

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 2nd MARCH 2026

Present:

Cllr Julie Macdonald Town Mayor

Councillors:

Cllr Joanne Callaghan	Cllr Kate Cernik
Cllr Bob Cernik	Cllr Graham Emmett
Cllr Emma Guy	Cllr Stephen Harcombe
Cllr Brian Holland	Cllr Andy Kent
Cllr Rachel Waterman	Cllr Andy Stott
Cllr Sam Naylor	Cllr Catriona Stewart
Cllr Andy Stott	

Also present:

Chris Shaw	Chief Officer
Liza Brander	Registrar and Wellbeing Manager

NTC 25/130 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Olwyn Dean, Cllr Alison Gerrard, Cllr Catherine Fox, Cllr Lee Siddall and Cllr Janet Illidge. Cllr Arthur Neil and Cllr Tom Melville were not present.

NTC 25/131 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interest under the following categories:

Pecuniary Interest, outside Bodies Interest, family, friend or close associate Interest

Councillor Rachel Waterman, Cllr Emma Guy and Cllr Sam Naylor, declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Councillor Sam Naylor declared an interest in Mid Cheshire Hospital trust.

NTC 25/132 OPEN FORUM

There were no members to speak at the open forum.

NTC 25/133 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 2nd February 2026 be confirmed and approved as a true and accurate record with the following amendments noted.

Cllr Catriona Stewart requested costs for childcare to be added to the policy

Cllr Catriona Stewart commented that item NTC 25/127 needs clarification as to which new cycle path destination is being referred to.

Part B NTC 25/128 Northwich Town Council Services costs is showing Cllr Emma Guy as against and unable to make a decision, the correct comment made was unable to make a decision.

Cllr Emma Guy requested the percentage be added to the precept figures.

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

NTC 25/134 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Finance, Amenities & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 16th February

2026.
Noted

Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 23rd February 2026.
Noted

NTC 25/135 TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor's diary – February 2026

Town Mayor's Communications	
11 th February	Warm Welcome Group - Northwich/Changing Lives Together
11 th February	Mayor of Knutsford Quiz 2026
17 th February	Cheshire Constabulary Armed Forces Community Network
19 th February	MCMTTC/Wizard of Oz
22 nd February	Crewe Civic Service
26 th February	Mayors Meal at Kanya Restaurant

The Mayor gave thanks to Cllr Andy Kent and Cllr Catriona Stewart for their kind donation to the Mayors Charity of the cash prize they won on the night of the Mayors Meal.

NTC 25/136 CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

The Chief Officer updated members with the following:

Members noted the Chief Officers Report

NTC 25/137 POLICE UPDATE

PCSO Falkner introduced Jack Kirkbride, he is the new town centre officer for Northwich, PCSO Falkner will be leaving the 28th of March. The Chief Officer gave thanks to PCSO Falkner and said it has been a pleasure working with her and we all wish her the very best in the future.

Further to the antisocial behaviour in town, four youths have been invited to the station along with their parents where they held acceptable behaviour discussions and they are now on the ASB pathway which means the Police will be looking at any future incidents involving the youths and they would then be invited in to see the intervention working team and discuss the education side and their chosen behaviour leading into adulthood. So hopefully we will see a reduction in antisocial behaviour.

Looking at ways to improve Barrons Quay. Highways, problem solving team and CW&C have been involved with the Police in trying to improve the issues, but they are still getting reports of problem drivers, Jack has spoken to several of them. Also working closely with BQ and NTC. The street furniture on Cumberland Street has not had the desired effect that was expected.

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

There are a couple shop lifter offenders that are due to attend court soon. They are looking at offenders, why are they offending, looking at housing, finances and ways to stop them offending in the future.

Cllr Kate Cernik asked if residents without social media are being informed on how to report a crime. Nic said that residents need to know when to call 999, 101 or email with problem. Notices have been put out to residents. Nic said it's important that residents make the call to

101 as its important they report incidents.

Cllr Rachel Waterman said there are many people not on social media and they do not know how to contact the police. Notices displayed in doctors' surgeries, high street, workplaces would get the word round to the community.

