

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

25th February, 2026

A Council meeting of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was held on Wednesday, 25th February 2026.

Present

The Mayor (Councillor B. Saru)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor T. Sheppard)

Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, J. Gutteridge, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, N. King, M. Kondakor, S. Markham, W. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, R. Roze, J. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins K. Wilson and M. Wright.

No apologies received.

Councillor P. Hickling arrived at 6.12pm during Announcements.

CL62 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that

- a) the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 10th December 2025 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor;
- b) the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 21st January 2026 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor; and
- c) the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 28th January 2026 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

CL63 **Declarations of Interests**

RESOLVED that

- a) the Declarations of Interests for this meeting are as set out in the schedule published on the Council website be approved;

- b) the General dispensations granted to all members under s33 of the Localism Act 2011 be noted; and
- c) no declarations were received from members in connection with the budget on council tax matters.

CL64 **Announcements**

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- A Cheese and Wine evening with a short history of George Eliot is being held in aid of the Mayor's Charity.
- A multicultural music event being held on 4th April bringing community culture shows together. The event starts at 6pm – 9pm £10 per ticket.

Councillor J. Gutteridge announced after careful consideration that he will be standing down as a councillor in the next local elections but wished to place on record his thanks to the residents of Whitestone for electing him to represent them.

Councillor Gutteridge expressed his thanks for the political and officer support that he has received, with specific thanks to Beryl (NABCEL Cleaner) and Dennis (Porter) whose pride in their work keep the Council running smoothly.

Councillor Gutteridge wished to thank all the medical specialists and staff at Dorethea Unit (George Eliot Hospital) who have been outstanding in their care for him during a difficult and ongoing period of ill health.

Lastly Councillor Gutteridge placed on record his thanks to the Mayor Councillor Bhim Saru for the excellent execution of his duties in this mayoral year and that Councillor Bhim Saru held the position of his second favourite Mayor to have served this Borough. Councillor Gutteridge then kindly donated £250 to the Mayor's charity.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Gutteridge for his generous donation and for his leadership and unwavering dedication to the residents of the Borough.

CL65 **Public Participation**

Question 1 – Craig Garrity submitted the following question but was unable to attend, therefore a written response was provided and included in the minutes below:

At the Borough Plan Committee on 15th January, officers confirmed that under the new NPPF, the Council's housing requirement has risen by 38% to 756 dwellings per year - a figure that significantly exceeds the 545 target presented to residents during the recent consultation.

Given that Policy DS8 of the Adopted Plan mandates an 'immediate' review if housing needs change significantly, can the Leader confirm if this clause has now been triggered, effectively rendering the Plan adopted in December 'out of date' just weeks after it was signed?

Councillor T. Venson, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement gave the following written response:

The Borough Plan Review was adopted on 10 December 2025 and is an up to date plan for the borough which sets a housing requirement of 545 dwellings per year for the plan period to 2039. This figure was examined under the transitional arrangements set out in national policy and was found sound by the Planning Inspectors.

In December 2024, whilst the Borough Plan Review was at examination, the Government updated national planning policy and introduced a new standard methodology for calculating local housing need. Under this new methodology, NBBC's local housing need is calculated at 756 dwellings per year. However, because of the transitional arrangements in place at the time of examination, the figure of 545 dwellings per year was the correct figure to be tested and was confirmed as sound.

Policy DS8 of the Borough Plan Reviews sets out circumstances that would trigger an early review of the Plan, including significant changes to national policy.

On 27 November 2025, the Government published guidance on the new 30 month plan making system. The guidance states that authorities which, under transitional arrangements, do not meet at least 80% of the local housing need identified under the new standard methodology, must begin preparing a plan under the new system. NBBC is one of 34 authorities which fall into this category. Under the new system, councils must meet a series of statutory backstop dates, including the requirement to give formal notice of the Council's intention to commence our 30-month plan preparation process by 30 June 2026. NBBC is therefore currently reviewing the new guidance and putting into place the necessary steps to ensure compliance with these deadlines, ahead of the publication of the supporting regulations.

Whilst the new local plan is being prepared, the policies within the adopted Borough Plan Review remain up to date and the Council can demonstrate a robust five year housing land supply.

Question 2 – Brian Walmsley asked the following question to the Leader of the Council:

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) two meeting sessions, of well over ten hours, to finally set a Reform/Conservative budget and advise the increase level for the Warwickshire County Council portion of our council tax. Can the Council Leader please tell me what the implications of this delay are to Nuneaton and Bedworth (who are the authority that have to collect the council tax from residents), including how Nuneaton and Bedworth residents will be affected as a result.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor S. Hey responded as follows:

Thank-you Mr Mayor and thanks for your question Mr. Walmsley

As you know we had to put this meeting back a week because, after one failed attempt, Reform led WCC had called another meeting for Tuesday 17th February only a day before our own budget setting meeting.

