

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

05 JANUARY 2026

PRESENT: Cllrs, Kirkbride, Thompson, Foote-Wood & Chatterjee

Officers: Mr Clark (Town Clerk) & Miss Atkinson (RFO)

25. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted by Cllr Ing. No apologies were received from Cllr Stenson.

Resolved – That the submitted apologies be accepted.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Resolved – None declared.

27. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 03 NOVEMBER 2025 – MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting on the 03 November 2025 be approved as a true record.

28. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS

Received – Reports on the income and expenditure activity of the Council from 01 October to 30 November 2025.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

29. BUDGET 2026-27 – FINAL REPORT

Received – Final Budget recommendations 2026/27 (Appendix A)

Resolved – (a) That the information is received and noted; (b) That the overall budget and consequent precept recommendation be made to Full Council meeting on 19 January 2026; and (c) That any budgetary alterations post this meeting will be referred at full council

30. WOODLEIGH

- The emergency lighting across the building has been repaired.
- The work on the windows on the ground floor has been carried out.
- Work has begun with DCC to extend the councils lease to 2040.

Resolved – That the information is received and noted.

31. ADOPTION OF THE COUNCIL IT & DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Received – IT and Data protection policy compliant with Assertion 10 a new requirement for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), focusing on digital and data compliance.

Resolved – That the IT and Data protection policy is approved.

Appendix A

BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 5 JANUARY 2026

BUDGET 2026/27 – FINAL REPORT

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Following consideration of the draft 2026/27 budget carried out at the Resources Committee meeting on 03 November, Services Committee on 01 December and Partnership Committee on 15 December 2025, this report considers the 2026/27 budget as a whole to enable recommendations to be formulated at this meeting, including the recommended precept figure, and presented to the full Council meeting scheduled for 19 January 2026.

2. Items Deferred from Previous Meetings

- 2.1** Due to confirmation of information being awaited, the following items were deferred for consideration at this meeting.

Co Durham Association/SLCC/NALC (101)

- This allocation covers membership of the County Durham Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils. Both subscriptions are intertwined, and one cannot be paid without the other.
- The membership fee for each element is set each year and multiplied by the most recent electoral figures available.
- The 2026/27 fee is 24.1p per elector made up of 15.5p for CDALC and 8.6p for NALC.
- 2019 electoral figure of 4,416 has been used to calculate the fee.
- The SLCC annual figure for 2025/26 is £360

Resolved – £1,064 (CDALC/NALC) & £360 (SLCC) Total- £1,424 (increase of £46)

- 3. The following items have been resolved by the Services and Partnership Committees, at their meetings on 01 & 15 December for recommendation to Resources and full council.**

Community Events (354)

That the budgetary bid for community events be £7,220

Christmas Lighting (221)

That the Christmas Lighting budget be set at £8,475

Play Areas (231)

That the Play Area budget be set at £2,995 and will incorporate only the costs of the regular play area inspections, and an amount for small maintenance costs.

Grounds Maintenance (311)

That the Grounds Maintenance budget be set at £23,344 which will include grass cutting, floral displays (summer/winter) improvements to current areas & watering/weeding services.

3. 4 Income – Fees and Charges

4. 4.1 The following income items are set by existing agreements or proposed by the relevant committees:

Play Areas

- (a) Tens Field - £100 – no change; and
- (b) Gate Licence Fee - zero – no change.

Allotments (per plot)

- (a) 2026/27 – the allotment plot rental already determined - £48/£30 – no change;
- (b) 2027/28 - £48/£30– No increase; and
- (c) Gross income 2026/27 - £4,042

Mini Golf – 2026 season

- (a) £3 per round for all users – no change;
- (b) £9 group ticket (up to four players – saving £3) – no change;
- (c) £15 loyalty ticket (7 rounds bought in advance) – no change;
- (d) £1 lost ball – no change;
- (e) £6 damaged club – no change; and
- (f) Gross income - £11,000

Woodleigh Charges - Dawson Room Hire Charges (per hour – min 2 hours)

- (a) Community - £12.50 – no change;
- (b) Repeat Community - £10 – no change;
- (c) Commercial - £20 – no change;
- (d) Commercial Refreshments £1.20 per head (Inc. VAT) – new charge; and
- (d) Gross income - £600.

Woodleigh, Scar Top & Demesnes Charges

- (a) Electricity (performance area) charged at the prevailing metered rate (New);
- (b) Commercial use (other than by a community, voluntary or not-for-profit group) - £50; and
- (c) Scar Top Banner Frame commercial booking (other than by a community, voluntary or not-for-profit group) £50.
- (d) Gross income - £250 *pro tem*.
- (e) Dog Agility licence - £40

Wednesday Market

- (a) Standard Pitch (0-6m) - £12 – no change;
- (b) Large Pitch (6-10m) - £18 – no change;
- (c) Additional metre (or part) beyond 10m - £2 – no change;
- (d) Charity Pitch - £0 – no change; and
- (e) Gross income - £8,000.

