

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 13th APRIL 2026

Present:

Cllr Julie Macdonald Town Mayor

Councillors:

Cllr Joanne Callaghan	Cllr Kate Cernik
Cllr Bob Cernik	Cllr Catherine Fox
Cllr Emma Guy	Cllr Stephen Harcombe
Cllr Brian Holland	Cllr Andy Kent
Cllr Rachel Waterman	Cllr Andy Stott
Cllr Olwyn Dean	Cllr Catriona Stewart
Cllr Andy Stott	

Also present:

Chris Shaw	Chief Officer
Cath Kirwan	Deputy Chief Officer/RFO

NTC 25/143 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sam Naylor, Cllr Arthur Neil, Cllr Alison Gerrard, Cllr Graham Emmett, Cllr Lee Siddall, Cllr Janet Illidge. Cllr Patricia Parkes and Cllr Tom Melville were not present.

NTC 25/144 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 and, Councillor Olwyn Dean declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

NTC 25/145 OPEN FORUM

Kevin Gardner has made a kind donation towards an AED which will be installed in Leftwich. This has been donated in memory of his late wife Barbara Gardner. Councillor Julie Macdonald thanked Mr Gardner for his kind donation.

NTC 25/146 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 3rd March 2026 be confirmed and approved as a true and accurate record with the following amendments noted.

Cllr Emma Guy requested to be removed from the Declarations of Interest

Additionally, an amendment is required to Part B, NTC 25/128 (Northwich Town Council Services Costs). The record currently shows Cllr Emma Guy as voting “against” and “unable to make a decision.”

The correct position is that Cllr Emma Guy stated she was unable to make a decision due to not having access to the previous cost information.

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

Cllr Emma Guy requested that the precept increase be added to the minutes as a percentage.

The precept rise was 10.9% for 2026/27

Proposed by Catriona Stewart and seconded by Andy Stott

All Agreed

NTC 25/147 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Finance, Amenities & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 16th March 2026.

Noted

Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 23rd March 2026.

Noted

NTC 25/148 TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor's diary – March 2026

Town Mayor's Communications	
5 th March	Visit Cheshire Tourism Awards
14 th March	Theos 21 Bags Litter Picking Challenge
21 st March	Rotary Swimathon, <i>attended by Deputy Mayor</i>
22 nd March	Davenham Dads Club
27 th March	Winsford Town Mayors Charity Race Night
5 th March	Visit Cheshire Tourism Awards

NTC 25/149 CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

Members noted the Chief Officers Report

NTC 25/150 POLICE UPDATE

No Police Update

NTC 25/151 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Members to approve the Community Engagement Policy

Proposed by Cllr Catherine Fox and seconded by Cllr Robert Cernik.

All agreed

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

NTC 25/152 EQUALITY DIVERSITY POLICY

Members to approve the Equality Diversity Policy

Proposed by Cllr Olwyn Deans and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan.

All agreed

NTC 25/153 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Members to approve the Scheme of Delegation

*Proposed by Cllr Rachel Waterman and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan.
All agreed*

NTC 25/154 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members to approve the Financial Regulations.

*Proposed by Cllr Kate Cernik and seconded by Cllr Cathrine Fox.
All agreed*

NTC 25/155 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Members to approve the Health and Safety Policy

*Proposed by Cllr Jo Callaghan and seconded by Cllr Robert Cernik.
All agreed*

NTC 25/156 FIREFEST 2026

Members received a report from the Chief Officer regarding a proposed ticketed bonfire and firework event. All ticket sales would be used to cover the cost of the event, with any surplus carried forward to the 2027 event.

Councillor Rachel Waterman asked why there is a need for the event. The Chief Officer explained that organising an official firework event would help reduce anti-social behaviour associated with fireworks and bonfires in the area, based on discussions with local police.

Councillor Emma Guy asked whether the £16,000 cost was included in the budget. The Chief Officer confirmed that £7,000 has been allocated within the Northwich Town Council budget, and that ticket sales would make the event cost-neutral. Councillor Guy also asked whether any profit would be carried forward; the Chief Officer confirmed that any surplus would go towards next year's event.

Councillor Robert Cernik expressed reservations, similar to Councillor Waterman, noting concerns that poor weather could impact ticket sales. The Chief Officer acknowledged that weather is always a risk but confirmed that tickets would be sold in advance.

Councillor Catherine Fox expressed support for the event, stating it would bring enjoyment to many members of the public.

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor

Councillor Catriona Stewart also supported the idea, commenting that a festival-style event at this time of year would be beneficial and that she would like to see a firework event in the town.

Councillor Rachel Waterman asked whether silent fireworks could be considered. The Chief Officer responded that these would be too expensive and noted that other firework events are available.

Councillor Olwyn Dean suggested using quieter fireworks—retaining some noise but avoiding very loud displays and expressed a preference for a broader festival atmosphere rather than solely a fireworks event.

The Chief Officer confirmed that quieter fireworks accompanied by music could be explored. Councillor Emma Guy stated that she did not support the event, questioning how it would be perceived if the Rotary Club could not afford to run it, but the Town Council could. The Chief Officer clarified that the issue was not solely financial but also related to a lack of volunteers and the increased requirements for security and medical provision at events.

Councillor Stephen Harcombe raised concerns about the timing of the event, noting the distress fireworks can cause to pets. He also commented that there is insufficient evidence to determine whether the event would be beneficial, suggesting the Council could choose not to proceed and observe public reaction. However, he expressed general support for a well-regulated organised firework event.

Councillor Kate Cernik commented that a town of this size should have a firework event and that it would provide a safer, controlled environment for the public.

The Chief Officer confirmed that, as with all Council events, full medical cover and security would be in place throughout. The estimated cost of the event is £16,000.

Council to approve the above proposal for Northwich Town Council to deliver the 2026 Bonfire and Firework display at Verdin Park, date to be confirmed. To continue the Northwich tradition.

Proposed by Cllr Andy Kent and seconded by Cllr Catherine Fox

6 For
5 Against

Resolved that Northwich Town Council deliver the 2026 Firefest Event at Verdin Park.

NTC 25/157 OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Andy Kent expressed his thanks to Northwich Town Council in advance for working in partnership with Grozone and Friends of Northwich Train Station on the installation of three new large planters, which will include a planting scheme.

It was noted that the project has been funded by Northern Railway and will be managed by Northwich Town Council.

Members were also informed that a wildflower meadow will be planted on the embankment near the station, which is expected to make a positive difference to the area.

Date.....

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Mayor

NTC 25/158 CWAC MEMBERS

Cllr Rachel Waterman raised concerns about the current library at Weaver Hall Museum but there is still no date of the new library opening. VINCI are having a meet them in the next few weeks.

Cllr Olwyn Dean updated members on the Peak Cluster and the consultation. Also, if you need a speed limit reduced and a 20mph reduction can't be put in place if the traffic is going to fast.

NTC 25/159 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Council meeting will be Monday 18th May 2026 at 6.00 pm

Meeting closed at 6.45pm.

Part B

In accordance with Local Government Act—Public Admission to Meetings Act 1960, the following agenda items are to be considered in the absence of press and public.

18. Discretion Policy

Report to be given at the meeting.

[Members to note the report.](#)

Council resolved to accept the discretion policy.

Proposed by Cllr Catriona Stewart and seconded by Cllr Kate Cernik

All agreed

Date.....

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Cllr Julie Macdonald
Mayor