I felt that we couldn't risk the prospect of holding our budget and council tax billing meeting without knowing the precept from WCC because, if WCC had not been able to set a budget and precept on 17th Feb we would not been able to agree the Tax Demands and would have had to call another emergency meeting to do that. Our meetings cost around £2000 to hold.

The opposition leaders agreed this was the sensible thing to do and I'm grateful for that.

But it doesn't make it any less messy for us. Officers and Councillors have booked holidays based on the original dates. Administrative arrangements have to be completely changed. Tax bill printing had to be put on hold and that is no mean task

So not being able to set a budget in a timely manner has consequences. Goodness knows what we would have done if WCC had not set a budget on the 17th. And of course, there must have been a cost to the taxpayer because of two WCC meetings instead of one and I bet they cost more to run than ours.

We now have a precept and so later in the meeting I can recommend our Council Tax setting and billing so I'm not presuming decisions to be taken later in this meeting.

However we now know that WCC are increasing their Council Tax by 4.44% (thats £80.91 a year on Band D) and the PCC by 4.94% (that's £15.00 a year on a band D property) where as our recommended increase is going to be £2.99% (£8.12 a year on Band D so most households in Nuneaton and Bedworth will pay less than that). Noticeably our proposed increase is below inflation whereas the two precepts aren't.

The WCC increase is despite that fact that Reform stood on a platform of reducing council tax but, having got control, harsh reality is hitting. It seems to me that cutting council tax or not increasing it to the maximum allowed just to make a political point while at the same time having to make savage cuts (unless of course you are a political adviser) is simply cutting your nose to spite your face. Populist politics it may be but it's bad governance in my view.

So, Mr. Walmsley, on Cllr. Finch's end-of-term school report I'm going to write "Short attention span, lack of attention to detail. Could do better"

Thank you, Mr. Walmsley and Mr. Mayor.

Statement 3 – County Councillor Keith Kondakor read the following statement:

The borough council has the lowest fees for House in multiple occupation (HMOs) in Warwickshire. The charge is between £841 and £923. In Rugby the fees are between £1,362 and £1,694. This limits the ability of the council to regulate the sector and ensure the large number of HMOs here are safe and of a suitable quality. The fees fund inspection and regulation, they are supposed to be self-financing. I ask the council to match the HMO fees in Rugby.

The borough council has the lowest Fixed Penalty Notice Fly Tipping fine in Warwickshire at only £400. We really need to have this increased to match the £600-£1000 of other Warwickshire councils so that we are no longer a cheaper place to Fly Tip.

We will also face a lack of parking spaces at the north end of Nuneaton town centre which will impact income and footfall. The council should consider increasing Nuneaton annual short stay car parking season tickets which do not cover the cost of providing a parking space in Nuneaton only. This more realistic charge will either free up space in the short stay for people visiting out town or increase income.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor S. Hey responded as follows:

Thank you, County Councillor Kondakor for your statement, it is noted.

CL66 **Questions by Members**

Question 1 – Councillor Eric Ameachi submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Housing:

Could the Portfolio Holder for Housing please provide a brief update on the empty property project and outline the key benefits delivered since the Empty Property Officer was employed?

Councillor C. Watkins, Portfolio Holder for Housing, responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr Mayor, and thank you, Councillor Ameachi for your question. Like the grumpy old man over there. I think all of our officers do a sterling job.

But the empty property officer was something that we'd put in our budget built in our budget, and I've seen massive benefits to this council.

Empty Property officer has put strong foundations in place to tackle the long-term empty properties across the borough. New borough wide empty property database has been created along with an online reporting tool that has already identified properties previously unknown to this council.

A consistent internal process for handling complaints and reports has also been established, ensuring cleaner and faster action. Internal partnership working has improved considerably.

A working form with Environment Working group with environmental health now coordinates responses and avoids duplication while collaboration with the Planning, Legal, Council tax, Housing and Community Safety is open to tackle long standing problematic properties and difficult landlords. The officer has also supported the resolution of the Council own empty properties, including work with evaluation agency in Birmingham.

Externally, the officer set up a multi-agency group with working with the police and fire, which has enabled strong joint enforcement. This led to the demolition of the Kingsholme following community protection notice.

Close working relations with the neighbourhood police teams support escalation of cases such as a site in Keresley.

