



Barnard Castle Town Council

Town Clerk: Martin Clark
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Barnard Castle
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ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING MONDAY 23 JUNE 2025

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby **summoned** to attend the meeting of Barnard Castle Town Council to be held in the **Dawson Room, Woodleigh on Monday 23 June 2025 at 6.00 p.m.** The meeting will consider the items of business listed below.

***Public Participation 6.00 – 6.15pm**

Members of the public are invited to speak on any matters contained within the agenda*. Following this period members of the public can remain but cannot speak further on any agenda item unless invited by the Chair.

TOWN CLERK
17 June 2025

AGENDA

22. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES
23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
24. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENT
25. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – 12 MAY 2025
26. EN BLOC ITEMS
27. UPDATES & REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES
28. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2024/25
29. EAST/WEST WARD VACANCIES – CO-OPTION
30. WEST WARD VACANCY
31. TENS FIELD – BARNARD CASTLE FOOTBALL CLUB
32. LETTER FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

* Questions must be submitted in writing to the Clerk prior to the meeting and must refer to items on the published agenda. The Public Participation policy can be found on the council website: <https://barnardcastletowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/BCTC-Public-Participation-Procedure.pdf>

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL
23 JUNE 2025**

DAWSON ROOM, WOODLEIGH

6:00 P.M.

DETAILED AGENDA

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD - 6.00pm to 6.15pm

22. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

Recommendation – That the submitted apologies be approved.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 10/May/19 refers), Members will be asked whether they have any personal, pecuniary, or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members are reminded that a declaration can be given later in the meeting if a need arises during discussion.

24. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

25. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES (ENCLOSED)

(1) 12 May 2025 (Annual Council)

Recommendation – That the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record.

26. EN BLOC ITEMS

This is a report arising from the decision at Minute 72/Aug/04 to amalgamate a number of agenda items so that the accompanying recommendations can be moved 'en bloc'. Any Member has a right to speak on any of the listed items, but it is hoped that discussion can be kept to a minimum.

The items included in the report are as follows:

(1) Resources Committee – 09 June 2025 - Draft Minutes

(2) Town Mayor Activities

Since the Council meeting on the 12 May 2025, the Town Mayor accompanied by Consorts, Miss Ellie Walker Ing, has attended the following:

26 May Barnard Castle Meet

Recommendation – That the draft committee meeting minutes, and Mayoral activity be received and noted.

27. UPDATES AND REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES

From the meetings outlined above at item 26 the following updates are noted:

(1) Resources Committee meeting – 09 June 2025

No referral to full council

28. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2024/25

Submitted – (i) Conclusion of 2024/25 Internal Audit & Internal auditor report (ii) Members to approve of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25.

Recommendation – a) That the Internal Auditor report for 2024/25 is noted.

(b) Section 1 of the 2024/25 AGAR is approved; and

(c) Section 2 of the 2024/25 AGAR is approved.

29. EAST/WEST WARD VACANCIES – CO-OPTION

Submitted - a report covering the process for co-option and details of the applications received.

30. WEST WARD VACANCY

Following the resignation of Cllr Mike McLean the Notice of Vacancy for the West Ward was posted on the 13 June 2025. If no poll is called for by the 4 July, the council would be able to consider the co-option process.

31. TENS FIELD – BARNARD CASTLE FOOTBALL CLUB

Submitted – Correspondence from Barnard Castle FC requesting an extension to the current lease.

32. LETTER FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Submitted – Correspondence from Cllr Foote-Wood (as County Councillor)

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

12 MAY 2025

PRESENT: Councillors Ing (the outgoing Town Mayor), Foote-Wood, McLean, Turnbull, Chatterjee, Kirkbride, Colledge, Stenson & Nilsson

Officers: Mr Clark (Town Clerk) & Ms C Atkinson (RFO)

Prior to the start of the meeting all members signed their Declaration of Office.

The outgoing Town Mayor, Cllr Ing opened the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26

Councillor Chris Foote-Wood was proposed and seconded. A second nomination for Cllr Paul Ing was proposed and seconded. A vote was called.

Cllr Paul Ing – 6 votes

Cllr Chris Foote-Wood – 3 votes

Resolved – (a) That Cllr Paul Ing be elected Town Mayor for Municipal Year 2025/26.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26

Councillor Chris Foote-Wood was proposed and seconded. A second nomination for Cllr Rima Chatterjee was proposed and seconded. A vote was called.

