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Council - 20/05/26

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 20th May, 2026
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present: Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey (Chair)

Councillors:	Beeston	Walton	Renshaw
	Bettley-Smith	Ashworth	Rogerson
	Casey-Hulme	Barber	SainReiners
	Fear	Clarke	Saxton
	Heesom	Downs	Sedgley
	Holland	Duffy	Shaw
	Hutchison	Fisher	Simpson
	D Jones	Gullis	Sparks
	Parker	Harrison	Stevenson
	J Tagg	Harrison	Swain
	S Tagg	Jellyman	Tift
	Turnock	Kasperowicz	Wood
	Whieldon	Lefroy	Westcott
	Whitmore	Machin	

Apologies: Councillor(s) Chamberlain and Evans

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Anthony Harold	Service Director - Legal & Governance / Monitoring Officer
	Nesta Barker	Service Director - Regulatory Services
	Andrew Bird	Service Director - Sustainable Environment
	Joanne Halliday	Service Director - Commercial Delivery
	Roger Tait	Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Craig Turner	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

3. ELECTION OF MAYOR 2026/27

Two nominations were received: Councillor Christopher Bailey and Councillor Joan Whieldon.

Councillor Bailey was proposed by Councillor Jonathan Gullis and seconded by Councillor Graham Shaw. Councillor Gullis stated that Councillor Bailey had served his country bravely in the armed forces, had shown great inspiration throughout his working life and at the age of sixty, gaining a degree. It would be an honour to see him as Mayor of the Borough.

Councillor Whieldon was proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Holland. Councillor Tagg stated that as Deputy Mayor for the past year, Councillor Whieldon had supported the Mayor – attending functions on his behalf, representing the Borough with dedication and enthusiasm, assisted by her Deputy Mayoress, Councillor Susan Beeston. Councillor Whieldon was thanked for the work that she had done over the past year.

The Chief Executive moved the nominations to a vote. There were:

- 25 (twenty-five) votes in favour of Councillor Bailey
- 15 (fifteen) votes in favour of Councillor Whieldon
- 2 (two) abstentions

Resolved: That Councillor Christopher Bailey be appointed as Mayor for the 2026-27 Municipal Year.

After being robed and 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.

The Mayor took the chair and made the declaration of acceptance of office.

[Watch the appointment here](#)

4. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2026/27

One nomination was received: Councillor Mark Harrison was proposed by Councillor Gullis and seconded by Councillor Shaw.

A vote was taken.

Resolved: That Councillor Mark Harrison be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2026-27 Municipal Year.

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

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

5. MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments were made:

- Mayoress: Deborah Bailey

- High Constable: Peter Whalan
- Mayor's Cadet: Cdt Elayna Johnson
- Chaplain: Father Christopher Routledge
- Mace Bearers: Jenny Otter and 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 and referred to the vital role of mayor for a borough's heritage.

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

- Tri-Services and Veterans Support Centre
- Bradwell Bombers FC

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7. VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR AND MAYORESS

On behalf of the Council, Councillor Simon Tagg congratulated the Mayor on his appointment and expressed thanks and appreciation to the retiring Mayor, and Mayoress who had picked up the reins following the sad death of the previous Mayor, Barry Panter.

The Leader notably referred to successful events of the past year including 'one Mayor Meandering' walking the boundary of the Borough. Councillor Robert and Mrs Judy Bettley-Smith had been excellent ambassadors for the Borough.

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8. RESPONSE OF THE RETIRING MAYOR AND SUMMARY OF THE MAYORAL YEAR

The retiring Mayor stated that the start of his Mayoral year had been overshadowed by the tragic death of former Mayor, Councillor Barry Panter, whose portrait now hung in the Mayor's Parlour.

During his Mayoral year he had enjoyed excellent support from both sides of the Chamber. He sent his best wishes to former Councillors who had not returned after the elections held in May.

