



STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

16 September 2025

Meeting commenced: 6.30pm Meeting ended: 8.35pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Hunter) in the chair

Councillors:

Albon	Harding
Cleeve	MacDonald
Coles	Petrovic
Duck	Rashwan
Fojtik	Rolfe
I Fradgley	Smith
J Fradgley	Vos

Presentations:

- Tony Guy MBE, Director at Heart of England Community Energy (HECE), provided an overview of the organisation's operations. HECE is the UK's largest community energy company by asset size and is based in Stratford-upon-Avon. Tony outlined how HECE operates, focusing on the generation of renewable energy through large-scale solar farms.

He highlighted that the income generated from these assets was reinvested into the local area, delivering significant social and economic benefits to Stratford-upon-Avon and the surrounding communities.

- Lisa Pinkerton and Jonathan Sullivan, representing Widgit, gave a presentation on the company's mission and its vision for Stratford-upon-Avon.

It was explained that Widgit was a pioneering software company specialising in symbols-based communication, with a strong

commitment to improving accessibility for individuals with communication difficulties.

Councillors expressed their support for Widgit's aspiration for Stratford-upon-Avon to become a Communication Friendly Town — where symbols were used widely across public spaces, businesses, and services to promote inclusivity and enhance access for all, particularly those with learning disabilities, autism, or limited English proficiency.

Their presentation highlighted the potential social impact of the initiative and outlined opportunities for collaboration across the community.

Mayors Announcements

The Mayor gave an update on the recent events she had attended and thanked the Deputy Mayor for her support.

42 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Alcock, Lee and McNaught Barrow and accepted for the reasons given.

43 Declarations of Interest

All members disclosed a Personal Interest in Minutes 49 and 52.

44 To receive written requests for dispensation

There were no request for dispensations.

45 Public Participation

There were no public present.

46 To approve the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 July 2025

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 July 2025 be approved.

47 To adopt the Draft Open Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 29 July 2025

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED That the Draft Open Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 29 July 2025 be adopted.

48 To adopt the Draft Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee Meetings held on 15 July and 12 August 2025

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED That the Draft Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee Meetings held on 15 July and 12 August 2025 be adopted.

49 To adopt the Draft Minutes of the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Review Group held on 19 August 2025

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED That the Draft Minutes of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Review Group held on 19 August 2025 be adopted.

50 Standing Orders and Terms of Reference

The Town Clerk reported that there were no amendments required to the current Standing Orders at this time. However, a comprehensive review of the document would be scheduled to take place in 2026 to ensure that all procedures remain compliant with current legislation, reflect best practice in local government, and continue to meet the operational needs of the Council.

On the Terms of Reference the Town Clerk reported that there was an amendment to Point 7 to read - *purchase/sale acquisition of land*.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED That the Standing Orders be adopted and that the

Terms of Reference be approved, subject to the above amendment.

51 Town Council Policies

Consideration was given to the following policies, which had been recommended for adoption:

- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Statement on Crime and Disorder Policy
- Safeguarding Policy (recommendation from Personnel Committee)

Following consideration, it was proposed and seconded and

RESOLVED

That the

- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Statement on Crime and Disorder Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

be approved.

Town Clerk's Open Report:

52 Members Allowances

The Council considered the annual review of Members' Allowances.

Councillors reaffirmed that Town Councillors should continue to not receive an allowance, although they would still be able to claim reimbursement for any expenses incurred while carrying out official Council duties.

Following discussion, it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That no further action be taken at this review.

53 Report on Virement of Funds – Organisational Review

Arising from a meeting of the Personnel Committee, consideration was given to a recommendation from the Internal Auditor that the Town

Council undertake a full Organisational Review. The scope of the review would include:

- Assessing the consistency, relevance, and accuracy of all job descriptions;
- Evaluating current workloads, role distribution, and organisational capacity; and
- Examining the Council's readiness for potential changes in service delivery, including the impact of local government reorganisation.

Members were advised that the Council had not undertaken a full staffing structure review for some time. Although job descriptions were reviewed annually with staff, several were now outdated and may not fully reflect current responsibilities.

By Minute 18.5 The Finance and Audit Committee, in accordance with their delegated authority agreed that the underspend in the 2025/26 Audit Budget be used to fund the Organisational Review.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED That the virement between budgets be sanctioned for the Organisational Review.

54 Warwickshire Association of Local Councils - AGM

The Council considered the appointment of a voting representative for the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils Annual General Meeting, to be held virtually on Wednesday, 12 November 2025 from 6.00pm to 7.00pm.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED Councillor Cleeve be appointed as the Town Council's voting representative for the AGM and Councillor Coles appointed as a substitute.

55 Local Government Reorganisation - Consultation

The Council considered the approach to completing the Warwickshire County Council questionnaire seeking feedback from Town and Parish Councils on the Government's English Devolution White Paper.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the questionnaire would be sent out direct to Councillors for a response direct to the Town Clerk who would collate responses and submit by the deadline of 5.00pm on Friday, 26 September 2025.

RESOLVED That following the collation of Councillors' responses the Town Clerk submit the Town Council's response to the consultation.

56 Town Clerk's Verbal Report

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on plans for Remembrance Sunday and outlined the increased costs expected for the 2025 Parade. The matter was originally due to be considered by the Civic Heritage Committee on 30 September; however, that date did not align with the submission of the Event Management Plan, hence the update being brought forward.

The increase of costs related to the Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) that the Council had now been advised to use.

The Town Clerk reported that the 2024 road closure and HVM costs totalled £4,727, whereas the 2025 quotation was £16,700, an increase of nearly £12,000 and significantly over budget.

The Town Clerk advised that she had just been informed that the District Council had purchased 20 HVM units for shared use, which would include Remembrance Day, and if feasible would reduce costs by around £4,000. However, staffing costs to operate and additional units would be required. She also advised that the 14-week lead-in time for the units may not be achievable for 2025.

Alternative options, which would reduce expenditure while maintaining the safety and integrity of the event, was presented to the meeting, which included a smaller footprint.

Following discussion, Councillors requested that the Town Clerk explore the potential use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to cover the infrastructure costs associated with the event. If deemed feasible, Members expressed their initial support for this approach.

57 Update Reports on Outside Bodies

Councillor J Fradgley – Stratford in Bloom
Councillor Petrovic – Community Builder – verbal update

58 Verbal Ward Reports

It was reported that Sara Aspley, CEO of the Town Trust, had recently resigned and would be leaving her post in November 2025. Councillors instructed the Town Clerk to write to Ms Aspley to thank her for her contributions and to extend their best wishes for the future

Councillor Cleeve - Shottery Ward – Commonwealth War Graves
Interfaith Service of Remembrance 4.00pm, 11 November 2025 at
Evesham Road, Cemetery.

59 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 18 November 2025 – 6:30pm

Mayor :