

COUNCIL - ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES - 27 MAY 2026

Present: Councillor Mpofu-Coles (Mayor);

Councillors Gittings (Deputy Mayor), Asare, Ayub, Ballsdon, Clarke, Cresswell, Cross, Davies, Dennis, Dominguez, Eden, Ennis, Foster, Gavin, Goss, Griffith, Gurung, Hornsby-Smith, Hoskin, Keane, Keeping, Lanzoni, Leng, Magyarosy, McCann, McEwan, McGoldrick, McGrother, Magon, Moore, Naz, O'Connell, DP Singh, R Singh, Smith, Stevens, Tarar, Terry, Thompson, Williams, Woodward and Yeo

Apologies: Councillors McElroy, Nikulina, Saadat, Walkem and White

1. TO ELECT A MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The first business to be transacted being the election of the Mayor, it was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Hoskin and CARRIED:

“That Councillor Paul Gittings be elected Mayor of this Borough.”

No other candidate having been nominated Councillor Gittings was duly declared elected.

2. TO ELECT A DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Griffith and CARRIED:

“That Councillor Amjad Tarar be appointed Deputy Mayor of this Borough.”

3. ADDRESS BY NEWLY-ELECTED MAYOR

Councillor Gittings addressed the Council.

4. VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR AND TADI CHIGUMIRA

It was moved by Councillor Leng and seconded by Councillor Eden and CARRIED:

“That the Council record their sincere appreciation of the ability, courtesy and diligence with which Councillor Alice Mpofu-Coles has discharged her duties attached to the office of Mayor since 21 May 2025. They also record their grateful thanks to Tadi Chigumira for the support and assistance she rendered in the capacity of Mayor’s escort throughout the Mayor’s term of office.”

5. ADDRESS BY RETIRING MAYOR

Councillor Mpofu-Coles addressed the Council.

6. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 24 MARCH 2026

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The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

7. STATEMENT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER

The Returning Officer submitted a Statement for the information of the Council showing details of the persons elected as Councillors at the local government elections held on 7 May 2026.

8. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

It was moved by Councillor Leng and seconded by Councillor Tarar and CARRIED:

“That Councillor Terry be appointed Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2026/27.”

9. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report setting out proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution following an annual review. Where applicable, relevant extracts of the Constitution showing the proposed changes were set out in Appendices 1 - 7 of the report.

Resolved –

- (1) That the proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution, as set out in paragraphs 3.2 – 3.15 of the report, be approved;
- (2) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services publish the amended Constitution on the Council's website.

10. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER AND LEAD COUNCILLORS AND ALLOCATION OF PORTFOLIOS

It was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Leng and CARRIED:

Resolved –

- (1) That Councillor Leng be appointed the Deputy Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2026-27;
- (2) That for the Municipal Year 2026-27, the following Councillors be appointed as Lead Councillors for the services listed below:

Adult Social Care	Councillor Dennis
Children	Councillor Griffith
Education and Public Health	Councillor Eden
Environmental Services and Community Safety	Councillor McGoldrick
Housing	Councillor Yeo
Leisure and Culture	Councillor Lanzoni

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Corporate Services and Resources	Councillor McEwan
Climate Strategy and Transport	Councillor Ennis
Planning and Assets	Councillor Leng

11. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL BODIES AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report asking the Council to decide which committees to establish for the year, their size and terms of reference, and determine the allocation of seats to political groups represented on the Council on committees in accordance with the provisions of Sections 15 and 16 of The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. Appendix 1 to the report setting out the Allocation of seats on Committees and Other Bodies was tabled at the meeting. Attached to the report at Appendix 2 was a revised Constitution and Terms of Reference agreed by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

A motion was moved at the meeting which set out the nominations of the political groups for appointments to the Standing, Regulatory and Other Committees, the Health & Wellbeing Board, Corporate Parenting Panel and the Consultative Committees and Forums.

