

AG E N D A
Annual General Meeting of Bowes Parish Council on
Tuesday 13 May at 7.30pm at Bowes Hutchinson's School

1. **Election of Chair for 2025/26**
2. **Acceptance of Office for all councillors**
3. **Election of Vice Chair for 2025/26**
4. **Apologies and declarations of interest** – if any, and procedure for register of interest forms.
5. **Minutes** of the Meeting held Wednesday 16 April 2025 for approval. See [Appendix A](#).
6. **Actions arising from the previous meeting** (unless dealt with later in agenda)
Cllr Hughes to feedback on his review of Durham Community Action's affordable housing profile for Bowes. The Clerk to confirm that an internal audit plan has been agreed with Butler and Gee and terms of engagement signed.
7. **Consideration of co-option.** The Chair to feedback on any interest from residents in being co-opted on to the Council and a vote to take place on any proposed co-option.
8. **Consideration of committees, councillor roles and outside appointments.**
Currently, the Council has no committees, one councillor with a designated role (Cllr Hughes – playgrounds) and Cllr Carlisle, Cllr Hughes, Cllr White and Cllr Tipping serve as four of the seven trustees of two charities (Kipling and John Bousfield). The Council are asked to re-confirm these arrangements or approve any changes.
9. **Review and adoption of standing orders and financial regulations on the Council's website.** Standing orders were updated in May 2023 and the NALC model has not changed significantly so it is proposed that they are adopted unchanged with a full triennial review in May 2026. Financial regulations were updated and approved in November 2024. NALC have issued one minor update applicable to contracts over £30,000. Whilst contracts of this size are unlikely it is proposed that financial regulations are updated in line with the NALC model.
10. **Review and adoption of other policies on the Council's website.** It is proposed that the Council confirms its adoption of Durham County Council's Code of Conduct as recommended by NALC, confirms the risk management policy and strategy approved in February 2025 remains appropriate and commits to review the suite of policies related to GDPR and IT Security in Autumn 2025 following an audit of personal data held by the Clerk. These were last reviewed in 2018. It is also proposed that the Council develops a Complaints Policy and updates the 2014 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy before the next meeting.
11. **Review and adoption of the asset register at 31 March 2025.** The Council's financial regulations approved in November 2025 included a new asset valuation policy. The Clerk has reviewed fixed assets owned by the Council at 31 March 2024, restated fixed assets to comply with the policy and confirmed that the only acquisitions or disposals in 2024/2025 were two donated sheds. The Council are asked to review and approve the asset register at [Appendix B](#).

12. **Finance & Accounts – See summary below**
- (a) Receipts since last meeting
 - £499.91 VAT Return 24/25 - HMRC
 - £220.00 West Clint Field Rent 25/26 – Brown
 - £44.50 Bank Interest
 - £6.00 Allotment Rent (see item 16b) - Hall
 - (b) Expenses since last meeting
 - £81.69 CDALC Membership 25/26
 - (c) Payments to approve at the meeting – £700.00 Clint Gardens Rent 24/25 & 25/26 – Youngs
 - £66.72 Playground inspections 24/25 – D.C.C.
 - £5.14 Postage reimbursement to clerk (4 stamps)
 - (d) Retrospective approval of urgent payments – all the expenses at (b) above were approved at the April 2025 meeting, so there is no need for any retrospective approval this month.
 - (e) Budget Monitoring to 30 April 2025 (month 1)
See **Appendix C** for receipts and payments in April 2025 compared with the profiled budget. At the end of April 2025 reserves were 2% (£1,085) more favourable than forecast. However, the underlying position is unchanged with £38,000 of reserves anticipated after allowing for deferred expenditure.
 - (f) See **Appendix D** for the bank reconciliation at 30 April 2025.
13. **Planning**
There has been one planning application within the parish council boundaries since the April 2025 meeting. It relates to a revised application to improve access to a former transport depot.
14. **Correspondence**
- (a) NALC have provided an induction pack for new councillors and an invite to free Zoom training in completing register of interest forms on 14 May 2025 at 6pm. Forms must be returned to DCC by 3 June 2025.
 - (b) SLCC have sent new guidance on responding to planning applications.
15. **Cemetery & Village maintenance**
To discuss progress (if any) in obtaining estimates from two contractors for further repairs to the cemetery wall and resolving a dispute regarding an invoice for snow clearance, as discussed at the April 2025 meeting.
16. **Allotments**
- (a) The invoice for repairs to the allotment wall remains outstanding.
 - (b) The vacant allotment with two sheds has been let for 6 months starting 1 May 2025, following the applicant's confirmation that they intended to re-let for a year in November and their acceptance and signing of allotment rules.
 - (c) To discuss the results of a follow up inspection of the allotments following issues raised at the April 2025 meeting.
17. **Play Park**
- (a) To consider the latest inspection sheet for the playground.
 - (b) The Clerk to update the Council on his letter of thanks to the resident who replanted the herbaceous border including an enquiry into future gardening at the play park. Cllr Hughes to update on re-planting the flower tubs.
18. **Footpaths**
Cllr White to update the Council on progress (if any) in obtaining estimates from two contractors for P3 grant-funded footpath repairs, as discussed at the April 2025 meeting.

19 **Bank and investment strategy**

The Council are asked to consider and approve the new Banking and Investment Strategy at [Appendix E](#), which sets out the need for change and the advantages and disadvantages of alternative options.

20 **AOB**

21 **Committee timetable for 2025/26**

The Council are asked to consider a timetable for all ordinary meetings up to the date of the May 2026 Annual General Meeting. 17 June 2025, 15 July 2025, 16 September 2025, 14 October 2025, 11 November 2025, 9 December 2025, 20 January 2026, 17 February 2026, 17 March 2026, 14 April 2026 are dates that would closely follow those for 2024/25 and avoid known holidays.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider and resolve the agenda items that require the exclusion of the Press and Public in accordance with the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960 for matters appertaining to confidential information.

22 **To approve the Clerk's post-probation employment contract**

As agreed at the April 2025 meeting the Clerk has successfully completed his probation period and a substantive employment contract is required. A contract will be presented for approval and signing at the meeting which removes the probation clause together with reference to the outdated starting pay and changes the pay dates from July, October and January to 30 June, 30 September and 31 March, respectively.