



# Great Aycliffe Town Council

Council Offices - School Aycliffe Lane - Newton Aycliffe - Co. Durham DL5 6QF

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## ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

5th June 2015

### Foreword by the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Mrs Wendy Hillary

It was a great honour for me to represent the Town Council of Great Aycliffe in my role as Mayor. As well as the formal civic duties I attended a further 158 engagements. It has been my pleasure to meet so many residents of the town many of whom were celebrating special occasions. I wanted to mention a few memorable moments from my year in office which was so difficult because I enjoyed it all. However, in no particular order here are a few –



meeting two Royal Visitors, HRH Countess of Wessex at the opening of the North East Autism Centre and HRH Duke of Gloucester at the 30th Anniversary of DISC ... the Remembrance Day Parade and tree planting ...presenting Councillor Robert Fleming with his Freedom of the Town Scroll ....visiting the schools Woodham Academy and Vane Road in particular, I could go on and on.

I would like to thank everyone who helped me raise £4840.00 for my nominated charities, Cruise Bereavement Care and County Durham School Benevolent Fund, this included the generous donation from Barclays Bank.

The Town Council always endeavours to rise to any challenges whilst focussing on the community's needs and continuing to improve our services. However, this is becoming increasingly challenging during these current economic times and there may be some difficult decision to be made in the future.

Following the town wide questionnaire undertaken as part of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan process the Council will undertake a full review of our aims and targets. We are committed to providing the best and most appropriate services for our residents.

This annual report provides a brief summary of some key achievements from the past year and an overview of financial information.

### A message from the new Mayor, Councillor Mrs Mary Dalton

It was an honour to once again be appointed as Mayor for the Town Council of Great Aycliffe at the Annual General Meeting held in May. This will be my fourth time as Mayor of Great Aycliffe and I am as dedicated, as always, to undertaking the role to the very best of my ability. I am looking forward to another year of civic events and public engagements. If you would like me to attend an event or special occasion please contact Christine Ryder on 01325 300700.

The Town Council has been working very hard to find



cost savings, yet still deliver the high level of services the residents of Great Aycliffe have become accustomed to. Due to careful management of the Town Council finances we have continued to make savings without the need to make cuts to front line services or staffing levels. We are starting the year in a healthy financial position but the Council faces some significant financial challenges over the next few years. The Town Council continues to support the preparation of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan and is committed to delivering the best plan possible to address the needs and comments that residents have made.

We encourage the residents of Great Aycliffe to engage with the Town Council and make their views known. We have a customer panel where residents can be actively involved in Town Council business and we are always looking for new members. Please contact the Town Council Offices 01325 300700 for further details. Or, why not attend one of our Council or committee meetings to see for yourself what goes on. Everyone is welcome.

### SOME KEY THINGS WE DID LAST YEAR

- ✓ Achieved £235,000 savings across all service areas which have been added to council balances, this will enable us to continue to deliver all of our services to you without the need to make cuts
- ✓ Once again achieved a clean bill of health with our finances and received an unqualified audit making this the eighth year in a row
- ✓ Even with difficult financial times we still managed to assist 15 different local organisations by giving over £2800 in grants



- ✓ Installed a MUGA in Horndale Park which was done in partnership with Horndale Residents Association, Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership and Aycliffe Youth Council
- ✓ Completed a town wide survey as part of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan consultation process
- ✓ Committed to undertaking a soft retail needs assessment to gain an independent view of the retail position and future retail prospects for the Town, this is in response to the comments made by resident during the consultation. We cannot force retailers to come to Aycliffe but we are hoping to gather some definitive information on retail
- ✓ Completed a successful funding bid for the Neighbourhood Plan receiving a grant for £7521
- ✓ Provided and manage a wide range of special community events Fun-in-the-Parks, Santa Tours, Senior Citizens' Excursions and Christmas Lights
- ✓ Assisted and support other event organisers – 10k race, 3k Fun Run, Remembrance Parade, Junior Cross Country, Annual Indoor Bowls Competition, Vintage Vehicles Event and Community Enhancement Awards

