



To All Members of the Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the Parish Council Meeting of Sacriston Parish Council at The Fulforth Centre on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025 at 6.30 pm for the purpose of transacting the following business:

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest** -To receive and record any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in relation to items on the agenda.
- 3. Public Participation** -Questions and comments from members of the public (maximum 5 minutes per item/per individual).
- 4. Approval of Minutes** - To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2025 (attached)
- 5. Police Matters**
- 6. Planning Applications** - to receive and consider any response to applications received between 6th November 2025 and 27th November 2025.
- 7. Growing Sacriston Together in Bloom**
- 8. Parish Assets**
 - a. Bus Shelters
 - b. Village Clock
 - c. Parish Building
 - d. War Memorial
 - e. Pit Wheel
- 9. County Councillors' Reports** – to receive the information.
- 10. Reports from Group Representatives**
 - a. **Fulforth Centre** – To receive the verbal report provided.
 - b. **HR and Finance Panel** - To receive the minutes from the meeting held on 6th October 2025.
 - c. **Sacriston Allotment Association** – To receive the minutes from the meeting held on 6th October 2025.
- 11. To declare a casual vacancy due to non attendance under s.85 of the Local Government Act 1972.**
- 12. CDALC Executive Committee nominations** – To consider nominations for approval for President, Honorary Auditor and Small Councillors position (attached)
- 13. Consultation – DCC Budget Proposals for 2026/2027 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2026/2027 – 2029/30 (phase two)** – To receive the information and discuss if the council would like to submit a response (attached).
- 14. Civility and Respect Councillors Statement of Assurance** – To consider for approval.

15. Finance Report

- a. To review and approve payment of invoices received (attached).
- b. To discuss the initial proposals for the 2026–2027 budget.
- c. Tax Base and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant allocation 2026/27 to Town and Parish Councils (attached).

16. Date and Time of Next Meeting - Wednesday, 7th January 2025 at 6:30 PM

Signed: Mrs C Dixon (Clerk to the Council)



SACRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 12th November 2025 at 6.30 pm In The Fulforth Centre

Present: Cllr H. Dixon (Chair), Cllr D Robson, Cllr G Ludlow, Cllr D Cumiskey, Cllr R Mickle, Cllr M Morrell, Cllr E Hopkins, Cllr A Page, Cllr K Wilson, and Mrs C Dixon (Clerk)

Also, present was County Cllr J Pickard

Apologies: Cllr A Wray, Cllr E Waldock, Cllr A-M Johnson and Cllr R Sharp

Item No:

1. Introductions and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 6.30 pm and welcomed everyone.

Apologies **RECEIVED** from Cllr A Wray, Cllr E Waldock, Cllr A-M Johnson and Cllr R Sharp.

2. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: No declarations were received.

3. Public Participation - (Questions & Comments from the public in attendance – max 5 mins per item/individual)

There were no members of the public in attendance.

4. Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: The minutes from the Meeting held on 1st October 2025 were accepted and signed as a true record.

5. Police Matters

RESOLVED: Nothing to report.

6. Planning Applications

DM/25/02104/FPA – 8 Springside, Sacriston, Durham, DH7 6QJ – First Floor bedroom and ensuite to the side of the house over the garage and kitchen.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the planning application.

7. Growing Sacriston Together in Bloom

The chair gave a verbal update on purchasing the bulbs to go in the area around the pit tub at the Crossroads. A meeting had been held with DCC regarding next year's planting, and they are to come back to us with costs.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the verbal report.

8. Parish Assets

- a. **Bus Shelters** **RESOLVED:** Nothing to report.
- b. **Village Clock** **RESOLVED:** Nothing to report.
- c. **Parish Building** **RESOLVED:** Nothing to report.
- d. **War Memorial** **RESOLVED:** Nothing to report.
- e. **Pit Wheel**

There had been a complaint regarding the advertising banner that was placed on the pit wheel.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the complaint and to look at the possibility of moving the banner next year.

9. County Councillor Report

Cllr J Pickard;

- A meeting had taken place with Jim Murray regarding Fyndoune School, and Cllr Pickard advised the meeting of the updates. Questions were raised regarding the allotments at the school.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the verbal report. Cllr Pickard is to investigate what is to happen with the allotments.

