

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**COUNCIL
MINUTES**

Date: Thursday, 21 May 2026

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: (Chair), (Vice Chair), Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Doug Bainbridge CC, Jan Bainbridge CC, Philip Bibby, John Blackwood, Leanne Brady, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Jim Brown, Jeff Bullock, Forhad Chowdhury, Nazmin Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Jody Hanafin, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Matthew Hurst CC, Dermot Kehoe, Lin Martin-Haugh, Jaysica Marvell, Andy McGuinness, Sarah Mead, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Liam Morrell Phillips, Ellie Plater, Tom Plater, Ricki Rands, Loraine Rossati, Peter Wilkins, Nigel Williams, Jade Woods and Tom Wren

Start / End Start Time: 7.00pm
Time: End Time: 8.40pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Lynda Guy, Rob Henry, Wendy Rouse, Graham Spencer and Peter Wilkins.

There were no declarations of interest.

At this juncture, the Mayor spoke of the recent sad passing of former Mayor, Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd, Freeman of the Borough who had dedicated an extraordinary 48 years of service to Stevenage and its residents in particular in the Bandle Hill and Poplars Ward. The Mayor paid tribute to Mrs Lloyd's sharp intellect, extensive knowledge, and unwavering determination to act in the best interests of the people of Stevenage.

The Leader of the Council also spoke, recognising Mrs Lloyd's remarkable service to both the Council and the town's residents, and the respect in which she was held across the political spectrum. He further acknowledged her significant contributions in a number of roles, most recently as Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Resources.

A number of Councillors then spoke in tribute, highlighting Mrs Lloyd's dedication and commitment to the town, and noting that this had been recognised through the award of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough, the highest honour the Council could bestow.

The Council then stood for a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd.

The Mayor then expressed her thanks, noting that this would be the final Council meeting she would chair. She thanked her husband, who had served as her consort during the year, for his support and for sharing in the experience throughout. She also extended her thanks to her wider family and friends for their continued encouragement and support.

The Mayor expressed her appreciation to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Briscoe, for attending events on her behalf, often at short notice alongside the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor. She also thanked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Richard Henry, fellow councillors, and her colleagues from Bedwell Ward for entrusting her with the honour of serving as the Mayor of Stevenage.

The Mayor placed on record her thanks to the Chief Executive, Tom Pike and his Senior Leadership Team as well as her support team, particularly the Mayor's PA, Tracey Frost, and Members' Services Officer, Sheila Scrivens, for their assistance throughout her Mayoral year.

Finally, the Mayor advised that £7,000 had been raised which would be shared between her chosen charities – the Young Carers Crew and the Rotary Club of Stevenage Grange.

2 **MINUTES - 25 FEBRUARY 2026**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25 February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

3 **ELECTION OF MAYOR**

The Mayor then asked for nominations for the Office of Mayor for 2026/27.

Councillor Richard Henry firstly thanked the Mayor and her Consort for their successful year in Office. He then nominated Councillor Lloyd Briscoe for the Office of Mayor.

Councillor Henry informed the Council that Councillor Lloyd Briscoe had represented Martins Wood Ward since 2014 and had served as Deputy Mayor over the past year. During this time, he had contributed to a wide range of committees, task forces and action groups. He had also served for seven years as a Cabinet Member, with responsibility for the Economy, Skills and Transport Portfolio.

Councillor Henry further noted that, for the past eight years, Councillor Briscoe had been a member of the committee of the Oval Community Association. Through his role as a Portfolio Holder, he had supported initiatives relating to regeneration, local business, transport improvements and neighbourhood development.

He also highlighted Councillor Briscoe's long-standing passion for Stevenage Football Club, noting that he was widely recognised as the club's official historian, preserving its history and heritage. Through his work with the Supporters Association, he had championed fan representation, community involvement and the protection of the club's identity. Councillor Briscoe was also a regular volunteer at

Broadhall Way on match days.

Councillor Henry described Councillor Briscoe as approachable, knowledgeable and passionate, and someone who was deeply proud of Stevenage. He then formally welcomed him as the Mayor of Stevenage.

The nomination was seconded by Councillor Myla Arceno, who expressed her support for her fellow Martins Wood Ward councillor, describing him as a dedicated and committed representative who would serve the role of Mayor with distinction. Councillor Arceno then spoke of Councillor Briscoe's connection with Stevenage Borough Football Club and his love of engaging with people from differing backgrounds in Stevenage and his strong foundation for community and charitable works.

There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Lloyd Briscoe be elected as Mayor for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

Councillor Lloyd Briscoe then made the statutory declaration of office.

The Mayor then announced that Sarah Pattison would be the Mayoress for 2026/27.

The Mayor thanked the Council for his election and for the support and the trust placed in him to undertake the role of Mayor of the Borough of Stevenage.

The Mayor paid tribute to Councillor Nazmin Chowdhury, the outgoing Mayor, and her Consort, thanking them for the manner in which they had undertaken their many duties over the past year. He advised that it had been a pleasure to attend a number of events as Deputy Mayor on several occasions and expressed his appreciation for their guidance, advice and support.

The Mayor stated that he, together with his partner, Sarah, were honoured to have the opportunity to promote all that is best about Stevenage and the Borough. He informed the Council that he had lived and grown up in Stevenage and spoke of his strong personal connection to the town. He emphasised his commitment to championing Stevenage and representing the Borough to the very best of his ability throughout his Mayoral year.

The Mayor advised that his chosen charities for the year would be The Muster Point and the Stevenage Community Trust.

4 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

The Mayor asked for nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor for 2025/26.

Councillor Loraine Rossati nominated Councillor Jackie Hollywell, and the nomination was seconded by Councillor Nazmin Chowdhury. In supporting the nomination, Councillor Hollywell was described as a supportive and dedicated colleague, with experience in community safety, equalities, and more recently housing and housing development. She was commended for her exemplary judgement and her strong commitment to social justice.

There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Jackie Hollywell be appointed Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

Councillor Jackie Hollywell then made the statutory declaration of office. The Deputy Mayor announced that Jeannette Thomas would be her Deputy Mayoress for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

5 **APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH MAYOR**

The outgoing Youth Mayor, Charlotte Gregory, in her speech advised that her year had been busy, rewarding and a truly memorable experience filled with wide ranging opportunities including opening Stevenage Day, travelling to Germany for Town Twinning and attending schools parliament days to encourage young people to become involved with decision making in the community alongside a number of charitable events supporting the Mayor's charities. She thanked the Councillors, Officers, family and friends for their support over the year and said that it had been an honour to serve as the Youth Mayor of Stevenage.

The outgoing Deputy Youth Mayor reflected that she had begun her term as a young SEND person whose voice was not being heard, but was pleased to report that, over the course of the year, she had found her voice within the Council and felt that it had been listened to and understood. She expressed her thanks to Charlotte for her support and friendship, and to Councillor Nazmin Chowdhury, Coleen De Freitas, and Carol Richardson for their guidance throughout the year.

It was then moved by Councillor Richard Henry, seconded by Councillor Coleen De Freitas and **RESOLVED** that Tyra Karira be elected as Youth Mayor for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

Tyra Karira then signed the declaration of office. In her acceptance speech, the new Youth Mayor thanked the Youth Council for her election. She further thanked the outgoing Youth Mayor and outlined a number of initiatives including bridging the gap between the youth community and the vital resources available to them ensuring everybody knew exactly where to go and where to turn to for mental health support, career guidance and a safe social place. She then announced that Annie Warren would be her Deputy Youth Mayor for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

6 **APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that Councillor Richard Henry be appointed Leader of the Council for 2026 - 2030.

In his speech of thanks Councillor Richard Henry informed the Council that Councillor Coleen De Freitas and Loraine Rossati would be the Co-Deputy Leaders.

The Members of the Cabinet and their Portfolios would be as follows:

- Councillor Tom Plater – Resources and Performance

- Councillor Loraine Rossati – Housing
- Councillor Myla Arceno – Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing
- Councillor Coleen De Freitas – Economy Skills and Young People
- Councillor Rob Broom – Environment, Transport and Planning
- Councillor Nazmin Chowdhury – Stronger Communities and Equalities

7 **APPOINTMENT OF LEADERS AND DEPUTY LEADERS OF THE POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL**

The Chief Executive advised the Council that Councillors Richard Henry, Liam Morrell Phillips and Andy McGuinness had been appointed as Leaders of the Labour and Co-operative, Reform and Liberal Democrat Groups respectively.

It was noted that Councillors Loraine Rossati and Coleen De Freitas would be Co-Deputy Leaders of the Labour and Co-operative Group. Councillor Doug Bainbridge CC and Councillor Tom Wren would be Deputy Leaders of the Reform and Liberal Democrat Groups respectively.

8 **APPOINTMENT OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

The Chief Executive advised that the Leader of the Opposition would be Councillor Liam Morrell Phillips and that Councillor Doug Bainbridge CC would be his Deputy.

9 **BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2026**

Council considered a report that detailed the results of the Borough Council Elections that were held on 7 May 2026.

Councillor Richard Henry, Leader of the Council, thanked Tom Pike (Returning Officer), Luke Fattorusso (Democratic Services Manager) and the elections team for the excellent and smooth management of the Election process.

Councillor Andy McGuinness, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group thanked the elections team for the efficient running of the elections.

The newly elected Members were welcomed to the Council.

The Council also placed on record its thanks to a number of long-serving Members who were no longer serving on the Council, including Stephen Booth, Simon Speller, and Jeanette Thomas, in recognition of their valued contribution and service.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the results of the Stevenage Borough Council Elections 2026 be noted.

10 **CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES**

Council considered various matters relating to the Member level decision making structure of the Council and the Council's constitution for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Terms of Reference, as detailed in the appendices to the report; and the size and political composition for the following bodies that form the non-Executive Member level decision making structure of the Council be approved, subject to the rules of proportionality where appropriate for 94 Committee seats where applicable (relevant Committees are identified thus*)
 -
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee* (Appendix A) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members and 1 Conservative Member)
 - Community Select Committee* (Appendix B) – 11 Members (6 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
 - Environment and Economy Select Committee* (Appendix C) – 11 Members (6 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
 - Planning & Development Committee* (Appendix D) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members and 1 Independent Member)
 - Licensing Committee (Appendix E) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 4 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
 - General Purposes Committee* (Appendix F) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 4 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members).
 - Appointments Committee* (Appendix G) - 7 Members (4 Labour Members, 2 Reform Members and 1 Liberal Democrat Member)
 - Standards Committee* (Appendix H) – 7 Members (4 Labour Members, 1 Reform Member, 1 Liberal Democrat Member and 1 Conservative Member)
 - Audit Committee* (Appendix I) – 9 Members (5 Labour Members, 2 Reform, 1 Liberal Democrat Member and 1 Independent Member).
 - Statement of Accounts Committee* (Appendix J) – 7 Members (4 Labour Members, 2 Reform Members and 1 Liberal Democrat Member)
 - Joint Consultative Committee* (Appendix K) – 3 Members (2 Labour Members and 1 Reform Member)

* Indicates where those bodies covered by the rules of proportionality for the purposes of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups), Regulations 1990 – total Committee places being 94

2. That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make consequential amendments to the Constitution to reflect the proposal set out in Recommendation 2.1 above.
3. That the membership of the Cabinet and the individual Portfolios, as set out at item 11 and in the green paper tabled at the meeting, be noted.
4. That the various Cabinet bodies appointed by the Leader, detailed in Paragraph 4.4 of the report and the relevant Terms of Reference for each body set out in Appendix L to the report, be noted.
5. That Council the dates for Council meetings for the Municipal Year 2026/27, as shown at Paragraph 4.7 of the report, be approved and that the calendar of formal meetings shown at Appendix M to the report be noted.
6. That the amendments to the Constitution set out in Appendix N as proposed by the Monitoring Officer be approved.

11 **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

Details of the individuals nominated to serve on each Committee, together with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of those Committees, where stated, had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor Richard Henry moved and Councillor Coleen De Freitas seconded the appointment of Committees and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and it was **RESOLVED** that the membership of Committees, together with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs, where detailed, are appointed for the 2026/27 Municipal Year as follows:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 Members - (7-3-2-1)

Councillors – E Plater (Chair), M Hurst, CC (Vice-Chair) , P Bibby, L Brady, J Brown, J Bullock, P Clark, J Hollywell, A McGuinness, C Parris, R Rands, J Woods and T Wren

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

11 Members - (6-3-2-0)

Councillors – J Brown (Chair), Rob Henry (Vice-Chair), J Ashley-Wren, L Guy, J Hollywell, M Hurst, CC, D Kehoe, J Marvell, L Morrell Phillips, N Williams and J Woods

ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

11 Members - (6-3-2-0)

Councillors – L Brady (Chair), P Wilkins (Vice-Chair), D Bainbridge CC, J Bainbridge CC, J Blackwood, J Brown, J Marvell, C Parris, G Spencer, N Williams and J Woods

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

13 Members – (7-3-2-1)

Councillors – C Parris (Chair), N Williams (Vice-Chair), J Ashley-Wren, D Bainbridge CC, F Chowdhury, P Clark, L Guy, J Hanafin, Rob Henry, J Hollywell, E Plater, P Wilkins, (Vacancy)

SUBSTITUTES: M Arceno, J Blackwood, N Chowdhury, C De Freitas, a McGuinness, L Morrell Phillips, W Rouse CC and T Wren

LICENSING COMMITTEE

13 Members – (7-4-2-0)

Councillors – L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Clark (Vice-Chair), L Guy, Rob Henry, J Hanafin, J Hollywell, M Hurst, CC, D Kehoe, J Marvell, A McGuinness, C Parris, R Rands and G Spencer

SUBSTITUTES: J Bainbridge CC, J Blackwood, J Bullock, L Rossati and W Rouse, CC

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

13 Members – (7-4-2-0)

Councillors – L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Clark (Vice-Chair), L Guy, Rob Henry, J Hanafin, J Hollywell, M Hurst, CC, D Kehoe, J Marvell, A McGuinness, C Parris, R Rands and G Spencer

SUBSTITUTES: J Bainbridge CC, J Blackwood, J Bullock, L Rossati and W Rouse, CC

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

7 Members – (4-2-1-0)

Councillors – Richard Henry (Chair), M Arceno, J Bullock, L Martin-Haugh, A McGuinness, L Morrell Phillips and L Rossati

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

7 Members – (4-1-1-1)

Councillors – L Martin Haugh (Chair), C Parris (Vice-Chair), P Bibby, R Broom, J Hollywell, L Morrell Phillips and T Wren

AUDIT COMMITTEE

9 Elected Members – (5-2-1-1) + 1 Independent Co-opted Member (S Uddin)

Councillors – F Chowdhury (Chair), D Kehoe (Vice-Chair), J Bullock, L Brady, C De Freitas, S Mead, L Morrell Phillips, G Spencer and P Wilkins

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

7 Members – (4-2-1-0)

Councillors T Plater (Chair), M Arceno, J Blackwood, N Chowdhury, R Parker CC, L Rossati and W Rouse, CC

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

8 Members – (2-1-0-0)

Councillors T Plater (Chair), D Bainbridge CC and J Brown

12

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Council considered a list of individuals nominated to serve on Outside Bodies which had been circulated before the meeting.

It was moved by Councillor Richard Henry, seconded by Councillor Coleen De Freitas and **RESOLVED** that the following individuals be appointed to represent the

Council on the various bodies detailed below for one year, unless otherwise stated:

CO-OPERATIVE COUNCILS INNOVATION NETWORK – Portfolio Holder
Economy, Skills and Young People

COUNCIL FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL ENGLAND THE
HERTFORDSHIRE SOCIETY – Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport and
Planning

DISTRICT COUNCILS NETWORK - The Leader of the Council

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EAST – The Leader of the Council

EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL PLANNING - Portfolio Holder for Environment,
Transport and Planning or Chair of Planning and Development Committee

HERTS WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP - Portfolio Holder for Environment,
Transport and Planning or Chair of Planning and Development Committee

HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD - The Leader of the Council

HERTFORDSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT BOARD - The Leader of
the Council

HERTFORDSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND POLICY GROUP -
Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport and Planning or Chair of Planning and
Development Committee

HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITIES LEADERS GROUP – The Leader of the
Council

HERTFORDSHIRE FUTURES - The Leader of the Council

HERTFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP -
Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport and Planning

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - The Leader of the Council

SO SAFE PARTNERSHIP – Portfolio Holder Stronger Communities and Equalities

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - Portfolio Holder Stronger
Communities and Equalities

STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD – The Leader and Co-Deputy Leaders of
the Council

AGE CONCERN STEVENAGE – Councillor M Arceno

BEDWELL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor E Plater

CHELLS MANOR COMMUNITY CENTRE – Councillor A McGuinness

CROSSROADS CARE – Councillors F Chowdhury

DOUGLAS DRIVE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION – Councillor L Briscoe

HOME-START STEVENAGE – Councillor C De Freitas

KADOMA LINK ASSOCIATION – Councillor J Ashley-Wren, P Clark and N Williams

LIVING ROOM PROJECT – Councillor J Hollywell

OLD STEVENAGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor J Brown

OVAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor G Spencer

PIN GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor T Plater

SHEPHALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor R Broom

ST. NICHOLAS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor M Hurst CC

STEVENAGE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU – Councillor R Broom

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY TRUST – Councillors M Arceno and J Brown

STEVENAGE CREDIT UNION LIMITED – Councillor T Plater

SPRUSE – Councillor L Martin-Haugh

STEVENAGE HAVEN – Councillor R Broom

STEVENAGE / AUTUN / INGELHEIM ASSOCIATION – Councillors N Chowdhury and L Rossati

STEVENAGE WORLD FORUM FOR ETHNIC COMMUNITIES – Councillor F Chowdhury and N Chowdhury

SYMONDS GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor J Hollywell

TIMEBRIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Councillor J Marvell

HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – Councillor J Brown

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION UNIT – Councillor J Brown

LUTON AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE – Councillor

CARERS CHAMPION – Councillor F Chowdhury

DEMENTIA CHAMPION – Councillor M Arceno

MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION – Councillor L Rossati

ARMED FORCES CHAMPION – Councillor C Parris

CHAIR