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# Minutes

**Meeting of** : Full Council Annual Meeting (Mayor Making)  
**Date** : 9 May 2026  
**Meeting held in** : Church of St Thomas and St Edmund  
**Commencing at** : 1200 hours

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Present:

Chair: Cllr J Wells (outgoing) and Cllr J Bolwell (incoming)

Vice Chair: Cllr A Bayliss (outgoing) and Cllr V Charleston (incoming)

Cllrs: P Beavan, C Corbin, S Foster, S Hocking, A Hoque, R Johnson, T Last, V Milos, A Riddle, R Rogers, P Sample and A Suddards

Officers: Asa Thorpe and Clare Dickinson

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The meeting commenced with Opening Prayers led by the Revd Canon Dr Tom Clammer OC.

The Chief Executive Officer started the meeting by welcoming everyone to St Thomas' Church, giving some housekeeping formalities and a brief outline of the meeting (a full copy of the Opening Remarks is attached at Annex A).

## 1. The Election of the Mayor for 2026-27.

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr John Wells, called for nominations for Mayor of the City of Salisbury, and Chair of the Council, for 2026-2027.

**Proposal: That Cllr Jenny Bolwell be elected to be the 765<sup>th</sup> Mayor Salisbury**

There were no further nominations for Mayor of Salisbury.

**Proposed:** Cllr R Rogers

**Seconded:** Cllr V Milos

A vote was taken, and it was:

## **Resolved that:**

1.1 Cllr Jenny Bolwell be elected to be the 765<sup>th</sup> Mayor Salisbury

Cllr John Wells transferred the ceremonial Chain of Office from himself to Cllr Jenny Bolwell.

Upon election Cllr Bolwell made the formal Declaration of Office and signed the Book of Acceptance.

Cllr Rogers gave a few words regarding the incoming Mayor.

## **2. Apologies:**

Cllrs M Brown, S Charleston, B Dalton, J Nettle, P Podger, S Rideout, E Rimmer and C Taylor gave their apologies.

## **3. Public Questions/Statement Time:**

There were no questions or statements submitted by members of the public.

## **4. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:**

There were no questions or statements submitted by councillors.

## **5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the last Annual meeting of the Full Council held on 10 May 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **6. Declarations of Interest:**

No declarations of interest were received.

## **7. Dispensations:**

No dispensations were requested.

## **8. Retiring Chair's Announcements:**

The Mayor, Cllr Bolwell, invited the retiring Mayor, Cllr Wells, to make a speech reflecting on his year as Mayor (a full copy of the Retiring Chair's Announcements is attached at Annex B).

## **9. Chair's Announcements:**

The newly elected Mayor, Cllr Bolwell, delivered her speech of acceptance of office (a full copy of the Chair's Announcements is attached at Annex C).

On conclusion the Mayor invited the previous Mayoress, Josephine Wells, and the new Consort, Tom Corbin, forward to the dais for the transfer of the Ceremonial Chain.

#### **10. The Election of the Deputy Mayor for 2026-27**

The Mayor, Cllr Bolwell, called for nominations for Deputy Mayor of the City of Salisbury, and Vice Chair of the Council, for 2026-2027.

**Proposal: That Cllr Victoria Charleston be elected to be Deputy Mayor for 2026-27.**

There were no further nominations.

**Proposed:** Cllr P Sample

**Seconded:** Cllr A Suddards

A vote was taken, and it was:

**Resolved that:**

10.1 Cllr Victoria Charleston be elected to be Deputy Mayor for 2026-27.

The ceremonial Chain of Office was transferred from Cllr Alan Bayliss to Cllr Victoria Charleston.

Upon election Cllr V Charleston made the formal Declaration of Office and signed the Book of Acceptance.

#### **11. Urgent Matters (if any) which by reason of special circumstances the Chair, decides should be considered as a matter of urgency:**

There were no matters considered under this item.

#### **Presentations**

At the end of the formal business presentations were made to the retiring Mayor.