Notices have been issued on several residential properties supported by planning and environmental health and environmental issues such as rat infestations and overgrowth have been resolved.

Engagement with owners as being proactive and letters have been issued to fifty longest standing empty property owners around the borough offering advice and support.

Discussions with the Kingsholme site owners, along with planning and Warwickshire County Council, have supported regeneration proposals. Support has also been provided to residents and builders affected by the empty homes. Policy development is progressing, including a probate support scheme, which is now out for tender and an empty property loan scheme is under development.

The officer engaging with the MP's and the West Midlands Combined Authority to raise the profile of the empty homes and shape the future strategy. And we've also had members of Richard Parker's team come here to have a discussion and presentation from us. Also members of the Empty Home Network and Training lining up with councils and experts nationally for advice and support.

This has also made us aware and makes us look at our own empty properties within the borough, and has also highlighted a few properties that are owned by Warwickshire County Council.

Overall, the officer has introduced a coordinated approach to empty homes where none existed previously, significantly improving internal systems, external partnerships, enforcement capacity and support for the owners. So everything is going in the right direction since employing the empty property officer and I hope that this continues in the future. Thank you, Councillor Ameachi.

Question 2 – Councillor Damon Brown asked the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration:

Six months ago, or thereabouts, the Council submitted financial plans to His Majesty's Government setting out how the initial part of the £20 million funding awarded to Bedworth by the Government will be spent as part of the Believe in Bedworth project. To date, and despite multiple requests for details of the projects that are to be funded to be provided to members, the project details have not been disclosed.

Will the Cabinet Member now either provide the details of the projects or explain clearly and unequivocally why they've not been provided to date and commit to

providing them before the end of the month - or concede that the plans provided to the Government were made up.

Councillor Nicky King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration, responded as follows:

Thank you, councillor for your question. This project is run by a board of local community; the council are just to simply operate due diligence. Last week the plans were submitted.

I can send you the criteria if you're not sure or they have now have a website which is up and running, which actually goes through their progress.

Question 3 – Councillor Sue Markham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement:

Why are so many planning applications being permitted to reach the final days of their statutory determination period without a decision or coming to committee? This situation raises serious concerns regarding compliance with statutory duties and proper administrative practice. We feel our hands are tied by the minimal time remaining. What immediate and substantive steps will be taken to ensure lawful determination within the prescribed timeframe and to prevent potential maladministration?

Councillor T. Venson, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement responded as follows:

Planning applications generally must be decided within 8 weeks for minor developments (householder/small projects) and 13 weeks for major developments.

Applications may take longer than the standard 8-13 weeks if they are particularly complex, require negotiation, require a Planning Committee decision (rather than officer delegation) or if statutory consultees require more time to provide a response.

If a decision cannot be reached within the statutory timeframe, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) may ask for a written agreement to extend the period. In the majority of cases, applicants agree to an extension but in some situations, they do not agree and therefore a decision needs to be made on the application.

The LPA has to provide information to Government on the time taken to issue decisions on applications. For the period October- December 2025 100% majors,

100% minors and 98% others/householders were dealt with within the required time frame.

Question 4 - Councillor Lubs Cvetkovic asked the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration:

Back in December I spoke to Cllr King about grant funding being made available to the Borough. I was delighted that some of this funding would be headed towards Bulkington.

Please could Cllr King update me on how much money has been allocated to Bulkington, and any limitations on how this money can be spent.

Would Cllr King still be willing to meet up to discuss how this money could best serve the residents of Bulkington

Councillor N. King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration, responded as follows:

At the moment, we're waiting for the projects to be submitted that fit the criteria before any of the money is allocated and finalised. Please be aware that one of the credentials is that the local MP's are involved in this project.

Please could you submit any projects to Jonathan White and include John Slinger MP?

And then in the meantime, I'm more than happy to meet up with you for any discussions.

Councillor L. Cvetkovic asked a supplementary question:

Councillor King, thank you for your reply. Could you let me know please what the criteria and limitations are because I haven't actually got a copy though, so they would be very much appreciated. Thank you.

Councillor N. King responded as follows:

Yes, of course I will get those emailed to you ASAP.

Question 5 – Councillor Martin Walsh asked the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement:

Does the portfolio holder for planning agree with me, and believe that given the recent media coverage, and the known historical issues of flooding along Woodlands Road, Woodlands Lane and the surrounding fields, that the outline planning application by Arbury Estates should never have been recommended for approval by the planning department?

And given now that following the reserved matters application by Taylor Wimpey, to build the 150 homes, that there has been multiple objections raised by WCC's flood team regarding mitigation, that the site should never have been in the previous Labour Borough Plan?

