

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 14th May, 2025
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present: Mayor - Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	Adcock	Grocott	Stubbs
	Allport	Heesom	Sweeney
	Barker MBE	Holland	J Tagg
	Beeston	Fox-Hewitt	S Tagg (Leader)
	Berrisford	Hutchison	Turnock
	Brown	Johnson	J Waring
	Bryan	S Jones	P Waring
	Casey-Hulme	D Jones	Whieldon
	Crisp	Lawley	Whitmore
	Dean	Lewis	Wilkes
	Dymond	Northcott	G Williams
	Edginton-Plunkett	Parker	J Williams
	Fear	Reece	Wright
	Gorton	Richards	

Apologies: Councillor(s) Burnett-Faulkner and Skelding

Officers:	Roger Tait	Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery
	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Anthony Harold	Service Director - Legal & Governance / Monitoring Officer
	Sarah Wilkes	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th April 2025 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

3. ELECTION OF MAYOR 2025/26

One nomination was received, for Councillor Bettley-Smith.

This was proposed by Cllr Simon Tagg and seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

The Leader praised Cllr Bettley-Smith's distinguished career over many years spanning agriculture, civil service and government agencies, along with commitment to serving the community in the borough and long-standing involvement as member of Betley Parish Council since 2003 and Chair since 2007. Cllr Bettley-Smith had also been ward councillor for Thistleberry ward and Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the past year and stood up to be Mayor in April, following the tragic passing of Cllr Barry Panter in February. His wife Judy would be supporting his role as mayoress.

The Chief Executive moved the nomination to a vote. All were in favour.

Resolved: That Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith be appointed as Mayor for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

After being robed and re-invested with the chain of office, the Mayor Elect returned to the meeting room preceded by the Mace Bearers and accompanied by the Chief Executive. He then took the chair and made the declaration of acceptance of office.

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4. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2025/26**

Two nominations were received:

- Cllr Joan Whieldon, who was proposed by Cllr Tagg and seconded by Cllr Sweeney. Reference was made to her election in 2022 following a successful career that took her around the world and provided her with expertise in mediation and dispute resolution, among other skills.
- Cllr Fox-Hewitt, who was proposed by Cllr Stubbs and seconded by Cllr Lewis. A dedicated public servant and steadfast advocate for the community since he was first elected in 2017 whose commitment was rooted in a professional background as a firefighter which provided him with a profound sense of duty and resilience.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

- 25 (twenty-five) votes in favour of Cllr Whieldon
- 17 (seventeen) votes in favour of Cllr Fox-Hewitt
- 1 (one) abstention

Resolved: That Councillor Joan Whieldon be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

The Deputy Mayor made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and expressed her commitment to serve to the best of her ability.

The Deputy Mayor congratulated the Mayor on his appointment and thanked members for their vote as well as for their support throughout her tenure. She announced that Cllr Susan Beeston would be her Deputy Consort.

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5. **MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS**

The following appointments were made:

- Mayoress: Judy Bettley-Smith
- High Constable: Samuel Bettley-Smith
- Mayor's Cadet: Cdt Warrant Officer Elliott Durham
- Chaplain: Rev. Tim Watson
- Mace Bearers: Jenny Otter and Mr Glenn Martin-James

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6. MAYORAL ADDRESS

The Mayor thanked members for electing him and expressed feeling honoured to have been considered for this office. He paid tribute to his predecessor Cllr Barry Panter who tragically passed away in February and referred to the vital role of mayor for a borough heritage. In addition to his two chosen charities he would endeavour to support and promote the Brampton Museum, the Apedale Heritage Centre and the Apedale Railway, including being involved in their events. The book known as The Role of Mayors had been restored to its rightful place in the Mayor's parlour with the script of 1766 when a mayor died in office against Cllr Barry Panter's entree.

The Mayor's two chosen charities were announced as follows:

- Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme, which provided sheltered accommodations and car home facilities along with care services, respite opportunities and day care which were all essential for those affected with dementia and those who cared for them.
- Papyrus UK, which focused on the prevention of suicides among the young and for which there would notably a walk around the 85 miles boundary of the borough.

The charity ball would be held on Saturday 21st March 2026 in Keele and another aim would be to visit each of the fourteen scout groups and four explorer groups during the year.

Accounts of all engagements and adventures would be available on the Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme's Facebook page. Official mayoral events would also be posted on the Mayor's civic Facebook page.

Mrs Beatrice Panter was invited to receive her ex mayoress badge and accept the badge on behalf of her late husband, former Mayor of the Borough.

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7. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS FOR 2025/26

The Leader welcomed the two new members of the Council and introduced the report on the appointments to Committees, Chairs and Vice Chairs including a new nomination for the Community Armed Forces Champion. Cllr Tagg proposed to move the recommendation which were seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

Resolved: That the committee appointments set out in the Appendix of the report be agreed.

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The Mayor proposed that a vote on committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be taken en bloc as set out in the appendix. There were 26 (twenty-six) votes in favour of Conservative members and 17 (seventeen) against.

Resolved: That Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be appointed as follows:

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	VICE-CHAIR
Audit and Standards	Cllr Paul Waring	Cllr Gill Burnett-Faulkner
Conservation Advisory	Cllr Trevor Johnson	Cllr Lilian Barker
Licensing and Public Protection	Cllr Joan Whieldon	Cllr Trevor Johnson
Planning	Cllr Paul Northcott	Cllr Nick Crisp
Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny	Cllr Rupert Adcock	Cllr Ian Wilkes
Economy and Place Scrutiny	Cllr Andrew Parker	Cllr Amanda Berrisford
Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny	Cllr Mark Holland	Cllr Amy Bryan

An appointment was made for the Community Armed Forces Champion role, previously held by Cllr Panter. Cllr Ian Wilkes was appointed to the position.

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

8. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Leader introduced the report on appointments to outside bodies and proposed to move the recommendation. This was seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

The Mayor proposed to take the appointments en bloc to the vote. There were 28 (twenty-eight) votes in favour and 15 (fifteen) against.

Resolved: That the appointment of Council's representatives to Outside Bodies for 2025-26 be agreed as set out in Appendix 1 and that officers be asked to advise the relevant organisation(s).

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

9. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

10. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There were no confidential items.

**Mayor - Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.45 pm