



## BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Governance Committee held at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 6 January 2026 in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House, Blyth, NE24 2AS.**

**Councillors:** BW Elliott (Chair), M Peart (Vice Chair), RA Baker, D Campbell, D Carr, T E Elliott, D Johnson, C Jones, D Nicholson, K Nisbet MBE and N Rolls

**Officers:** M Wilkinson (Town Clerk), E Brown (Deputy Town Clerk), H Jenner (Principal Officer), E Mullen (Democratic Services Officer)

**Also Present:** Cllr Marcus Nicholson      **Members of the Public – 0**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Cllr Marcus Nicholson, who was recently elected to represent Bebside & Kitty Brewster ward, following a by-election in December 2025. Cllr M Nicholson was present at the meeting as an observer.

Minute No	
1	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were noted for Cllr D Swinhoe
2	<b>Disclosure Interests and Grant of Dispensations</b> Councillor BW Elliott declared an interest following Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 that he will be taking part in this meeting but will not be voting.
3	<b>Minutes of the previous Governance Committee</b> The minutes of the Governance Committee meetings held 7 October 2025 were approved at the meeting of the Council held 16 October 2025.
4	<b>Actions arising from the Previous Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>DBS Checks for Members and Staff</b> – The Democratic Services Officer provided an update on Councillor DBS Checks. All County Councillors have provided copies of their certificates, and Town Councillors have all participated in face-to-face ID checks and have had applications submitted. There are a few Councillor's applications who are going through the final stages of the review process. The Democratic Services</li></ul>

	<p>Officer will contact Cllr M Nicholson directly to complete his DBS Check.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Insurance Review</b> – The Town Clerk provided an update on the Council’s insurance review to ensure all external assets are covered. The budget originally reflected £9,000 for insurance this year, however it is reflected in our budget monitoring that £30,000 has been spent. This is because it was said that an increase in insurance and liability would be £17,000 for the full year but we have also been required to pay for a part-year to ensure full coverage since moving away from self-insurance. </li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the Staffing Sub-Committee</b> It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Staffing Sub-Committee held on 4 December 2024 were agreed as a true record.</p>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Recommendations from Staffing Sub-Committee</b> It was unanimously RESOLVED to adopt the recommendations from the Staffing Sub-Committee meeting from 4 December 2025. Actions on the recommendations have been delegated to the Governance Committee which will begin that work immediately.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Budget Monitoring Report All Committees</b> Members agreed to defer and merge discussion of this item as part of Agenda Item 9.</p>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Internal Audit Report</b> The recommendations from the internal audit report were noted by Members.</p> <p>Members were interested in taking up the auditor’s offer of attending a future meeting to talk through his report and the recommendations he has made towards the end of the municipal year.</p>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Decision Report – Budget &amp; Precept 2026/27</b> It was clarified that Community Development Committee and Environment Committee have been through their respective budgets to seek approval from Governance Committee.</p> <p>The Town Clerk explained the recommendation of a 2% parish council tax increase and how it would be of longer-term benefit in comparison to not increasing council tax.</p>



	<p>Following discussion on what the Council want to offer the residents of Blyth, the following decisions were made:</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the Governance Committee probable outturn for 2025/26 and the budget for 2026/27.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the Environment, and Community Development Committee's probably outturn for 2025/26 and budgets for 2026/27.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the budget for all Committees for 2026/27, and Precept, is recommended for approval at Full Council on 15 January 2026.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree to constantly review the financial climate and re-model future years spending, for Council to consider the precept and spending by 2030/31, to have a budget to negate the need to use reserves, and to balance the budget as well as maintaining an adequate level of reserves.</p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Governance Committee is scheduled to take place in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House on Thursday 23 April 2026 at 6.30 pm. However, this could be changed to make provision for Easter and the change over of accounts.</p>

The meeting closed at 19:16