As this Council knows, I have spoken out against all applications in the Woodlands area since becoming the ward Councillor for Slough nearly 5 years ago and will continue to do so.

Councillor T. Venson, Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration responded as follows:

The outline planning application was recommended for approval by Planning Officers as it was considered to meet relevant Policies within the Borough Plan and the NPPF.

The Environment Agency and the Warwickshire County Council Flood Risk Management Team did not object to the outline planning application.

The Planning Officer's recommendation was overturned by the Planning Committee. The Council's decision to refuse the application was considered by the Planning Inspectorate and they overturned the decision.

The Warwickshire County Council Flood Risk Management team have submitted one objection as the details submitted are current insufficient and they do not allow the FRM team to suitably assess of the proposed development. Their consultation letter contains information as to how the developer can overcome their objection. Taylor Wimpey are reviewing this and will provide updated information in due course.

The site was allocated in the Borough Plan (2019) as part of the wider HSG4 – Woodlands site for approximately 689 dwellings. The Borough Plan was examined by an independent Inspector who considered all the supporting evidence including a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to determine the Plan was sound.

CL67 **Special Urgency Decisions**

None taken

CL68 **Cabinet**

The Leader of the Council submitted the Leaders report on behalf of Cabinet. The report highlighted matters considered at the Cabinet meetings held on 3rd December 2025 and 21st January 2026 and details of reports from the West Midlands Combined Authority Board (WMCAB), which has a direct impact on NBBC.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CL69 **Election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor**

The Council gave consideration to the selection of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/27:

(a) Mayor

It was proposed by Councillor P. Hickling and seconded by W. Hancox that Councillor T. Sheppard be invited to accept the office of Mayor.

It was further proposed by Councillor K. Wilson and seconded by Councillor M. Bird that Councillor S. Markham be invited to accept the office of Mayor.

A vote was taken

RESOLVED that Councillor T. Sheppard be invited to accept the office of Mayor for Municipal Year 2026/27

(b) Deputy Mayor

It was proposed by Councillor C. Watkins and seconded Councillor K. Price that Councillor E. Amaechi be invited to accept the office of Deputy Mayor.

It was further proposed by Councillor J. Clarke and seconded Councillor S. Markham that Councillor K. Wilson be invited to accept the office of Deputy Mayor.

A vote was taken.

RESOLVED that Councillor E. Amaechi be invited to accept the office of Deputy Mayor for Municipal Year 2026/27

CL70 **Recommendations from Cabinet and Other Committees**

i) Recommendation from Local Government Reform sub-committee – Community Governance

At the Cabinet meeting held on the 21st January 2026 a report by Chief Executive was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendation for council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendation.

A vote was taken.

RESOLVED that it is most logical to defer a full council decision to initiate a Community Governance Review, until the Government has decided on the future structure or local government within Warwickshire

ii) Treasury Management Update 2025/2026

At the Audit and Standards meeting held on the 3rd February 2026, a report by the Treasury and Technical Business Partner was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor J. Bonner moved the recommendation for Council approval.

Councillor C. Smith seconded the recommendation

A vote was taken

RESOLVED that

a) the Treasury Management Report for 2025/26 - Quarter 3 report be noted; and

b) the update to the Treasury Management Practices in Appendix A of the report (TMP 5) be approved

iii) Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) 2026/27

At the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on the 3rd February 2026 a report by Treasury and Technical Business Partner was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor J. Bonner moved the recommendation for council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendation.

A vote was taken:

It was **RESOLVED** that the updated TMPs be approved.

iv) Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 26/27

At the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on the 3rd February 2026 a report by the Treasury and Technical Business Partner was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor J. Bonner moved the recommendation for Council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendation.

A recorded vote was taken

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, J. Gutteridge, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, N. King, S. Markham, W. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, and K. Wilson

AGAINST: Councillors M. Kondakor, R. Roze, and M. Wright

ABSTENTIONS: None

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy Statement including all Prudential Indicators, the MRP Policy and Annual Investment Strategy be approved

v) Constitution Updates from the Constitution Review Working Party

At the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on the 3rd February 2026 a report by the Assistant Director – Democracy and Governance was submitted and recommendations put forward for Council approval.

Councillor J. Bonner moved the recommendation for council approval.

Councillor C. Smith seconded the recommendation.

A vote was taken.