The Chief Executive Officer concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and contribution to the day's proceedings (a copy of the full version is at Annex D).

The Revd Canon Dr Tom Clammer OC led everyone in closing prayers.

Everyone remained in their places until invited to leave by the Parade Marshall and church stewards, to join the procession back to the Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 12.35pm

## **Annexe A – Chief Executive Opening Remarks**

Dear Distinguished and Honoured guests, Mr Mayor, and Councillors,

Welcome to this meeting to formally elect the 765th Mayor of the City of Salisbury. My thanks to the team here at St Thomas's church for their hospitality and support in presenting today's Annual meeting of Full Council. How lucky are we to meet in these beautiful surrounds.

Our city is a special place to grow up. To grow old. A great place to invest. To do business. To visit and increasingly to study.

It is days like today that remind us all of the rich traditions and celebrations of civic duty which span the centuries. On behalf of Salisbury City Council, I thank you for the giving up of your time to witness and to be a part of this special 765th inauguration.

Housekeeping formalities are, somewhat surprisingly, that there are no practices or drills set for today's events. If you see me running, do try to keep up!

Seriously, in the event of any inconvenience, please do get the attention of one of the experienced church wardens or the civic officers (with their blue lanyards). I am certain they will be happy to assist.

The meeting will follow the format as laid out in the Order of Proceedings.

## **Annexe B – Retiring Mayor’s Announcement**

I am going to begin by congratulating Cllr Bolwell on her well-deserved appointment as the 765<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Salisbury. Jenny has worked extremely hard for the residents in her ward for a very long time, and long before her election as a Salisbury City Councillor in 2021.

My year as Mayor has flown by at an alarming rate. It began with a flurry of activity early in May last year. I had exactly seven days from the announcement of the of the outcome of the local elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, to Mayor Making here on 9<sup>th</sup> May, to prepare for the year ahead.

The pace of life accelerated at an astonishing rate and at no point during the year there did it even look likely to slow down. I have had very little time to pause and reflect in any great depth, on the truly remarkable experience of being Mayor of our City. In terms of summing up the past 12 months, it took me a while to decide where to begin, but first I would like to acknowledge the support I have received throughout the year.

I am extremely grateful to my wife Jo for all her time and energy in combining her duties as Mayoress with her responsibilities as a primary teacher, and her patience in adjusting, without complaint, to the domestic upheaval caused by the demands on my time.

Salisbury City Council Corporate Services, and Beth George in particular, have worked hard to ensure I was briefed and well prepared for civic events. Managing my diary has been a challenging experience for all concerned! Throughout the year Charlotte Eardley did an excellent job publicising my activities with her photography and updating my Mayor’s Facebook page.

I would also like to thank Mayoral Scout Helen and Mayoral Guide Lottie for fulfilling their duties in significant civic events throughout the year.

In my Mayor Making speech last May I said I was “... looking forward to meeting people from a wide range of backgrounds and a variety of organisations associated with our city...” and made a pledge to “... devote much of my time and energy to raising public awareness of the value various groups and individuals and celebrating their achievements and positive impact on our community by attending events throughout the year...”

It is not however, the volume of events and engagements which made my year such a rewarding experience, but their diversity. I have been asked recently what have been the ‘highlights’ of my year. Not an easy question to answer in a year full of highlights.

Without doubt the most moving experience came in November when I was invited to attend and participate in the Light up a Life an annual service held at St. Thomas’s Church organised by the Salisbury Hospice Charity. The entire congregation were invited to come forward to place a lighted candle on the altar in memory of their loved ones while the Kate Edgars Singers sang a selection of carols.

Early in my year in office, I attended several Scouts events, and my feedback on each occasion was that “...this organisation brings out the best in our young people...” They certainly pulled out all the stops in their Christmas Panto!

I have been overwhelmed by how much time, energy and care Salisbury residents provide to enhance the lives of others. I am not going to attempt to list them all, but I am proud to be part of a community with so many kind, generous, and unselfish people. Their valuable contribution often goes unnoticed by most of us, but I can assure you their efforts have a huge positive impact on the well-being of our community

The vast range of my experiences this year in a relatively short time, have provided an enormous depth and breadth of knowledge and a strong understanding of the strengths of our community. That knowledge and understanding will certainly help me work more effectively as a local councillor over the next three years.