- ✓ Held another successful 'go run for fun' event with over 300 young people taking part.
- ✓ Held our last ever Great Aycliffe Show which is being replaced by Aycliffe Festival. The Town Council are encouraging and helping groups and organisations to hold 10 days of community events across the whole of the parish area
- ✓ Reinstated a very successful Firework Show after health and safety concerns were addressed
- ✓ Continued to encourage interest in the environment of Great Aycliffe through the Environment Officer who works with the community and schools by holding 68 public environmental events and delivering 32 school environmental sessions

### We also continue to provide our usual services such as:-

- ✓ Continue to provide an environmental centre at Moore Lane
- ✓ Held another successful Town Pride Environment Week working with the Youth Council, local schools and volunteers
- ✓ Manage 9 parks, all with play equipment and provide additional play areas at Scott Place, School Aycliffe and the Oak Leaf Sport Complex
- ✓ Continue to provide 6 football pitches, Mini-soccer and six-a-side pitches
- ✓ Continue to run the Oak Leaf Sports Complex - indoor bowls, sports hall, squash courts, bar and catering, children's holidays courses, indoor/outdoor sports activities
- ✓ Continue to run the Oak Leaf Golf Complex – 18 hole golf course and an 18 bay floodlit driving range
- ✓ Continue to provide a limited supply of free dog poo bags
- ✓ Continue our partnership working with Durham County Council
- ✓ Worked with a range of partners to deliver a variety of events and services
- ✓ Manage Stephenson Way Cemetery and West Cemetery and provide grounds maintenance and burial service at St Andrew's Churchyard
- ✓ Provision and maintenance of Aycliffe Angels Memorial Garden
- ✓ Maintenance of war memorial and flagpole
- ✓ Run 2 pre-school play settings – with 'good' Ofsted ratings
- ✓ Provide a range of civic events
- ✓ Provide 212 allotment plots in 5 different locations. Including 2 allotment sites with pigeon or poultry facilities
- ✓ Employ a Town Pride Team and a team of Park Patrol Operatives
- ✓ Provide public seats in many locations
- ✓ Provide bus shelters with litter bins (not the ones with adverts)
- ✓ Grounds maintenance and environmental management at a number of key sites
- ✓ Assist Aycliffe Youth Council
- ✓ Provide a lorry park
- ✓ Encourage Community Empowerment through Customer Panel, Consultation and Open Days
- ✓ Provide small grants to local voluntary organisations
- ✓ Comment on planning applications



# NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING



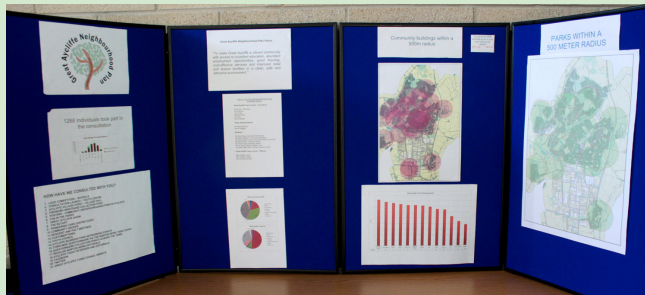
Consultation began on the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan in June 2014 with 15000 questionnaires being circulated across the Town and officers attending a large number of community meetings and events in order to gain as many views as possible. Questionnaire responses have set the priorities for the plan which are retail, environment, protecting our important greens from development and housing - with older persons' accommodation being a key topic for further analysis.

A vision for the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan was developed from the comments made by residents and subsequently consulted on. The following vision was chosen by residents - *"To make Great Aycliffe a vibrant community, the Neighbourhood Plan will seek to enhance the natural environment, support and encourage high quality housing, local jobs and improved retail and leisure facilities in a healthy, green and attractive town"*



Working groups have been established to address the issues and consider the options. The environment and housing groups have met on a number of occasions to review residents' comments and compare these against the national and local planning policies to see if there is anything the Neighbourhood Plan can add to the existing planning framework which is specific to our area and needs.

£7521 of grant funding has been received from the Department for Communities and Local Government to help provide planning expertise, soft market testing for future retail needs, publicity and printing costs.



