

## **COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

**TUESDAY, 12 MAY 2026**

### **Present:-**

Cllr. Roy Denney (Chairman)  
Cllr. Janet Forey (Vice-Chair)

|                       |                         |                       |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Cllr. Shabbir Aslam   | Cllr. Helen Gambardella | Cllr. Tracey Shepherd |
| Cllr. Royston Bayliss | Cllr. Hannah Gill       | Cllr. Dillan Shikotra |
| Cllr. Dr John Bloxham | Cllr. Nigel Grundy      | Cllr. Mike Shirley    |
| Cllr. Lee Breckon JP  | Cllr. Paul Hartshorn    | Cllr. Roger Stead     |
| Cllr. Nick Brown      | Cllr. Richard Holdridge | Cllr. Ben Taylor      |
| Cllr. Nick Chapman    | Cllr. Mark Jackson      | Cllr. Matt Tomeo      |
| Cllr. Adrian Clifford | Cllr. Becca Lunn        | Cllr. Bob Waterton    |
| Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore | Cllr. Antony Moseley    | Cllr. Maggie Wright   |
| Cllr. Stuart Coar     | Cllr. Les Phillimore    | Cllr. Neil Wright     |
| Cllr. Tony Deakin     | Cllr. Terry Richardson  |                       |
| Cllr. Susan Findlay   | Cllr. Ande Savage       |                       |

### **Officers present:-**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Julia Smith       | - Chief Executive                                 |
| Sarah Pennelli    | - Executive Director - S.151 Officer              |
| Louisa Horton     | - Executive Director - Communities                |
| Marc Greenwood    | - Executive Director - Place                      |
| Sophie Wisher     | - Senior Elections & Governance Officer           |
| Nicky Brown       | - Senior Personal Assistant                       |
| Jill Stevenson    | - Community Development & Partnerships<br>Manager |
| Sandeep Tiensa    | - Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer   |
| Avisa Birchenough | - Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer          |
| Nicole Evans      | - Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer          |

### **Honorary Alderman in attendance:-**

Guy Jackson

### **Youth Council in attendance:-**

Grace, Promise, Jess, Jayden, Rita, Barnabus, Evelyn, Lara & Ky-Mani

## **Apologies:-**

Cllr. Alex DeWinter and Cllr. Jane Wolfe

### **1. A MINUTES SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF GEOFF WELSH**

The Chair, Cllr. Roy Denney invited Members and Officers to hold a minute silence for Geoff Welsh who sadly passed away on 9 April 2026.

Geoff Welsh, was one of the Council's longest serving Councillors, having served as a Member of the Council from May 1995 until his departure on 7 November 2023. He represented the Ward of Glen Parva and was a longstanding Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group. He also served as Chairman and Commissioner of the Scrutiny Commission since its inception in May 2000. He was appointed as Honorary Aldermen at an extraordinary council meeting in 2024 as a Member who had served his community and District with distinction.

Members and Officers shared their memories of Geoff and sent their condolences to his wife Bev Welsh.

### **2. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS**

No disclosures were received.

### **3. CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEM**

Under Part 4, Section 1, Paragraph 13 of the Council's Constitution, the Chairman, Cllr. Roy Denney, moved that Agenda Item 17, Youth Council Update be considered before Item 3.

### **4. PRESENTATION: YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE**

*Cllr. Shabbir Aslam arrived at the meeting during this item.*

Members received a presentation from Members of Blaby District Council Youth Council.

The presentation covered the following:

- 2025/26 priorities including: Discrimination, Vaping and Climate Change
- Team Building trip to Beaumanor Hall
- 2026 Youth Conference
- Votes at 16
- Warning Zone
- Meet the Councillor event

- 2026/27 priorities including: Habits that harm, Sexism, Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime
- Trip to Parliament
- Primary School Youth Conference

Youth Council members invited Councillors to attend their 2026/27 Priorities workshop being held on 8 June 2026.

## **5. OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Cllr. Royston Bayliss, Cllr Adrian Cifford and Cllr. Stuart Coar left and returned to the meeting during this item.*

The Chairman, Roy Denney made announcements in respect of the following:

- On 8 May 2026, attended the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to represent Blaby District Council.
- The Chairman thanked members that have attended his events over the year and also expressed thanks to both his wife and the Vice Chairman Cllr. Janet Forey for their support over the year.
- The Chairman thanked the Senior PA, and colleagues for their support in managing the Chairman's events, and announced that £3,300 was raised on behalf of his nominated charity, LOROS.

The Leader, Cllr. Ben Taylor, thanked the Chairman for his service to the Council and his fundraising effort for LOROS.

## **6. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The outgoing Chairman Cllr. Roy Denney invited nominations for the election of Chairman of Blaby District Council for the ensuing year.

### **DECISION**

That Cllr. Janet Forey be elected Chair of Blaby District Council, until the Annual Meeting of the Council to be held in 2027.

## **7. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Cllr. Janet Forey read out the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**8. INVESTITURE OF CHAIRMAN WITH CHAIN OF OFFICE**

Cllr. Janet Forey was invested with the Chain of Office for the Chairman of the Council.

**9. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The new Chair announced that her nominated Charity would be Rainbows Hospice and that her consort would be Honorary Alderman Iain Hewson.

**10. PRESENTATION OF PAST CHAIRMAN'S BADGE TO OUTGOING CHAIRMAN**

Cllr. Janet Forey presented Cllr. Roy Denney with the Past Chairman's Badge.

**11. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Chair of the Council invited nominations for the Vice- Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Cllr. Roger Stead was duly nominated.

