

## Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 1st April 2026.

**Present:** The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Robert Cook)  
Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Richard Eglinton, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Katie Weston, Cllr Paul Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

**Officers:** Mike Greene, Majella McCarthy, Clare Harper, Reuben Kench, Neil Mitchell, Carolyn Nice (Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing), Marc Stephenson, Iain Robinson, Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Judy Trainer, Peter Bell and Tom Coates

**Also in attendance:** Civic Dignitaries and Invited Guests

**Apologies:** Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr David Reynard and Cllr Jim Taylor

### **COU/1/26 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure**

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised all present of the premises evacuation procedure in the event of an emergency.

### **COU/2/26 Appointment of The Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2026/27**

Moved by Councillor Jim Beall and seconded by Councillor Eileen Johnson, that Councillor Bob Cook be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

RESOLVED that Councillor Bob Cook be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

### **COU/3/26 Appointment of the Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2026/27**

Moved by Councillor Jim Beall and seconded by Councillor Lisa Evans, that Councillor Marilyn Surtees be appointed Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

RESOLVED that Councillor Marilyn Surtees be appointed Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

**COU/4/26 Return of Thanks for Appointment by The Mayor**

The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Bob Cook, returned thanks for his appointment and addressed the meeting regarding his ambitions for the year ahead.

**COU/5/26 Return of Thanks for Appointment by the Deputy Mayor**

The Deputy Mayor returned thanks for her appointment.

**COU/6/26 Vote of Thanks to Retired Mayor**

Moved by Councillor Lynn Hall and seconded by Councillor Tony Riordan, that a vote of thanks be extended to the retired Mayor for the admirable way in which he has discharged his duties during his term of office.

RESOLVED that thanks be extended to the retired Mayor for the admirable way in which he has discharged his duties during his term of office.

**COU/7/26 Presentation of Medallions and Commemorative Digital Album to the Retired Mayor and Mayoress**

The Worshipful the Mayor presented the retired Mayor and Mayoress with Medallions and a commemorative album.

**COU/8/26 Address by the Retired Mayor**

The Retired Mayor addressed the meeting to reflect on his year in office.

**COU/9/26 Mayor's Civic Award Scheme**

The Retired Mayor recognised the achievements of those who had been successfully nominated for a Mayor's Civic Award:

- Young Person Award – Ariadne Goldsmith
- Service to the Community Award – Individual – Janet Hodgson
- Service to the Community Award – Groups and Organisations – Hope Cancer Community Group
- Service to the Community Award – Business – Choco-Latte
- Health and Wellbeing Award – Stockton Volunteer Driver Service
- Green Award – Bright Minds, Big Futures
- Mayor's Special Award – Olga Maloney

**COU/10/26 Presentation to Retired Mayor's Charities**

A presentation was made to the Mayor's Charities.

The Retired Mayor presented Brian and Stella Jones from The Moses Project and Amanda Baker and Helen Shaw from Butterwick Hospice with cheques for £20,054.84 raised during his civic year.

**COU/11/26 Long Service Awards**

The Retired Mayor recognised the special contribution of a unique group of staff who had all achieved 25 years' service as a Local Government employee:

- Rachel Douglas
- Colin Dyball
- Derek Hall

Colin Dyball was in attendance at the meeting and the Retired Mayor invited him to come to the stage to receive his long service certificate.

#### **COU/12/26 Presentation of Silver Salver to Retiring Deputy Mayor**

On behalf of the Council, the retiring Mayor presented a silver salver to the retiring Deputy Mayor for his services during 2025/26.

#### **COU/13/26 Presentation of Bible to the Mayor by the Mayor's Chaplain**

Reverend Paul Neville presented the Bible to the Worshipful the Mayor.

#### **COU/14/26 Presentation of Floral Arrangements**

Floral arrangements were presented to the Mayoress, the retired Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor.

#### **COU/15/26 Council's Constitution**

Council was invited to approve the Council's Constitution. Members had been provided with a link to the Constitution.

RESOLVED that the Council's Constitution be agreed.

#### **COU/16/26 Meetings of Council**

RESOLVED that meetings of the Council be held at 6.00pm (except where otherwise stated) during the Municipal Year on the following dates:

20 May 2026  
22 July 2026  
23 September 2026  
18 November 2026  
20 January 2027  
24 February 2027 (Special - MTFP)  
17 March 2027  
26 May 2027 (Annual Meeting - 11.00 am)

#### **COU/17/26 Announcement of Cabinet Members for 2026/27**

The Leader announced her Cabinet for the Municipal Years 2026/27:

- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport – Councillor Paul Rowling
- Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care – Councillor Pauline Beall
- Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor Clare Besford

- Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture – Councillor Nigel Cooke
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing – Councillor Richard Eglington
- Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety – Councillor Norma Stephenson

**COU/18/26 Appointments 2026/27**

No changes were proposed to Committee appointments.

**COU/19/26 Corporate Parenting Pledge**

The Worshipful the Mayor signed the Corporate Parenting Pledge on behalf of the Council accepting all Members' role as Corporate Parents.

**COU/20/26 The Mayor will close the Meeting**

The Worshipful the Mayor closed the meeting and invited guests to the civic reception.