## Retail Update

Retail is the biggest priority for residents. Respondents like the appearance of the town centre since its redevelopment but still have concerns about the amount of vacant units and lack of choice. There is support for restaurants and bars within the town centre although, the clear priority is to improve the retail offer, widen the choice of shops and attract the bigger brands. However, before options can be explored it is essential to ascertain whether national retailers are interested in investing anywhere on the Town.

As a direct result of the consultation, the Town Council has secured funding to commission a commercial agent to undertake some independent soft market testing. The brief is to approach retailers and the leisure industry (bars and restaurants) to determine whether they would be interested in setting up business anywhere in Newton Aycliffe. If the answer is 'no' they will ask the reasons 'why'. This research will run over a 6 week period and the outcome will be reported in the local press, social media and through local community meetings.

The Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory planning document which makes allocations for land and business use. The plan is not a delivery mechanism; therefore it must be made clear that as much as the residents want the major brands to come to Aycliffe, retailers will only make a decision on a sound commercial basis.

## Environment Update

Green spaces are key to our identity and residents told us they want them protecting. The working group has been plotting and prioritising the green spaces, which has been a mammoth task. We will be undertaking a character assessment and when this has been complete this will help us plan the next step to protect the key greens and wildlife corridors.

Aycliffe Village residents are keen to keep their 'village' feel and we are working with the planners to find the best way to achieve this within the planning boundaries and restrictions.



## Housing Update

We have been gathering statistical data to help support any future housing needs for residents and were amazed to find a predicted growth of 82% for residents aged 85+. There was a large amount of support for older persons' accommodation which may not necessarily be bungalows but could be sheltered accommodation, apartments or life-time homes.

## Business update

Aycliffe Business Park have been undertaking work on a 'Shaping the Future' project and we have been working with the business community on this and have the Chairman of the Business Park Steering Group on the main Neighbourhood Plan working group. Whilst it may appear that we have overlooked the business sector, we do not want to overlap or repeat the work already undertaken and plan to incorporate any suitable business planning items into the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan.

The information from the working groups will be collated and developed into an issues and options paper where residents will have the opportunity to vote on their preferred option. This work is expected to be completed in the next few months. We are aiming to have a draft Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan completed around Christmas, giving sufficient time for consultation, independent assessment and planning review, prior to going to referendum in May 2016.

## BYERLEY PARK, HORNDALE & COBBLERS HALL WARD



**John D. Clare**  
Lab - Tel. 318333



**Ian Gray**  
Lab - Tel. 313770



**Brian Hall**  
Lab - Tel. 314105



**Irene Hewitson**  
Ind - Tel. 318763



**Paul Kjenstad**  
Lab - Tel. 07814 777212



**Alison Palmer**  
Lab - Tel. 314559

## WOODHAM WARD



**Barbara A. Clare**  
Lab - Tel. 318333



**Neil Collinson**  
Lab - Tel. 300072



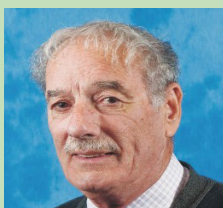
**Mary Dalton**  
Lab - Tel. 320499



**Michael Dalton**  
Lab - Tel. 320499



**Sandra Haigh**  
Ind - Tel. 318303



**Keith Henderson**  
Lab - Tel. 319542

# KNOW YOUR COUNCILLOR

## AYCLIFFE CENTRAL WARD



**Jim Atkinson**  
Lab - Tel. 310791

## AYCLIFFE VILLAGE



**Bill Blenkinsopp**  
Ind - Tel. 788893

## SIMPASTURE WARD



**Derek G. Atkinson**  
Lab - Tel. 301395



**John Clark**  
Lab-Tel. 07972 170190



**Valerie M. Raw**  
Lab - Tel. 311447

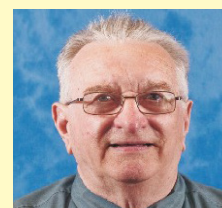


**William Iveson**  
Lab - Tel. 312490

## WEST WARD



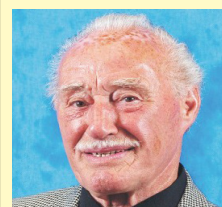
**Eddy Adam**  
Lab-Tel. 07900 701966



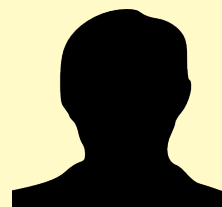
**Raymond Bowman**  
Lab-Tel. 07944 067396