Cllr Chris Foote-Wood – 3 votes

Cllr Rima Chatterjee – 6 votes

Resolved – That Cllr Rima Chatterjee be elected as Deputy Town Mayor for Municipal Year 2025/26.

3. DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE

The newly elected Town Mayor & Deputy Town Mayor duly signed their Declaration of Office forms.

4. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

None

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 10/May/19 refers), Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. No declarations were made.

6. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

(i) Council Meeting – 24 March 2025

Resolved – That the minutes be accepted as being a true and accurate record.

7. REVIEW OF THE 2024/25 MAYORAL YEAR (COUNCILLOR ING)

Received – Report on the 2024/25 Mayoral Year.

Resolved – (a) That the report of Mayoral Activity be received; and
(b) That the cordial thanks of the Council be extended to Councillor Paul Ing on the manner in which they have conscientiously carried out the Mayoral role during the Municipal Year 2024-25; (c) That thanks be extended to the Mayor's Consorts: Ellie Walker, Miss Claudia Talbot, Chris Cain, William Atkinson & Sue Ing; and (d) That the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Foote-Wood, be thanked for attending on behalf of the Town Mayor on two occasions.

8. CONFIRMATION OF NOMINATIONS TO COMMITTEES 2025/26

Received – Report on committee membership

Resolved – (a) That Members approved the following composition of committees for

Partnership (7+5)	Planning (5)	Resources (6)	Services (7)
Rima Chatterjee	Mike McLean	Chris Foote-Wood	Fiona Turnbull
Chris Foote-Wood	Caroline Nilsson	Paul Ing	Mike McLean
Fiona Turnbull	Leigh Stenson	Rima Chatterjee	Malcolm Colledge
Ian Kirkbride	Malcom Colledge	Leigh Stenson	Paul Ing
Caroline Nilsson		Ian Kirkbride	Chris Foote-Wood

and (b) That following Committee Chairs were nominated and approved:

Partnership - Cllr Ian Kirkbride

Planning – Cllr Leigh Stenson

Resources – Cllr Ian Kirkbride

Services – Cllr Fiona Turnbull

9. REPRESENTATIONS WITH EXTERNAL BODIES & REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Appendix A

10. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S AND/OR EMPLOYEES MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES

Resolved – (a) That the Council confirms and agrees to renew its employees' and Council's membership of the following bodies:

- (i) Society of Local Council Clerks
- (ii) County Durham Association of Local Councils
- (iii) National Allotment Society
- (iv) Open Spaces Society

11. CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURED RISKS

Resources Committee resolved in November 2018 (Minute 40/Nov/18 refers), that the Town Council's insurance policy be maintained with Zurich Municipal. The current long-term agreement the council has reduces the premium by 5% each year and runs to 2027-28.

A full copy of the insurance schedule is maintained in the office.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

12. DATES, TIMES OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Presented - A schedule of the dates, times of Council meetings and Partnership, Services, Resources and Planning Committees during the Municipal Year 2025/26.

It was confirmed that all committee and council meetings commence at *6.00 p.m. on Monday's unless otherwise stated.

*The **Planning Committee** will meet within two weeks of published applications relating to the parish. Meetings will be commence at 5.30pm or 5.45pm or otherwise.

Resolved – That the following schedule of dates and times of all meetings be approved and noted for Municipal Year 2025/26.

Partnership Committee	Services Committee	Resources Committee	Council
07 July 2025	21 July 2025	09 June 2025	23 June 2025
27 October 2025	06 October 2025	01 September 2025	15 September 2025
15 December 2025	01 December 2025	03 November 2025	17 November 2025
02 February 2026	16 February 2026	05 January 2026	19 January 2026
	13 April 2026	09 March 2026	23 March 2026
			11 May 2026

13. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

(A) Internal Auditor

At the Annual Council meeting (Minute 14(a)/May/21 refers) it was determined that the Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2021/22 should be Mr Gordon Fletcher. In accordance with standard procedures, a decision in respect of the financial year 2025/26 is now sought.

Resolved – That Mr Gordon Fletcher be appointed as this Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2025/26.