5. Budget Proposal Summary

A budgetary schedule is attached as **Appendix A** to this report and details the 2026/27 recommendations compared to a base of 2025/26. Set out in the table below is a more detailed breakdown.

Cost Centre	Recommendation
Council Administration (101)	See below
Training (101)	£200
Audit Fees (101)	£1,550
Bank Charges (101)	£400
Replacement IT & Software (101)	£650
Insurance (101)	£2,843
Subscriptions (101) SLCC/CDALC	£1,424
Stationary & Office Goods inc consumables (101)	£420
Accounts Software Packages (101)	£1,439
IT & Maintenance support (101)	£2,104
Postage/publications/eye tests (101)	£100
Professional fees & Charges (101)	£350
Financial Donations	£nil
Total	£11,480
Central Support Svcs	£136,533
Woodleigh Operational Expenditure (106)	See below
Office Rent (106)	£9,102
Business Rates/Water Rates (106)	£988
Electricity/Gas (106)	£11,330
Repairs/maintenance (106)	£434
Planned/preventative maintenance (106)	£1,200
Telephone/broadband (106)	£897
Service Level Agreement (106)	£2,142
Cleaning (106)	£1,630
Supplies (106)	£150
Total	£27,873
Elections (104)	£1,000
Chains of Office (105)	£50
Castle & Market floodlighting (321)	£500
Defibrillator (110)	£225
Allotments (201) (self-financing)	£4,042
Mini Golf (211) (self-financing)	£11,000
Wednesday Market (self-financing)	£8,000
Christmas Lights (221)	£8,475
Play Areas (231)	£2,995

Cost Centre	Recommendation
Grounds Maintenance (311)	£23,344
Dog Fouling	£500
Bede Road Bus Shelter (342)	£50
Community Events (354)	£7,220
Market Place Public Toilets (501)	£ 6,386

5. 6. Factors taken into Consideration

6. 6.1 To date, there is £39,749 in the earmarked reserve funds (**Appendix B**).

6.2 The council tax base upon which the precept is calculated is 1898.6 for 2026/27, an increase of 3.9 on the 2025/26 tax base. The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) grant payable to the council for the 2026/27 financial year will be NIL due to the council tax base increase. It is expected that the LCTRS grant payments to town and parish councils will cease entirely in 2026/27 in order to assist Durham County Council in meeting significant budget challenges.

7. Conclusion

Savings have been made in the areas that can be controlled by the council through good financial management. The increases in utilities, insurance and contracted services have been made in line with the non-pay inflation 3% approved in November.

7. The council Central Support Services costs have increased in line with the agreed 4%.

8. As can be seen from **Appendix A**, if all the budgetary items are approved as shown, the total 2026/27 demand on Durham County Council would be **£221,121** being the Precept. This would result in an increase of 11% on 2025/26 and amounting to **£9.70p** a month on a Band D property (+96p on 25/26). The increase is due largely to the loss of rental income.

9. All recommendations from this meeting, including the recommended Precept and overall budget, are for onward transmission to the Council meeting scheduled for 19 January 2026. Durham County Council has confirmed that the Precept Notification Date is Friday 23 January 2026.

10. Recommendation – Members' views are requested on all of the above, such that an overall budget and consequent precept recommendation may be made to Full Council meeting on 19 January 2026.

Appendix A

Cost Centre	Budget 2025/26 £	Budget 2026/27 £
101 Council Administration	12,396	11,480
102 Central Support Svcs	131,153	136,533
101 Mayoral Allowances	NIL	NIL
104 Elections	1,000	1,000
105 Chains of Office	50	50
106 Woodleigh operational	27,476	27,873
110 Defibrillator	225	225

201	Allotments	4,027	4,042
211	Mini Golf	11,000	11,000
221	Christmas Lights	8,475	8,475
231	Play Areas	2,995	2,995
291	Wednesday Market	8,000	8,000
311	Ground Maintenance	22,660	23,344
321	Castle & Market Floodlighting	636	500
331	War Memorials	NIL	NIL
342	Bede Road Bus Shelter	50	50
354	Community Events	9,100	7,220
404	Wayfinding Units	NIL	NIL
501	Market Place Public Toilets	6,200	6,386
321	Dog Fouling	500	500
Total		245,943	249,673
Income			
1.	Fees and charges (recreation)	15,127	15,142
2.	Fees and charges (other)	8,850	8,850
3.	Woodleigh Rental	9,880	1,560
4.	Bank interest	3,000	3,000
5.	Precept	209,086	221,121
6.	LCTRS	NIL	NIL
		245,983	249,673

Ear Marked Reserves

War Memorials	1500.00
Bouch Way PA	10863.29
Allotment Improvements	8031.00
PA Future Repair & Future Provision	1235.00
BC Playing Fields	900.00
Mini Golf	3312.00
Elections	6434.61
Grounds Maintenance	5123.00
Replacement of IT & Software	1700.00
Total	39749.70