RESOLVED that

- a) the number of signatories required for Motions on Notice be amended to one (1) Councillor and a Secunder;
- b) the Civic Honours Sub-Committee membership list be amended by removing 'The Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services' and replace with 'One other Cabinet Member' as per Table 2 under 4.3.1 of the report;
- c) the Terms of Reference for the Shareholder Committee be included as per 4.4.2 of the report;
- d) it be ensured all public meetings have a Vice Chair appointed with effect from the 2026/2027 Municipal Year, as proposed in 4.5.1 of the report; and
- e) the wording under 4E.15 of the Constitution be amended as per Table 3 under 4.6.1. of the report.

vi) **General Fund Revenue Budget 2026/27**

Councillor S. Hey moved as per the constitution part 4A.12 (r) to suspend standing orders to extend the length of speeches on the budget items for the proposer and seconder beyond five minutes.

Councillor K. Wilson seconded the procedural motion.

A vote was taken

RESOLVED that as per the constitution part 4A.12 (r) standing orders to extend the length of speeches on the budget items for the proposer and seconder be suspended.

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources was submitted and recommendations put forward for Council approval

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendations for council approval with an additional recommendation that at point 5.4 of the report, the Selective Licensing figure be amended from £38k to £40k with the remaining figures (including the Total) being unaltered.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendations

Councillor K. Wilson, Leader of the Main Opposition, moved the following amendment:

Recommendations

It be Recommended to Council that:

- a) The Council Tax requirement for 2026/27 of £11,566,358, an increase of 2.99% on a Band D, is approved in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- b) The net General Fund revenue expenditure budget of £23,850,000 is approved (Appendix A).
- c) That Members' Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances for the financial year 2026/27 not be increased in-line with the officer pay award.
- d) It be noted that the NNDR1 has been completed and submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and included within the Budget for 2026/27 with a precept for Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) of £21,678,232 in 2026/27.
- e) The Fees and Charges for 2026/27 are approved and implemented.
- f) The Section 25 Statement of the S151 Officer in part 9 of the report detailing the reserve position, robustness of estimates and affordability is given due consideration when approving the budget and Council Tax for 2026/27.
- g) Delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources, Strategic Director – Housing & Community Safety and Strategic Director – Public Services to incur expenditure in accordance with the approved budget including undertaking procurement exercises in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- h) Delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources to use the Financial Planning Earmarked Reserve when necessary to support the financial position of the Council.

- i) It be noted the update to the medium-term financial plan and use of reserves.
- j) The Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on behalf of the Council to outline the Council's concerns regarding the adequacy of Government funding to meet the full operational costs of delivering the mandated food waste collection service.
- k) The Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on behalf of the Council to outline the Council's concerns regarding the lateness of the Local Government Finance Settlement and the settlement amount awarded.

Budget Position

- 1.1. The draft budget was presented to Cabinet in December 2025 and a deficit position of £3.543m was reported.
- 1.2. Additional pressures were highlighted during the finalisation of the budget, and a breakdown of the final recommended position is summarised in the following table:

	2026/27
	£'000
General Fund Draft Budget Deficit	3,543
<u>Changes in Funding:</u>	
Update to Business Rates Retention	£734
Increased Revenue Support Grant	(£2,347)
Inclusion of Recovery Grant	(£514)
Council Tax Surplus	(£101)
Homelessness Consolidated Grant Increase	(£53)
<u>Additional Changes since the Draft Budget:</u>	
Reduction in Investment Income	£200
Increase in Pay award from 3% to 3.5%	£84
Emergency Planning Service change from External to Internal	£23
Bedworth Physical Activity Hub Contract	(£420)
Reviewed Business Rates Charges applicable to NBBC	(£175)
Changes due to the Pension Fund Revaluation	(£165)

Final Deficit to Fund	809
<u>Councillor Funding Decisions</u>	
Council Tax Increase at 2.99%	(£336)
Transformation savings target	(£500)
Funding software implementation by earmarked reserves	(£49)
Delete net zero consultancy	(£45)
Increase in Fees and Charges	(£18)
Remove increase in Members allowances	(£11)
Remove advertising for investment property	(£7)
Remove additional Deputy Monitoring Officer role	(£3)
Removal of an OSP chair (3 instead of 4) (10 months)	(£3)
Removal of transport support for NABCEL vehicle	(£3)
Remove member training	(£2)
<u>Growth Items:</u>	
Revenue Contribution to Park Refurbishment	£75
Borough Sweep Annually	£42
Changes in Car Parking Charges	£32
Community Grants	£9
Borough Party Event	£5
Bulkington Christmas Lights	£5
Total Deficit / (Surplus)	0

Member Funding Decisions

- 1.3. In previous years there has been a budget provision to account for vacancy savings. This was not included within the draft budget but following further analysis the saving has been re-instated.
- 1.4. Increasing the council tax by the maximum 2.99% will increase funding to deliver services.
- 1.5. Within the draft budget was the inclusion of software implementation as a one-off cost. This has been removed and the cost of the implementation will be funded from earmarked reserves.
- 1.6. Fees and charges be increases as stated in point 2.