Cllr Dixon asked Cllr Pickard if the two County Councillors would contribute some of their budget towards the selection boxes this year at the Christmas Extravaganza. It was expected that 300 selection boxes would be required at a cost of £1.79 each.

RESOLVED: Cllr Pickard **AGREED** to this proposal but would need to know more information.

10. Reports from Group Representatives

- a. **Fulforth Centre** – Verbal report given by Cllr Dixon.
- b. **HR and Finance Panel** – Verbal report given by Cllr Dixon.
- c. **Parish Allotment Association** – Verbal report given by Cllr Dixon.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the reports.

11. Wilkinsons Funfair

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** the correspondence; however, as the council already provides the Party in the Park and the Christmas Extravaganza, there is no requirement for this at this time.

12. Website

Three quotes have been obtained; however, the clerk did not have time to look at the quotes in detail in readiness for the meeting. The clerk has made a payment to the current website host due to the timing of the invoice; however, the company explained that should we choose to go with a different supplier mid-contract, they will reimburse the support part of the invoice.

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the information.

13. Festive Lights

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the quote and the installation of the lights at the Crossroads.

14. It’s Your Neighbourhood Campaign

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the information.

15. Finance Report

a. Invoices to be paid

RESOLVED: Invoices agreed to be paid and were signed by the Chair.

b. Review Budget 2025-2026

RESOLVED: to **NOTE** the up to date budget. To hold a budget workshop to discuss the budget proposals for 2026-2027.

c. VAT Claim

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** that the clerk is to submit a VAT claim.

16. Grant Applications

a. Salvation Army – Funding request for £500 towards the Christmas Toy Appeal.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the request of £500.

b. Sacriston Colliery Cricket Club – Funding request of £200 towards the running costs and equipment. This will also supply the council with a sponsorship board. The cost would be £75 per annum thereafter.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the request of £200. The Cricket Club will need to contact the council every year for approval of £75.

17. Grant Awarding Policy and Grant Application Form

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Grant Awarding Policy and Grant Application Form.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025, at 6.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 19.12 pm.

Agreed and signed by Chair of Sacriston Parish Council

Date



SACRISTON PARISH ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2025 at 6.30 pm The Fulforth Centre

Present: Cllr H. Dixon (Chair), Cllr D Robson, Cllr E Waldock, Cllr B Mickle (Allotment Rep for Cross Lane), Cllr A Page, Cllr R Sharp (Allotment Rep for Daisy Hill), and Mrs C. Dixon (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllr G Ludlow (Vice Chair)

Item No:

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence-** The Chair opened the meeting at 6.30 pm and welcomed everyone.

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** apologies received and accepted.

- 2. Declarations of Interest**

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** there were no declarations of interest.

- 3. Approval of Minutes**

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2025 as a true and accurate record, and for the Chair to sign them accordingly.

- 4. Gates/Boundary Fencing -**

RESOLVED: to **NOTE** that work is to commence at Cross Lane next week on the boundary fence. Cllr Sharp has been **APPROVED** to purchase a combination lock so that fencing can be stored in one of the allotments and so the contractors are able to access this when carrying out the work at Daisy Hill.

- 5. Treasurer's Report**

RESOLVED: Bank Account Balance: £2,419.90

Cash in Hand: £30.00

Gate Key Deposit Allocation: £600.00 – although £20 is to be reimbursed to D4 once the key is handed back.

Total Available Funds: £3,049.90

(Note: Gate Key Deposit is allocated and not available for general use)

- 6. Water Rates - Daisy Hill Allotments:** £70.04

Cross Lane Allotments: £558.52 (In credit)

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** the balance on the water rates accounts. Water is to be turned off at Daisy Hill and Cross Lane sites on 1st November 2025.

- 7. Matters Arising**

RESOLVED: to **NOTE** that vegetables have been stolen from Cross Lane, plot P2.

8. Vacant Allotments

Cross Lane: D4, P19 and P20 now have a dividing fence and gates; however, they do require some rubbish clearance.

Works Currently Underway On: Plots P14, P16, P17

Daisy Hill: 0

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** Cllr Mickle is to clear the rubbish from plots P19 and P20.

9. Waiting Lists

RESOLVED: To **NOTE** the waiting list.

10. Representative Reports

Cross Lane – Nothing to report.

Daisy Hill – Nothing to report.

11. Application for Buildings

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** applications for P15, A1 and A6.