The retiring Mayor wished to thanked the Chief Executive, other officers and the Mayoral team for their advice and support. He thanked his son, Sam who had been his High Constable throughout the year but had been unable to attend this evening. Therefore, his daughter performed the role this evening. He thanked his wife Judy for her support, advice and encouragement.

The year had been an adventure and objectives had been achieved and every visit had been enjoyable with 325 visits made throughout the year and raised around £36,000 for the two chosen charities.

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Two main charities had been supported – Papyrus and Belong but many other charities were supported personally.

Gifts were handed to the Mayoress, Consort, High Constable, Civic and Member Support Officer, Chauffeur, Mace Bearers, Chaplain and High Sergeant.

The retiring Mayor finished by congratulating the new Mayor and letting him know he could rely on him would he need any advice or support.

The Mayor handed out badges of office to the retiring mayor and mayoress and as recognition for their service.

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9. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

It was moved by Councillor Glenn Tift and seconded by Councillor Vanessa Renshaw that Councillor Jonathan Gullis be appointed as Leader of the Council.

Councillor Gullis thanked Councillor Simon Tagg for his many years of service as Leader of the Borough Council and for his passion and commitment to the Borough. The voters were also thanked for putting their trust in a Reform Administration.

Resolved: That Councillor Jonathan Gullis be appointed as Leader of the Council.

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10. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET

The Leader confirmed Councillor Graham Shaw as Deputy Leader and the following as members of the Cabinet for 2026/27:

- Councillor Jonathan Gullis
– Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres
- Councillor Graham Shaw
– Cabinet Member for Finance
- Councillor Vanessa Renshaw
– Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection
- Councillor Ben Simpson
– Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Green Spaces
- Councillor Martin Rogerson
– Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance
- Councillor Andrew Fisher
– Cabinet Member for Residents Services and Neighbourhoods

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

11. **ELECTION RESULTS**

The Leader introduced a report and moved the recommendations detailing the results from the elections held earlier this month.

Councillor Shaw seconded the recommendations.

The Leader thanked previous members who had not returned following the elections and stated that in the near future, the following former Councillors would be welcomed as Honorary Aldermen of the Borough:

Gillian Burnett-Faulkner, Paul Northcott, Paul Waring, Mike Stubbs, Stephen Sweeney, Ian Wilkes, Gill Williams and John Williams who had all met the relevant criteria.

Sylvia Dymond was just short of a year and it was hoped that, by working with officers a way could be found to make her eligible to become an Honorary Alderman.

The Leader stated that the election results had been historic – going from one Reform UK Councillor to twenty-seven. There was an amazing team of members with a wide range of experience. The Leader said that he looked forward to working with everyone to help drive an agenda forward, tackling the bread and butter issues that mattered to people.

Councillor Simon Tagg thanked and congratulated the new Leader of the Council on his appointment. Where the new Administration did the right thing and took the Borough forward they would be supported by the Conservative group. They would however be held to account where failures were seen.

Councillor Tagg paid tribute to former members of his group who had not returned following the elections.

Resolved: That the information be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

Councillor Duffy left the meeting at 8:01pm

12. **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2026-2030**

The Leader introduced and proposed to approve the Calendar of Meetings.

This was seconded by Councillor Graham Shaw.

Resolved: That the draft Calendar of Meetings 2026-30 be approved.

[Watch the debate here](#)

13. **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS FOR 2026/27**

The Mayor proposed that members of the committees be appointed as per the list provided and that a vote on committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be taken en-bloc. There were 25 (twenty-five) votes in favour of the Reform members, 15 (fifteen) votes in favour of Conservative members and 2 (two) in favour of Labour members.