- 1.7. Freeze the member allowances at the 2025/26 rates so therefore there would be no increase in line with the officer pay award for 2026/27.
- 1.8. Remove additional officer growth for advertising of properties as the current budget is deemed sufficient.
- 1.9. Remove the officer growth request for an additional Deputy Monitoring Officer to support with Local Government Reorganisation and keep the current level of 1 Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- 1.10. Reduce the overview and scrutiny panels down to 3 rather than 4 from June 2026.
- 1.11. Remove the cost of support for the NABCEL vehicles.
- 1.12. Removal of the officer growth request for member training provision.

Growth Items

- 1.13. Re-introduce the £75k contribution to improve parks equipment within the Borough for 2026/27.
- 1.14. To implement a Borough sweep across the borough in 2026/27.
- 1.15. Change car park fees and charges and re-vert back to the cost of £1.50 for 3 hours of parking.
- 1.16. Increase the provision to provide small grants to community groups during 2026/27.
- 1.17. Ensure budget is available to introduce a Borough party in the park for 2026/27.
- 1.18. Implement a Christmas light turn on event in Bulkington similar to those currently provided in Nuneaton and Bedworth during 2026/27.

2. Fees and Charges

- 2.1. Discretionary fees and charges are recommended to be uplifted by December CPIs rate of 3.4% (excluding the green bin charge). The Fees & Charges Policy was approved by Cabinet in July 2025.

2.2. No uplifts for fees and charges within the following services are proposed due to reviews on-going:

- Planning and Land Charges
- Licencing
- Legal

2.3. During 2026/27 individual cabinet reports will be presented in relation to the above service area fees and charges with recommendations for uplifts.

3. Medium-Term Financial Plan

3.1. A revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was reported to Cabinet in November 2022 and was noted in the report that the Plan that accompanies the Strategy will be updated and presented during the budget process. Now a multi-year settlement has been finalised on the 9th February 2026 the MTFS will be updated and presented to Cabinet during 2026/27.

3.2. Attached at Appendix A is an updated Medium Term Financial Plan based on the members funding decisions and growth items. Growth items are included for 2026/27 but removed in 2027/28 except for the revision of car parking fees.

3.3. The General Fund Reserve balance would need to be utilised in future years to fund the deficits if savings can't be identified to balance the General Fund in 2027/28 and 2028/29.

3.4. The budget presented is balanced over the three-year period and although this requires a drawdown from the General Fund Reserve Balance it is deliverable. This is due to the contributions reducing the reserve but maintaining 10% of net expenditure as a balance by 2028/29.

Opposition General Fund Budget Summary

GENERAL FUND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

	Budget	Proposed Budget	Forecast	Forecast
	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Portfolio				
Business & Regeneration	1,289	1,184	1,271	1,359
Environment & Public Services	6,991	8,105	8,784	9,262
Housing	63	121	217	300
Leisure, Communities & Health	4,994	4,861	4,972	5,067
Planning & Enforcement	1,593	2,165	2,238	2,301
Resources & Central Services	8,096	8,809	8,783	9,210
Portfolio Expenditure	23,027	25,246	26,266	27,499
Accounting Adjustments				
Depreciation	(3,097)	(3,169)	(3,169)	(3,169)
Minimum Revenue Provision	530	829	1,424	1,454
Interest Payable	941	1,076	942	670
Interest Receivable	(741)	(459)	(409)	(339)
Financing of Capital Expenditure	1,125	1,125	540	540
Contributions to/from reserves	(1,436)	(1,436)	(890)	(110)
Central Provisions	433	637	642	648
Net Expenditure	20,784	23,849	25,347	27,191
Provisions				
Forecasted Outturn	(250)	0	0	0
Regeneration Income	0	0	(1,040)	(1,421)
Removal of 2026/27 One-off Spend	0	0	(137)	(137)
Transformation Savings	0	0	(1,100)	(1,800)
LGR Shadow Cabinet	0	0	250	0
Additional Pressures/Opportunities	(250)	0	(2,027)	(3,358)
Funding				
NDR	(7,717)	(5,303)	(5,026)	(5,127)
Council Tax	(11,196)	(11,666)	(12,031)	(12,515)
New Homes Bonus	(1,027)	0	0	0

Revenue Support Grant	(330)	(5,818)	(5,694)	(5,622)
Recovery Grant	(514)	(514)	(514)	(514)
Adjustment Support Grant	0	(546)	0	0
Total Funding	(20,784)	(23,848)	(23,265)	(23,778)
Deficit	(250)	0	54	55

Councillor S. Markham seconded the amendment.

