



Cannock Chase Council

Council Meeting

Monday 16 February 2026 at 6:00pm

In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Notice is hereby given of the above-mentioned meeting of the Council, which you are summoned to attend for the purpose of transacting the business as set out below:

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Members should refer to the guidance as included as part of this agenda.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026: minute numbers 48 - 55; page numbers 37 - 41.

Copies of the relevant budget reports for the remaining agenda items, as considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 29 January 2026, can be viewed on the [16 February 2026 Council](#) meeting page on the Council's website.

4. Housing Revenue Account Budgets and Capital Programme 2025-2029, Cabinet Resolutions

Council is requested to consider recommendations referred from the Cabinet meeting held on 29 January 2026 in respect of:

(i) Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2025/26 to 2028/29 (Minute Number 84):

"That Council, at its meeting to be held on 11 February 2026 be recommended to:

(i) Determine a minimum level of working balances of £2.620 million for 31 March 2027 and indicative working balances of £2.802 million and £3.015 million for 31 March 2028 and 2029, respectively.

(ii) Approve the Housing Revenue Accounts Revenue Budgets for 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 (and note the forecast outturn for 2025-2026) as summarised in appendix 1 of the 29 January 2026 Cabinet report."

(ii) Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2025/26 to 2028/29 (Minute Number 85):

“That Council, at its meeting to be held on 11 February 2026, be recommended to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes for the period 2025-2026 to 2028-2029, as set out in appendix 2 of the 29 January 2026 Cabinet report.”

5. Budget 2025 to 2029

Council is requested to consider recommendations referred from the Cabinet meeting held on 29 January 2026 in respect of:

(i) General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2025-2029 (Minute Number 81)

“That the following be recommended to the full Council meeting to be held on 11 February 2026:

- (A) The Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2026-2027 be set at £18.055 million.
- (B) The indicative General Fund Revenue Budgets be set at £18.088 million for 2027-2028 and £17.564 million for 2028-2029.
- (C) The General Fund working balance be set at a minimum of £1.0 million.
- (D) The detailed capital programme as set out in report appendix 2 be approved.
- (E) The Council Tax for 2026-2027 be increased by 2.99% to £258.81 for a standard Band D equivalent property.
- (F) The Council's Tax Base be set at 29,862.96 (as determined by the Deputy Chief Executive Resources & S151 Officer).
- (G) Note that the inflation parameter for fees and charges for 2026-2027 was generally set at 4%.
- (H) Delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer in consultation with the Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader to add items to the budget from reserves in line with the purpose of the reserve.
- (I) The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer be authorised to adjust reserve contributions to reflect any grant and local taxation changes announced in the final 2026/2027 Local Government Finance Settlement.

In accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, consideration will also be given to any valid alternative budget proposals presented by Political Groups and individual Council Members as a referral back to Cabinet.

Any alternative balanced budget proposals submitted to the Chief Executive by the relevant deadline will be circulated to all Members by 4:00pm, Monday 9 February 2026.

The Council Tax Resolution will be submitted to the 25 February 2026 Council meeting following the final agreement of the budget and receipt of all relevant Precepts.



**T. Clegg
Chief Executive**

6 February 2026

Guidance on Declaring Interests at Meetings

Declaring Interests at Full Council

The Code of Conduct requires that where you have an interest in any business of the Council, and where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the interest, and you attend a meeting of the Council at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

The following interests must be disclosed where they may be affected by any matter arising at the meeting:

- (a) A **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** is an interest of yourself or your partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners) in respect of employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried out for profit or gain; sponsorship; contracts; land; licences; corporate tenancies; or securities, as defined with the Localism Act, 2011.
- (b) A **Registerable Interest** includes any unpaid directorships or any body of which you are a member, or are in a position of general control, and (i) to which you are appointed by the Council, or (ii) which exercises functions of a public nature, or (iii) which is directed to charitable purposes, or (iv) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy.
- (c) A **Non-Registerable Interest** is any other matter affecting your financial interest or well-being, or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate.

Where the matter **directly relates** to the interest, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where the matter **affects** the interest, but does not **directly relate** to it, you can remain in the meeting and take part **unless** the matter affects the financial interest or well-being to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision, and a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

Please make the nature of the interest clear to the meeting

It would be helpful if, prior to the commencement of the meeting, Members informed the Monitoring Officer of any declarations of interest, of which you are aware. This will help in the recording of the declarations in the Minutes of the meeting.