12. Inspections

RESOLVED: To **RECEIVE** the reports regarding the inspections and to provide notice of eviction to D7.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting - The Clerk informed members that the meeting originally scheduled for Monday, 3rd November 2025, would need to be moved due to the Clerk’s annual leave.

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the meeting to be held on Monday, 10th November 2025 at 6.30 pm

Agreed and signed by Chair of Allotment Association.....

Date

Meeting Closed at 18.52pm



SACRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

HR and Finance Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2025 at 6.30 pm The Fulforth Centre

Present: Cllr H. Dixon (Chair), Cllr D Robson, Cllr E Waldock, Cllr B Mickle, Cllr A Page, Cllr R Sharp and Mrs C. Dixon (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllr G Ludlow (Vice Chair)

Item No:

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence** - The Chair opened the meeting at 7 pm and welcomed everyone.
RESOLVED: To **NOTE** apologies received and accepted.
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
RESOLVED: To **NOTE** there were no declarations of interest.
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2025 as a true and accurate record, and for the Chair to sign them accordingly.
- 4. Finance Report**
RESOLVED: The clerk confirmed the current bank account balance is in the sum of £86,161.27.
- 5. Invoices**
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the invoices and for the Chair to sign them accordingly.
- 6. HR** – The Clerk reported ongoing issues with the Council computer, noting that the battery life is very low and that the computer must remain plugged in at all times to operate. The Clerk advised that the computer is now four years old and may be approaching the end of its useful life.
RESOLVED: It was **APPROVED** to look at the replacement of the laptop.
- 7. Date and Time of Next Meeting** - The Clerk informed members that the meeting originally scheduled for Monday, 3rd November 2025, would need to be moved due to the Clerk's annual leave.
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the meeting to be held on Monday, 10th November 2025 at 6.30 pm

Meeting closed at 7.10pm.

Agreed and signed by Chair of Allotment Association.....

Date

CDALC < CDALC@durham.gov.uk >

Fri, 07 Nov 2025 2:08:30 PM +0000

Dear clerks, chairs and executive committee members,

At the CDALC AGM, it was agreed for the make-up of our Executive Committee to change, as shown in the [new Executive Committee structure](#). **We are now seeking nominations for all positions, with a deadline of 31 January 2026.**

All nominations must be submitted by the clerk, while all nominees for the larger and smaller council positions (max of one per council and a Councillor) must separately submit a 200-word statement describing relevant skills and qualities which they could offer the CDALC Executive Committee.

Voting for the positions will take place at a Special General Meeting in early March 2026 (provisional date Sat 7th Mar/venue to be confirmed). The nominees' statements will be included with the meeting papers.

Nominations and nominees' 200 word statements **must be submitted using the following two forms**. Please do not email your nominations and/or statements.

- [Nomination form for President, Honorary Auditor and Larger and Smaller Council position](#)
- [Nominee 200 word statement for Smaller and Larger Council positions](#)

Please see further information below about Executive Committee nominations:

[The new Executive Committee structure](#)

[How to nominate](#)

[Special General Meeting – March 2026](#)

What's expected of Executive Committee members

The new Executive Committee structure

The following table summarises the Executive Committee make up/positions.

No of Seats	Position	Form of Election	Tenure	Voting Rights
1	President (normally a local MP)	Elected at AGM	2 years	Non-Voting
1	Honorary Auditor	Elected at AGM	2 years	Non-Voting
8	Larger Council Position	Elected at AGM	2 years	Voting
8	Smaller Council Position	Elected at AGM	2 years	Voting
1	Darlington Borough Area	Elected by area, reported to AGM	Determined by the area	Voting
1	Gateshead Council Area	Elected by area reported to AGM	Determined by the area	Voting
1	City of Sunderland Area	Elected by area	Determined by the area	Voting

		reported to AGM		
21	Total Number Of Positions (19 voting)			

For full details of the arrangements, see the [draft minutes of the 79th CDALC AGM, item 5 and the report](#). The 2-year positions will in the first instance be in post until the 2027 AGM, anticipated in the October. From there onwards there will then be bi-annual elections.

