



# Macclesfield Town Council Full Council

## Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7pm at Macclesfield Town Hall.

### **In Attendance:**

Cllr Emma Gilman  
Cllr James Barber-Chadwick  
Cllr Sarah Bennett-Wake  
Cllr David Edwardes  
Cllr Sam Hale  
Cllr Alift Harewood  
Cllr Mike Hutchison  
Cllr Sandy Livingstone  
Cllr Ruth Thompson  
Cllr Mick Warren  
Cllr Chris Wilcock  
Cllr Fiona Wilson

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Sarah Bennett-Wake declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7.2 as a Trustee of CAB.

Cllr James Barber-Chadwick declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7.3 as a Trustee of the Silk Trust.

### **Public Questions**

The meeting was adjourned to invite comments and questions from the public.

CEC Councillor, Brian Puddicombe reported that a second FA Cup tie against Premier League opposition had recently taken place at the Leasing.com Stadium in his ward. Macclesfield lost 1–0 but put in a strong performance. Attendance of around 5,300 created logistical challenges for the club, police and council, and Councillor Puddicombe thanked Inspector Haque and his team for ensuring the event ran smoothly. He noted the matches had also benefited the local economy.

He raised concerns from nearby residents about dangerous or illegal parking on match days and thanked police for their enforcement where possible. Councillor Puddicombe added that Councillor Wilson would raise the issue of additional traffic signage and thanked PC James Jardine for his assistance. He concluded that the club's success was welcome but should not come at the expense of local residents.

The meeting was then reconvened.

### **3 Minutes of the Full Council Meetings**

#### **3.1 15<sup>th</sup> December 2026**

#### **3.2 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026**

**Resolved:** The minutes were approved.

### **4 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

**Resolved:** There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### **5 Planning Committee**

#### **5.1 Planning Committee Minutes 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

#### **5.2 Planning Committee Minutes 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

The minutes were noted.

#### **5.3 Matters arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### **6 Finance Committee**

#### **6.1 Finance Committee 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

The minutes were noted.

#### **6.2 Matters arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes

#### **6.3** The spend to date of £788,193 as approved by the Finance Committee 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 was approved.

## 7 Community Delivery

### 7.1 Local Police Unit

Inspector Richard Haque provided an update on policing activity in Macclesfield. He reported that Cheshire Police is currently the number one performing in the country for charging and summoning offenders. There have been 166 reported crimes, with a 37.95% detection rate in Macclesfield, compared to approximately 22% in Crewe. Domestic abuse remains a force priority, with 25% of offenders brought to justice in Macclesfield compared to 20% in Crewe.

In terms of response times, Grade 1 incidents, which involve an immediate threat to life, have a target attendance time of 15 minutes, with 93.7% achieved within this timeframe. Grade 2 incidents, where there is no immediate threat to life, have a 60-minute target, with 84.9% achieved.

During Operation Guardians, a week-long safeguarding initiative focused on children and vulnerable people, there were two arrests for domestic violence, visits to Yew Tree Children's Home, engagement at Marlborough School regarding parking enforcement, and patrols in park hotspot areas.

Police continue to tackle County Lines activity and child exploitation, with two arrests in the town centre relating to drug use and a 15-year-old arrested in possession of a knife, with preventative work ongoing. Counterfeit currency has also been identified as a regional issue, with two arrests made locally.

A Retail Business Week of Action resulted in several drug warrants, including drugs posted from overseas, and three arrests relating to counterfeit notes. Housing partners are pursuing evictions linked to criminal activity. A warrant at the Stanley Arms also resulted in an arrest relating to an illegal immigrant.

Future activity includes the Hot Watch initiative, plain-clothes officers targeting shoplifters and transient offenders, and the "Jog On" campaign to improve safety for women and girls while running. Officers are also being encouraged to visit the Indoor Market during patrols to support businesses and maintain a visible presence.

A Community Protection Order is being pursued in relation to a persistent beggar operating in the town centre who travels from Wolverhampton.

Cllr Fiona Wilson thanked Inspector Haque for his update. She welcomed the work being undertaken on parking enforcement and noted that Macclesfield was fortunate to have the football club, but that parking around the ground continued to be a significant issue on match days. In particular she thanked PC Jardine, who was there on Saturday, and is looking to get for the parking notices that have been introduced in Crewe and Wilmslow.

Cllr Wilson also thanked PC Jardine, who had been present on Saturday, and PCSO Newns for work being undertaken around Fir Grove in relation to school parking. She reported that residents were increasingly frustrated and angry about parking around the football club and expressed concern that tensions could escalate. She suggested meeting more regularly to discuss the issue and

proposed exploring the possibility of a park and ride scheme from Macclesfield Academy to the football club to help alleviate parking pressures. She also said that that signage about parking had been requested, similar to that installed in Crewe and Wilmslow, and that they were looking to get it implemented along with PC Jardine.

Cllr James Barber-Chadwick asked about concerns raised by residents of Churchside regarding anti-social behaviour in the area, particularly around Sparrow Park, and queried whether CCTV and police systems were properly joined up. Inspector Haque confirmed that CCTV should be integrated and working alongside police activity and that activity should have gotten better recently with possible offenders having been moved on from the area.

Cllr Sarah Bennett-Wake asked for an update regarding the return of the PC for Hursdfield.

Cllr David Edwardes stated that for the past six years he had been requesting mobile phone contact numbers for PCSOs to allow councillors to raise issues more easily. He also raised concerns about parking enforcement outside schools, reporting that when residents approach traffic enforcement they are directed to the police, and when they approach the police they are referred back to traffic enforcement. It was suggested that enforcement action should be taken rather than simply advising drivers.