I have already referred to the contribution of the Salisbury City Council Corporate Team, but I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise how successfully Officers have struck a good balance between innovation and maintaining tradition and cultural identity going back hundreds of years.

My Mayor's charity this year was Alabare, and with the support of family and friends have raised just over £3,500 through various events, including The Sleep Out at Stonehenge in November, and completing 10-mile road races in Wimborne and Salisbury.

Looking beyond our city, I am pleased to have maintained links with our twinning associations in Saintes in France, Xanten in Germany and Salisbury, North Carolina in the USA, but also to have been instrumental in initiating the formal twinning process with Nivelles in Belgium following my invitation and visit to the city in the autumn. Nivelles is similar in many ways to our city and would offer numerous opportunities to develop cultural and youth group links in the coming years. Nivelles, as a consequence of being twinned with Xanten and Saintes, would also create a group of four communities thus attracting substantial additional EU funding to support that process.

This week I could not have wished for two more appropriate civic events to mark the end of my term of office, bringing into focus my passion for maintaining Salisbury's long-established traditions and the pressing need to play our part in reducing the damaging impact of human activity on our environment.

On Thursday I welcomed a group of dedicated followers on an eco-pilgrimage bringing the Coat of Hopes to our city, a journey which began five years ago en route to COP 26 and so far have walked a total 2,294 miles!

The coat itself consists of over 700 individual patches and is in the city in the until 16<sup>th</sup> May when it will appear at the People in the Park event in Queen Elizabeth Gardens. The pilgrimage is intended to remind us that solutions depend on collective effort and people feeling they have a part to play.

Yesterday I attended the Royal British Legion remembrance ceremony to mark the 81<sup>st</sup> anniversary of VE Day in the Market Square. We gathered to honour those who sacrificed their lives in the conflict not only with a ceremony, but with our dedication to the values they defended: freedom, democracy, and unity.

Those two days were a reminder of how important it is to look back to remember and acknowledge what came before, and simultaneously look forward, with a sense of purpose and optimism to the future.

## **Annexe C – Newly Elected Mayor’s Speech**

I stand here today with a sense of pride, disbelief, and no small amount of gratitude. I wasn’t the obvious candidate for this moment. I went to La Retraite Convent School, left home at 16, and if there was a wrong decision to be made back then, I probably made it. So, if you had told that version of me that one day I would stand here as the 765th Mayor of Salisbury, I wouldn’t have believed you

And yet, here I am.

Truthfully, I might not even have become a councillor if it weren’t for Cllr Rogers asking me to stand alongside him. So, Ricky - this is on you!

When I look around this church today, I feel deeply honoured. Not just because of the title, but because of what it represents: trust, community, and the chance to give something back.

I want to thank Reverend Kevin Martin of St Michael’s Church for agreeing to be my Chaplain for the year. I can’t promise I’ll behave, but it’s certainly one way of making sure I attend church a bit more often.

## **Annexe D – Chief Executive Officer Closing Remarks**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you all for being here today and for your thoughtful presence throughout this occasion. Your support and participation are sincerely appreciated.

We are fortunate to gather in Salisbury, a city with a proud civic and historic tradition. Salisbury is a city shaped by centuries of history but very much focused on its future. That future will be especially significant next year as we mark Salisbury 800; a milestone celebration of the city's heritage and identity. I encourage everyone to follow updates from Salisbury City Council for information on how to best become involved – whether rumours of a special book, a concert or even tree planting!

As we leave today, let us carry forward a sense of pride in our city and appreciation for the community we share.

And, as we close, may I kindly ask that you remain seated until the civic party has exited.

Churchwardens will then guide you out in an orderly manner. Thank you for your cooperation in maintaining the dignity of this occasion.

Thank you once again for your presence and your support.