



**MINUTES OF THE ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 6th JANUARY 2026
AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER.**

Present

Councillors G Forman (Deputy Mayor), M Bowe, C Neal-Sturgess, C Chester, A Leask, M Cargill, K Cargill, W Mills, D Gordon, J Andrews, V Howells and S Bardha.

In attendance Mrs V Lowe, Town Clerk, Cllr S Juned (District Councillor), Cllr T Ballinger (District Councillor) and Cllr J Norris (County Councillor)

In the absence of the Mayor, the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Mayor.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF MAYOR

There was no public participation.

District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr T Ballinger (Ward Member for Alcester West) reported that he had been dealing with serious issues relating to refuse bags left outside Henley Court on Henley Street. He had also been in contact with SDC Building Control officers regarding the insecure roof at the rear of 15 High Street which adjoined the tuery - this had been made safe by SDC contractors. He reported that confidential discussions continued regarding The Three Tuns. He had reported dangerous late-night driving to the police. He reminded Councillors about the new County/District Councillor surgeries to be held at Church House on the last Saturday of the month. Finally, he reported that he had logged 105 hours of time on District Council matters in the last month.

Cllr S Juned (Ward Member for Alcester East) had sent a written report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. She reported that the SDC budget for 2026 will go to the SDC Cabinet on 9th February and then to Council on 23rd February. She explained that the Government's financial settlement was the first multi-year settlement for a decade but the way councils receive funding has changed, is not generous and will reduce in future years. SDC is reviewing the Social Housing Allocations Scheme which will go out to public consultation. A Statement of Intent on Warwickshire Homelessness is to be agreed between all councils (County, District and Boroughs), Integrated Care Board and HM Prison and Probation Service to ensure that all are guided by the same principles. Finally, she informed Councillors that Litter Free Alcester would be holding its spring clean on 21st March.

There were questions from Councillors regarding the West Midlands Combined Authority, local government reform and its impact on budgets and staffing. There was also a question about the South Warwickshire Local Plan and Cllr Juned confirmed that the regulation 19 consultation had been delayed until June 2026.



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Cllr J Norris (County Councillor for Alcester) had sent a written report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He reported that he had been pleased to allocate WCC Councillor grant funding to Alcester Town FC, St Nicholas PCC and AGS Friends. He updated Councillors on the proposed closure of Great Alne Primary School explaining that the consultation had now closed. He had attended a WCC committee meeting looking at school places and had been surprised that this showed a surplus of primary school places in Alcester which did not reflect local knowledge. He is making further enquiries. Cllr Norris had been successful in having a motion passed to make it simpler for schools to obtain a 20-mph limit outside school gates. It was hoped that Alcester Academy would benefit from these changes.

Cllr Norris reported that WCC was considering a proposal to expand on-street Pay & Display parking in several towns including Alcester. The official reason for this was to reduce congestion and road safety but it was understood that this was primarily aimed at increasing WCC income.

Councillors confirmed to Cllr Norris that they objected to this proposal and it was agreed that the Town Clerk would write to WCC to express the view that the introduction of charges would seriously damage High Street businesses who had already been hit with other tax rises. The policy would also adversely affect the older population in Alcester who were less mobile and would have to pay to park even for a short while. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would also contact the other towns affected to try and agree a joint approach.

Cllr Holyland asked Cllr Norris for an update on school buses using School Road. Cllr Norris and the Town Clerk will follow up on this with WCC officers who had not responded to previous requests.

1. Apologies

Apologies with reasons had been received from Cllrs D Henderson (Mayor), R Ashfield and K Greenaway. These apologies were accepted by Council.

2. Minutes of Council Meetings

The Deputy Mayor asked Councillors to consider for approval the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 2nd December 2025. The minutes were proposed to be accepted by Cllr K Cargill, seconded by Cllr Gordon and approved by Council; they were then signed by the Deputy Mayor.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on the agenda items.

4. Mayor's Report

The Deputy Mayor thanked everyone who had attended the Toy Service at the Baptist Church in December. She reminded everyone about the High Bailiff's Parade and Church Service on 11th January.

5. Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk presented her monthly report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. She reported that the vacancy notice in relation to the resignation of Cllr Ray Howells had expired on 31st December 2025. She awaited confirmation from SDC that no requests had been received for an



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election. She reminded Councillors that nominations for the Civic Awards were needed by Friday 9th January.

6. Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Deputy Mayor, as Chair, confirmed that she was satisfied that Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed.

There were no questions about the minutes.

There was the following proposition from the Committee:

6.1 To agree a budget of £474,302 for the financial year 2026-27. Taking into account, anticipated income of £45,125, to request a precept from Stratford-on-Avon District Council of £429,177 for the year 2026-27.

It was noted that all councillors had received the draft budget and briefing notes in advance of the meeting. There were no questions about the budget. Cllr Bowe asked the Town Clerk to confirm the impact on the Council Tax. She confirmed that the increase for Band D properties was £6.91 per year, which amounted to 13 pence per week.

The budget and precept demand were proposed by the Deputy Mayor, seconded by Cllr Mills and carried by Council. The Town Clerk will submit the necessary paperwork to Stratford DC.

7. Planning Committee

Cllr M Cargill, as Chair, confirmed that he was satisfied that Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. He confirmed that the Aldi planning application was still pending with no response yet from WCC Highways.

There were no propositions from the Committee.

8. Lead Councillors/Working Groups

8.1 Climate Change

A report from Wendy Sherwood, Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator, had been circulated in advance of the meeting which showed the progress on the Alcester Connected for Climate and Nature project. Mrs Sherwood was thanked for her report. The Town Clerk answered questions regarding the hedgehog houses and highways.

8.2 Community Flood Resilience Panel

A report from the Lead Councillors has been circulated in advance of the meeting. Cllr Chester was thanked for producing the report. Cllr Neal-Sturgess reported that the Environment Agency had refused to replace the Oversley Bridge camera. He also reported that the old Flood Warden WhatsApp group had been shut down. A new group for Flood Watchers would replace it soon.

9. Accessibility Statement

The draft updated Accessibility Statement had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no questions about the Statement. Cllr Leask proposed that it was adopted. This was seconded by Cllr Chester and carried by Council.

10. Town Council Representatives

The Greig Hall – Cllr Mills reported that the new double glazing in the main hall had been completed.



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11. Payment of Accounts

The Town Clerk presented the Payment of Accounts for the preceding month. The accounts were proposed to be approved by Cllr Neal-Sturgess, seconded by Cllr Bowe and carried by Council.

12. Dates of future meetings

Planning Committee - Monday 19th January 2026 at 7 pm (if required).

Finance & General Purposes Committee – Tuesday 27th January 2026 at 7pm

Full Council - Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at 7 pm.

All meetings at Globe House.

The Deputy Mayor closed the meeting.