An adjournment took place at 8.05pm until 8.20pm.

Councillor K. Wilson moved a procedural motion in line with the constitution Part 4A.12 (m) to suspend standing orders to continue the meeting beyond three hours until the business of the meeting has been concluded.

Councillor J. Clarke seconded the procedural motion

A vote was taken

RESOLVED that the procedural motion was carried.

A recorded vote was taken on the amendment as follows:

FOR: Councillors M. Bird, D. Brown, J. Clarke, J. Collett, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, M. Etienne, J. Gutteridge, J. Hartshorn, A. Khangura, S. Markham, W. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Smith, M. Walsh and K. Wilson

AGAINST: Councillors E. Amaechi, J. Bonner, A. Bull, S. Dhillon, W. Hancox, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, N. King, M. Kondakor, C. Phillips, K. Price, R. Roze, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, T. Venson C. Watkins and M. Wright

ABSTENTIONS: None

The amendment was lost

A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, J. Bonner, A. Bull, S. Dhillon, W. Hancox, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, N. King, M. Kondakor, C. Phillips, K. Price, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, T. Venson C. Watkins and M. Wright

AGAINST: Councillors M. Bird, D. Brown, J. Clarke, J. Collett, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, M. Etienne, J. Gutteridge, J. Hartshorn, A. Khangura, S. Markham, W. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Roze, R. Smith, M. Walsh and K. Wilson

ABSTENTIONS: None

The substantive motion was carried

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) the Council Tax requirement for 2026/27 of £11,566,358, an increase of 2.99% on a Band D, be approved in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- b) it be noted that the NNDR1 has been completed and submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and included within the Budget for 2026/27 with a precept for Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) of £21,678,232 in 2026/27;
- c) the Fees and Charges for 2026/27 (Appendix C of the report) be approved and implemented;
- d) the net General Fund revenue expenditure budget of £23,838,704 be approved (Appendix A of the report);
- e) the Section 25 Statement of the S151 Officer in part 9 of the report detailing the reserve position, robustness of estimates and affordability was given due consideration when approving the budget and Council Tax for 2026/27;
- f) delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources, Strategic Director – Housing & Community Safety and Strategic Director – Public Services to incur expenditure in accordance with the approved budget including undertaking procurement exercises in accordance with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules;
- g) delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources to use the Financial Planning Earmarked Reserve when necessary to support the financial position of the Council;
- h) it be noted the update to the medium-term financial plan (section 6 of the report) and use of reserves (section 7 of the report);

- i) the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on behalf of the Council to outline the Council's concerns regarding the adequacy of Government funding to meet the full operational costs of delivering the mandated food waste collection service;
- j) the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on behalf of the Council to outline the Council's concerns regarding the lateness of the Local Government Finance Settlement and the settlement amount awarded; and
- k) at point 5.4 of the report, the 'Include resource for Selective Licensing' figure be amended from £38k to £40k with the remaining figures (including the Total) being unaltered.

Councillors T. Cooper, J. Gutteridge and W. Markham left the meeting.

vii) Housing Revenue Account Budget 2026/27

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources was submitted and recommendations put forward for Council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins moved the recommendations for Council approval

Councillor S. Hey seconded the recommendations

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, N. King, S. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, and K. Wilson

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: M. Kondakor, R. Roze and M. Wright

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) the budgeted surplus of £181 for 2026/27 be approved;
- b) a rent increase on dwellings of 4.8% from 6th April 2026 be approved;

- c) the fees and charges for the HRA (Appendix B of the report) be approved and implemented from 6th April 2026; and
- d) Delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director – Housing & Community Safety to carry out procurement exercises in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in order to deliver the capital programme.

viii) Capital Budget 2026/27

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources was submitted and recommendations put forward for Council approval.