Cllr Sam Naylor gave thanks to Nic for all her work over the years and welcome on-board Jack.

Cllr Sam Naylor also invited the Police along to the Mosk on Sunday evening and said they had mentioned they would like more engagement with the Police in the future.

NTC 25/138 NORTHWICH ACTIVE TRAVEL

Following on from Consultation in 2024 the Northwich Active Travel Plan is now being implemented, please see timetable and schedules below which was sent via CW&C Council.

We have also uploaded these onto the Northwich Town Council website.

I write to advise that the Active Travel England funded work in Northwich, to improve walking, wheeling and cycling in the town centre; will commence shortly. It will start on 2 March 2026 for five months. The route was identified through previous consultation on our adopted Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which sets how we plan to develop our walking and cycling networks across the borough.

The scheme is funded by Active Travel England and includes improved pedestrian crossing points at side roads; reduced speed limits to make on-road cycling safer; a signalised crossing for pedestrians and cyclists over Chester Way and improved public realm and crossings at the Venables Way junction with Witton Street.

The works are programmed to take place in the following 4 phases*:

- Chester Way and Church Road - Monday 2 March to Thursday 16 April 2026
- Witton Street, Old Warrington Road and Station Road - Thursday 16 April to Thursday 14 May 2026
- Venables Road, Albion Road, and Witton Street - Friday 15 May to Friday 19 June 2026
- Station Road, Manchester Road, Victoria Road, Kingsway, Church Road & Princes Avenue - Wednesday 17 June to Wednesday 22 July 2026

***All work is weather dependant and will require some temporary road closures and diversions to be in place.**

We recognise there will be disruption during this time. Updates will be provided on our website [Improving walking, wheeling and cycling access in Northwich | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

The full provisional programme is listed here, although this could be subject to change:

- Chester Way, lane closure Monday 2 March to Thursday 16 April
- Church Road closure – Wednesday 8 April to Wednesday 15 April
- Witton Street, road closure and removal of parking bays Thursday 16 April to Thursday 30 April
- Old Warrington Road and Station Road closed - Thursday 30 April to Thursday 14 May
- Venables Road, road closed - Friday 15 May to Tuesday 2 June
- Albion Road, temporary traffic signals – Wednesday 3 June to Tuesday 16 June
- Venables Road, road closed - Wednesday 17 June to Friday 19 June

- Manchester Road, road closed - Wednesday 17 June to Friday 26 June
- Manchester Road, Station Road 4-way temporary traffic signals - Friday 26 June to Thursday 25 June
- Victoria Road, Kingsway & Church Road - Tuesday 7 July to Monday 20 July

Cllr Sam Naylor commented that this has been on the agenda for a long time now and only this week it's come to light that this will be happening. It's a very welcome injection of finance to Northwich and will impact on health and well being and connecting people. It will be disruption but worth it in the long run.

Cllr Catriona Stewart has emailed highways asking for the outcome on the consultations and will report back to Council.

Cllr Kate Cernik suggested advising residents that this money was put to one side back post covid time and can only be used for this project Active Travel and cannot be used for potholes or anything else.

Cllr Graham Emmett said it's very frustrating when cones are left out blocking the road when work is not in operation. Chief Officer to ask the question if the cones could be moved back, especially at weekends but it will probably be down to costs and time involved that this isn't done.

Cllr Rachel Waterman said this is going to create a lot of disruption, but it will be worth it for the end outcome.

Cllr Bob Cernik said the Active Travel predates Boris Johnson government and there will be a lot more happening in the future around the river weaver and other improvements. A cycle way would be really welcomed. We need to keep the active travel options open to Winnington Bridge and the river Weaver.

Cllr Sam Naylor said Hunts Lock to Blue Bridge is fantastic and many improvements have been made for walking and cycling.

Cllr Rachel Waterman met with Brio and discussed Active Cheshire, it was asked if our town could have the Forest Bike Model as in London where you hire a bike at the train station and dropping it at town. Chief Officer said we investigated this years ago, but we can look at it again. A designated cycle lane would encourage people to use bike lanes as it will be safer than using the roads.

