

MINUTES OF THE **ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 13TH MAY 2026** AT 6.00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT.

Present: L Cooke (Mayor) Presiding
A Ineson (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: B Bailey G Jennings
J Bradford M Joyce
R Buscombe C Parker
P Bullivant P Parker
C Davieson M Ryan
D Corney-Walker L Wood
A Gibbs N Yabsley
A Hall

Invited guests: Family members and friends of Councillors
Reverend Gill Daniel, Avenue Church
Anna Chaplain, Kim Martin
Representatives of The Lighthouse Sensory Room
Representatives of Citizens Advice Bureau Teignbridge
Freewoman Carol Bunday
Freeman Mike Hocking
Inspector James Johnson, Devon & Cornwall Police

In attendance: Philip Rowe Town Clerk
Samantha Scott Deputy Town Clerk & RFO
Carla Winsborrow Mayor's Secretary
Robert Woodger Facilities Maintenance Team Leader
Linda McGuirk Principal Administrator
Nigel Canham Communications Advisor
Pierre Doutreligne Projects & Strategy Officer

Also, present Mick Cockerham County Councillor
Jane Taylor District Councillor

RETIRING MAYOR

Reverend Jill Daniel led prayers.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Colin Parker, welcomed all present to the Annual Meeting of the Council and thanked invited guests for attending.

Councillor Parker invited those present to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect for the late Mr Robert Leeper, former Town and District Councillor.

In his retiring remarks, Councillor Parker reflected on his year in office and spoke of the great honour it had been to serve the people of Newton Abbot. He remarked upon the strong sense of community spirit, resilience and pride that continues to define the

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town, and praised the many individuals, organisations and businesses that contribute to Newton Abbot's vibrant and positive atmosphere. He referred to the many encouraging comments received throughout the year, including through social media, which highlighted the town's upbeat character and community achievements.

Councillor Parker also acknowledged the significant work undertaken by the Council during the year, including ongoing involvement in Local Government Review, asset transfers and a number of major projects. He highlighted the continued growth and success of Newton Abbot Museum and expressed appreciation to the Museum staff and volunteers for their dedication.

Special thanks were extended to Councillor Louise Cooke for her steadfast support throughout the municipal year in her role as Deputy Mayor. Councillor Parker stated that throughout his tenure he had remained mindful of the responsibilities of the office and had sought to carry out the role with integrity, fairness and commitment, recognising that the role of Mayor extends far beyond ceremonial duties alone.

Councillor Parker expressed his sincere gratitude to all those who had supported him during the year, including fellow Councillors, Officers and the Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Jill Daniel. He also conveyed his deepest appreciation to his family, especially the Mayoress, Mrs Jean Parker, for their unwavering support.

Councillor Parker then presented a cheque for £3,000 to a representative of the Mayor's charity, Citizens Advice Teignbridge. The representative of the charity thanked the Mayor and all those who had contributed to the fundraising efforts during the year and outlined how the funds would support the charity's ongoing work within the community.

In concluding, Councillor Parker offered his best wishes to the incoming Mayor and assured them of the Council's full support and respect in undertaking the role. Councillor Parker then formally presided over the commencement of the meeting.

1. **ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR – 2026/2027**

The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Colin Parker invited nominations for the election of the Town Mayor for the forthcoming year.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Louise Cooke be elected Mayor for the year 2026/27.

There being no other nominations it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Louise Cooke be hereby elected Mayor of Newton Abbot for the year 2026/27.

Upon transferral of the Mayoral Chain to Councillor Louise Cooke, Councillor Colin Parker was presented with a Past-Mayor's insignia.

Father of the House, Councillor Mike Ryan congratulated Councillor Louise Cooke and thanked Councillor Colin Parker for his contribution over the past 12 months.

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2. **DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Louise Cooke read and duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Mayor of Newton Abbot.

Councillor Cooke spoke of the great privilege and honour it was to be elected as Mayor of Newton Abbot and expressed her enthusiasm for leading the Council forward in joy and kindness through the year ahead.

The Mayor confirmed the following arrangements for her term of office:

Kim Martin would serve as Mayor's Chaplain.

Mayoral Charities for the year would be The Lighthouse Sensory Room at the Courtenay Centre and Glendinning Academy.

A Civic Service would be held during the year, with the date to be confirmed.

3. **APOLOGIES**

A valid reason for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Tom Corney-Walker.

4. **INTERESTS**

None declared.

5. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR – 2026/2027**

The Mayor invited nominations for the appointment of Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Amanda Ineson be appointed Deputy Mayor for the year 2026/2027.

There being no other nominations it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Amanda Ineson be hereby appointed Deputy Mayor of Newton Abbot for the Year 2026/2027.

Cllr M Ryan abstained from voting.

6. **DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Amanda Ineson read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Ineson upon her appointment as the Deputy Mayor. Councillor Ineson thanked Councillors for voting for her and assured members of her commitment.

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7. **MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

The Council noted and adopted the details of the memberships of committees and sub-committees of the Council, as circulated prior to the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised Members that there had been a minor amendment to Councillor Gwen Jennings' membership of the Strategic Planning Forum. It was also noted that the membership of the Staffing Committee currently exceeded the number permitted within its Terms of Reference. The Town Clerk informed Members that a report would be presented to the June meeting of the Council outlining options to address and resolve the matter.

Accordingly, it was;

RESOLVED that the membership of committees and sub-committees of the Council be hereby noted and adopted subject to the above minor amendments.

8. **PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

Further to the Informal Meeting of the Council held on 6th May 2026, where upon Members discussed the proceedings of the Council.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the existing Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the parent Committees will be responsible for any necessary decisions arising from the business of its Committee, Sub-Committees and Working Parties until such time as the respective Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, as appropriate, are elected and appointed at their first meeting.

9. **APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES SERVING ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Council noted the statement on appointments to Outside Bodies, as circulated prior to the meeting, subject to a minor amendment to remove Councillor Buscombe from the RHM Bakers Charity.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the appointment of representatives on Outside Bodies be hereby noted and adopted.

10. **APPROVAL OF SIGNATURES FOR CHEQUES**

The Mayor reported on the need for the Council to pass a mandatory resolution authorising Lloyds Bank plc to continue to provide banking arrangements for the

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Council and designate authorised signatories for the purpose of signing cheques on behalf of the Council.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the following persons be hereby authorised to sign cheques on behalf of the Council:

- Mayor
- Deputy Mayor
- Town Clerk
- Deputy Town Clerk & (RFO)
- Principal Administrator
- Chairperson of Finance & Audit Committee
- Vice-Chairperson of Finance & Audit Committee

11. **CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING**

At the conclusion of the meeting the Mayor invited all those present to join her for refreshments.

Meeting closed at 18:50

Chairperson.....Date.....

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