Some items will be mentioned in the papers for full Council but are not actually being considered by Full Council. In such circumstances the Monitoring Officer's advice to Members is that there is no need to declare an interest unless the particular matter is mentioned or discussed. As a general rule, Members only need to declare an interest at full Council in the following circumstances:

- Where a matter is before the Council for a decision and/or
- Where the matter in which the Member has an interest is specifically mentioned or discussed at the Council meeting.

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

On Wednesday 21 January 2026 at 6:05 p.m.

Part 1

Present

Councillors:

Aston, J. (Chair)

Bancroft, J.	Jones, P.
Bishop, L.	Jones, V.
Boulton, C.	Lyons, N.
Cartwright, S.	Lyons, O.
Craddock, R.	Mawle, D.
Dunnett, M.	Muckley, A.
Elson, J.	Preece, J.
Fisher, P.	Prestwood, J.
Fitzgerald, A.	Samuels, G.
Gaye, D.	Sutherland, M.
Haden, P.	Thompson, S.
Hill, J.	Thornley, S. (Leader)
Hill, J.O.	Thornley, S.J.
Hughes, G.	Todd, D.
Johnson, J.	Williams, D.

48. Apologies

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillors T. Johnson (Vice-Chair), L. Bullock, M. Freeman, and L. Wilson.

49. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

None received.

50. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 5 November 2025 be approved as a correct record.

51. Chair's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Councillor T. Johnson

On behalf of the Council, the Chair offered her sincere condolences to Councillor Tony Johnson, former Leader of the Council, of the tragic loss of his son, Thomas.

The Chair noted that whilst she did not know Thomas, those who did said what a lovely person he was.

Members were asked to respect the family's privacy at this sad time, and the Council's thoughts were with them all.

(ii) Visit to Sheltered Housing Schemes

The Chair noted that before Christmas, she had the pleasure of visiting the Council's sheltered housing accommodation where she met residents and staff, noting it was lovely to speak to a resident aged 92, still having her independence and living a full life. All the residents spoke very highly of the Council and the support they were given.

(iii) Forthcoming Events

The Chair advised that next month, year 6 schoolchildren had been invited to the council chamber for a debate, and it was pleasing to note this also included a school with children with special educational needs. The Leader had kindly offered to donate a trophy to each of the winning teams.

The Chair then advised that a couple of months ago, the Council had the pleasure of the Sea Scouts taking part in a question and answer in the chamber as part of achieving one of their badges. They had such a lovely time that they had requested to come back next month for Councillors to help them achieve their next badge. If any Members wished to be part of the debate, then they were asked to contact the Leader.

52. Leader's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Planning Committee Changes

The Leader advised of proposed changes to the Labour Group's membership of the Planning Control Committee (see minute number 53 for full details).

(ii) Elections Postponement Request

The Leader advised that on 18th December 2025, he received a letter from the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) regarding the elections scheduled for May 2026. The Minister asked if cancelling the May elections in Cannock Chase would release capacity to ensure smooth transition to a new authority.

In light of the issues raised and the concerns regarding the Council's capacity, which were well publicised, the Leader advised he had respectfully requested that the Minister consider deferring the May 2026 election.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was the Government's top priority and MHCLG recently released a list of information on LGR Preparatory Activities, which was huge. All councils needed to be focused on this work in preparation for LGR. It was likely that some key officers would be seconded to work with colleagues across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to work with MHCLG and that other resources, including financial, would also have to be made available. Councils' chief executives would be meeting on 22 January to plan for this work.

The Leader advised he had seen the list from MHCLG. The demand was primarily on senior finance, including the S151 Officer, Chief Accountant, procurement, HR, IT, audit, legal and communications officers. This would require considerable input from the Chief Executive and the leadership team. The S151 Officer was also the Returning Officer.

The Council's top priority was the delivery of the town centre regeneration programme. This was a large, complex, high-profile programme involving politically sensitive decisions and was high risk. This project alone called on time of the S151 Officer, Chief Accountant and Monitoring Officer to support the Chief Executive, Deputy and the Head of Economic Development, again calling on key officers previously mentioned.