It was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Leng and CARRIED:

Resolved –

- (1) That the total number of Committees Seats, the overall share of Committee Seats, and the Allocation of Committee Seats be agreed as set out in Tables 1 to 3 of Appendix 1;
- (2) That the list of Committees as set out in Table 3 of Appendix 1 be appointed to as follows:

Standing Committees

That the following Councillors be appointed to serve on the following Standing Committees of the Council in the Municipal Year 2026/27:

Policy Committee (10:3:2:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Dennis	Cllr Nikulina	Cllr R Singh	Cllr Thompson
Cllr Eden	Cllr White	Cllr Smith	
Cllr Ennis	Cllr Williams		
Cllr Griffith			
Cllr Lanzoni			
Cllr Leng			
Cllr McEwan			
Cllr McGoldrick			
Cllr Terry			
Cllr Yeo			

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Adult Social Care, Children's Services & Education Committee (10:4:2:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Asare	Cllr Clarke	Cllr Ballsdon	Cllr O'Connell
Cllr Dennis	Cllr Cresswell	Cllr Smith	
Cllr Eden	Cllr Magon		
Cllr Foster	Cllr Walkem		
Cllr Gittings			
Cllr Griffith			
Cllr McEwan			
Cllr Mpofu-Coles			
Cllr Naz			
Cllr Tarar			

Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee (11:5:2:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Ayub	Cllr Clarke	Cllr Ballsdon	Cllr Thompson
Cllr Cross	Cllr Cresswell	Cllr Saadat	
Cllr Gavin	Cllr Keane		
Cllr Hoskin	Cllr Nikulina		
Cllr Lanzoni	Cllr Walkem		
Cllr Magyarosy			
Cllr McEwan			
Cllr McGoldrick			
Cllr McGrother			
Cllr Naz			
Cllr Yeo			

Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee (10:4:2:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Cross	Cllr Dominguez	Cllr Goss	Cllr Moore
Cllr Ennis	Cllr McCann	Cllr Saadat	
Cllr Gurung	Cllr McElroy		
Cllr Hornsby-Smith	Cllr Nikulina		
Cllr Keeping			
Cllr Leng			
Cllr McGoldrick			
Cllr McGrother			
Cllr DP Singh			
Cllr Stevens			

Regulatory and Other Committees

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That the following Councillors be appointed to serve on the following Regulatory and Other Committees of the Council in the Municipal Year 2026/27:

Audit & Governance Committee (5:2:1:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Asare	Cllr Keane	Cllr Smith	Cllr Moore
Cllr Gavin	Cllr Williams		
Cllr Magyarosy			
Cllr McGrother			
Cllr Stevens			

Licensing Applications Committee (8:3:1:0)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Ayub	Cllr Clarke	Cllr Saadat	-
Cllr Dennis	Cllr Keane		
Cllr Gurung	Cllr Magon		
Cllr Leng			
Cllr McGoldrick			
Cllr Stevens			
Cllr Tarar			
Cllr Woodward			

Personnel Committee (4:2:0:0)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Ennis	Cllr Keane		
Cllr McEwan	Cllr Nikulina		
Cllr Mpofu-Coles			
Cllr Terry			
<i>(or nominees)</i>			

Planning Applications Committee (8:3:1:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Davies	Cllr Dominguez	Cllr Saadat	Cllr Moore
Cllr Ennis	Cllr McCann		
Cllr Foster	Cllr Williams		
Cllr Gavin			
Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr Leng			
Cllr Stevens			
Cllr Yeo			

Standards Committee (4:1:1:1)			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Gavin	Cllr Keane	Cllr R Singh	Cllr Moore
Cllr Keeping			
Cllr McEwan			

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Cllr Terry			
<i>Named Substitutes:</i>			
Cllr Leng			Cllr Thompson

- (3) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the relevant Group Leader, be authorised to determine any necessary adjustments to be made to individual Committee allocations in accordance with the provisions of Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;
- (4) That the Council appoint to the Corporate Parenting Panel and Health & Wellbeing Board in accordance with the Constitution, approve the allocation of seats as set out in Tables 4 and 5 of Appendix 1 and make appointments as follows:

Corporate Parenting Panel

That the following Councillors be appointed to serve on the Corporate Parenting Panel in the Municipal Year 2026/27:

Corporate Parenting Panel			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Leader of the Council		Cllr Ballsdon	Cllr O'Connell
Lead Cllr for Children (Chair)			
Lead Cllr for Education and Public Health			
Cllr Yeo			

Health & Wellbeing Board

That the following Councillors be appointed to serve on Health and Wellbeing Board in the Municipal Year 2026/27:

Leader of the Council
Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care
Lead Councillor for Children
Lead Councillor for Education and Public Health
Named substitute: Councillor Leng