**Arun M. Chandran**  
Lab - Tel. 313224



**George C. Gray**  
Ind - Tel. 314934



**Vacancy**



**Tom Twissell**  
Lab-Tel. 07455 666550

## SHAFTO / ST. MARY'S WARD



**Robert S. Fleming**  
Lab - Tel. 310025



**Wendy Hillary**  
Lab - Tel. 313273



**Malcolm Iveson**  
Lab - Tel. 319759



**Chris Wheeler**  
Lab - Tel. 318805

## NEVILLE WARD



**Jed P. Hillary**  
Lab - Tel. 313273



**Sarah Iveson**  
Lab - Tel. 319759



# MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015 / 2016

## CHAIRMAN / VICE-CHAIRMAN

## Number of Members

**COUNCIL** (*All Members*) **Councillor Mrs. Mary Dalton (Mayor), Councillor Jed Hillary (Deputy Mayor)**

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** (*27 Members + Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors E. Adam, D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, B. Blenkinsopp, R. Bowman, A.M. Chandran, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, J. Clark, N. Collinson, Mrs. M. Dalton, M.A. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, I. Gray, G.C. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, P. Kjenstad, Mrs. V.M. Raw, T. Twissell and C. Wheeler (1 Vacancy).

**RECREATION COMMITTEE** (*27 Members + Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors E. Adam, D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, B. Blenkinsopp, R. Bowman, A.M. Chandran, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, J. Clark, N. Collinson, Mrs. M. Dalton, M.A. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, I. Gray, G.C. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, P. Kjenstad, Mrs. V.M. Raw, T. Twissell and C. Wheeler (1 Vacancy).

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** (*24 Members + Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors E. Adam, D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, B. Blenkinsopp, R. Bowman, A.M. Chandran, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, N. Collinson, Mrs. M. Dalton, M.A. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, I. Gray, G.C. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, Mrs. V.M. Raw and C. Wheeler (1 Vacancy).

## SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS from the Policy and Resources Committee

**SERVICE REVIEW WORKING GROUP** (*9 Members*)

Councillors J. Atkinson, W. Blenkinsopp, A.M. Chandran, R.S. Fleming, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, M. Iveson and C. Wheeler.

**GENERAL APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE** (*Members chosen as necessary*)

**PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE** (*10 Members + Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. M. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, Mrs. W. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson and Mrs. V.M. Raw.

**APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE** (*9 Members + Deputy Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors E. Adam, A.M. Chandran, J.D. Clare, M.A. Dalton, K. Henderson, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, W. Iveson, P. Kjenstad and C. Wheeler.

**AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE** (*7 Members + Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors A.M. Chandran, M. Dalton, Mrs. M. Dalton, G.C. Gray, B. Hall, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, M. Iveson and Mrs. S.J. Iveson.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT MEMBER WORKING GROUP** (*10 Members*)

Councillors D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, A.M. Chandran, R.S. Fleming, G.C. Gray, B. Hall, K. Henderson, M. Iveson, Mrs. V.M. Raw and C. Wheeler.

**CHARGES WORKING GROUP** (*Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Environment, Recreation and Policy and Resources Committees plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor*)

Councillors J. Atkinson, A. Chandran, Mrs. M. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, I. Gray, B. Hall, J.P. Hillary and M. Iveson.

**REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE** (*9 Members + Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio*)

Councillors J. Atkinson, W. Blenkinsopp, A.M. Chandran, Mrs. M. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, B. Hall, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson and C. Wheeler.

## WORKING GROUPS from the Recreation Committee

**GOLF COURSE WORKING GROUP** (*4 Members + Chair and Vice of Recreation*)

Councillors D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, R.S. Fleming, B. Hall, J.P. Hillary and M. Iveson.

**SPORTS COMPLEX WORKING GROUP** (*Members chosen as necessary*)

**FESTIVAL WORKING GROUP** (*4 Members + Chairman & Vice-Chair of Recreation*)

Councillors J. Atkinson, J. Clark, M.A. Dalton, Mrs. M. Dalton, B. Hall and J.P. Hillary.