Housing was the largest department; this service was undergoing a programme of change resulting from the value for money report and this involved more significant input from key officers.

Regarding the Council's capacity the following information had been shared widely with members and been the subject of recent scrutiny reports. The Council had been facing challenges in recruitment for professional roles for several years. As of 31 October 2025, there were 45 vacancies across the Council. This did not include Housing and amounted to 13% of the workforce. Of these vacancies, 18 were within the corporate and support services, many of them being longstanding.

Recruitment had been very difficult for this Council for quite some time, competing with many organisations in both the public and private sectors. With the additional uncertainty around the future of local government, it was anticipated that even less would be interested in moving to work in local government. Vacancies had an obvious impact on the Council's capacity to deliver services and an increase in demand for some services was also being seen.

The capacity issues were reflected in the Council's strategic risk register, and whilst there were actions to address this, they were largely focused on managing priorities and expectations. This was about managing the risk at the current level, and it was not expected that this would reduce. The capacity risk referenced the impact that the work LGR was likely to have on service delivery and officers. The Council was already seeing an impact from the additional work that LGR was creating.

The demand from the public and members for day-to-day services continued to grow and the advent of social media and AI generated complaints took up more time.

The Leader hoped this update provided the Council with an objective summary of the position that the Council was in, noting it was with this information that he has asked the Minister to seriously consider the deferment of this year's elections.

Finally, the Leader asked for Members to be aware that he could not defer or cancel an election, that authority sat with the Secretary of State, not himself as Councillor Steve Thornley.

(iii) Minutes Silence

At the conclusion of the Leader's announcements, Members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to Councillor T. Johnson following the tragic death of his son.

53. Changes to Membership of Committees 2025-26

The Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor S. Thornley, notified of changes to the Labour Group's membership of the Planning Control Committee for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year:

The Leader of the Green Group, Councillor A. Muckley, notified of a change to the Green's Group membership of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

That:

- (A) Councillor S. Thornley be removed from the Planning Control Committee.
- (B) Councillor J. Hill be appointed as the Labour Group member on the Planning Control Committee in place of Councillor S. Thornley.
- (C) Councillor D. Gaye be appointed as the Labour Group's substitute member on the Planning Control Committee in place of Councillor J. Hill.
- (D) Councillor A. Muckley be appointed as the Green Group's substitute member on the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

54. Recommendation Referred from Cabinet

Consideration was given to the following recommendation to Council, made by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 4 December 2025, in respect of:

(i) Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Programme Update and Next Steps (Cabinet 04/12/25, Draft Minute Number 68)

"That Council be recommended to update the capital programme allocation in respect of those works identified in appendix 1 of the 4 December 2025 Cabinet report."

Councillor J. Johnson moved the following amendment to the recommendation:

"That based on the information provided by the Deputy Chief Executive-Place in this meeting, a decision on the recommendation be deferred until after the publication of the development framework to allow Members to consider the matter further once they had seen a copy of the framework."

The Leader of the Council requested a five-minute adjournment to discuss the proposed amendment with the Administration.

Meeting adjourned - 7:18pm

Meeting reconvened - 7:23pm

Councillor J. Johnson advised that following discussion with his Group colleagues, he was withdrawing his amendment. Therefore, the original recommendation stood.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15(4)(a), a named vote was requested on the proposed recommendation and supported by the required number of Members:

For	Against	Abstain
Aston, J.	Bancroft, J.	
Boulton, C.	Bishop, L.	
Cartwright, S.	Craddock, R.	
Dunnett, M.	Elson, J.	
Fisher, P.	Fitzgerald, A.	
Gaye, D.	Haden, P.	
Hill, J.	Hughes, G.	
Hill, J.O.	Johnson, J.	
Preece, J.	Jones, P.	
Prestwood, J.	Jones, V.	

For	Against	Abstain
Samuels, G.	Lyons, N.	
Thornley, S.	Lyons, O.	
Thornley, S.J.	Mawle, D.	
Todd, D.	Muckley, A.	
Williams, D.	Sutherland, M.	
	Thompson, S.	
15	16	0

In addition, Councillors Bullock, Freeman, T. Johnson, and Wilson were absent from the meeting.

Resolved:

That the recommendation not be approved.

55. Comments and Questions on Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels Under Rule 9

None received.

The meeting closed at 7:31 p.m.

Chair