(B) External Auditor

Mazars LLP were appointed as the town council's External Auditor for a period of 5 years from 2017. Mazars have been successful in the bidding for a further 5 years from 2022/23.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

14. APPOINTMENT OF BANKERS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

It has been determined that Barclay's Bank PLC should be this council's banker. In line with standard procedures, a decision in respect of the financial year 2025/26 is now sought.

Resolved – That Barclay's Bank PLC be appointed as this Council's bankers for the financial year 2025/26.

15. THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

At Minute 03/Jun/20 the Council confirmed its eligibility to use the General Power of Competence and so adopted its use.

The council is required to revisit that decision and make a new resolution at every 'relevant' annual meeting of the council, to confirm that it still meets the criteria. Following the 2025 elections the council continues to meet the eligibility criteria.

Resolved – That Barnard Castle Town Council hereby confirms it meets the eligibility criteria for adoption of the General Power of Competence as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012. We further resolve to adopt the General Power of Competence.

16. ANNUAL ADOPTION OF COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS & FUTURE REVIEW

Resolved – (a) That the council approve the current adopted Standing Orders; and (b) Cllr Kirkbride be nominated to work with the Town Clerk on a Task and Finish Review.

17. EAST AND WEST WARD VACANCIES

Councils who have had uncontested elections and are quorate will be able to act as a corporate body from this meeting (12 May 2025) and are able to co-opt to any unfilled vacancies.

The council has three unfilled vacancies – 2 West Ward, and 1 East Ward.

Resolved – (a) That the three unfilled vacancies are filled through the Council Co-Option Policy; and (b) That said vacancies are posted.

18. LOCAL AREA NETWORK FOR TEESDALE

From 1 April 2025, throughout County Durham, Local Networks (LNG) will replace the former Action Area Partnerships (AAPs).

The new Local Network for Teesdale will be governed by a new Panel. Between now and September, work will take place for the recruitment of Panel members. The Teesdale Local Network will have two seats for representatives of the Town/Parish councils in the area. Ideally the two new representatives should be in place by the end of June. Members are asked to consider whether it would like to nominate one councillor to sit on the new Teesdale Local Network Panel.

Resolved – That Cllr Turnbull is put forward to sit on the Teesdale Local Area Network

19. BCCL ANNUAL BONFIRE 2025

A request has been received from Barnard Christmas Lights Committee (BCCL) for permission to hold the Annual Bonfire Night on the Upper Demesnes.

Resolved – That permission is given to BCCL to hold the annual bonfire night on the Upper Demesnes on 7th November 2025.

20. SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC) ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Town Clerk and RFO have been invited to the Annual SLCC conference in Hinkley, Leicestershire on the 14 & 15 October 2025. The conference is part of training and development for both the Clerk and RFO.

Resolved – That the information is received and noted.

21. NEW COUNCILLOR TRAINING

A training session for new councillors has been arranged for Wednesday 4th June on the zoom platform from 6- 8pm.

Resolved – That Cllr's Colledge, Stenson and Nilsson are booked to attend.

Appendix A

ANNUAL REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION ON OR WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING BACK

1. Introduction

1.1 This report presents a list of those bodies to which the Town Council nominates representatives and reaffirms the arrangements for reporting relevant business to the Council

2. Nominations for Representatives

2.1 Nominations and appointments are sought in respect of this Council's representation on the following bodies during the municipal year 2025/26

- a. Teesdale Residents' and Travellers Forum – **Cllr Stenson & Cllr Turnbull**
- b. Larger Local Councils Forum – **Clerk & Cllr Foote-Wood**
- c. The Witham Hall Ltd – * **Cllr Ing**
- d. Dawson Cottage Trust – **Cllr McLean**
- e. Cultura Trust/Raby – **Cllr Turnbull**
- f. St Mary's Barnard Castle Hall Association - **vacant**

* The Witham Hall Ltd requests the Town Mayor be the representative.

3. Reporting Arrangements

3.1 A verbal report of the relevant body will be made as part of a portfolio report to the next available meeting of the full council. Members (and where relevant, the Clerk) will have the opportunity to speak to that item at the meeting. Those bodies indicated above meet only occasionally and are reported by exception.