## GRANTS / DONATIONS

The Council considered applications for Grants and the following were agreed and paid out over the year 2014/15.

• Oakleaf Golf Club Junior Team	£300	• Oakleaf Golf Club	£ 20
• Aycliffe & District Bus Preservation Soc	£100	• Great Aycliffe Cancer Support	£200
• Neville Community Centre	£ 20	• Lifeline Community Action	£300
• Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe	£100	• Holocaust Memorial Event	£100
• Get Kids Going	£ 50	• Durham County School Benevolent Fund	£100
• The Soccer Factory	£125	• Education Centre for Children with	
• Kate Avery	£200	Down Syndrome	£200
• Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe	£ 20	• St. Clare's Foodbank	£1,000

## MAYOR'S ANNUAL EVENTS

Councillor Mrs. Mary Dalton has been appointed as Mayor of Great Aycliffe for 2015/16. The Mayor's chosen charities for her year in office will be:- The Renal Unit at James Cook Hospital, Neville Parade Community Centre and Scout / Guide Organisations of Great Aycliffe.

### MAYOR'S "AT HOME"

Thursday, 9th July 2015 - Council Offices - (2.00 p.m.)

### MAYOR'S CIVIC SERVICE

Sunday, 13th September 2015 – St. Clare's Church - (10 a.m.)

### MAYOR'S CIVIC CAROL SERVICE

Sunday, 20th December 2015 – St. Clare's Church - (6 p.m.)

### MAYOR'S CIVIC BALL

Friday, 19 February 2016 – Redworth Hall Hotel

### CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT (Provisional)

Friday, 4 September 2015 at the Oakleaf Golf Complex



## REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2015/16

- (a) **Youth Council - Two + Corporate & Policy Officer**  
Councillor D.G. Atkinson, Councillor J. Atkinson, Corporate & Policy Officer
- (b) **County Durham Association of Local Councils - Two Members only at AGM + Town Clerk**  
Councillor R.S. Fleming, Councillor M. Iveson, Town Clerk
- (c) **Aycliffe Village Community Association - One**  
Councillor C. Wheeler
- (d) **Woodham Village Community Association - Two**  
Councillor N. Collinson, Councillor K. Henderson
- (e) **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Local Council's Committee - Two + Town Clerk**  
Councillor R.S. Fleming, Councillor B. Hall, Town Clerk
- (f) **Larger Local Councils' Forum - Two + Town Clerk**  
Councillor R.S. Fleming, Councillor M. Iveson, Town Clerk
- (g) **Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre - One**  
Councillor C. Wheeler
- (h) **Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society - One**  
Councillor I. Gray
- (i) **Friends of Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve - One**  
Councillor I. Gray
- (j) **Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway - One**  
Councillor J. Atkinson
- (k) **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Five**  
Councillor J. Atkinson, Councillor M.A. Dalton, Councillor I. Gray, Councillor B. Hall, Councillor C. Wheeler

## MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

27th May 2015	Environment	25th Nov. 2015	Environment
27th May 2015	Recreation *	25th Nov. 2015	Recreation *
3rd June 2015	Policy & Resources	2nd Dec. 2015	Policy & Resources
10th June 2015	Full Council	9th Dec. 2015	Full Council
1st July 2015	Environment	13th Jan. 2016	Environment
1st July 2015	Recreation *	13th Jan. 2016	Recreation *
8th July 2015	Policy & Resources	20th Jan. 2016	Policy & Resources
15th July 2015	Full Council	27th Jan. 2016	Full Council
2nd Sept. 2015	Environment	24th Feb. 2016	Environment
2nd Sept. 2015	Recreation *	24th Feb. 2016	Recreation *
9th Sept. 2015	Policy & Resources	2nd Mar. 2016	Policy & Resources
16th Sept. 2015	Full Council	9th Mar. 2016	Full Council
14th Oct. 2015	Environment	6th Apr. 2016	Environment
14th Oct. 2015	Recreation *	6th Apr. 2016	Recreation *
21st Oct. 2015	Policy & Resources	13th Apr. 2016	Policy & Resources
28th Oct. 2015	Full Council	20th Apr. 2016	Full Council
All meetings commence at 7.15 p.m.			

\* The **Recreation Committee** will commence immediately after the Environment Committee Meeting.

**11th MAY, 2016 - COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING - 7.15 p.m.**

**18th MAY, 2016 - PARISH MEETING - 7.15 p.m. (\*\*\*)**

The Public and Press are cordially invited to attend.

“The Public Entrance to the Council Chamber will be open 30 minutes prior to the commencement of meetings”.

### COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES

**Personnel Sub-Committee** - This Sub-Committee will be held as and when required.

**Audit Sub-Committee** – This Sub-Committee will meet, as a minimum, on a quarterly basis. (Dates as appropriate)

**Appeals Sub-Committee** – This Sub-Committee will be held as and when required.

**General Appeals Sub-Committee** – Will be held as and when required.

**The following Working Groups will meet as and when required.**

**Charges Working Group** **Asset Management Member Working Group**

**Golf Working Group** **Sports Complex Working Group**

**Show Working Group**

**Service Review Working Group**

**Personnel Member Appeal Panel**

(\*\*\*) (*N.B. – this is not a meeting of the Town Council but a meeting of local government electors in the Council's area. Any queries about the Parish Meeting can be made to the Town Clerk on 01325 300700.*)

## MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Listed below for public disclosure is the allowances and other expenses claimed by the Council's Elected Members during the financial year 2014/15 in line with statutory requirements as set out in the Local Authority (Members Allowances) Regulations 2004.

Surname	Forenames	Title	Total Payment	Allowance	Subsistence	Mileage Claim
Adam	Eddy	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Atkinson	Derek	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Atkinson	Jim	Mr	£1,105.73	£1,059.60		£46.13
Blenkinsopp	William M.	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Bowman	Raymond T	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Chandran	Arun M	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Clare	Barbara Anne	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Clare	John D	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Clark	John	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Collinson	Neil	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Dalton	Michael A	Mr	0	0		
Dalton	Mary	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Fleming	Robert S	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Gray	George C	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Gray	Ian	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Haigh	Sandra	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Hall	Brian	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Henderson	Keith	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Hewitson	Irene	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Hillary	Jeremy P	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Hillary	Wendy P	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Iveson	Malcolm	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Iveson	Sarah J	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Iveson	William	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Kjenstad	Paul	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Palmer	Alison	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Raw	Valerie M	Mrs	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Summers	Dan	Mr	£529.80	£529.80		
Twissell	Tom	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		
Wheeler	Chris	Mr	£1,059.60	£1,059.60		

*Any subsistence figures are for Conferences – As per approved Members Allowance Scheme*



# Annual Report on the Council’s Finances 2014/15

### 1. Introduction

Welcome to the annual report on the Council’s finances which we hope you will find informative and of interest.

This report sets out the Council’s spending plans for this year; 2015/16, whilst also providing a summary of the Council’s financial performance over the last year; 2014/15, including the outcome of the annual audit inspection.

### 2. The Council Budget

The Council Budget is an estimate of the resources that the Council will require to be raised from council tax to fund all of the services it provides for the year ahead.

The Budget covers the financial year which runs from 1st April to 31st March.

The Council needs to set a Revenue Budget and a Capital Budget each year.

The **Revenue Budget** funds the day to day running costs of the Council’s services such as salaries and supplies and the net cost, after deducting any income receivable from fees and charges and grants, is met from the Town Council proportion of the Council Tax bill.

The **Capital Budget** funds major one off investment in the Council’s fixed assets such as its buildings, vehicles and play areas and is funded from the Council’s Balances and Reserves and any external grants that may be available.

### 3. 2015/16 Revenue Budget

The 2015/16 Revenue Budget was developed on the principle of maintaining services whilst keeping the required increase in council tax as low as possible.

Additional budget provision needed to be made for the following:-

- A 2.2% officer pay award and implementation of a minimum hourly rate of £7 per hour for the lowest paid Council staff;
- A £27,000 cut to the Council Tax Support Grant funding;
- A significant fall in pre-school funding income following a fall in numbers attending and a cut to the funding rate; and
- Other unavoidable increases in running costs.

