

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 12TH JANUARY 2026 (6:00 – 8:00pm)**



COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Derek Kennedy (Chair), Stephen Ball, Penny Grennan, John Ord, Fay Hartland, Nigel Porter, Roger Higgins, Mike Domingue, David Wright, Dom McDermott, Neil Park, Tom Sharlot

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE

Andrew Gooding – Town Clerk
Hexham TV- Peter Woods

TC26-001. WELCOME BY THE CHAIR

The Mayor, Cllr Kennedy, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

TC26-002. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public attended

TC26-003. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Cllr Suzanne Fairless-Aitken

TC26-004. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interests.

TC26-005. DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

TC26-006. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was **AGREED** To **RECEIVE** and **SIGN** as a true record, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 8 December 2025.

TC26-007. WELCOME GLEN SANDERSON, LEADER OF NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS ISSUES OF INTEREST TO HEXHAM.

Cllr Sanderson was invited to discuss the strained relationship between Northumberland County Council and Hexham Town Council. A number of issues were discussed including: the Old Fire Station proposal from Sir Antony Gormley, derelict buildings (old bus station, former workhouse), former Hexham Middle School site, public toilets, pedestrianization, speed restrictions and opportunities for growth.

Cllr Sanderson stated that NCC will support the installation of a Sir Antony Gormley sculpture in the town and the establishment of Hexham as an arts town.

A proposal was put forward for the two councils to work together in conjunction with officers to jointly look at issues with the town. It was agreed to move forward on this basis and to provide a list of issues to be discussed.

TC26-008. TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2026-2027 BUDGET FOR HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr Hartland identified the major areas of spend for the 2026/27 budget including the redevelopment of the Sele playground. The provision of free concerts in the summer was also highlighted along with the ambition of Hexham to become an arts town.

Questions were raised around:

1. the increase in PSDF revenue which was the result of a greater proportion of the Council's money attracting a higher level of interest
2. An increase in the salaries budget as a result of an external evaluation of salaries paid.

The motion was **SUPPORTED** by a majority vote.

TC26-009. TO APPROVE REVISED COSTINGS AND DESIGNS FOR SELE PLAYPARK

Cllr Tom Sharlot proposed the revised costing and plans for the Sele playpark as a good balance between: design, accessibility, environmental impact and cost. It was noted the contribution of the user groups.

Questions were raised around:

1. Security and whether cctv provision should be considered
2. Sufficient seating in place

The motion was seconded by Cllr Hartland

The motion was **SUPPORTED** by a unanimous vote.

TC26-010. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON HEXHAM'S POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

- a) **Hexham Middle School (NCC)**
Raised in **TC26-007**
- b) **Old Bus Station (Dysart/NCC)**
Raised in **TC26-007**
- c) **Toilets (NCC)**
Raised in **TC26-007**

d) West Road (NCC)

No update.

e) Police Houses (PCC)

Works have commenced.

f) Old Workhouse (79thGroup)

Raised in **TC26-007**

g) Shambles (NCC)

Almost complete with car park and some snagging to finish.

h) Cycle path (NCC)

Works programmed for the closure of the road at Peth Head and raised table at the junction with Corbridge Road. Still working on developing the Haydon Bridge to Hexham cycle path.

i) Railway Buildings and Water Tower

Action to escalate enforcement.

j) West End Methodists

No update.

k) Former Beales Site

No update

l) Former Prospect House

Properties now on the market.

m) Abbey Cottage

No update.

n) Old Fire Station

Raised in **TC26-007**

Cllr Kitchen raised the issue of the approved planning permission on the greenbelt. Reference was made to: the tensions between greenbelt development and affordable housing; the effectiveness of the neighbourhood plan; the cost of development sites.

TC26-011. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

27/01/26	Tynedale Community Partnership
05/03/26	Town & Parish Conference

TC26-012. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well attended Christmas Market that was very popular.
Village green application had a hearing at Wentworth where questions were asked of the applicant and landowner to determine its use over the last 20 years.

TC26-013. TO AGREE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Accounts for payment were **AGREED**

TC26-014. TO NOTE APPROVED COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following were **AGREED**:

Finance & General Purposes	19/11
Planning & Infrastructure	4/11

TC26-015. TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.

- a. NALC e-news and events and NALC Chief Executive's bulletins
- b. CAN e-news
- c. Northumberland CVA Voice ebulletins
- d. Rural Bulletin
- e. Police Fraud Project
- f. Community Resilience Forum