3.2 Where the Town Council is requested or required to take action in response to a meeting of one of these bodies, that issue will be raised on the next available agenda of the Town Council (or relevant Committee), by the named representative, which may be prior to the information item being reported to full council.

4. 2025/26 Municipal Year

4.1 The list at 2.1 above is for review by the council, to provide nominations and appointments to these bodies for 2025/26 municipal year.

Resolved – (a) That the Town Council appoints the above representatives to each of the identified bodies; and (b) That the Town Council reaffirms the reporting arrangements set out in paragraph 3.1, above.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2025**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL

www.barnardcastletowncouncil.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes ✓	No ✗	Not applicable ✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

27/05/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

GORDON FLETCHER (C.M.A.I.A.)

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

G Fletcher

Date

28/05/2025

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

Barnard Castle Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
	✓		<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

23/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

Barnard Castle Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	108,339	121,912	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	229,250	214,286	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	74,052	64,420	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	157,357	136,097	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	132,372	127,288	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	121,912	137,233	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	120,722	133,520	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	464,880	464,880	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	<i>The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

17/06/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

23/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

Barnard Castle Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

Martin Clark

From: rowell.emma67 <rowell.emma67@gmail.com>
Sent: 22 May 2025 08:16
To: clerk
Subject: Re: Expression of interest in vacant position.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Martin,

Thank you for inviting me to send a personal statement, which should be read alongside my brief CV.

My motivation for applying for the vacant position on the Town Council is largely that, should I be successful in this endeavour, I could represent the trading community in Barnard Castle. These are difficult times to be a small business owner and I would like to work with the Town Council and the trading community to continue the work done previously by BCTC to improve the offer to visitors and help to maintain an attractive and vibrant High Street.

I am aware of the hard work done by Cllr Rima Chatterjee and would like the opportunity to work alongside her to continue to develop the potential of the trading community.

I feel this will be beneficial to all residents. We can improve our offer to tourists and help to encourage visitors and potential residents to come to Barnard Castle because of the beauty of our surroundings and the vibrancy of our High Street.

This improves the experience of living in our locality and helps to maintain the value of properties in the area.

I have a professional interest in health and would be interested in developing a position within the Town Council with a special interest in health.

Ultimately my interest is to improve the lives of our residents and the experience of visitors, so that we can continue to celebrate Barnard Castle as a happy and healthy place to live and an interesting and exciting place to visit.

Best Regards,
Emma Rowell

On Mon, 19 May 2025, 07:55 clerk, <clerk@barnardcastletowncouncil.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi Emma

Could you add to your CV with a short piece on why you would like to be considered for co-option that would be shown to members.

PS 11571

A xibnagga





NAME

Emma Rowell
11-13 Market Place
Barnard Castle
DL12 8NF
07547931296
Rowell.emma67@gmail.com

CURRICULUM VITAE

I am currently self employed as a Counsellor and Psychotherapist, in private practice. I own and run McNab's Books in Barnard Castle.

2019-2021

Non- Executive Director County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust

2017-2019

Elected and served as a town councillor on BCTC

2013 – present

I own McNab's Books in Barnard Castle

2010-2013

I created and managed a community alcohol service in Stockton on Tees.

The project was run in partnership with the NHS, Stockton Borough Council and the Cleveland Police and the Probation Service.

The aim was to offer medical interventions, structured day services and psychotherapy to those affected by alcohol.

I also set up and managed a team within North Tees Hospital who identified all admissions due to alcohol.

Those identified had a brief intervention and if appropriate were referred into the alcohol service.

I managed a team who worked with the CJS. The Police notified the team of any arrests where alcohol was a factor. The team then attended to deliver a brief intervention and to refer into the alcohol service where appropriate.

I managed a team who were embedded into GP services who delivered psychological support to any patients identified as alcohol dependent.

I managed a team of alcohol specialist support workers who held caseloads of those referred for treatment.

I liaised with our local NHS Trust to deliver medical detoxification in the home, when appropriate.

I managed a team of Counsellors who worked throughout the various settings and in the centre to deliver psychological support.

I supervised their practice.

The Service was recognised by the stakeholders as exemplary and the model was replicated across the community alcohol services for local authorities.

2009-2010

I was employed as Senior Practitioner with The Albert Centre to deliver Counselling and Psychotherapy to pregnant women affected by alcohol in the community.