**DECISION**

That Cllr. Roger Stead be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2026 - 2027 Municipal Year.

**12. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Cllr. Roger Stead read out the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and thanked Members for being elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council.

**13. INVESTITURE OF VICE-CHAIRMAN WITH CHAIN OF OFFICE**

Cllr. Roger Stead was invested with the Chain of Office for the Vice-Chairman of the Council.

**14. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2026, as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

**15. LEADERS ANNUAL STATEMENT 2025-26**

*Cllr. Hannah Gill and Cllr. Maggie Wright left and returned to the meeting during this item.*

Cllr. Ben Taylor, Leader of the Council, presented his Statement and highlighted that he was proud of this year's achievements, in particular:

- Providing affordable housing for the vulnerable and removing residents from temporary accommodation.
- Successful rollout of food waste collections.
- Bringing ICT infrastructure in-house.
- Progressing with Local Government Reorganisation.

Cllr. Ben Taylor was particularly proud of the Council's achievement in hosting the Armed Forces Coffee Mornings which showed the Council's determination to support local armed forces veterans.

Cllr. Ben Taylor thanked Blaby District Council officers, Councillors, volunteers, business partners and resident's by staying focused on what matters most and remaining firmly committed by making Blaby District a thriving place to live, work and visit.

**16. SCRUTINY STATEMENT TO ANNUAL COUNCIL 2025-26**

*Cllr. Stuart Coar left the meeting during consideration of this item and did not return.*

The Scrutiny Commission Chairman, Cllr Nick Brown presented the Scrutiny Statement.

The Scrutiny Commission Chairman, Cllr Nick Brown invited all non-executive members to attend the Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop taking place on 2 June 2026.

The Scrutiny Commission Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Neil Wright thanked Democratic Services, Officers and Scrutiny Members for their hard work and support over the last 12 months

The Leader, Cllr. Ben Taylor thanked Scrutiny Commissioners and Scrutiny Members for being a supportive critical friend over the last year.

**17. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26**

The Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Chairman, Cllr. Mark Jackson presented the Annual Report.

Cllr. Mark Jackson thanked the Finance Team, Democratic Services and Independent Internal Auditors for their support.

Cllr. Mark Jackson also thanked Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Members and the Independent Member for their work at Committee meetings.

Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore- Deputy Leader & Finance, People & Transformation Portfolio Holder thanked Audit and Corporate Governance Committee Members and Officers for their hard work and contributions over the last year.

**18. CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA**

Under Part 4, Section 1, Paragraph 13 of the Council's Constitution, the Chairman, Cllr. Janet Forey, moved that Agenda Item 13, Appointments of Chairman and Vice-Chairman to Committees 2026/27 be considered before Item 12.

**19. APPOINTMENT TO CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN TO COMMITTEES 2026/27**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer.

As 2 nominations had been received for the role of Chairman of Scrutiny Commission, the Chairman took the vote by a show of hands.

Cllr. Nick Brown was duly elected.

As 3 nominations had been received for the role of Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Commission, the Chairman took the vote by a show of hands.

Cllr. Neil Wright was duly elected.

**DECISIONS**

1. That Council appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of Committees for the municipal year 2026/2027 as detailed at Appendix A of the report.
2. That Cllr. Nick Brown be elected as Chairman of Scrutiny Commission for

the municipal year 2026/27.

3. That Cllr. Neil Wright be elected as Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Commission for the municipal year 2026/27.

Reason:

It is appropriate to give effect to the wishes of the political groups.

**20. DELEGATION SCHEME OF THE CABINET EXECUTIVE AND CABINET APPOINTMENTS 2026/27**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer.

The Chairman proposed the remaining reports listed under Section 2 of the agenda, including the supplemental reports received, to be moved without debate unless any Members requested otherwise.

**DECISIONS**

1. That the report of the Leader of the Council be accepted.
2. That the Constitution be amended accordingly with the updated roles and responsibilities of Cabinet Executive Members and Senior Leadership Team.

Reason:

It is appropriate to receive the report of the Leader of the Council and the appointment of Members to the Cabinet Executive.

**21. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2026/2027**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer.

**DECISIONS**

1. That the preferences and changes to appointments to Outside Bodies be approved.
2. That unless otherwise stated all appointments continue until the Annual Council Meeting in 2027.
3. That all appointments be endorsed as approved duties for the payment of expenses.

4. That the Constitution be updated accordingly.

Reason:

It is appropriate to give effect to the wishes of the political groups.

**22. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES 2026/27**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer.

**DECISION**

1. That effect be given to the wishes of the political groups as to the allocation of seats.
2. That the distribution of seats as set out at Appendix 2 of the report be endorsed with immediate effect for all Committees.

Reason:

It is appropriate to give effect to the wishes of the political groups and ensure compliance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989, Section 15 – 17 inclusive.

**23. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2026/27**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer.

**DECISION**

That the Schedule of Meetings for 2026-2027 be approved.

Reason:

It is a Constitutional requirement for Council to approve the Schedule of Meetings.

**24. PUBLIC SPEAKING PROTOCOL**

No requests were received.

**25. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

No questions were received.

**26. ANNUAL CORPORATE ACTION PLAN 2025/26 (CLOSURE REPORT)**

Considered – Report of the Business Systems, Performance & Information Manager, presented by Cllr. Ben Taylor – Leader of the Council.

**DECISION**

That the progress made against the Corporate Action Plan 2025-2026 be noted.

Reason:

It is important that Elected Members, and staff are familiar with how the Council is delivering against its agreed actions and priorities.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.57 P.M.**