The Mayor, Cllr Emma Gilman, thanked Inspector Haque for the update and noted that parking was a problem across many areas. She also praised PC Jardine for the work being undertaken and his commitment.

## **7.2 CAB**

Will McKellar from Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) reported that the period around Christmas often sees a reduction in numbers, however 751 clients were seen, presenting around 1,700 different problems, with £620,000 in income maximised for residents.

Case studies were shared to illustrate the type of support provided, including assistance with a neighbour dispute, which is not commonly seen, alongside more typical issues such as cost of living pressures and benefit support.

Cllr Sarah Bennett-Wake thanked Will for the report and asked what the main housing issues were. Will explained that the key challenges are access to affordable housing and housing disrepair, with young people in particular struggling to move into suitable accommodation due to a lack of available housing.

Cllr Sandy Livingstone added that there is a significant shortage of suitable housing, making the support provided to residents particularly important.

The Mayor, Cllr Emma Gilman, thanked Will and the wider Citizens Advice Bureau stating that their work is highly valued.

### **7.3 Silk Museum**

Hannah Williamson attended the meeting, with the Vice Chair offering apologies on behalf of Clare Harding, Director of the Museum. Hannah reported a positive quarter, with visitor numbers up 9% year-on-year and a trebling of visitors to Paradise Mill in January. The Museum Tots programme is thriving. Volunteer numbers have grown, with total hours contributed doubling. The museum has successfully completed a year of Weaver residents programme and is now planning how to continue this craft initiative. New POS and ticketing machines have been installed, and investment has been made in the Sunday School building, including increased security. Three new young trustees and a new QS and account trustee have joined.

The Elmer Trail and Santa visits gave a significant boost, generating a 53% increase in footfall. The museum continues to support events such as the Lantern Festival and Lunar New Year and is also focusing on engaging new target groups through partnerships, including the Silk Triangle initiative. Hannah highlighted that its Women's History month and there is a range of activities many which are free taking place. Upcoming events include a series of workshops focusing on the Bayeux Tapestry as they are the British Museum regional partner. Hannah thanked the Town Council for their ongoing support.

Cllr Sarah Bennett-Wake thanked Hannah, noting she was impressed with footfall figures and collaboration with the museum.

Cllr David. Edwardes asked whether the museum had considered introducing a rover ticket; Hannah confirmed this will be developed in partnership with Leek and Congleton museums.

### **7.4 CCTV**

There was no speaker from CCTV, the Mayor and clerk will arrange a meeting.

### **7.5 Library / VIC**

Vicky Bailey, Library Manager, reported on the first year of a formalised relationship with the Town Council, noting that it had been beneficial and helped strengthen connections. This year's programme focused on culture and creativity, including a company called Illuminate offering activities for children over six weeks and then with young adults for another 6 weeks. This will result in an exhibition in the Indoor Market. Cheshire All Touring Arts will present three shows starting with one in April. The team is making use of the theatre area and other spaces within the library, and three banks are now operating on site. The visitor information centre has also been very useful, and they are working on formalising the relationship with the sellers to ensure the service generates some income.

The VIC receives 10–25 enquiries daily about transport, walks, visitor attractions, dining, and accommodation. Library figures remain strong, with

250 new borrowers, an 8% increase on last year, and additional funding has supported extra activities.

Cllr Sarah Bennett-Wake thanked Vicky for the update.

Cllr Sandy Livingstone also expressed thanks, highlighting that the library is very welcoming, acts as a great community hub, and supports children's education.

Cllr David Edwardes asked about the banking services; Vicky confirmed that Barclays operates three days per week, Lloyds and Halifax one day each, and Santander will operate one day per week, maximising use of the space.

## **8 Governance Review**

### **8.1 Ward Budget Guidance**

### **8.2 Mayors Civic Awards Policy**

**Resolved:** The policies were approved.

## **9 Meeting Schedule**

**Resolved:** The meeting schedule was approved.

## **10 Parks and Play Areas**

The Clerk will return to CEC to determine whether any additional funding or Section 106 (S106) monies can be allocated to these projects.

Councillors representing the wards in which these parks are located will review the park proposals and provide feedback or suggestions to the Clerk.

## **11 Community Buses**

**Resolved:** The proposals in the report was approved as follows:

- The Council continues to deliver Free-to-Ride Bus Days for the same events as in 2025.
- Officers actively explore sponsorship opportunities
- A structured sponsorship approach be developed, offering local businesses visibility through event marketing and promotional materials.

## **12 Strategic Plan Update**

The report was noted.

## **13 South Park Pavilion Update Report for Council**

**Resolved:** The proposals in the report were approved as follows:

- Approves the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced Project Manager for the Pavilion Project.
- Delegates responsibility for recruitment and selection of the Project Management Consultancy to the SP Pavilion Working Group, with the Clerk providing support and assistance throughout the process.
- Approves the appointment of a Mechanical and Electrical Designer at an estimated cost of £23,500, as recommended by Bower Mattin Design Team.
- Approves the appointment of a Commercial Solicitor at an estimated cost of £8,000 to review and finalise construction contract documentation.

#### **14 Public Art Trail**

**Resolved:** The proposal for an art trail during the festive season was approved as recommended by the Services Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026.

#### **15 Date/Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Full Council will be held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at the Town Hall.

Chair: Cllr Emma Gilman

Clerk: Laura Smith

Meeting Closed 8:40pm