



**MINUTES OF THE ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4th AUGUST 2026
AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER**

Present

Councillors R Ashfield (Deputy Mayor), K Cargill, M Cargill, L Boyd, W Mills, D Gordon, D Henderson, M Bowe, C Chester, V Holyland and J Andrews.

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

In the absence of the Mayor (who was attending the High Sheriff's Changemaker event in Warwick) the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Mayor.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF MAYOR

None.

District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr S Juned (Ward Member for Alcester East) reported that a Stratford Energy Support Fund had been created which would be managed by Act on Energy. She also reported that the Home Choice Register had been re-launched following the recent public consultation. She had submitted an item on both issues to the Town Council newsletter.

Cllr T Ballinger (Ward Member for Alcester West) reported that SDC had taken on THE contract for new EV chargers in Bulls Head Yard which should be activated soon. He also reported that he had been supporting the Deputy Mayor in promoting the new Visit Alcester website and had been appointed as a Director of the Food Festival. He reported that Dr Manuela Perteghella MP was due to meet the Chief Constable and would raise issues relating to ASB in Alcester. The MP is holding a surgery on 28th August at Church House.

1. Apologies

Apologies with reasons had been received from Cllrs G Forman (Mayor), K Greenaway and S Bardha. These apologies were accepted by Council. Cllr A Leask was absent. Apologies were also received from Cllr J Norris (County Councillor).

2. Minutes of Council Meetings

The Deputy Mayor asked Councillors to consider for approval the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2026. They were proposed to be accepted by the Cllr K Cargill, seconded by Cllr Chester 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 Mayor was absent but had advised the Town Clerk that she would report on her activities at the next meeting. The Deputy Mayor reported that she had attended the Mayor of Warwick's Civic Service. She advised Councillors of a Race Night in aid of the mayoral charity which would take place on 26th September at the Eric Payne Community Centre.

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 work to replace the kitchen at the Eric Payne Community Centre had started on the previous day. There were no questions regarding the report.

6. Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Deputy Mayor confirmed that she was satisfied that Committee members approved the minutes from the preceding month, which were then signed. Cllr Bowe asked a question about the renewal of the lease for the Bleachfield Street allotment site. The Town Clerk explained that she had met with officers from SDC and agreed the terms for a renewal of the lease. SDC officers had confirmed that in anticipation of local government reorganisation, they were happy to discuss a freehold transfer of this site and others in due course but this would need to wait for SDC to adopt a Community Asset Transfer policy.

The Town Clerk presented the management accounts and bank reconciliation statements for the first quarter of 2026-27 which were approved as drawn. There were no questions about the accounts.

There were two propositions from the Committee:

6.1 To approve the Environmental Policy dated June 2026

This was proposed by Cllr K Cargill, seconded by Cllr Bowe and carried by Council.

6.2 To approve the Data Protection Complaints Procedure dated July 2026.

This was proposed by Cllr Chester, seconded by Cllr Mills and carried by Council.

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. There were no propositions from the Committee and no questions about the minutes.

8. South Warwickshire Local Plan

It was noted that the Regulation 19 Consultation on the South Warwickshire Local Plan was now live. It was agreed that the Planning Committee would respond on behalf of the Town Council.

9. Local Government Reorganisation

With the permission of the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Juned made a presentation on the progress of Local Government Reorganisation. She confirmed that a letter had been received on 16th July from the Secretary of State agreeing that the case had been made for two unitary authorities for Warwickshire. A

North Warwickshire Council (covering North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Rugby) and a South Warwickshire Council (covering Stratford and Warwick).

The letter had explained that whilst a single authority might create some savings by economies of scale, the two-authority model would be more responsive to local identity and local needs. The Secretary of State had confirmed that the two-authority model was appropriate due to the distinct identities and geographies of the two area and would give more flexibility for devolution.

The next step will be a Structural Changes Order which will need to be passed in Parliament to abolish the existing councils and to create the new councils.

A Project Board of officers had been formed to oversee the process locally. This Board would shortly add elected some current Councillors to its membership. The government had allocated some funding to each authority to assist with the issues arising from the organisation.

Cllr Juned confirmed that in May 2027, elections would take place for the Shadow South Warwickshire Council. These would coincide with parish and town council elections including those in Alcester. The existing District Councillors would have their term extended to May 2028 to coincide with the creation of the new authorities.

In response to a question from the Town Clerk, Cllr Juned confirmed that it was likely that Town Councillors elected in May 2027 would serve a 5-year term so that elections for parish and town councils coincided with those of the unitary authority going forward.

Cllr Juned answered a number of questions from councillors regarding finances of SDC and WDC, the number of councillors, the location of new council offices, future changes in the political balance of the unitary council and which combined authority would cover South Warwickshire. She explained that this level of detail was yet to be confirmed.

Cllr Juned was thanked by the Deputy Mayor for her valuable input into the meeting.

10. Lead Councillors

10.1 Business and Tourism

A report from the Deputy Mayor and Cllr Andrews had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Deputy Mayor and Cllr Andrews gave an update on their progress on the new Visit Alcester website.

10.2 Allotments

The report from the Facilities Manager on behalf of Cllr Greenaway had been circulated in advance and was noted. Cllr Chester asked if it would be possible to investigate relocating School Road allotment holders away from the flood plain. The Town Clerk explained that this would be difficult but that she would discuss it with the Facilities Manager.

11. Town Council Representatives

It was noted that there were vacancies for one trustee for Moorfields Charity and one for Newport's School Foundation following the death of Cllr Neal-Sturgess. There were no volunteers for these roles and so it was agreed to

defer this item until the next meeting. Councillors were asked to consider the roles in the meantime and to contact the Town Clerk if they were interested.

United Charities – Cllr K Cargill reported that one of the almshouses was in need of significant renovation which would require considerable investment by the charity.

Moorfields – Cllr Bowe reported that the charity wished to plant a tree in Moorfields Park to commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth II and the King's Coronation. The Town Clerk confirmed that this would be acceptable and that Cllr Bowe should contact the Facilities Manager to make arrangements.

Royal British Legion – Cllr M Cargill reported that the Legion was planning to create a poppy cascade on the Globe island to coincide with Remembrance weekend. They are recruiting help from people who can knit or crochet poppies for the display.

12. Payment of Accounts

The Town Clerk presented the Payment of Accounts for the preceding month. The accounts were proposed to be approved by Cllr Boyd, seconded by Cllr M Cargill and carried by Council.

13. Dates of future meetings

Planning Committee – Monday 11th August at 7 pm.

Finance & General Purposes Committee - Tuesday 25th August at 7 pm.

Full Council - Tuesday 1st September at 7 pm.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings at Globe House.

The Deputy Mayor closed the meeting.