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendations for Council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendations

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, M. Kondakor, N. King, S. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, K. Wilson and, M. Wright

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: R. Roze

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) The capital budget and forecast for 2026/27 to 2028/29 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) be approved; and
- b) Delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director – Housing & Community Safety, Strategic Director – Public Services, and Strategic Director – Corporate Resources to carry out procurement exercises in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in order to deliver the capital programme.

ix) **Council Tax 2025/26**

The Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Resources & Central Services, Councillor S. Hey, moved the resolution setting the Council Tax for the Council's area for council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the resolution.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, M. Kondakor, N. King, S. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, R. Roze, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, K. Wilson and, M. Wright

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

It was **RESOLVED** that

1. it be noted that on 3rd December 2025 the amount of 41,369.0 has been calculated and determined as the Council Tax base for the year 2026/27 for the whole council area [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the 'Act')].
2. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 is **£11,566,358.71**
3. the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
 - (a) **£ 111,763,745.63**
being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act;
 - (b) **£100,197,386.92**
being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;
 - (c) **£ 11,566,358.71**
being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (d) **£279.59**

being the amount at 3(c) above (item R), divided by item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

4. it be noted that for the year 2026/27 **Warwickshire County Council** has indicated a precept requirement to the Council of **£78,760,784.34** and has indicated the amounts set out in Column 3 of the table in 6 below in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings.
5. it be noted that for the year 2026/27 the **Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner** has indicated a precept requirement to the Council of **£13,184,704.48** and has indicated the amounts set out in Column 4 of the Table in 6 below in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings.
6. the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the Council's amount of Council tax as shown in column 2 below for each category of dwelling.

1	2	3	4	5
Valuation Bands	Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council	Warwickshire County Council	Warwickshire Police & Crime Commissioner	Council Tax 2026/27
	£	£	£	£
R A	155.33	1,057.70	177.06	1,390.09
A	186.39	1,269.24	212.47	1,668.10
B	217.46	1,480.78	247.89	1,946.13
C	248.52	1,692.32	283.30	2,224.14
D	279.59	1,903.86	318.71	2,502.16
E	341.72	2,326.94	389.53	3,058.19
F	403.85	2,750.02	460.36	3,614.23
G	465.98	3,173.10	531.18	4,170.26

H	559.18	3,807.72	637.42	5,004.32
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7. the Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2026/27 sets out the principles which the Secretary of State has determined will apply to local authorities in England in 2026/27. The Council is required to determine whether its basic amount of Council Tax is excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; and

8. for the purposes of Section 222 the Local Government Act 1972, pursuant to Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972, Council approve the following officers be authorised to prosecute and/or defend on behalf of the Council, or to appear on behalf of the Council any proceedings before a magistrates' court to prosecute or defend or to appear in any such proceedings, in relation to the recovery of all non-domestic rates, council tax, business improvement district and other debts and to appear in such proceedings:

Income Recovery Officer (Magistrates' Court)	Revenues Shared Services Manager (Magistrates' Court)	Revenues Team Leader – Recovery (Magistrates' Court)
Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service (Magistrates' Court)	Solicitor to the Council (Magistrates' Court)	Litigation and Contracts Solicitor (Magistrates' Court)

x) Local Council Tax Support Scheme

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Assistant Director – Finance was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendation for Council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendation

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, M. Kondakor, N. King, S. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, R. Roze, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T.

Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, K. Wilson and, M. Wright

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

It was **RESOLVED** that the report and Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2026/2027 be approved.

xi) Crisis and Resilience Fund Policy 2026

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Assistant Director – Finance was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendation for Council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendation

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, M. Kondakor, N. King, S. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, R. Roze, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, K. Wilson and, M. Wright

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

It was **RESOLVED** that the report and the policy for the Housing Payment Crisis Resilience Fund 2026/27 be approved.

xii) Council Tax S13A Policy

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Assistant Director – Finance was submitted and a recommendation put forward for Council approval.

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendation for Council approval.

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendation.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors E. Amaechi, M. Bird, J. Bonner, D. Brown, A. Bull, J. Clarke, J. Collett, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, W. Hancox, J. Hartshorn, S. Hey, P. Hickling, B. Hughes, T. Jenkins, A. Khangura, N. King, S. Markham, B. Pandher, C. Phillips, K. Price, B. Saru, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, C. Smith, R. Smith, T. Venson, M. Walsh, C. Watkins, and K. Wilson.

AGAINST: R. Roze

ABSTENTIONS: M. Kondakor and M. Wright

It was **RESOLVED** that the report and the Council Section 13A (1) (C) Policy for financial year 2026/27 be approved.

xiii) NBBC Business Rate Discretionary Relief Policy

At the Cabinet meeting held prior to Council on the 25th February 2026 a report by the Assistant Director – Finance was submitted and recommendations put forward for Council approval.

Councillor S. Hey moved the recommendations for Council approval with an additional recommendation as follows:

‘Section 7 of the policy be referred to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel for review’

Councillor C. Watkins seconded the recommendations

It was **RESOLVED** that

- a) the policy outlining the Council’s approach for Non-Domestic Rates Relief for 2026/27 be approved; and
- b) Section 7 of the policy be referred to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel for review

Mayor