Cllr Emma Guy asked if it was possible to have a statement on Northwich Town Council and social media that we can all use rather than all councillors replying to social media separately. Active Travel team could help. We are directing people to their site.

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

Cllr Catriona Stewart said cycling in Northwich is worse than cycling in London. Very frightening and cars do not give way. Comments that are made on social media suggest that no one cycles in Northwich and this is not the case.

Cllr Graham Emmett said is there an actual proposal as he hasn't seen the options, Cllr Sam Naylor said there is a link at the bottom of the email showing option 1 and option 2. He would also not cycle through Northwich and is there any designated cycle lanes being proposed. Chief Executive to get clarification.

NTC 25/139 NORTHWICH MUSIC FESTIVAL 2026

Northwich Town Council have organised and funded a Music Festival for over 10 years which has been mainly held in Verdin Park. The event has evolved over the years which started as a one-day event and eventually became a three-day event over the last few years. The budget

for the event has increased mainly due to additional days but also additional infrastructure, security, and medical requirements.

This has always been a free event for the community, and over the past three years we have run a bar to help with funding the event. Attendance at the music festival is low considering it is a free event; it is also weather dependant for attendance.

Proposal

To move the event into Northwich Town Centre (Apple Market Place) and work with the local businesses to create a fringe festival around the main stage on the weekend of 13th /14th June 2026. The main stage will run from 1.00 pm until 9.00 pm at the latest to then encourage people to then visit our local bars and restaurants for the rest of the evening.

There will be small fairground rides, children's entertainment and limited food traders around the main stage. Security, medical, and toilets will all be on site throughout the event along with NTC staff and volunteers.

The acts will be acoustic throughout the day, with the last two acts each night being tribute acts to finish the evening.

We are currently working with the Artisan Market as this will be taking place on the Saturday and potentially on the Sunday if traders are available.

Funding

The cost will be met by Northwich Town Council, Northwich BID and Members Budgets and we are actively looking for a main sponsor. The event will cost approximately £20,000 which includes all acts, stage, barriers, security, medical toilets and waste removal.

By staging this event in the town centre, Northwich will see large scale events throughout the summer months which supports our local businesses and makes the town a desirable place to be.

Recommendation

Council to approve holding the Northwich Music Festival in Apple Market Place on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th June 2026

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

Cllr Andy Stott asked if we would still be holding our own bar, Chief Officer said we want to encourage people to use the local bars and restaurants in Town so we will not be holding our own bar. Cllr Andy Stott also asked is this short term and we then go back to Verdin Park in future years. Chief Officer said we will assess every year.

Cllr Andy Kent commented that we are looking for a main sponsor, it's a great proposal but with time being so close do we have a budget if we do not get a main sponsor. CO confirmed we do have a budget for this.

Cllr Bob Cernik asked where the music is taking place. CO explained it will be like the Pina Colada with music taking place at the stage and in bars and restaurants.

Cllr Sam Naylor thinks this is a fantastic idea, great location and benefit all the bars and restaurants and replace Northwich Festival.

Cllr Rachel Waterman suggested we engage with local community that might want to be involved in an act and bring their family into town.

Cllr Emma Guy asked what cost we would be looking for with the main sponsor. CO said we do have a budget towards the event, but we could have various sponsors all donating to the event.

Cllr Kate Cernik said we have lots of good musical theatre groups that could also be included.

Cllr Steven Harcombe commented that he was involved in the Choir in Northwich and they could sing at the event.

Cllr Sam Naylor suggested that maybe VINCI/ION might like to sponsor us as they are delivering the regeneration of Weaver Square.

Cllr Catriona Stewart suggested that M&S may like to sponsor the event.

Proposed by Cllr Andy Kent and seconded by Cllr Catriona Stewart

All Agreed

NTC 25/140 OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Sam Naylor attended a Northwich Biomass meeting last week. The company involved also operates the local incinerator, which previously received a number of complaints regarding odour. It was explained that the new process will involve materials arriving by tanker, with the system designed so that odours cannot escape. Attendees were assured that there should be no issues relating to smells. The proposal is expected to bring new business to the town. It was also confirmed that the number of vehicle movements will remain the same as previously.

