

AGENDA 5, Enc ii) OFFICERS UPDATE – 23rd June 2026

Neighbourhood Services

We have welcomed Matthew to the team and he is working with Ryan on horticulture and assets.

The Executive Officer has created a schedule for our assets and horticulture than defines the jobs expected to be carried out across the week, depending on high or low season. This is scheduled work and there is some time available for reactionary work. This coincides with the introduction of the new asset platform CiviCLY that all staff have been introduced to and which is working well and will make managing our assets much more efficient.

Prior to horticultural assets being worked through on the weekly high-season visit more substantial work has been carried out on each. This includes the Memorial Garden, Doves Corner, St. John's Workers Memorial, the Mining Wheel, Jack Charlton Statue, and the four Gateways. Station Road beds are underway as we speak. It is expected that by w/c 15th June we will move to the routine schedule.

We have suffered vandalism at both Alexandra Road Play Area and People's Park Play area recently. People's Park is a concern and damage is currently being assessed, as well as the CCTV footage available to try and ascertain who is responsible.

The projections for the world cup are on so we hope the will pick up some positive comments as England proceeds through the competition.

Town Twinning

The delegation of all twin towns and cities is being held in Remscheid in April 2027, planned for 8-10th April. Along with Newbiggin-by-the-Sea Town Council, Ashington Town Council is cordially invited and the Executive Officer had an informal online meeting with Sven Wolf, Lord Mayor Remscheid prior to the Annual Meeting. Remscheid is celebrating 20 years of their Youth Council which we hope will be a feature of the trip. They are keen to look into Parkrun following this suggestion. Anyone Cllr wishing to join the trip would be very welcome. The Council will be formally represented as usual by the Civic Head.

Public Toilets

Following the Council's formally agreed interest in December to seek information the public toilets on Station Road there has been no further information from NCC. The EO has sought a conversation, following up in January and again in April. This was followed up again in May after the announcement of capital expenditure on public toilets being planned in Northumberland (copied below).

Public Toilets Investment Programme

The Council has agreed an additional £1.56m capital funding in its Medium Term Financial Plan over the next 3 years to enable the completion of its Public Toilets Improvement Programme. The additional funding will mean that all 54 public toilets in the County will benefit from improvements, with the remaining 26 public toilets being improved over the next 3 years. Details of the timing of refurbishment activity and scope of works needed at each facility are currently being developed. Issues with repeated blockages at Alnmouth public toilets have not been fully resolved following changes made to cisterns, so some further works to improve the flow/falls within the drainage pipework serving the site are due to start in June. Access to toilets will be maintained during the works.

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Council Owned Depot – Community Asset Transfer

The full application was submitted at the end of February. After a follow-up email by the Executive Officer, further documents were requested and subsequent to some back and forth the full application was signed off as received on 22nd April. This is now at Stage 2 for assessment by the Strategic Property Asset Management Group (SPAMG). There are no published timescales for a response; an update has been requested.

[Read the Full Community Asset Transfer Process](#)

Allotment Sites – Management Report

Hirst East End (Council Managed)

- News plot holder taken on, with recently new plot holders making good progress
- Strimming of vacant garden carried out, this has now been split and occupied
- Pest control arranged in response to rat activity
- Scrap removed from site
- Further plot split completed, reducing the waiting list and adjusting area for one existing plot holder
- Roads weed sprayed
- Inspections scheduled for w/c 15/06

Nursery Park (Council Managed)

- Arrangements made with local tree surgeon to chip fly-tipped hedging material on site
- Roads weed sprayed
- Inspections scheduled for w/c 15/06

Woodhorn Road (Council Managed)

- Site management visit carried out; plots requiring immediate attention identified
- Roadway works planned for week commencing 22nd June
- Weed spraying carried out

North Seaton Colliery (Council Managed)

- Weed spraying carried out
- Inspections to be carried out next week
- Fly-tipping issues, reminders about locking gates issued

Seaton Hirst (Committee Managed)

- Meeting held with Secretary regarding rat issue raised by local residents; pest control requested and committee to clear the affected plot
- Asbestos collection carried out, with further collections to follow

Wansbeck Road (Committee Managed)

- Scrap collection at the site organised and completed
- Nearby residents surveyed about fence works requested by committee as part of capital work

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General

Meeting held with NCC Senior Environmental Enforcement Officer regarding the increase in fly-tipping across allotment sites with a view to standardising response, evidence collecting and potential to prosecute. Exploring fly-tipping CCTV options.

Capital works scoring has been carried out with a view to prioritising the capital works to be booked in the current financial year.

