FORMAL NOTICE OF THE 32ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (Meeting) of North East Chamber of Commerce ("the Chamber") will be held at Newcastle Cathedral on Tuesday 8 September at 14:00.

Members will be asked to consider and vote on the following resolutions which will be proposed as ordinary resolutions and special resolutions (as indicated):

ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

1. To accept the notice convening the Annual General Meeting.

2. To accept apologies for absence.

3. To approve the minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting of the Chamber held on 02 July 2025.

4. To receive accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025. A full set of financial statements is included in the Chamber Annual Report 2025 available **here**.

5. To re-appoint Azets as auditors to hold office from the conclusion of the meeting until the conclusion of the next general meeting of the Chamber at which accounts are laid and to authorise the Board to fix their remuneration.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION
The next resolution is a special resolution requiring a 75% majority of those voting.

6. The resolution is to adopt an updated version of the Articles of Association of the company. The new version of the Articles is available **here** and should be read alongside the revised version of the **Chamber Council's Terms of Reference**.

Ordinary business will resume following this resolution.

ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS cont.

7. Pursuant to article 15 of the Articles, supported by the Council Terms of Reference, article 3.3, to appoint for two-year terms to Chamber Council:

As president:
Natasha McDonough (MMC Ltd.)

As vice-president:
Louise Hunter (Northumbrian Water Ltd.)

As elected members:

Rhiannon Hiles (Beamish Museum)
Chloe Clover (Wander Films)
Gill Hunter (Gray Fox Consulting Ltd.)
Susan Howe (Muckle LLP)
Lucy Dixon (Karbon Homes)
Stephen Bittle (Walker Filtration)
Very Rev. Lee Batson (Newcastle Cathedral)
Darren Hankey (Hartlepool College)
Chris Coles (Turner & Townsend)
Sarfraz Mian (Neue Schule and international trade forum)
Kay Carrick (Beamish Museum and chair of women's leadership and social equity forum)

R Bearne

Rhiannon Bearne, company secretary
Date: Monday 10 August 2026
Registered office: Commerce House, Aykley Head Business Centre, Durham DH1 5TS

Note: A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting convened by the above notice is entitled to appoint another person as their proxy to attend and exercise all or any of their rights to speak and vote at this meeting. Completion of the proxy does not preclude a member from attending and voting at the meeting in person.

NORTH EAST
Chamber of Commerce

MINUTES OF THE 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MEETING HELD ON 02 JULY 2025
MEETING HELD AT BEAMISH HALL HOTEL, COPPY LANE, BEAMISH, STANLEY, DH9 0YB

PRESENT

Deborah Walton President
John Marshall Chairman
John McCabe CEO
Rhiannon Bearne Executive Director Policy & Representation and Company Secretary

Together with116 attendees excluding Chamber colleagues.

WELCOME AND PRESIDENT'S REVIEW

Deborah Walton welcomed members to the 31st Annual General Meeting, describing it as an important opportunity to reflect on the Chamber's achievements and look ahead with confidence and ambition for the North East.

She thanked members for their continued support and strong engagement across the region.

In her first President's Review, Deborah reflected on a positive and purposeful year, recognising the Chamber's continued influence during a period of significant political change and its commitment to ensuring the voice of business remained at the heart of decision-making.

She highlighted the opportunities created through devolution, celebrated the success of the Inspiring Women in Business Awards and the Chamber's focus on inclusivity, thanked Board, Council and Chamber members for their contributions, and reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to championing sustainable growth and supporting the region's future leaders.

Deborah then handed over to our Alison Maynard, Deputy Principle at our event sponsor, New College Durham, before handing over to John McCabe.

CEO'S REVIEW

John McCabe reflected on a year shaped by significant political, economic and social change, highlighting the opportunities presented by devolution and renewed regional leadership.

He reported that, despite challenging economic conditions, the Chamber remained financially resilient, welcomed more than 300 new members and continued to invest in its long-term growth through property and operational improvements.

John highlighted the Chamber's impact in supporting international trade, strengthening business representation and influencing regional skills investment through the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

He also reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to diversity and inclusion through initiatives such as the Inspiring Women in Business programme.

Concluding his review, John thanked members, the President, Board, Council and Chamber team for their continued support, commitment and contribution to the Chamber's success.

John handed back to Deborah for the formal proceedings.

ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

1. To accept the notice convening the Annual General Meeting.

2. Apologies

3. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting of the Chamber held on 11 July 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2024 were unanimously approved.

MINUTES OF THE 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4. Accounts

To receive accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024. A full set of Financial Statements is included in the Chamber Annual Report 2024.

There being no questions the accounts were unanimously approved.

5. Appointment of Auditors

To re-appoint Azets (formally MHA Tait Walker) as auditors to hold office from the conclusion of the meeting until the conclusion of the next General Meeting of the Chamber, at which accounts are laid and to authorise the Board to fix their remuneration.

The resolution was unanimously approved.

6. Pursuant to article 14.7 of the Articles to appoint for a 2-year term to Chamber Council:

As Elected Members:
John Marshall (Chair of Board)
Lesley Moody (Vice Cahir and AES Digital Solutions)
Andrew Haigh (Newcastle Building Society)
Jennie Collingwood (NWL)
Jo Elliott (Wander Films)

Pursuant to article 14.5 of the Articles to re-appoint for a final 2-year term up to the maximum time limit for their current position on Chamber Council:

As chair of the North of Tyne Sub Regional Committee:
John Johnston (Bernicia Group)

As representative of the North of Tyne Sub Regional Committee:
Tony Gates (Northumberland National Park)

As representative of the South of Tyne, Durham and Wearside Committee:
Alan Metcalfe (Zenith People)

The resolution was unanimously approved.

Deborah congratulated everyone on their appointments and said this concludes the formal business of this year’s AGM and thanked everyone for their participation.

Deborah handed over to Rhiannon Bearne.

A CHANGING REGION: WHAT IT MEANS FOR BUSINESS

Rhiannon thanked Deborah for going through the AGM activity.

Rhiannon continued by introducing herself and giving introductory remarks to the fireside panel “a changing region: what it means for business”.

Rhiannon welcomed the two panel speakers Sarah Walker, Interim Director of Business Solutions at the Tees Valley Combined Authority and Phil Witcherley, Director of Economic Growth and Innovation at the North East Combined Authority.

There was then a fireside panel discussion followed by Q&A.

Rhiannon thanked everyone for being here, for everything they do to drive the North East forward and for their continued support for the Chamber.

CLOSING REMARKS

Deborah gave the closing remarks by saying it’s been a great opportunity to reflect on the year we’ve had but also what’s coming next. She thanked the event sponsor, New College Durham, Sarah Walker and Phil Witcherley for joining the panel discussion. And to John and Rhiannon and the Chamber team for everything they do behind the scenes to make events like this possible.

Deborah thanked everyone for attending and closed the 31st Chamber AGM.