



Ashington Town Council
Town Hall, 65 Station Road
Ashington, Northumberland
NE63 8RU

15th May 2026

To All members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Annual Meeting of the Council**, to be held in **THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 65 STATION ROAD, NE63 8RU, on Tuesday 26th May 2026 at 6:00pm.**

The agenda for the meeting is set out below, along with associated papers. If you have any questions about any of the items on the agenda, please contact the office.

The meeting is open to the press and public. As per the agenda and our standing orders, any resident wishing to speak should contact us prior to the meeting (see item 6).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Eden'.

Sarah Eden
Executive Office/RFO

AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF BUSINESS CHAIR

Pursuant to section 15 (2) of the Local Government Act 1972, to receive nominations for Chair of Ashington Town Council and in the event of more than one Councillor being proposed and seconded, to take a vote and elect the Councillor with the majority (enc)¹

2. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

To sign and deliver a form that confirms the elected Chair's declaration of acceptance of office, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972, s83 (4).

Please note that the Chair takes up the position immediately following acceptance of office.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (DOI)

To receive any declarations of interest.

Please note it is a Cllrs own responsibility to ensure their DOI is kept up to date.

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5. DISPENSATIONS

To receive and approve any dispensations in respect of Declarations of Interest given.

Please note that receiving a dispensation, which is granted by the meeting, allows you to stay in the room and/or speak on any matter for which you have declared an interest.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair to receive any items put forward by members of the public and to put questions to or draw relevant matters to the attention of the Council. This is for a period of 15 minutes overall and is limited to 3 minutes per person.

7. DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS FULL COUNCIL MEETING

To receive and agree as a true record, the minutes of the last Full Council meeting held on 31st March 2026, noting that the draft was shared online in April (enc)ⁱⁱ

Please note that only those Cllrs who were present at the meeting can approve the minutes as a true record.

8. DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

To receive (for information), the minutes of the last Personnel Committee meeting held on 21st April 2026 (enc)ⁱⁱⁱ

9. ELECTION OF BUSINESS VICE-CHAIR

To receive nominations for Business Vice-Chair of Ashington Town Council and in the event of more than one Councillor being proposed and seconded to take a vote and elect the Councillor with the majority (see enc i)

10. ELECTION OF CIVIC HEAD OF ASHINGTON

To receive nominations for the position of Civic Head of Ashington and in the event of more than one Councillor being proposed and seconded to take a vote and elect the Councillor with the majority (see enc i)

11. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CIVIC HEAD OF ASHINGTON

To receive nominations for the position of Deputy Civic Head of Ashington and in the event of more than one Councillor being proposed and seconded to take a vote and elect the Councillor with the majority (see enc i)

12. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

Pursuant to section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, to confirm that Sarah Eden shall be re-appointed as the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) (enc)^{iv}

13. STANDING ORDERS

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 42, to agree to adopt the NALC Model Standing Orders (Updated 2025) (enc)^v

14. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI2015/234), to agree to adopt the NALC Model Financial Regulations with local changes pursuant to how we operate financial affairs (updated 2025) (enc)^{vi}

15. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

In accordance with The Localism Act 2011, and as decreed eligible by the Parish Council (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 (SI 2012/965), to agree to adopt the General Power of Competence (enc)^{vii}

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16. STANDING COMMITTEES

a) Finance and General Services Committee (FGS)

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the Finance and General Services Committee (enc)^{viii}

In view of the proposed change to the Terms of Reference of the Personnel Committee, to agree to elect the Chair of the FGS Committee.

b) Personnel Committee

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the Personnel Committee, including membership and to elect members (enc)^{ix}

To agree to elect three members to sit outside of the Personnel Committee, as the **Grievance and Disciplinary Panel**, in accordance with the Personnel Committee terms of reference, associated policies, and best practice

To agree to elect three members to sit outside of the Personnel Committee, as the **Appeals Panel**, in accordance with the Personnel Committee terms of reference, associated policies, and best practice.

c) Climate Change and Environment Committee

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the Climate Change and Environment Committee (enc)^x

d) Partnership Board

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the Partnership Board, including members (enc)^{xi}

e) Youth Advisory Committee

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the Youth Advisory Committee, including members (enc)^{xii}

f) Allotment Liaison Group

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the Allotment Liaison Group, including members (enc)^{xiii}

g) CCTV Group

To receive, consider, and agree the terms of reference of the CCTV Group, including members (enc)^{xiv}

17. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

a) Assets Register Policy

To agree to adopt the Assets Register Policy and Capitalisation threshold, which sets out the Council's arrangements for including assets on the Assets Register in line with the requirements of the Practitioners Guide 2026 (enc)^{xv}

b) Building Security And Visitor Protocol

To agree to adopt the Building Security and Visitor Protocol, which sets out the Council's arrangements for managing access to Council premises and ensuring the safety of staff, councillors and visitors, updated to include the Crime and Policing Act 2026 (previously adopted March 2026) (enc)^{xvi}

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c) CCTV Policy

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and updated to include The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 to agree to adopt the updated CCTV Policy (enc)^{xvii}

d) Complaints Procedure

To agree to adopt the Complaints Procedure of the Council (previously adopted May 2025), updated to include The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (enc)^{xviii}

e) Data Protection Policy

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and updated to include The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 to agree to adopt the updated Data Protection Policy (enc)^{xix}

f) Disciplinary Procedure

To agree to adopt the updated Disciplinary Procedure (previously adopted May 2025) updated to include the Employment Rights Act 2025 (enc)^{xx}

g) Employee Code of Conduct

To agree to adopt the Employee Code of Conduct (previously adopted May 2025) updated to reflect the Employment Rights Act 2025 and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 (enc)^{xxi}

h) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and updated to include the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 (in force 26 October 2024) and the Employment Rights Act 2025, to agree to adopt the updated Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy (previously adopted May 2025) (enc)^{xxii}

i) Freedom of Information Policy

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and updated in line with the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, to agree to adopt the updated FOI Policy (enc)^{xxiii}

j) Grievance Procedure

To agree to adopt the updated Grievance Procedure (previously adopted March 2026), updated to include the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 — proactive duty to prevent sexual harassment, and the Employment Rights Act 2025 (enc)^{xxiv}

k) Health and Safety Policy

To agree to adopt the Health and Safety Policy (previously adopted May 2025) updated to include the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 — proactive duty to prevent sexual harassment, and the Employment Rights Act 2025 (enc)^{xxv}

l) IT Policy

In accordance with paragraph 1.54 of the Practitioners' Guide 2025 and the requirements of Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance Statement, to agree to adopt the Ashington Town Council IT Policy (enc)^{xxvi}

m) Lone Working Policy

To agree to adopt the Lone Working Policy, which sets out the Council's arrangements to protect employees who work alone or without close supervision, in accordance with its duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, updated to include the Employment Rights Act 2025, Worker Protection Act 2023 (third-party harassment), Crime and Policing Act 2026, Online Safety Act 2023 (previously adopted March 2026) (enc)^{xxvii}

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n) Model Councillor Officer Protocol

To agree to adopt the Model NALC/SLCC Councillor Officer Protocol (previously adopted January 2025) (enc)^{xxviii}

o) Model LGA Councillor Code of Conduct

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, 28 (12), to agree to adopt a Code of Conduct for Ashington Town Council (previously adopted May 2025) (enc)^{xxix}

p) Model Publication Scheme

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, to agree to adopt the Model Publication Scheme (previously adopted May 2025) (enc)^{xxx}

q) Pension and Flexible Retirement Policy

In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014, to agree to adopt a Pension and Flexible Retirement Policy (previously adopted January 2025) (enc)^{xxxi}

r) Pension Discretions Policy

In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended), Regulation 60, which requires administering and scheme employer bodies to formulate and publish a written statement of the policy they will follow in relation to the exercise of their discretionary functions, to agree to adopt a Pension Discretions Policy (previously adopted January 2025) (enc)^{xxxii}

s) Press and Media Policy

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Communications Strategy, and updated to reflect 'quotation protocol,' to agree to adopt the updated Press and Media Policy (previously adopted May 2025) (enc)^{xxxiii}

t) Reserves Policy

To agree to adopt the Reserves Policy (previously adopted May 2025) (enc)^{xxxiv}

u) Safeguarding Policy

To agree to adopt the updated Safeguarding Policy (previously adopted May 2025), updated to include clarification of the policy's scope in relation to activities carried out by Councillors and Officers outside their Council role (enc)^{xxxv}

v) Sickness and Leave Policy

In accordance with the Employment Rights Act 2025, to agree to adopt a Sickness and Leave Policy (enc)^{xxxvi}

w) Social Media and Email Policy

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Data Protection Act 2018, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and new requirements under Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018, to agree to adopt the updated Social Media and Email Policy (previously adopted May 2025) (enc)^{xxxvii}

x) Training Costs Reimbursement Policy

To agree to adopt the Training Costs Reimbursement Policy, which sets out the Council's approach to recovering training costs where an employee leaves within a specified period (previously adopted March 2026) (enc)^{xxxviii}