Resolved: That the committees' membership as set out in the Appendix to the report be agreed, and that the Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be appointed as follows:

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	VICE-CHAIR
Audit and Standards	Cllr Glen Tift	Cllr Janice SainReiners
Conservation Advisory	Cllr Sue Beeston	Cllr Jill Whitmore
Licensing and Public Protection	Cllr Simon Kasperowicz	Cllr Pamela Jellyman
Planning	Cllr Christopher Saxton	Cllr Jonathan Downs
Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny	Cllr Scott Stevenson	Cllr Olivia Wozny
Economy and Place Scrutiny	Cllr Martyn Ashworth	Cllr Patricia Harrison
Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny	Cllr Paul Wood	Cllr Peter Walton

[Watch the debate here](#)

14. APPOINTMENTS TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS FOR 2026/30

The Mayor proposed to take the appointments en bloc to the vote. There were 25 (twenty-five) votes in favour of the Reform UK nominees and 15 (fifteen) votes in favour of the Conservatives nominees.

Resolved: That representatives to the outside bodies be appointed as follows:

Name of Organisation / Role	Representative
Aspire Housing Board	Cllr Renshaw
Business Improvement District	Cllr Gullis
Campaign to Protect Rural England – County Branch	Cllr Machin
Corporate Parenting Panel	Cllr Kasperowicz
Local Councils Network	Leader
Visit Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership	Leader
Go Kidsgrove	Cllr Westcott
LGiU Assembly	Cllr Rogerson
Local Government Association	Leader
Newcastle Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership)	Leader
North Staffs Victim Support	Cllr Renshaw
Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London (PATROL)	Cllr Renshaw
Sir John Offley Almshouse Trust	Cllr Whitmore
Staffordshire County Council Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Stevenson
Staffordshire Leaders Board	Leader
Staffordshire Playing Fields Association	Leader
Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel and associated panels	Cllr Shaw
Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire Theatre Trust Limited (New Victoria Theatre)	Leader
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	Leader

Newcastle-under-Lyme Almshouse Association	Ward Councillors
West Midlands Employers	Leader
Waste and Mineral Site Liaison Committee – Acton Composting Site (Committee is Active)	Cllr Lefroy
Waste and Mineral Site Liaison Committee – Holditch House Waste Site	Cllr Barber
Waste and Mineral Site Liaison Committee – Keele (Madeley Heath) Quarry (Committee not yet Active)	Cllr Bettley-Smith Cllr Whitmore
Waste and Mineral Site Liaison Committee – Knutton Quarry (Committee is Active)	Cllr Shaw Cllr Sparks
Waste and Mineral Site Liaison Committee – Walleys Landfill Site (Committee is Active)	Cllr Ashworth (Silverdale) Cllr Shaw (Knutton) Cllr Jones (Keele) Cllr Whieldon (Thistleberry)
West Midland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association	Cllr Bailey
Armed Forces Champion	Cllr Bailey

[Watch the debate here](#)

15. **CONFIRMATION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The Leader introduced the report and moved the recommendation forward.

This was seconded by Councillor Martin Rogerson.

Councillor Mark Holland expressed his support for the report and highlighted that the changes that had been made in relation to procurement procedures.

Councillor Joan Whieldon enquired about the timescale for the implementation of the recommendations.

The Service Director for Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) said the request would be taken forward.

The Leader advised that further amendments to the Constitution would be taken to the next full Council meeting, adding that these would not be subject to a cross-party working group.

- Resolved:**
1. That the updates to the constitution produced by the Monitoring Officer (see Appendices to the report) be noted.
 2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to progress amendments to the constitution at Appendices 1-3. 3.
 3. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any further administrative / enabling amendments to the constitution as required.

[Watch the debate here](#)

16. **URGENT BUSINESS**

The Leader introduced the report and moved the recommendation forward.

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Councillor Martin Rogerson seconded the recommendation.

Councillor Simon Tagg, the Leader and the Mayor respectively thanked the departing Monitoring Officer for his work and wished him luck in his new role.

Resolved: That in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989:

1. The appointment of Barbara Beardwell as the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer, be confirmed.

2. The approval be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to maintain an Interim Monitoring Officer ahead of a permanent replacement.

[Watch the debate here](#)

17. **DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

There were no confidential items.

**Mayor Councillor Christopher Bailey
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 8.15 pm