: material (>15%) variances for quarter 1 by budget head

NB: positive variances indicate a favourable position against the phased budget (lower net expenditure or higher net income); negative variances indicate an adverse position.

A: Code	B: Budget Head	G: pro rata variance %	H: variance £	Explanation
102	Democratic Costs	15%	£1,373	Councillor training expenditure is ahead of the phased budget at quarter 1, partly offset by lower participation allowance expenditure.
240	Sport & Leisure	21%	£10,283	Lower than phased staffing expenditure across pitches and open spaces, together with £2,400 Pitch Power funding received in quarter 1.
241	Hill Rigg House	25%	£2,862	Electricity expenditure is significantly below the phased budget, partly offset by repairs and decoration and other premises costs.
242	Lowhills Road Bowling Club	100%	£1,112	Hire income received in quarter 1 is higher than the phased income budget.
263	Eden Lane Bowling Club	-270%	-£1,151	Repairs and decoration expenditure of £1,339 is significantly ahead of the phased quarter 1 budget.
350	Allotments	250%	£2,827	Annual allotment rents have largely been received in quarter 1 while expenditure remains below the phased budget.
410	Town Activities	50%	£620	Concessionary use expenditure is below the phased budget and other annual activities have not yet taken place.
430	Town Events	26%	£1,768	Summer event income of £2,607 has been received in quarter 1, more than offsetting expenditure above the phased budget.
901	Capital Projects	17%	£50	Only limited consultant expenditure has been incurred against the phased quarter 1 budget at this stage of the year.

Appendix 3: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	This report provides Members with the Council's financial position at the end of quarter 1 of the 2026/27 financial year. Overall expenditure remains within the phased budget at this stage of the year. Individual budget variances will continue to be monitored by Officers and reported to Members through the Council's quarterly budget monitoring arrangements.
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	Regular budget monitoring reduces the risk of significant overspends or income shortfalls remaining unidentified. Material variances will continue to be reviewed with budget holders so that any emerging financial pressures can be identified and managed at an early stage.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	No direct implications
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	This report forms part of the Council's regular and transparent financial reporting arrangements. Budget information is reviewed with relevant budget holders and reported to Council on a quarterly basis.
Procurement:	No direct implications
Legal:	The quarterly budget monitoring process supports the Council's compliance with its Financial Regulations and its responsibilities for proper financial administration and governance.

Report to: Peterlee Town Council:

Date: 7th September 2026

Report of: Ian Hall, Chief Officer/Town Clerk

Subject: **Free Function Friday, Saturday and Sunday Trial Existing Bookings**

Report Purpose: 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.

Background: At the Council meeting held on 17th August 2026, Members considered a proposal to introduce a three-month "Free Function Friday" trial at the Pavilion.

The original proposal was specifically intended to increase bookings on Fridays, which had been identified as a quieter trading day.

During consideration of the report, Members proposed extending the offer to Saturdays and Sundays.

Council subsequently resolved that a three-month trial be approved on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, whereby room hire charges would be waived for selected private functions held at the Pavilion.

Detail: At the time the decision was made, the Pavilion already had a number of confirmed Friday, Saturday and Sunday function bookings which fall within the three-month trial period.

These customers booked their functions before the Council introduced the free hire offer and had agreed to pay the normal room hire charge.

The Council's resolution did not specifically state whether the free hire arrangement should apply retrospectively to these existing bookings.

There is therefore the possibility that customers with existing bookings may request a refund when they become aware that new customers booking qualifying functions during the same three-month period are receiving free room hire.

Members are therefore asked to clarify how these existing bookings should be treated to ensure that Pavilion staff can apply a clear and consistent approach.

If the Council agrees that the free hire offer applies retrospectively to all qualifying bookings taking place during the three-month trial period, the room hire charges already paid or due from those customers would need to be refunded or waived.

The total potential value of refunds/waived charges for existing bookings during the three-month trial period is £1,260.

If Members determine that the offer applies only to bookings made following the Council's decision on 17th August 2026, no refunds would be made and existing bookings would remain subject to the charges agreed at the time of booking.

Option 1 – Existing bookings remain at the agreed price

The free hire promotion would apply only to qualifying bookings made following the Council's decision on 17 August 2026.

Customers who had already booked would continue to pay the room hire charge agreed when their booking was made.

This would protect income already secured by the Council and would treat the scheme as a promotional incentive designed to generate new bookings.

Option 2 – Refund existing bookings

The free hire arrangement would apply to all qualifying functions taking place during the three-month trial period, regardless of when the booking was originally made.

Customers who have already paid the room hire charge would receive a refund, and any outstanding room hire charges for qualifying existing bookings would be waived.

This would ensure that customers holding qualifying functions during the same trial period receive the same free room hire offer.

Recommendation: Members are requested to consider whether customers with existing bookings that fall within the three-month Free Function Friday, Saturday and Sunday trial period should receive a refund of their room hire charge.

Appendix 1: Implications

<u>Area</u>	<u>Implication</u>
Finance:	If Members agree to refund existing bookings that fall within the three-month trial period, the Council would lose the room hire income already received or due from those bookings. The total financial impact would be £1,260
Staffing:	No direct implications.
Risk:	There is a risk of customer dissatisfaction if customers with existing bookings are charged for room hire while other customers receive free hire for functions taking place during the same trial period. Members are therefore asked to agree a clear and consistent approach.
Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration:	No direct implications
Crime and Disorder:	No direct implications
Consultation & Communication:	No direct implications
Procurement:	No direct implications
Legal:	No direct implications