Website and Social Media PR

Website

Ashington Town Council has completed a major overhaul of its website, delivering significant improvements to accessibility, navigation and functionality. The project has involved extensive redevelopment across the website's key sections, with work on smaller areas still ongoing.

The Wards section now features a faster, more accessible interactive map, allowing residents to view ward information, identify their local councillors and use a postcode search to locate their ward quickly. The Policies section has been completely redesigned, enabling users to search for specific policies, sort documents more effectively and see clearly when policies were last adopted and updated. The Councillors page has been enhanced with new search and sorting functions, making it easier for residents to find and access information about their elected members.

The Structure and Committees section has been transformed from a lengthy text-based page into a clearer, easier-to-navigate format. The Allotments section now offers integrated directions for both Android and iPhone users and incorporates the same interactive mapping system used in the Wards section. Several information pages, including the War Memorial and About Ashington Town Council sections, have been redesigned to improve readability, replacing large blocks of text with a more engaging layout.

The mobile version of the website has received substantial improvements, with a dedicated navigation system making browsing significantly easier on smartphones and tablets. Smaller standalone pages covering items such as seats, bins and bus shelters have been brought together under a new Street Scene section, creating a more logical structure for residents. The Community Guidance and Defibrillator sections have also been upgraded, with the latter now featuring an interactive search tool allowing users to locate the nearest publicly accessible defibrillator by current location or chosen address.

Councillors, residents, community groups and visitors are encouraged to explore the updated website and share their feedback. Anyone who spots an issue or has suggestions for further improvements is welcome to contact the Council directly.

The following items appeared on our website news page since the previous officer's report. Members are reminded that we maintain active Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages to promote Council activities and engage with our community. You can read them in full by visiting the website.

<https://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/news/>

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Article Title	Date
Have your say on the future of Northumberland — consultation open now	2nd June 2026
Ashington Town Council Small Grant Fund: Three Local Groups Awarded Over £1,000	1st June 2026
ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL APPOINTS CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR AND CIVIC HEAD FOR THE YEAR AHEAD	27th May 2026
Miners' Memorial Service to Honour Northumberland's Mining Heritage at Annual Picnic	26th May 2026

Facebook

The Council's Facebook page has seen exceptional growth over the period 8 May to 4 June 2026, with significant increases recorded across all key metrics compared to the previous reporting period.

Views reached 184,300, an increase of 207.2%, with 70% of views coming from non-followers, up 50%, demonstrating that content continues to reach well beyond the existing audience. Unique viewers totalled 38,476, up 174.6%. Content interactions reached 1,500, up 101.8%, with interactions from non-followers rising by 189.1% to 740, narrowly exceeding the 749 interactions recorded from followers. Facebook visits totalled 2,500, an increase of 97.5%.

The page recorded 61 new follows, up 79.4%, against 26 unfollows, delivering a net gain of 35 followers, representing a 75% increase on the prior period.

Overall, this reporting period represents a strong performance across all areas, with particularly notable growth in reach beyond the existing follower base, suggesting that content is resonating with a broader audience across the town and beyond.

Post	Reacts	Comments	Share	Date
🚫 Illegal e-bike, e-scooter and motorcycle riders causing misery across Ashington and surrounding a...	94	37	39	21st May 2026
Ashington Town Council has confirmed a number of key appointments for the forthcoming year following...	85	6	12	27th May 2026
👉👈 The annual Northumberland Miners' Picnic will begin with a special Miners' Memorial Service on...	21	0	28	26th May 2026
🎵 A fresh new chapter is coming to Ashington this summer... and it's being led by young people 🙌 Ashi...	41	10	13	15th May 2026

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  Ashington Town Council is planting its colours firmly to the mast this summer with a bold red an...	92	4	5	18th May 2026
 New seating has been installed along Newbiggin Road and Black Close Bank as part of a local impro...	76	12	3	15th May 2026
 Big news for Ashington and communities across Northumberland!  Grassroots projects tackling clim...	66	6	3	15th May 2026
 Ashington Town Council is hiring a Seasonal Neighbourhood Services Operative for Summer 2026  Lo...	11	7	13	13th May 2026
  The annual Northumberland Miners' Picnic will begin with a special Miners' Memorial Service on...	10	1	11	2nd June 2026
Ashington marked International Workers' Memorial Day on Saturday 2nd May, bringing the community to...	49	2	1	6th May 2026

Upcoming Meetings

- Armed Services Day – 27th June, 10am
- Finance and General Services Committee – 14th July, 6pm