2007-2009

I was employed by Teesside University as a Midwifery Lecturer.

I was seconded from the clinical area on a two year contract to deliver anatomy and physiology, evidence based practice and medical ethics to undergraduate midwives in the School of Health. I delivered a specialist course on drug and alcohol harm and foetal alcohol syndrome.

2001-2007

I was engaged as a Midwife for Durham and Darlington NHS Trust.

I worked in the Midwifery Led Unit and in the Community.

I specialised in working with vulnerable women who had a history of drug and or alcohol use.

2003 – Present.

Appointed as Trustee of Play@Cotberstone

With responsibility for safeguarding.

1998-2001

I took time out of work to have my second and third sons.

1992-1998

I worked as a tutor at Holme House Prison in conjunction with Phoenix House to deliver an education programme on a Drug free wing.

This project was funded and led by Teesside university.

My duty was to deliver a health education programme and basic skills to prisoners who elected to move to a drug free wing.

1993-1996

Newcastle University Medical School

BSc Midwifery.

1992 – 1994

Trained and worked for Darlington Rape Crisis as a manager and counsellor.

1992-1993

I worked as a tutor at Holme House Prison.

To deliver basic skills to prisoners.

The project was led and funded by Teesside University.

1989-1992 I took time out of employment to have my first son.

Statement of Suitability for Co-option

Mr Jan Thompson, 36 Birch Road, DL12 8JR, Barnard Castle

I would like to apply to be co-opted onto Barnard Castle Parish Council starting June 2025.

Background

I have previously been a parish councillor for the last 4 years and served on various sub committees during this period. My attendance record and support for council activities has been strong. For personal reasons after the last 4-year term ending 2025, I decided to formally stand down from the council.

However, finding that the council will now be short numbered in next 4-year term, after further consideration I have changed my mind, and I believe the Barnard Castle Parish Council team should be served correctly with a full operational team.

For that reason, I am putting myself forward for co-option and would be pleased if you voted me back onto the council team.

My Criteria

Degree BSC Hons in Analytical Chemistry

Lived in Barnard Castle since 1979.

Worked at GSK for 30 years, Various Roles - Lab Technician / Quality Officer / Supply Quality Auditor/ Procurement – Site Chemicals Buyer / Regulatory Officer.

Currently self employed as a Quality Management System Consultant for Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Companies.

03 June 2025

Barnard Castle Town Council
Woodleigh, Flatts Road, Barnard Castle, DL12 8AA

Dear Members of Barnard Castle Town Council

I wish to express my interest in the vacancy for a Town Councillor in Barnard Castle and my readiness to represent the west ward if so co-opted. I have been a resident of Barnard Castle from 1988 onwards, although we lived in Woodland village from 2010 - 2016. I consider I know the town and its environs well.

Within Barnard Castle, from 2016 – 2021, I was a committee member of the Friends of St Mary's Church, a Friend of the Bowes Museum and the Witham Hall, supporting particularly drama, dance and musical events. I was also an active member of the badminton group at Teesdale Leisure Centre.

In 2011, I completed training to become a Volunteer Adviser at Citizens Advice, Barnard Castle. We continue to support Barnard Castle residents and many from further afield, "by providing the advice people need for the problems they face" and "by improving the policies and principles that affect people's lives". This research and campaigns' agenda is more preventative in nature and is designed to stop problems arising in the first place.

I also represented the west ward of our town on the Town Council from 2022-25 and was instrumental in encouraging the Council to support the Warm Spaces' initiative as well as contributing to the Campaign to Reduce Dog Fouling in the town. I have also been a Town Council Nominated Trustee of the Dawson Trust for 2 years.

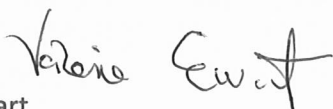
Professionally, I qualified as a teacher of English (London University, 1973) and have been employed in maintained and independent schools, as well as with Co Durham's Special Educational Needs Support Service (1994-98) following completion of postgraduate qualifications in the teaching of children with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) in 1994. Most recently, I held the post of Head of Learning Support at Barnard Castle School, 1998 – 2010; this work involved liaison with educational psychologists, Co Durham Education Support Service, higher education institutions, and our department had five full-time teachers.