- (5) That the Council appoint to the Consultative Committees and Forums listed in Table 6 of Appendix 1 as follows:

Access and Disabilities Working Group			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>

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Cllr Cross		Cllr Goss	Cllr Thompson
Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr McGrother			

Alliance for Cohesion and Racial Equality			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr McGoldrick		Cllr Saadat	Cllr Thompson

Arts & Heritage Forum			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Hoskin	Cllr Nikulina	Cllr Ballsdon	Cllr Thompson
Cllr Lanzoni		Cllr Goss	
Cllr Magyarosy			
Cllr Stevens			

Civic Board			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Eden		Cllr Ballsdon	Cllr Thompson
Cllr Gavin			
Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr Leng			
Cllr Stevens			
Cllr Terry			

Cleaner Air & Safer Transport Forum			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Cross	Cllr Magon	Cllr Goss	Cllr O'Connell
Cllr Davies			
Cllr Ennis			
Cllr Griffith			
Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr Leng			

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP			
Cllrs McGoldrick and Terry			
Observers: Other Group Spokespersons			

Cycle Forum			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Cross	Cllr White	Cllr Goss	Cllr Moore
Cllr Davies			
Cllr Ennis			
Cllr Griffith			

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Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr Leng			

Local Joint Forum			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Ennis		Cllr R Singh	
Cllr McEwan			
Cllr McGrother			
Cllr Terry			
(or nominees)			

Older People's Working Group			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Gittings			Cllr O'Connell
Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr Hoskin			
Cllr McEwan			
Cllr McGrother			

Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Ayub		Cllr Goss	Cllr O'Connell
Cllr Eden			
Cllr Ennis			

Safer Reading Neighbourhood Forum			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Cllr Davies		Cllr Ballsdon	
Cllr Griffith			
Cllr Hornsby-Smith			
Cllr Keeping			
Cllr McGoldrick			

Town Twinning Group			
<i>Labour</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>
Mayor – ex-officio		Cllr Smith	
Cllr Terry			

- (6) That the following Councillors be appointed as Chairs/Vice-Chairs of the bodies listed at (5) above:

Body	Chair	Vice Chair
Access & Disabilities Working	Cllr Hornsby-	Cllr McGrother

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Group	Smith	
Arts & Heritage Forum	Cllr Lanzoni	Cllr Stevens
Civic Board	Cllr Terry	Cllr Leng
Cleaner Air & Safer Transport Forum	Cllr Cross	Cllr Ennis
Corporate Parenting Panel	Cllr Griffith	
Cycle Forum	Cllr Cross	Cllr Ennis
Local Joint Forum	Union side	Cllr McEwan
Older People's Working Group	Cllr Gittings	Cllr Hoskin
Safer Reading Neighbourhood Forum	Cllr McGoldrick	
Town Twinning Group	The Mayor	

- (7) That the Terms of Reference of all bodies listed in (2) to (5) above be as set out in the Council's Constitution;
- (8) That the revised Constitution agreed by the Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education, as attached to the report at Appendix 2, be agreed and adopted.

12. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES

It was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Leng and CARRIED:

Resolved –

That the following be appointed Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the following Committees for the Municipal Year 2026/27:

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Adult Social Care, Children's Services & Education	Councillor Asare	Councillor Naz
Audit & Governance	Councillor Williams	Councillor Stevens
Health & Wellbeing Board	Councillor Eden	Thames Valley ICB representative
Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure	Councillor Hoskin	Councillor Magyarosy
Licensing Applications	Councillor Woodward	Councillor Tarar
Planning Applications	Councillor Gavin	Councillor Davies
Personnel	Councillor McEwan	Councillor Terry
Policy	Councillor Terry	Councillor Leng
Standards	Independent	Councillor Keeping
Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport	Councillor Cross	Councillor Hornsby-Smith

13. DATES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2026/27

It was moved by Councillor Gittings and seconded by Councillor Tarar and CARRIED:

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Resolved –

- (1) That the calendar of meetings for the Municipal Year 2026/27, as attached to the agenda, be approved;
- (2) That, before the day of the Annual Meeting in 2027, meetings of the Council be held at half-past six o'clock in the afternoon on 30 June, 13 October 2026, and 26 January, 23 February and 23 March 2027, unless the Mayor shall specify some other date and time.

(The meeting closed at 8.00 pm)