

## **FC AGENDA 5, ENC i)**

### Questions for Ashington Town Council Annual Meeting 26 May 2026

#### 1. re Ashington Town Forum ToR

It is hard to disagree with the Purpose of the Forum.

Under methods is states

“ look for opportunities to engage with **other stakeholders** in the town....

Constructive relationship with **property owners**

Yet there are only Strategic Business and no representatives of the many smaller businesses and retailers in the town centre and around the whole town. These strategic businesses are important and will play a big part in major developments.

Does the council think it would be useful to have some formal representation of the smaller businesses too?

Similarly on Education the new college and EPNE are a vital part of education and training, but there are more children in the schools form 5 to 18 than the college.

Shouldn't the school partnerships be involved too?

There is no mention of the health sector, from GPs to the District hospital. This may be covered elsewhere but I believe it needs consideration. What does the Town Council think of this suggestion?

Confidentiality.

While I agree there are some commercially sensitive matters does the council think it would be better for this section to read;

“ All participants are expected to respect the commercially sensitive nature of **some** developments and to maintain the confidentiality of **such** information disclosed within the meeting”

Does the council think that the present wording is too restrictive for a forum aimed to bring a cohesive approach to the development, prosperity and community of the town?

The mantra should be tell as much as possible to as many people as possible as early in the design /planning process as possible.

#### 2. Size of council workforce.

The running costs of the council are a major part of the budget, and hence precept. I note the staff numbers are increasing. Has the council been able to identify any waste that has been eliminated as some councillors gave the impression when seeking election last year that there could be savings?

Ashington Resident

**[REDACTED]**