Service Area	2015/16 Budget £
Members and Civic Expenses	69,850
Corporate Management, Finance and Administration	456,700
Neighbourhood Plan	37,500
Capital Financing Charges	30,900
Pre Schools	234,400
Community Events	134,450
Sports Complex	758,250
Golf Course and Driving Range	277,900
Environment and Open Spaces	140,150
Parks, Sports Pitches and Play Areas	326,200
Works and Depot	173,450
Street Equipment	14,400
Cemeteries	79,800
Allotments	18,850
Contingency Sum	27,500
<b>Total Cost of Running Town Council Services</b>	<b>2,780,300</b>
<b>Capital Programme Investment in Council Assets</b>	<b>378,250</b>
<b>Contribution to Capital Reserves</b>	<b>25,000</b>
<b>Removal of Depreciation</b>	<b>(347,500)</b>
<b>Total Planned Revenue and Capital Spending</b>	<b>2,836,050</b>
<b>Less Income</b>	
LCTSS Grant	(228,900)
Pre-Schools Funding and Fees	(168,000)
Sports Complex Fees and Charges	(439,000)
Golf Course and Driving Range Fees and Charges	(185,000)
Cemeteries and Allotments Fees and Charges	(26,800)
Feed In Tariff Income from Solar Panels	(10,500)
Other Income	(8,050)
Investment Income	(5,500)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(1,071,750)</b>
<b>Less Use of Council Balances - Capital Programme</b>	<b>(378,250)</b>
<b>Less Use of Council Balances - Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>(37,500)</b>
<b>Net Budget Requirement / Council Precept</b>	<b>1,348,550</b>

firm foundation, and some surplus resources, to meet the challenges, spending commitments and funding cuts that lie further ahead.

### 4. 2015/16 Council Tax

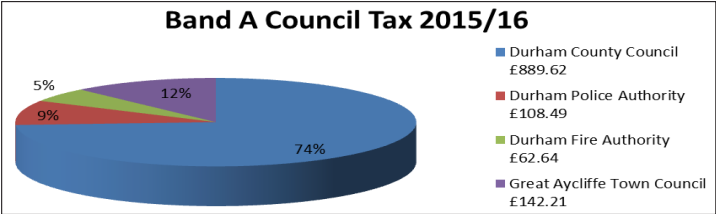
The 2015/16 Band D Town Council Tax is £213.32 per year.

This represented an increase of 1.98% on the 2014/15 Council Tax.

However, it is important to note that more than half of the properties in Great Aycliffe fall within Council Tax Band A and therefore pay only two thirds of the Band D Council Tax.

The 2015/16 Band A Council Tax is £142.21 per year which equates to £11.85 per month or £2.73 per week. This equates to an increase of £2.76 per year.

A breakdown of the 2015/16 Council Tax is shown below demonstrating that only 12p in every £1 of the total Council Tax comes to the Town Council:-



### 5. 2015/16 Capital Programme Budget

The Council will continue to make capital investment in order to deliver the Council’s Asset Management Plan and invest in community assets.

The **Capital Programme Budget for 2015/16** has been **set at £378,250** and includes provision for various building works, replacement vehicles and machinery, computer hardware, replacement play equipment, a new multi-use games area, footpath repairs and a possible new park development.

The Capital Programme Budget **will be funded from the Council’s Earmarked Capital Reserves and external capital grants and contributions.**

### 6. Council Balances and Earmarked Reserves

The Council’s **Balances and Earmarked Reserves stood at £1.1 million at the end of March 2015.** This is better than anticipated and is as a result of the savings delivered on the Council’s Revenue Budget last year as well as the lower than expected spending on the Capital Programme Budget.

The current level of reserves held will enable the Council to continue to meet its capital spending commitments for the foreseeable future and provide some protection against funding cuts and revenue budget pressures.