My employment as a teacher required me to follow codes of conduct, conducting myself professionally, implementing policies and practices, and communicating effectively with pupils and their parents, and staff. I have also been responsible for training staff to adapt their teaching strategies to support those with specific difficulties. I also produced school plays and musicals, and ran public speaking and debating groups in schools, as well as supporting those following the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Having studied the qualifying criteria published on the Town Council's website, I believe I could again use my personal and professional experiences to date, and previous and current interests, to support full involvement with the work of the Town Council, something I have done my best to undertake over the last three years.

I should be pleased to attend a Council Meeting at which I might have the opportunity to develop further the information given above and to answer your questions.

Yours sincerely



Valerie Ewart



Barnard Castle Football Club

Tens Field, Off Kalafat, Barnard
Castle, County Durham, DL12 8UN

Telephone: 07817 755222

Email: laura@drewassoc.co.uk

10th June 2025

Dear Councillors,

As you will be aware, as Managing Trustees of the land, you have granted Barnard Castle Football Club a lease on the Tens Field playing field until 11th December 2027.

Barnard Castle Football Club were promoted last month to the Wearside Premier Division – a culmination of many years of improvement and ambition, both on and off the pitch. This is the highest sporting level that a team from the town has ever played. The 2025/6 season will also see a reserve team competing in the North Riding League, giving a clear route of player development from our thriving junior section into competitive adult football.

With this promotion comes a number of FA and League requirements which we would like the council, as trustees for the landlord, to give consideration to please.

Security of Tenure:

Although the lease runs for a further eighteen months, in footballing terms this only gives us "Security of Tenure" for one playing season. We would be grateful if the council would please give consideration to extending our lease to the end of the 2026/7 playing season (31/05/27) at a minimum, but preferably for a period of ten years. This will enable the club to seek substantial funding (up to 70% in most cases) from the Premier League Stadium Fund for the required improvements to the facilities at Tens Field (see below), reducing the requirement on the club to fund these groundworks purely through donations and sponsorship.

Improvements to the Ground:

Under the terms of our lease, we are able to make improvements as necessary (and with permission) to the ground. In the next 12-24 months, we would anticipate these being the following items:

- Erecting a small covered stand, to hold 50 people standing;
- Provision of further toilet facilities for spectators;
- Creation of a small paybox or turnstile;
- Tarmacking along two sides of the pitch to provide firm standing spectator accommodation.

The pitch is also likely to require widening within the footprint of the site by approximately two metres.

We therefore seek permission from the Council to commence a planning application in respect of these necessary works please.

Yours sincerely,
Laura Drew

Club Secretary
Barnard Castle Football Club

Chairperson: Geoff Thwaites

Secretary: Laura Drew

Martin Clark

From: Chris Foote-Wood <chrisfootewood@gmail.com>
Sent: 08 June 2025 09:39
To: clerk
Subject: Drugs/Anti-social behaviour

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To: Martin Clark

Town Clerk

Barnard Castle Town Council

Sunday June 8th 2025 by email

Drugs/Anti-social behaviour

I would be grateful if you would bring my letter to the attention of the town councillors, and also place it on the agenda of the council or an appropriate committee.

Thank you

(County councillor) Chris Foote-Wood

To: The Clerk and members of Barnard Castle Town Council

Colleagues: I am certain the interests of the town would be best served by close co-operation between the town council and myself as Barnard Castle's county councillor. For example, Police and Crime Commissioner Joy Allen has agreed to my request for her to visit the town. I have suggested she formally invites the town council to nominate one representative other than myself to join us on her walkabout.

For the information of members, I have had a long and fruitful meeting with Sgt Richard Hinde who has just arrived in Barney. We discussed recent anti-social behaviour in the town during the traveller migration with a view to what might be done next year. The town council may well wish to have an input to this discussion.

12 m 511

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Sgt Hinde has had considerable experience dealing with drug issues in Newton Aycliffe. He tells me he would like to hear from anyone with information on drug dealing in the town, via his email richard.hinde@durham.police.uk or phone 07817075361.

Kind regards

(Cllr) Chris Foote-Wood

Barnard Castle's county councillor

"Prestbury"

37 Dawson Road

Barnard Castle

Co. Durham DL12 8JZ

Email: chrisfootewood@gmail.com

Mob: 07984060615

Copy to Sgt Hinds