How to nominate

- By **31 January 2026**, please inform us of any nominations your council may have for the position of:
 1. President
 2. Honorary Auditor
 3. Larger or Smaller Council representative (larger councils are > 6,000 electorate and/or >£250,000 budget) from your own council
 4. Darlington, Gateshead and Sunderland positions, these should be confirmed to us, by email, and will be ratified by the Special General Meeting

Use this [Nomination form for President, Honorary Auditor and Larger and Smaller Council position](#)

For the positions 1. President and 2. Honorary Auditor, the existing postholders are wishing to stand - they will need to be nominated to be considered:

President	Mary Kelly Foy MP
Honorary Auditor	Dan Austin (Gt Aycliffe TC Clerk) <i>Dan has indicated his willingness to step aside if there is another suitable nomination</i>

- By **31 January 2026** nominees for the larger and smaller council reps must separately provide a 200-word statement to support their application and include what skills and qualities they can offer to the CDALC Executive Committee.

Use this [Nominee 200 word statement for Smaller and Larger Council positions](#)

Applications for the larger and smaller council reps will only be accepted where there is both the clerk's confirmation of their nomination and the nominee's statement –

submitted separately. Any statements over 200 words will be cut off at the 200th word, when included in the Special General Meeting papers. We recommend when filling in the statement to prepare it in your own device and copy and paste it to reduce frustration typing it into the software. It isn't possible to save a draft.

Special General Meeting

The postholders will all be agreed at the Special General Meeting to be held in early March 2026. Provisional date is Sat 7th Mar at a venue tbc. Where there are more candidates than positions available there will be an election.

What's expected of Executive Committee members

I've attached below its functions as per the CDALC constitution but I've also described its work in practice.

The Exec Committee meets quarterly on a Wednesday afternoon, usually in the first half of March, June, Sep and December, dates for 2026 being 18 March, 17 June, 16 September and 2 December. Meetings are in person, but those needing to attend remotely can be accommodated. There's no fixed venue and over the last year we have met in Durham and at Bishop Auckland.

It would be anticipated that Exec Members should endeavour to attend their relevant Forum meeting 2026 dates are Thurs 19 Feb, 21 May, 16 July and 19 Nov at venues tbc – Smaller Councils have remote attendance option.

Over the last year the CDALC Exec Committee has met on additional occasions to collate CDALC's representations to govt consultations (remote meetings, proxy meetings and the national standards framework), we formed a focus group for a think tank looking at proposals for the future of local democracy, assessed applications and appointed nominees for DCC's Standards Committee and supported the Executive Officer making representations to DCC's Standards Committee. Individual members have worked with the Executive Officer to deliver training to new County Councillors and made representations to a LGA Peer Review of DCC.

The Exec must appoint a chair and vice-chair, at the Exec meeting following the Annual General Meeting at which appointed. They must also appoint a representative to our National Association's (NALC's) National Assembly (meet remotely 5 times a year) and 3 reps to attend and vote at the NALC AGM.

So, in summary, although at the core of the Exec Committee's work are its quarterly meetings, there are other opportunities and expectations of the role as an Executive Committee member.

CDALC Constitution states:

15. FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

15.1. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Executive Committee shall have the power to provide for the conduct, management, control and administration of the affairs of CDALC and may take such steps, incur such expenses, acquire and dispose of such property, enter into such commitments or arrangements and employ such servants or agents as may be suitable for carrying out the policy of the CDALC into effect.

15.2. The Executive Committee shall control the banking and investment of the CDALC funds.

15.3. No money shall be borrowed by or on behalf of the CDALC without the Executive Committee's consent.

15.4. The Executive Committee shall present an annual report and submit the audited accounts to the Annual General Meeting.

For any further queries, please come back to me.

Many thanks



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CDALC < CDALC@durham.gov.uk >

Tue, 25 Nov 2025 5:14:41 PM +0000

Dear clerks, chairs and executive committee,

Please see attached a letter from DCC's Corporate Director of Finance, details of the County Council's latest consultation on its budget proposals for 2026/27 and its Medium Term Financial Plan for the 4 years 2026/27-2029/30 - [Budget proposals for 2026/27 and Medium Term Fi... | Durham County Council](#) . This is an extremely important consultation for our sector as it includes the proposals to cease the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme grants which, since 2013, have been paid to those of our parish and town councils with the lowest tax raising capacity. In 2025/26, 56 of our 109 County Durham precepting parish/town councils and meetings received a grant which is based on a formula agreed between CDALC and DCC and is largely focussed on those of our councils serving the most deprived communities. In 2023, the County Council decided to reduce the grants by 50% over the three years, 2024/25 – 2026/7 whereas these new proposals are for a complete axing of the grants commencing in April 2026.