### 7. 2013/14 and 2014/15 Actual Revenue Spending

A summary of the Council’s actual expenditure in 2013/14 and 2014/15 in running its various services, and how this expenditure was funded is detailed below:-

2013/14 £	Service Area	2014/15 £
62,953	Members and Civic Expenses	66,075
429,612	Corporate Management, Finance and Administration	425,663
-	Neighbourhood Plan	28,354
29,958	Capital Financing Charges	29,842
249,930	Pre Schools	236,715
129,785	Community Events	146,513
709,089	Sports Complex	725,989
276,303	Golf Course and Driving Range	266,740
316,644	Parks, Sports Pitches and Play Areas	312,529
304,759	Environment, Works and Street Equipment	280,214
77,302	Cemeteries	77,832
19,222	Allotments	18,190
842	Contingency Sum	-
14,956	Elections	-
<b>2,621,355</b>	<b>Total Cost of Running Council Services</b>	<b>2,614,656</b>
	<b>Less Income</b>	
(296,146)	Council Tax Support Grant	(255,847)
(226,232)	Pre Schools Funding and Fees	(196,562)
(441,905)	Sports Complex Fees and Charges	(436,140)
(186,026)	Golf Course and Driving Range Fees and Charges	(202,440)
(19,362)	Cemeteries Fees	(26,575)
(6,603)	Allotments Rents	(6,413)
(40,207)	Other Fees and Charges	(44,785)
(14,956)	Use of Balances (Elections and Neighbourhood Plan)	(28,354)
(5,896)	Investment Income	(6,370)
<b>(1,237,333)</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(1,203,486)</b>
(347,410)	Exclusion of Depreciation Charges	(329,898)
<b>1,036,612</b>	<b>Actual Net Cost of Council Services</b>	<b>1,081,272</b>
<b>234,988</b>	<b>Contribution to Council Balances / Savings</b>	<b>235,328</b>
<b>1,271,600</b>	<b>Council Precept / Council Tax</b>	<b>1,316,600</b>

### 8. 2013/14 and 2014/15 Actual Capital Investment

A summary of the Council’s capital investment in Council and community assets in 2013/14 and 2014/15, and how this expenditure was funded is detailed below:-

2013/14 £	Investment Area	2014/15 £
16,775	Council Building Works and Improvements	83,078
19,037	Replacement Vehicles, Machinery and Equipment	30,190
32,048	Information Technology and Office Equipment	10,745
-	Parks and Play Area Improvements	55,426
28,683	Infrastructure Works (Drainage, Bridges, Footpaths)	11,896
8,648	Street Equipment (Bus Shelters, Bins, Fencing)	-
<b>105,191</b>	<b>Total Capital Investment</b>	<b>191,335</b>
	<b>Funded by:-</b>	
-	Capital Contributions	39,307
105,191	Use of Council Balances	152,028
<b>105,191</b>	<b>Funding of Capital Investment</b>	<b>191,335</b>

1. Statement of Accounts
2. Annual Governance Statement
3. Value for Money Assessment

The Council is pleased to report that it has again received a clean bill of health on all aspects of the audit inspection.

This means that the external auditors consider that:-

- The Council’s Statement of Accounts presents fairly its financial position;
- The Council is well managed and governed with sound strategies, policies, procedures, systems and internal controls;
- The Council’s finances are in good order and it is well placed to meet the challenges that lie ahead;
- The Council secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public money and delivers value for money services to the local community.

This was a very positive Audit Report for the Council and has been achieved as a result of the hard work and commitment of all councillors, management and staff.

The financial position and spending of the Council is continuously monitored and controlled in order to help achieve the most efficient use of public resources and this prudent management of the Council’s spending has resulted in significant savings in both years, with spending in 2014/15 £235,000 under the level of Precept.

This was made up of the planned £25,000 contribution to Earmarked Capital Reserves, as well as efficiency savings, unused and under-utilised budgets, and increased income across all service areas of £210,000.

All savings achieved on the Revenue Budget have been set aside in the Council’s Earmarked Reserves to provide for further investment in Council and community assets for the benefit of the tax payers of Great Aycliffe over the coming years.

### 9. Annual Audit Report

The Council is subject to an annual inspection by its external auditors and the overall opinion on the financial standing of the Council is set out in an Annual Audit Letter.

The auditors looked at three main areas in 2013/14:-