

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON**

15 May 2025

7.00 - 8.30 pm

PRESENT

COUNCILLORS

Andrew Johnson (Chair)
Sue Livings (Vice-Chair)

Danielle Brown	Maggie Hulcoop
David Carter	Paul Jago
Joel Charles	James Leppard
Linda Clark	Kay Morrison
Jodi Dunne	Russell Perrin
Tony Durcan	Daniella Pritchard
Tony Edwards	Nicky Purse
Hannah Ellis	Matthew Saggars
Michael Garnett	Stacy Seales
Emma Ghaffari	Lanie Shears
James Griggs	Jake Shepherd
Alastair Gunn	Clive Souter
Michael Hardware	Dan Swords
Luke Howard	Nancy Watson

OFFICERS

James Gardner, Managing
Director
Emma Crouch, Senior
Executive Officer
Giles Clarke, Executive
Director
Julie Ellis, Executive Director
Daniel Dickinson, Assistant
Director - Legal and
Democratic Services (Interim)
Hannah Marriott, Senior
Executive Officer
Nicole Parker, Executive
Officer
Paul Keen, Communications
Officer
Adam Rees, Senior
Governance Support Officer
Lisa Stokes, Executive Officer
Jacqui Van Mellaerts,
Assistant Director - Finance

1. **WEBCAST INTRODUCTION**

The Chair said the meeting was being webcast live and would be available for repeated viewing after the meeting has ended. By continuing to attend the meeting, you were consenting to being filmed and to appearing in the webcast.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Houlihan, Mark Ingall and Stefan Mullard-Toal.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2025 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Paul Jago following his election in the Mark Hall by-election on 1 May 2025.

He said it had been an honour to serve the year as Chair and highlighted the many events he has been fortunate enough to attend.

The Chair presented cheques of £6,000 to both of his chosen charities, Harlow Steel Band and Harlow Dementia Support Network.

He thanked everyone who had supported him throughout the year as Chair.

6. **PRESENTATION OF CIVIC AWARDS**

The Chair presented the following people and organisations Civic Awards in recognition of their commitment and contribution to the local community.

Frank Alecks – Citizen of the Year
Dave Hobbs - Citizen of the Year
Harlow Junior Parkrun – Sports and Culture Award
Harlow Parkrun – Sports and Culture Award
Olivia Bolwerk – Young Citizen of the Year
Charlie Doe – Young Citizen of the Year
Daniel Rumelhart – Young Citizen of the Year

7. **UPDATE FROM HARLOW YOUTH COUNCIL**

Ella Braby, Harlow Youth Council, gave an update on the Youth Council's work. A copy of this update is appended to the minutes.

8. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Joel Charles (seconded by Councillor Hannah Ellis) proposed the nomination of Councillor Andrew Johnson as Chair of the Council.

Councillor James Griggs (seconded by Councillor Lanie Shears) proposed the nomination of Councillor Kay Morrison as Chair of the Council.

Upon being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Andrew Johnson be elected as Chair of the Council for 2025/26 and be invested with the chain and badge of office.

Councillor Johnson signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

9. **APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL AND
DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor James Leppard (seconded by Councillor David Carter) proposed the nomination of Councillor Sue Livings as Vice Chair of the Council.

Councillor James Griggs (seconded by Councillor Lanie Shears) proposed the nomination of Councillor Kay Morrison as Vice Chair of the Council.

Upon being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Sue Livings be appointed as Vice Chair of the Council for 2025/26 and be invested with the chain and badge of office.

Councillor Livings signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

10. **ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Councillor David Carter (seconded by Councillor Hannah Ellis) proposed the nomination of Councillor Dan Swords as Leader of the Council.

RESOLVED that Councillor Dan Swords be elected as Leader of the Council.

11. **APPOINTMENTS TO THE CABINET**

RESOLVED that Full Council noted that the following Councillors were appointed to the Cabinet:

Councillor David Carter – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing

Councillor Danielle Brown – Portfolio Holder for Culture and Community

Councillor Joel Charles – Portfolio Holder for Public Protection

Councillor Hannah Ellis – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Transformation

Councillor Alastair Gunn - Portfolio Holder for Garden Town and Planning

Councillor Michael Hardware – Portfolio Holder for Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

Councillor James Leppard - Portfolio Holder for Finance

Councillor Nicky Purse - Portfolio Holder for Environment

12. **2025/26 PLAN: BUILDING HARLOW'S FUTURE**

Full Council received a report on Building Harlow's Future.

