

**Lichfield City Council**

**Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held in Guildhall, Lichfield  
on Monday 26 January 2026 at 6.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors R Harvey-Coggins (Deputy Mayor), J Anketell, H Ashton, D Baker, C Ball, J Blackman, R Bragger, J Christie, J Eagland, K Farrelly, M Field, A Fox, C Greatorex, A Hughes, P Knight, A Lax, J Marshall, P McDermott, P Ray, D Robertson, A Rushton, S Schafer, J Smith, E Strain, B Watkins, and R Yardley.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors J Madden, C. Pinder-Smith, and M Warfield (medical advice).

**71. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Deputy Mayor noted how much she had enjoyed attending the Cathedral on Christmas day and reminded Members of forthcoming civic events including the charity Ceilidh dance and the Shrovetide Pancake races.

**72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

Councillors H Ashton and C Ball declared an interest in agenda item 12 (minute 80), regarding a question under Standing Order 8(2) as they are both members of the Municipal Charities who hire rooms in the Guildhall and took no part in the voting thereon.

**73. COUNCIL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** *That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 December 2025 (No's 52-70) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.*

**74. MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**75. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 4 December 2025 to 15 January 2026 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority, be received.*

**THE DEPUTY MAYOR ADJOURNED THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC FORUM**

Members of the public representing Lichfield Bridge Club, Lichfield Chess Club and Lichfield Arts addressed the Council regarding the proposed new hire charges for the Guildhall, specifically the removal of the charitable rate and asked members to reconsider.

The Deputy Mayor advised this would be dealt with at Agenda item **12** of the meeting.

**THE MEETING WAS RECONVENED**

**76. COMMERCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (CSC)**

Councillor J Blackman asked Members to note that Guildhall hire charges and market pitch fees would be discussed at Agenda items **11** and **12**.

Councillor C Greatorex expressed concern about the creation of additional markets on Sundays and the impact this would have on the current markets. Councillor R Bragger clarified that the intention was to only hold specialist, themed markets on Sundays which would not be in competition with the existing general markets.

**RESOLVED: That the minutes and recommendations of the Commercial Services Committee held on 13 January 2026 be adopted and that the council creates a market on each Sunday of the year by utilising its powers under the Food Act Part III.**

**77. CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE (CCBC)**

Members considered the minutes and recommendations of the CCBC held on 14 January 2026.

**RESOLVED: That the minutes and recommendations of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Committee held on 14 January 2026 be adopted.**

**78. FINANCIAL PROGRESS REPORT 1 APRIL TO 30 NOVEMBER 2025**

Members considered the financial progress report from 1 April to 30 November 2025

**RESOLVED: That the eight-month Financial Progress Report be noted.**

**79. FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27 - MARKETS**

Members considered the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 as recommended by the City Council's cross party Commercial Services Committee (CSC) as provided at **Agenda Appendix 4**.

**RESOLVED: That Market pitch fees, associated charges and Market Square/Pool Walk hire fees for 2026/27 be as provided at Agenda Appendix 4.**

**80. FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27 - GUILDHALL**

Members considered the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 as recommended by the City Council's cross party Commercial Services Committee (CSC) as provided at **Agenda Appendix 5**.

Councillor J Marshall thanked the members of the public representing Lichfield Bridge Club, Lichfield Chess Club and Lichfield Arts who addressed the Council in person regarding the proposed new hire charges for the Guildhall. Councillor J Blackman thanked all the hirers who had taken the time to make their representations in writing to the Council stating that their comments had been noted.

It was proposed by Councillor J Marshall and seconded by Councillor A Hughes that the charitable/voluntary rate of hire charges be reinstated and renamed '*Subsidised Rate*' to acknowledge the social and community benefits for the organisations that are eligible.

All other fees and charges to remain as per the CSC recommendations, except for the use of the CPI measure of inflation rather than RPI as set out by the CSC.

Councillor C Greatorex proposed an amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor A Lax. Councillor C Greatorex suggested that due to the works scheduled to the Guildhall roof in the spring of 2026 and the subsequent loss of bookings, there be no increase to the Guildhall hire

charges for 2026/27 and this be left in abeyance until the Commercial Services committee could discuss further.

Councillor A Lax called for a named vote on the amendment, the Town Clerk then asked each member in turn to state whether they were for or against the amendment or whether they wished to abstain. The voting is recorded below.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Councillor J Anketell		✓	
Councillor H Ashton	Declaration of interest		
Councillor D Baker	✓		
Councillor C Ball	Declaration of interest		
Councillor J Blackman		✓	
Councillor R Bragger		✓	
Councillor J Christie		✓	
Councillor J Eagland	✓		
Councillor K Farrelly	Left at 7.25pm, not present for the vote		
Councillor M Field		✓	
Councillor A Fox		✓	
Councillor C Greatorex	✓		
Councillor R Harvey-Coggins		✓	
Councillor A Hughes		✓	
Councillor P Knight			
Councillor A Lax	✓	✓	
Councillor J Madden	APOLS		
Councillor J Marshall		✓	
Councillor P McDermott		✓	
Councillor C Pinder-Smith	APOLS		
Councillor P Ray		✓	
Councillor D Robertson		✓	
Councillor R Rushton		✓	

Councillor S Schafer		✓	
Councillor J Smith		✓	
Councillor E Strain		✓	
Councillor B Watkins		✓	
Councillor M Warfield	APOLS		
Councillor R Yardley	✓		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	

The Town Clerk confirmed the result, and the amendment to the motion was declared lost.