The consultation period ends on 4th January 2026 and we urge all councils to respond. In Paul Darby's (DCC's Corporate Director of Resources) attached letter he specifically asks consultees to consider:

- If any of the proposals will have a negative impact on your organisation's priorities and workload
- If so, how might these be minimised
- If the proposals were not to go ahead, to suggest alternatives for DCC to consider to meet its budget reduction targets.

The overall consultation is about the County Council finding additional savings to those it has previously identified, in order to help with balancing its budget next year and for the four years to 2029/30. It is also linked to the amount the County Council increases its own council tax by ie how much more savings it needs to find depending on council tax increases, and the introduction of a cap of 90% council tax support for working age claimants. The latter, which has always been 100% since the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in 2013 was the trigger for the original grants being paid to parish and town councils, when tax raising capacities were reduced. Working age claimants had previously been subsidised directly by central government. The 90% cap will result in a collective increase of £310,000 tax raising capacity for our parish and town councils, however, the reduction of £1 million in grant funding leaves a deficit of £691,000 for all our councils. That's just to standstill, without taking inflation into account. [I've pasted in below some of the headline councils impacted by the proposals.](#)

The CDALC Executive will be meeting next Weds 3rd Dec to agree our Association's response which we will share with you as soon as we have sent it. Thank you to all of you who participated in our Forum meetings last week and contributed to the discussions on this issue. Some of you were able to speak directly to DCC's Cllr Nicola Lyons, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Civic Resilience on the negative impact of the proposals on your councils. But please do also respond to the consultation directly.

There are two online events for the budget proposals on Mon 1 Dec at 5pm and Thurs 4 Dec at 1.30pm which you can find on the consultation's letstalk page at [Budget proposals for 2026/27 and Medium Term Fi... | Durham County Council](#)

Most notable impacts for councils of cessation of LCTRS grants – in £net and %

For the full data, in DCC's Cabinet report of 19 Nov 2025, see [Council Tax Base 2026-27 - Appendices 4.pdf](#). The full Cabinet papers are at [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 19 November 2025, 10.00 am - Durham County Council](#).

Net £ impacts – in decreasing order – only councils over £1,000 net decrease shown

Parish Area	Net Impact (decrease) £	Increase / (Decrease) in Council Tax Charges Required to Standstill %
Peterlee Town Council	(160,988.41)	8.26%
Great Aycliffe Town Council	(114,617.24)	5.44%
Ferryhill Town Council	(109,724.14)	18.36%
Seaham Town Council	(95,024.97)	6.91%
Horden Parish Council	(60,393.34)	8.56%
Stanley Town Council	(49,740.75)	5.09%
Easington Colliery Parish Council	(44,925.82)	11.44%
Sildon Town Council	(43,126.07)	5.28%
Murton Parish Council	(28,303.43)	7.73%
Monk Hesleden Parish Council	(18,500.91)	5.68%
Cornforth Parish Council	(18,361.29)	26.87%
Trimdon Parish Council	(17,999.33)	9.28%
South Hetton Parish Council	(8,979.93)	7.05%
Wheatley Hill Parish Council	(6,489.02)	4.78%
Fishburn Parish Council	(6,183.80)	5.66%
Haswell Parish Council	(6,034.02)	8.95%
Trimdon Foundry Parish Council	(5,352.59)	7.52%
Belmont Parish Council	(3,812.98)	3.48%
Hutton Henry Parish Council	(2,184.26)	4.98%
West Auckland Parish Council	(2,174.49)	8.70%
Sacrison Parish Council	(2,034.68)	3.20%
Cockfield Parish Council	(1,532.16)	5.69%
Kelloe Parish Council	(1,402.39)	8.92%
Eldon Parish Council	(1,170.96)	9.04%

% impact – only councils over 5% shown

Cornforth Parish Council	(18,361.29)	26.87%
Ferryhill Town Council	(109,724.14)	18.36%
Easington Colliery Parish Council	(44,925.82)	11.44%
Trimdon Parish Council	(17,999.33)	9.28%
Eldon Parish Council	(1,170.96)	9.04%
Haswell Parish Council	(6,034.02)	8.95%
Kelloe Parish Council	(1,402.39)	8.92%
West Auckland Parish Council	(2,174.49)	8.70%
Horden Parish Council	(60,393.34)	8.56%
Barningham Parish Council	(137.57)	8.45%