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y) Vexatious, Persistent, Aggressive and Abusive Complaints Policy

To agree to adopt the Vexatious, etc. Complaints Policy of the Council, updated to include the Online Safety Act 2023, Crime and Policing Act 2026, and The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (previously adopted July 2025) (enc)^{xxxix}

z) Whistleblowing Policy

To agree to adopt the Model NALC Whistleblowing Policy, updated in line with the Employment Rights Act 2025 (enc)^{xl}

aa) Working from Home Policy

To agree to adopt the updated Working from Home Policy (previously adopted May 2024) (enc)^{xli}

18. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

a) Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) (includes Town & Parish Liaison Working Group)

To agree the representative on the NALC County Committee of Northumberland (enc)^{xlii}

The Northumberland Association of Local Councils is an organisation which represents the interests of parish, town, and community councils, whilst offering specialist training, advice, and other support to its members. The County Committee of Northumberland meet quarterly on a Saturday morning.

All Councillors are encouraged to create their own sign-in to access the information on the NALC Website.

19. ASHINGTON TOWN FORUM

To agree the representatives (4) on the Ashington Town Forum (enc)^{xliii}

The Forum aims to bring together strategic partners in Ashington to ensure a cohesive approach to the development, prosperity and community of the town, to strive for a thriving retail, business, living, tourist and evening economy, and to respect and uphold the town's history and heritage.

20. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Combined Full Council Meeting (AGAR) and FGS Committee – Tuesday 23rd June 2026, 6:00pm, Council Chamber.

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ENCLOSED

Please note that all bold items are included on the Council's website in Policies, these can be accessed by clicking on the link below.

[ATC Website/The Council/Policies](#)

- i Roles at Ashington Town Council
- ii Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting, 25th March 2026
- iii Draft Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting, 21st April 2026
- iv Note about RFO and Proper Officer Roles
- v **NALC Model Standing Orders (updated in 2025)**
- vi **NALC Model Financial Regulations (updated 2025)**
- vii Clerk's Note – General Power of Competence
- viii **Terms of Reference of the Finance and General Services Committee**
- ix **Terms of Reference of the Personnel Committee**
- x **Terms of Reference of the Climate Change Committee**
- xi **Terms of Reference Partnership Board**
- xii **Terms of Reference Youth Advisory Committee**
- xiii **Terms of Reference Allotment Liaison Group**
- xiv **Terms of Reference CCTV Liaison Group**
- xv **Assets Register Policy**
- xvi **Building Security and Visitor Protocol**
- xvii **CCTV Policy**
- xviii **Complaints Procedure**
- xix **Data Protection Policy**
- xx **Disciplinary Procedure**
- xxi **Employee Code of Conduct**
- xxii **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy**
- xxiii **FOI Policy**
- xxiv **Grievance Procedure**
- xxv **Health & Safety Policy**
- xxvi **IT Policy**
- xxvii **Lone Working Policy**
- xxviii **Model Councillor Officer Protocol**
- xxix **Code of Conduct**
- xxx **Model Publication Scheme**
- xxxi **Pension and Flexible Retirement Policy**
- xxxii **Pension Discretions Policy**
- xxxiii **Press and Media Policy**
- xxxiv **Reserves Policy**
- xxxv **Safeguarding Policy**
- xxxvi **Sickness and Leave Policy**
- xxxvii **Social Media and Email Policy**
- xxxviii **Training Costs Reimbursement Policy**
- xxxix **Vexatious, Persistent, Aggressive and Abusive Complaints Policy**
- xl **Whistleblowing Policy**
- xli **Working from Home Policy**
- xliv **NALC and Northumberland ALC**
- xlvi **Terms of Reference Ashington Town Forum (NCC)**

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