Proposed by Councillor Dan Swords (seconded by Councillor David Carter)
it was:

RESOLVED that Full Council:

- A** Approved the Building Harlow's Future plan, as set out in Appendix A to the report, as the council's main corporate policy framework for 2025/26.
- B** Delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to further review and amend the plan as required.

13. **CHANGES AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

Full Council received a report on changes and appointments to committees.

Proposed by Councillor Dan Swords (seconded by Councillor David Carter)
it was:

RESOLVED that Full Council:

- A** Agreed the new committee structure and terms of reference set out in the report.
- B** Delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any necessary or consequential changes to the constitution to reflect A above.
- C** Noted the political balance calculations for 2025/26 and agreed that committee seats are allocated to political groups as set out in Tables 1 and 2 of the report.
- D** Appointed Councillors as members of council committees as set out in Appendix A to the report.
- E** Appointed Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees as set out in Appendix A to the report.

14. **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

Proposed by Councillor Dan Swords (seconded by Councillor David Carter)
it was:

RESOLVED that the calendar of meetings 2025/26 be approved.

15. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL



Thank you for inviting Harlow Youth Council to the meeting. My name is Ella, and I am a Harlow Youth Councillor. Harlow Youth Council is a locally elected group of 13- to 19-year-olds who live in or attend school in Harlow. Harlow Youth Council is not affiliated to any political party. All young people can have their say, through their youth councillor, about issues that are important to them. As a group, the Youth Council represents the views and opinions of young people in the town. Following our elections earlier this year we were pleased to welcome a new cohort of young people to join Harlow Youth Council for their two-year term.

I am here to share an update on the work that Harlow Youth Council is doing. Our current priorities are chosen from the results of the Make Your Mark Consultation that is run UK wide every two years. The aim of the consultation is to find out what topics and issues are important to young people. In Harlow the top two issues were Crime and Safety & Health and Wellbeing, and these will be our focus for the next two years. Our work will include reviewing, and possibly adding to, the resources that are made available to children, young people, parents and carers via the HYC page on the council's website – these include information leaflets to help raise awareness of young people's mental health issues; environmental issues; and child exploitation.

Community safety remains a concern for the young people in Harlow and we have three Youth Councillors who represent young people at the police led Independent Advisory Group. In addition to this we also have two Youth Councillors who are part of the police stop and search panel where they view bodycam footage on stop and searches in Harlow and can provide feedback on how they think officers conducted the search.

Following a successful application to the Essex County Council Local Community Fund, Harlow Youth Council were able to offer free self-defence sessions to young people during the February half term which links to our crime and safety priority. The aim of the project was to educate young people about how to use correct techniques to protect themselves and help them to feel safe and secure when out in the community. The sessions were run by a local martial arts provider who was able to teach the young people how to defend themselves should they ever find themselves in a situation that makes them feel unsafe. The sessions were held at the Safe to Go Stow Community Hub and followed by a briefing with an Essex Police Officer. This

gave the young people an opportunity to have an informal conversation about crime and safety in Harlow and discuss any underlying issues affecting young people in the community. The initiative was mainly targeted towards young people that live in The Stow area but young people from other areas also attended.

Youth Councillors are often involved in consultations and various services and organisations attend our meetings to discuss a range of topics and issues that affect young people. Youth Councillors provide feedback on behalf of Harlow young people, and we hope that our views are considered to help shape the growth and development of Harlow going forward. We were recently involved in a workshop focused on the Cultural Strategy and gave our views on the arts, culture and wellbeing in Harlow from young people's perspective. We are pleased that we have been given the opportunity to give our feedback and look forward to a visit from the team with an update on the strategy.

In order to help raise the profile of Harlow Youth Council and let young people know that we are here to listen to their views and make sure that their voices are heard, Youth Councillors take every opportunity to attend as many community events as possible. During the summer we plan to attend the Great Get Together in June and National Play Day in August.

Harlow Youth Council are planning another 'Apprentice Style' activity evening with Ward Councillors on Monday 16 June at the Latton Bush Centre. You should have received an Outlook invitation by now and we are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible. We are keen to continue building closer working relationships with you and welcome any opportunities to work with Ward Councillors on any issues that affect young people in the Town.

Thank you