Peterlee Town Council	(160,988.41)	8.26%
Murton Parish Council	(28,303.43)	7.73%
Trimdon Foundry Parish Council	(5,352.59)	7.52%
South Hetton Parish Council	(8,979.93)	7.05%
Seaham Town Council	(95,024.97)	6.91%
Cockfield Parish Council	(1,532.16)	5.69%
Monk Hesleden Parish Council	(18,500.91)	5.68%
Fishburn Parish Council	(6,183.80)	5.66%
Great Aycliffe Town Council	(114,617.24)	5.44%
Greencroft Parish Council	(328.94)	5.36%
Sildon Town Council	(43,126.07)	5.28%
Stanley Town Council	(49,740.75)	5.09%
Edmondsley Parish Council	(575.22)	5.03%

Kindest regards

Web: <https://cdalc.info/>



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1 Attachment(s)

Further Budget Consultation 2...

209.1 KB



Civility & Respect

IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

Councillor's Statement of Assurance

I confirm that I have read the council's Code of Conduct, including the principles of public life, and understand my obligations and the behaviour expected of me whenever I am acting as a councillor.

Understanding my duties as a councillor, I will adopt the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. I will also:

- Behave respectfully towards others, including those I disagree with.
- Uphold the values identified in my council's Code of Conduct.
- Attend training required by the council as part of my role as a councillor.

Signed _____

Name _____

Date _____

Description	NET	VAT	TOTAL	Paid
Fencing for Daisy Hill and Cross Lane Allotments			£10,920.00	17/11/2025
Grass cutting at The Old Church			£200.00	
Donation			£200.00	20/11/2025
Donation			£500.00	20/11/2025
Lights at Crossroads	£1,156.00	£231.20	£1,387.20	
Salary			£1,055.78	26/11/2025

Contact: town and parish precepts
Direct Tel:
email: townandparishprecepts@durham.gov.uk
Our ref: T&PC 26/27



Ms C Dixon
Sacriston Parish Council
The Fulforth Centre
Front Street
Sacriston
Durham
DH7 6JT

Agenda Item 15c

10 November 2025

Dear Parish / Town Clerk

Tax Base and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant allocation 2026/27 to Town and Parish Councils

On 19 November 2025, Cabinet will consider the tax base for 2026/27. This will be subject to confirmation once the County Council meets to consider the proposed changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for working age claimants on 10 December 2025.

Over the period 18 July and 26 September 2025, the council consulted on these proposals and is now proposing that the LCTRS is moved to an Income Banded Scheme with a capped maximum contribution of 90%, that the second adult reduction is removed, that there is a fixed non-dependant deduction made where applicable and that the savings (capital) allowance is lowered in the means test calculation.

These changes need to be agreed by Full Council but have a material impact on the tax base calculation.

On 19 November 2025, the Cabinet will also consider the latest 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Planning (16) financial forecasts for the County Council. These forecasts show that without any Council Tax increases being applied and before any new additional savings are factored in, the Council faces a budget shortfall of £27.567 million in 2026/27 and £82.137 million across a four-year planning period. This is a worse position than what was set out in the previous report to Cabinet on 17 September 2025, with the financial challenge increasing by £7.520 million in 2026/27 and £11.118 million in total across the four-year planning period.

Resources

Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UE

Main Telephone 03000 26 0000

Text messaging service: 07786027280 – please start your message with the word INFO

To assist with addressing the budget challenge the Council faces, £10.057 million of new savings proposals have been developed, which are profiled: £9.103 million (90%) in 2026/27; £0.586 million (6%) in 2027/28; and £0.368 million (4%) in 2028/29.

Despite the development of £10.057 million of new savings proposals, and assuming all of these are ultimately agreed, a significant budget deficit remains. Cabinet will therefore need to carefully consider options to raise council tax, find further financial savings and/or consider the use of reserves as a temporary measure to help balance the budget next year. The outcomes of the local government finance settlement will be a material consideration in this regard.