A named vote was then held on the substantive motion, the Town Clerk asked each member in turn to state whether they were for or against or whether they wished to abstain. The voting is recorded below.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Councillor J Anketell	✓		
Councillor H Ashton	Declaration of interest		
Councillor D Baker		✓	
Councillor C Ball	Declaration of interest		
Councillor J Blackman	✓		
Councillor R Bragger	✓		
Councillor J Christie			
Councillor J Eagland	✓	✓	
Councillor K Farrelly	Left at 7.25pm, not present for the vote		
Councillor M Field	✓		
Councillor A Fox	✓		
Councillor C Greatorex		✓	
Councillor R Harvey-Coggins	✓		
Councillor A Hughes	✓		
Councillor P Knight	✓		
Councillor A Lax		✓	

Councillor J Madden	APOLS		
Councillor J Marshall	✓		
Councillor P McDermott	✓		
Councillor C Pinder-Smith	APOLS		
Councillor P Ray	✓		
Councillor D Robertson	✓		
Councillor R Rushton	✓		
Councillor S Schafer	✓		
Councillor J Smith	✓		
Councillor E Strain	✓		
Councillor B Watkins	✓		
Councillor M Warfield	APOLS		
Councillor R Yardley		✓	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	

The Town Clerk confirmed the result, and the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) *The charitable hire rate be renamed 'Subsidised' rate*
- b) *The Subsidised rate and Private Hire rate be increased by the prevailing CPI plus 1% for 2026/27*
- c) *That the Weddings, Civil Ceremonies and Commercial hire fees be increased per room as per the CSC recommendations for 2026/27, as provided at Agenda Appendix 5*
- d) *That the Special Event booking rate be increased as per the CSC recommendations, for 2026/27 as provided at Agenda Appendix 5*

**81. BUDGET ESTIMATES 2026/2027**

Councillor J Marshall commended Officers for their hard work in preparing the budget.

**RESOLVED: That the Budget Estimates and Report for the 2026/27 financial year totalling £1,239,505 be approved and the precept for 2026/27 be set at £1,075,013.00**

**82. REPAIR, RENOVATION AND SPECIFIC PROJECT PROGRAMME 2026/27**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and **Agenda Appendix 7.**

**RESOLVED: That the Report be noted**

**83. SUBSIDY REVIEW – LICHFIELD ARTS AND LICHFIELD FESTIVAL**

Further to Minute 99 of the Council's meeting on 28 January 2019, the arrangements between the Council, Lichfield's Arts and Lichfield Festival are to be reviewed annually by council. Members considered the current arrangements and

**RESOLVED: That**

- a) *The current general arrangements associated with the separate licences to occupy Donegal House remain appropriate.*
- b) *Arrangements in regard to the hire of the Ashmole Room remain appropriate.*
- c) *An inflationary increase (CPI – 3.4%) be applied to the prevailing licence charges for 2026/27.*
- d) *In compliance with point (c), the City Council reconsiders this matter at its January 2027 meeting.*

**84. GRANT REQUEST - LICHFIELD COMMUNITY SPORTS CLUB CIC**

Members considered the Agenda report noting that the application had already been circulated to the Grants committee for informal consideration and comment, with those who responded being in support of awarding the grant.

**RESOLVED: That the Council award £2,000 to Lichfield Community Sports Club CIC to fund 30 places at its February 2026 half term holiday camp.**

**85. FREEDOM OF THE CITY -SOPHIE CAPEWELL**

All Members agreed to acknowledge the exemplary contribution of Lichfield's professional gold medal cyclist, Sophie Capewell by bestowing her with the Freedom of the City.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) *That the City Council acting in accordance with section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by Section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, confirms its intention to grant the Freedom of the City to Sophie Capewell.*
- b) *That all necessary arrangements be made for the formal grant of the Freedom and presentation of the Freedom scroll at a Special Meeting of the Council to be held on a date to be confirmed.*

**86. OFFICERS' REPORT**

Councillor A Hughes commended the Open Spaces Officer for the improvements to the Heather Gardens and the Museums and Heritage Officer for the organisation of the Christmas events at the Museum.

***RESOLVED: That the Report be noted.***

**87. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Councillor H Ashton asked if LDC had repaid their contribution for the installation of a lift at Liberty Jamboree's new premises. The Town Clerk confirmed that they had.

***RESOLVED: That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for the period***

- a) 1 October 2025 to 31 October 2025 in the sum of £170,362.34 General Account, and £483.31 Imprest Account.***
- b) 1 November 2025 to 30 November 2025 in the sum of £119,623.43 General Account, and £1,353.54 Imprest Account.***

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.01PM**

**MAYOR**