



Councillor Mark Winnington (Mayor)

Present (for all or part of the meeting):-

Councillors:

Aspin K M
Beatty F E
Carter E L
Cooke R P
Cooper A G
Dodson M G
Godfrey A T A
Hobbs A D
Hood J
James R A
Jones E G R
Jones P W
Kenney R
Leason P A
McNaughton D M

Nixon A
Nixon J A
Nixon L
Pardesi G P K
Pearce A N
Pert J M
Phillips M
Reid A F
Rose J T
Rouxel D P
Sandiford A J
Spencer S N
Thorley J
Thurstance A

Officers in attendance:-

T Clegg	-	Chief Executive
I Curran	-	Head of Law and Governance
B Potts	-	Civics/Executive Officer
W J Conaghan	-	Press and Communications Manager
J Dean	-	Democratic Services Officer

C15 Freedom of the Borough Presentation to Alderman Jack Kemp

The Mayor called upon the Leader to address the Council who led Members in paying tribute to Alderman Jack Kemp.

Upon receiving the freedom scroll from the Mayor, Alderman Kemp responded accordingly.

RESOLVED:- that Alderman Jack Kemp be granted freedom of the Borough of Stafford.

C16 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2026 were agreed as a true and correct record.

C17 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J A Barron, B M Cross, A P Edgeller, P C Edgeller, I D Fordham, B McKeown, A R McNaughton and J P Read.

C18 Announcements

The Mayor welcomed the newly elected Member for the Manor Ward, Councillor Aaron Thurstance, to his first meeting.

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to lead tributes to former Councillor Angela Loughran and Mr John Loughran, which were duly endorsed by fellow Members.

It was with sadness that the Mayor announced the passing of former Councillor Kenneth Farrington Brown; all present observed a minutes silence as a mark of respect.

The Leader of the Council provided a brief update regarding Local Government Reorganisation, noting that the Government had selected the 'North/South' model for Staffordshire. Councillor Godfrey thanked the chamber for supporting the proposal, and advised that Members would be kept informed of the process moving forward.

C19 Councillor Session

Councillor D P Rouxel had submitted the following question in accordance with Paragraph 12.3(a) of the Council Procedure Rules:-

"Last year the Council approved a new scheme for providing financial support to voluntary and community groups. Could you provide an update on the how well the new scheme has worked, what changes have taken place in terms of the support the funding is providing and if there are any plans to make amendments for the next round of funding next year".

Councillor J Hood responded as follows:

"The new VSCE Grant Scheme was introduced to make sure that council funding is awarded in a way that is fair, transparent and focused on achieving the best outcomes for Stafford Borough residents and those applying for funding.

We increased the annual funding available from £130,250 to £141,370, with a built-in annual uplift, this opened the process to a wider range of organisations through a competitive application system with a clear assessment criteria. This brings all grant funding into a single borough wide framework using a formal assessment process meaning every applicant is assessed equally.

The new scheme has worked well in that the level of interest demonstrated that this approach was successful and the right thing to do. The applications totalled over £241,000 against the available budget of £141,370. This showed both the demand for funding and the strong engagement from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

All applications were assessed against published criteria, with funding decisions based on evidence of local need, expected impact, organisational capability and value for money. This has moved us away from historic funding arrangements and towards a more outcome-focused approach.

The funded organisations are now providing regular monitoring information, and early indications are positive, it's too soon to make judgements on the overall impact of the scheme, but a full evaluation will be undertaken at the end of the year and our plans will be put forward then for the next funding round.

Overall, the scheme appears to be delivering its intended aims of improving transparency, accountability and fairness while broadening access to funding and ensuring that council investment delivers value for our residents.”

The organisations who were awarded funding were:

Organisation	Awarded
Citizens Advice	£60,000
Douglas McMillan	£2,000
Katharine House	£3,500
Musical Theatre Stafford	£7,500
Rising Brook Baptist Church	£10,674
Stafford Community Food Distribution Hub	£7,973
Stafford District Arts Council	£10,000
Staffordshire Women's Aid	£15,000
Support Staffordshire	£6,262
Community Foundation for Staffordshire	£17,961
Street Pastors	£9,600
Right Stuff	£21,937.80

Councillor J M Pert asked the following supplementary question:

“Will Cabinet continue to fight to ensure funding for the voluntary sector continues in light of the challenges arising from local government reorganisation?”

Councillor Hood replied that she hoped all Councillors would continue to fight for support for the voluntary sector.

C20 Code of Governance and Annual Governance Statement

Considered the report of the Head of Business Support and Assurance setting out the Council's revised Code of Governance and the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2025/25.

Councillor R A James introduced the report highlighting the details as contained within paragraphs 1, 3, 5 and the associated appendices before proposing that the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2 of the report be approved.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor R P Cooke.

The matter was then put to the vote and subsequently declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that

- (a) the Code of Governance be approved;
- (b) the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report and the Governance Improvement Plan as set out in Annex 2 of the report be approved.

C21 Annual Scrutiny Business Report

Considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance detailing the business conducted by the Scrutiny Committees during the 2025/26 municipal year.

The Leader of the Council reiterated the importance of the role of the various Scrutiny Committees and thanked the Chairmen for their work over the preceding year.

Councillor F Beatty introduced the report highlighting the detail as contained within paragraph 5 before proposing that the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2 of the report be approved.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor J A Nixon.

Councillor M J Winnington, former Chair of Resources Scrutiny Committee, thanked Members and Officers for their contributions over the past year.

Continuing, Councillor J M Pert on behalf of Councillor A P Edgeller, Chair of Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, thanked members of the Scrutiny Committee and guest speakers for their input last year, with particular reference made to the work of the food waste Task and Finish Review Working Group. Further thanks were extended to the Officers who had provided appropriate help and guidance to Members.

Councillor F Beatty, Chair of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee, thanked Members and Officers for their work over the past municipal year, noting in particular that of Councillor Rouxel in Chairing the associated Task and Finish Review Working Group. Councillor Beatty noted the importance of ensuring any recommendations arising from the various Scrutiny Committees were taken into account.

The matter was then put to the vote and subsequently declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED:- that the report be noted.

C22 Request from the Leader of the Council

RESOLVED:- that on behalf of the Council the Leader write to the Football Association praising the England football team for their efforts in the recently held World Cup.

MAYOR