For 2026/27, Durham County Council has calculated an overall (indicative) council tax base of **151,633.6 Band D equivalent properties**. This represents a 1.93% increase from the previous year and reflects prudent assumptions around property growth, exemptions, premiums and discounts and assumes the changes to the LCTRS for working age claimants is approved at County Council on 19 December 2025.

You will recall, in 2024/25, following the budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 14) consultation, the council approved the reduction to the grant payments to town and parish councils over a three year period (2024/25 – 2026/27). The reductions previously agreed were £250,000 per annum in each of the three financial years. Payments currently being made to town and parish councils totals circa £1 million in 2025/26.

As part of our Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 16), the council proposes to cease the LCTRS grant payments to town and parish councils entirely in 2026/27, to assist the council in meeting its significant budget challenge next year. Public consultation on this and other Phase 2 budget proposals will run from 21 November 2025 to 4 January 2026, though I would advise you to plan on this basis at this stage.

The outcome of the Phase 2 consultation and savings proposals will be considered by Cabinet on 21 January 2026 and included in the council's 2026/27 budget and MTFP 16 report to County Council on 18 February 2026.

Indicative Tax Base Position 2026/27

Your (indicative) tax base (note that this is subject to the agreement of the changes to the LCTRS 2026/27 at County Council on 10 December 2025), and the impact of withdrawing the grant payments to town and parish councils is shown below for your council:

Sacriston Parish Council	
Current Tax Base (2025/26) [A]	1,380.40
Tax Base for 2026/27[B]	1,385.70
Tax Base Increase/(Decrease) from 2025/26 [C] = [B] - [A]	5.30
Current Band D Council Tax (2025/26) [D]	45.91
Increase/(Decrease) in Council Tax Yield [E] ([C] x [D])	243.32
Removal of 2025/26 LCTRS Grant [F]	-2,278.00
Net Position [E] - [F]	-2,034.68

*This is the amount you would have to increase or decrease your precept by to give you a standstill position in terms of resource availability (in cash terms).

Town and parish councils are asked to plan on the basis that:

- the LCTRS policy change considered within the tax base assumptions is approved at Council on 10 December 2025; and
- the removal of the LCTRS grant payments to town and parish councils is ultimately approved following the Phase 2 budget savings proposal public and stakeholder consultation.

I will write to you separately if the LCTRS changes are not agreed at the County Council meeting on 10 December 2025 to inform you of the revised position.

Whilst I am sure that the proposal to cease the LCTRS grant payments to town and parish councils will be disappointing, I would be grateful if you could submit your precept requirement by 23 January 2026 to enable this to be incorporated into the 2026/27 budget and council tax setting reports to Cabinet and Council in February 2026. I have attached the relevant Official Precept Request forms within this letter.

Precept payments will be paid directly into your bank account in accordance with the instalment profiles that applied in 2025/26. **Please ensure that all relevant bank account details are supplied on the attached form. Please also supply your current email address for remittance notification.**

If your precept is greater than £140,000 you must also comply with the requirements of the Council Tax Regulations 2003, which require additional information to be published as follows:

- **Gross expenditure breakdown by class of service provided;**
- **Income broken down by class of service provided;**
- **Net expenditure broken down by class of service provided;**
- **A statement of the effect of the aggregate gross expenditure and net budget requirement upon the level of precept issued.**

Should you require any further information with regards to this letter, please do not hesitate to contact my Technical Accountancy Team via email @ **townandparishprecepts@durham.gov.uk**. Further information is provided in the November 2025 Cabinet report, which is available on the Durham County Council website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Darby
Corporate Director of Resources

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

OFFICIAL PRECEPT REQUEST 2026/27 –Sacriston Parish Council

Please return a completed, signed electronic request via email to townandparishprecepts@durham.gov.uk.

1. Precept Requirement for 2026/27	£
2. Tax Base 2026/27	1,385.70
3. Band D Charge	£
Divide the precept figure in Box 1 by the tax base figure in box 2 to calculate the Band D charge for the year commencing 1st April 2026	
4. Date of Meeting	
This is the date of the parish/town council meeting where the precept in box 1 above was agreed	

Print Name (Chairman)		Signature		Date	
Print Name (Clerk)		Signature		Date	

Bank details for payment:

Name of bank					
Bank address					
Sort code		Account number			
Email for remittance advice					

It is essential that all of the above information is provided. Failure to do so may result in a delay in your precept/grant being paid.