Cllr Rachel Waterman and Cllr Sam Naylor took part in the Sustainable Northwich litter pick. They commented on how disappointing it was to see such a significant amount of litter across the area.

Date.....

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**Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor**

Members of the public in Davenham have created and displayed signs highlighting concerns about the volume of rubbish being dropped, which was described as appalling. The CO is currently addressing litter issues along Northwich Road.

Cllr Andy Kent also expressed concern about the level of litter in Northwich. He referred to the former Keep Britain Tidy campaign and its impactful public posters, suggesting that a similar awareness campaign could be considered locally. He proposed organising a competition for the best anti-litter posters, with winning entries displayed around Northwich.

Cllr Steven Harcombe said it is not just litter, the hedge near Church was full of fly tipping and by Halfords.

Cllr Catriona Stewart commented on a poster she had seen that was very visual and said, "don't be a tosser". Cllr Rachel Waterman said she has used this before and said it's not the litter that is the issue, it's the people tossing it out the cars and dropping it.

Cllr Andy Kent said they do a littler pick at Northwich Station each month.

Cllr Rachel Waterman has also been involved in letter picking and said businesses need to take ownership and pick up their customers rubbish out of their own car parks.

Cllr Emma Guy will have a look at work regarding the Keep Britian Tidy campaign.

Cllr Graham Emmett suggested speaking to CW&C about increasing the number of bins in town now they have reduced them.

Cllr Kate Cernik suggested involving BID to encourage businesses to help, maybe a “cleanest business of the month” award.

C O said in the past we have involved children at local schools, and they have designed posters that were placed on all the bins in town.

Cllr Sam Naylor reported that the new street cleaner machines have been purchased by CW&C.

NTC 25/141 CWAC MEMBERS

Cllr Rachel Waterman and Cllr Sam Naylor provided a further update following their meeting at Cheshire Central, where discussions focused on waterways, transport, infrastructure, and opportunities to increase boat traffic into Northwich.

They explored the possibility of encouraging more boats to travel to Northwich from Anderton but were advised that the process involves significant administrative requirements. The CO confirmed that previous enquiries about bringing boats into Northwich for Christmas events and weekend activities had received a similar response.

Cllr Rachel Waterman highlighted the potential environmental and logistical benefits of transporting goods by water, noting that a single barge travelling from Winsford to Northwich could replace several lorry journeys. Members agreed that this is an initiative worth continuing to pursue.

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

It was noted that the Canal & River Trust (CRT) has limited funding available for dredging, though not for the entire stretch of river. Members suggested inviting the new Regional Director of CRT to attend a future meeting to discuss opportunities relating to leisure, business, and the local economy.

Cllr Andy Kent said the CRT have tried to move this forward many times. The towpath is near on collapsing and needs repairs. We need someone senior enough to come to the council so we can express our frustration. It's very important to Northwich.

Charlotte Walton is our lead officer for Northwich; we need to try and get her to come and see us either at a Council meeting or a separate meeting.

Cllr Kate Cernik went to see the dry dock and said it is amazing, with so much history. She is hoping the dredging will get this far.

Cllr Andy Kent, Cllr Sam Naylor and Cllr Rachel Waterman said Government announced 11 million pounds has been invested to improve the bus routes, will any of this be coming to us? Bus transportation in town is not good. Changing lives together has been working and bidding for transport in the local area. This is for people who don't live near bus routes.

Cllr Andy Kent hopes that come May 2027 we have greater power and see how CW&C are looking at spending the money. He would like a bit more information regarding this.

Cllr Rachel Waterman was pleased to announce the pothole near Buccaneer has now been filled in.

Cllr Graham Emmett would like to note the passing of Clive Steggel from The Vale royal

Rotary club. NTC to send a tribute. He has done so much for the town over the years, would it be possible for his family to pick up a Mayors Award.

NTC 25/142 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Council meeting will be Monday 13th April 2026 at 6.00 pm
(Due to bank holiday the Monday before)

Meeting closed at 7.15pm

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor