



MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday 18th February 2026

Time: 7:00 pm

Venue: Board Room, North Warwickshire Borough Council Civic Suite, Council House, South Street, Atherstone, Warwickshire, CV9 1DE

In Attendance:

Councillors: D Wilkinson, C Evans, C Jones, J Chambers (Chair), G Short, M Short, G Chamberlain, T Short, R Collins, D Wright, M Thomas, K Barnett and O Dipple (arrived 7.30pm)

Deputy Clerk: S Oldham (minutes) Locum RFO J Turner (via TEAMS)

Guests: NWBC Cllr Jarvis, Craig Bird (Restore Collective)

Members of the Public/Press: None

1. Apologies:, S Bishop, J Braithwaite had sent apologies which were noted.

2. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations: None

3. Public participation: Craig Bird of Restore Collective was in attendance briefly in case anyone needed to ask him questions about the recent Lottery Grant that had been awarded for the Arcade Upstairs Project.

4. Reports from External Organisations (for information only):

a) **Warwickshire Police:** A written report had been received prior to the meeting, and it was noted that two vehicles of the same make had been stolen recently (Ford Puma).

b) **County and Borough Councillors:** Apologies had been received from NWBC Cllr D Clews.

NWBC Cllr Jarvis: it was reported that the Britannia Works demolition had commenced. Also, the parking in Croft Road was hindering the tree removal at the leisure centre so it was having to be rearranged. Potholes were still a problem locally so it was agreed that Cllr Jones would draft a letter to go to WCC from the Town Council.

5. Minutes: It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on the 21st of January 2026.



6. Correspondence Received:

a) Grand Union Canal Transfer – Phase Two Public Consultation launch 11th February 2026 – Thursday 2nd April 2026. Cllr T Short reported that the MP had arranged a public meeting on the 31st March 2026 with doors open at 5.30pm and the meeting at 6.30pm.

b) NWBC Cllr Singh – Town Council asked to consider the position of a Town Crier. It was agreed to move this to the Communications and Engagement working group for further consideration and report back to Full Council.

c) Town of Culture – MP Rachel Taylor and NWBC / Atherstone Partnership proposal for Atherstone.

After discussion it was agreed to express an interest in this proposal.

The Town Council would be willing, in principle, to nominate a Councillor to participate in a wider stakeholder steering group to support the development of an application.

However before confirming our nomination, Members would welcome clarification on the proposed governance and leadership arrangements – specifically whether the bid is intended to be led solely by Atherstone Partnership, or whether it will be convened and overseen through a broader stakeholder forum (for example under the auspices of the Borough Council), and as referenced at the recent joint stakeholder meeting.

Cllr Chambers would circulate a draft email to members in advance.

d) Chief Executive NWBC – launch of Local Government Reorganisation Consultation.

It was **RESOLVED** that Atherstone Town Council support the two Unitary Councils for Warwickshire (North and South) proposal. Cllrs T Short and Wilkinson would draft up the consultation response to bring back to Full Council on the 18th March 2026 ready for the deadline of the 26th March 2026.

e) Office of the Sheriff of the County of Warwick – Nominations for High Sheriff 2031/32.

It was agreed to delegate a response to the Mayor with Councillors invited to feedback any suggestions.

7. Planning*: **Any planning applications received from or decided by NWBC ahead of the meeting date, following the publication of this agenda may also be reported to the Town Council under this item.*

a) To consider new applications:



Reference	Address	Details	ATC comment / Deadline
PAP/2025/0561	St Mary's House Friars Gate	Work to trees in a conservation area	No Comment
PAP/2026/0030	2 Bath Road Atherstone	Erection of single storey side and rear extension	No Comment
PAP/2026/0054	3M Ratcliffe Rd	Demolition of all buildings and structures	No Comment
PAP/2026/0071	Chapel House, Friars Gate	Creation of off-road parking area and installation of free-standing Electric Vehicle charging point.	No Comment
PAP/2026/0072	Chapel House, Friars Gate Listed building consent	Creation of off-road parking area and installation of free-standing Electric Vehicle charging point.	No Comment
PAP/2026/0075	20 Repington Avenue	Erection of single storey rear extension	No Comment
PAP/2025/00585	14 Holte Rd, Atherstone	Work to Trees	No Comment

b) To report decisions on previous applications (for information only):

Reference	Address	NWBC decision
PAP/2026/0019	Atherstone Leisure Complex	No objection to works
PAP/2025/0575	Atherstone Leisure Complex	No objection to works
PAP/2025/0511	2 The Willows	Granted



PAP/2025/0348	4 Charlotte Way Atherstone	Withdrawn
PAP/2025/0465	Holte Villas, Witherley	Withdrawn

8. Committees, Working Groups and Representations.

- a) It was **RESOLVED** for the Deputy Clerk to add Cllr Thomas to the Communications and Engagement Working Group and the Open Spaces Working Group.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** to agree to the request from Cllr Chamberlain to come off the Communications and Engagement Working Group. Deputy Clerk to amend the paperwork.
- c) It was **RESOLVED** for the Deputy Clerk to adjust the Council Structure terms of reference for the Open Spaces Working Group to reflect the changes and to update the Councillor profiles on the website.

d) Arcade Working Group and Arcade operational matters:

- i. To consider the updated Fire Risk Assessment report and associated quotation for electrical and building work.
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation from the electrician regarding outstanding actions relating to the fire risk assessment.
It was **RESOLVED** to accept the revised quotation for the building works required to Unit 5 as outlined in the fire risk assessment.
It was further **RESOLVED** to move £5000 from the General Reserve fund to an Earmarked Reserve for this project in relation to the proposed costs of the new fire doors.
It was agreed that the Development and Review working group (working with the Arcade working group) would update the list of tasks outstanding on the Fire Risk Assessment in order to track progress.
- ii. To receive an update on the application to NWBC Shop Front Grant Scheme for a new front shutter.
Cllr Wright declared an interest as a NBWC Cllr.
It was noted this application had been successful and it was agreed the Deputy clerk should liaise with the conservation officer regarding the colour it should be painted and then place the order.
- iii. To consider the quotations for Agency Management of the commercial shop units.
It was agreed that this should be deferred until a new clerk is in post but the Arcade working group are asked to analyse the figures in the meantime.
- iv. Upstairs Arcade: To receive an update on the application made on behalf of the Town Council to The National Lottery Community Fund for £19,758.00.
It was noted that this had been successful and related to the heating and insulation improvements as noted in the EPC and MEES report.



- v. To receive a quotation for lease preparation of the transfer of the Upstairs Arcade space to Restore Collective as a community space and associated advice from the Locum RFO on the next steps including procurement and tender process.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from Evans Derry Solicitors with Restore Collective meeting the legal costs of the lease. The deputy clerk to action both points.

It was further **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the Locum RFO namely that Full Council approves the procurement process for the Arcade Project as outlined in the report, in accordance with Financial Regulations, and authorises the Clerk to commence the quotation and advertising process, with a further report to be presented prior to contract award.

- vi. To receive an update on the current Upstairs EPC and suggested next steps required to file the EPC. It was **RESOLVED** that once the heating and insulation work has been completed the EPC will be revisited as per the quotation provided and submitted accordingly. The deputy clerk to action both points.
- vii. To consider an alternative location for the Town Council Archive.
It was agreed for the Deputy Clerk to explore further options for rationalising the materials that need to be archived or managed as part of the Council's Records Management Policy and report back to Full Council. In the meantime, it was agreed for the Deputy Clerk to proceed with letting the vacant Unit 8 downstairs rather than holding as a potential storage option.
- viii. To consider disposal of surplus office furniture and equipment. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk could work with Restore Collective to determine which items needed to be kept and which could be disposed of.

e) **Open Spaces Working Group** – the written report from Cllr M Short was noted. It was agreed to have the copse at Royal Meadow area tidied up and made more nature-friendly in October with funding from Warwickshire National Education Union, if it can be named Lorna's Copse, in honour of the late Lorna Dirveiks's long service to the union and to underprivileged Warwickshire schoolchildren, adult education, the youth service and much more. Cllr M Short to follow up this action.

f) Town Councillor and Representative reports

- i. A brief verbal report from Atherstone Stakeholder Meeting 28th January 2026 attended by Cllrs Chambers and Jones was noted.

Cllr Jones thanked all the stewards for their work at the recent Ball Game and it was noted that some problems with the road closure contractor would be addressed by the Ball Game committee. Cllr Jones also reported that he had re-directed the person asking about using bricks from the Hat Factory in a memorial bench to Neil Dirveiks at the Heritage Society.



9. Financial Matters:

- a) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Bank Reconciliation to 30th November 2025.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Bank Reconciliation to 31st December 2025.
- c) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Bank Reconciliation to 31st January 2026.
- d) It was **RESOLVED** to ratify payments made under delegated authority, approve the payment schedule (& nominate two signatories to authorise the internet payments to be made by the Deputy Clerk)
- e) To note the Q3 Budget Monitoring Report & Forecast. It was agreed that Cllr Barnett would liaise with the Locum RFO regarding earmarking of reserves based on previous budgets.
- f) To consider advice from the Locum RFO on an additional deposit facility in addition to Unity Trust Bank. It was agreed to ask that the Locum RFO prepares a draft investment schedule for Full Council to consider at a future meeting.
- g) It was **RESOLVED** to accept the revised Reserves Policy as drafted by the Locum RFO to comply with the latest JPAG standards.
- h) It was **RESOLVED** to accept the revised Risk Management Strategy as drafted by the Locum RFO.
- i) To consider the report on the Financial Risk Register by the Locum RFO and agree a further review. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations for improvement to the register as reviewed by the Locum RFO in their report and to action them accordingly.
- j) CCTV Contingency Fund for 2026-27 (question from January Full Council) – advice from Locum RFO was considered and it was **RESOLVED** That Full Council delegates authority under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to the Clerk, in consultation with Cllrs G Short and C Jones, to authorise expenditure up to £3,000 from the approved CCTV budget for the purpose of maintaining continuous CCTV provision in the interests of public safety.

10. Operational Reports, Maintenance and associated recommendations:

- i. It was **RESOLVED** to accept a quotation for the two-year maintenance of benches and noticeboards in the Cemetery and Market Square. The Deputy Clerk to action.
- ii. The latest weekly Play Area Inspection Reports carried out by NWBC were noted.
- iii. The latest quarterly Play Area Inspection Reports carried out by NWBC were noted.
- iv. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotations for work arising from reports for the Play Areas including labour and parts. The Deputy Clerk to action.
- v. To consider quotation from Cloudy IT for staff and Councillor digital skills training. It was agreed to defer this item until a new clerk is in post.



Closed Session: It was **RESOLVED** to move into a closed session and exclude the public and press, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest in the due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed for items 11 -17.

11.Staffing matters:

- a) A verbal update from the Employment Committee on the Town Clerk/RFO recruitment process was noted.
- b) SLCC Practitioner’s Conference – it was noted that this had been a very useful training exercise with items being fed back to Council in due course.

12.CCTV Matters – nothing to report.

13.St Mary’s Park Incident 16/11/2025 - Claim Reference: 482098- an update from the Deputy Clerk closing the file was noted. It was agreed for the Deputy Clerk to seek advice from NWBC about improvements to the gate and entrance to avoid children running out onto the road.

14. Atherstone Market Square – An update from the Deputy Clerk about the recent Street Trading Consent Hearing held on 11.2.26 and matters arising was noted. The hearing was deferred for further information to be provided by the licensing and legal team at NWBC.

15. Arcade Confidential Matters – It was agreed for the Deputy Clerk RFO to agree a payment plan for a previous Arcade tenant.

16. Atherstone Common Rights Holders correspondence from the Honourable Piecemaster was considered and a response agreed for the Deputy Clerk to send.

17. Westwood Rd Play Area lease with Atherstone Common Plots (Rights Holders /Proprietors) – this was agreed

The meeting was closed at 21.30pm

Chairman signature:.....