

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the hybrid meeting of the General Purposes Committee, held on Monday 15th September, 2025.

PRESENT: Councillor M. Buckley (in the Chair).

Councillors: D. Challenger, N. Davies, R. Davies, C. Griffiths, M. Hanson, E. Jones, M. Moore, M. Perfect, V Perfect, I. Roberts, J. Stoneley and M. Whittaker.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors P. Cunningham and D. Jones.

IN ATTENDANCE: L. Wood, Town Clerk and N. Thornton, Support Officer.

93. PUBLIC ENQUIRY ITEM

There were no public enquiry items.

94. DECLARATION OF INTEREST – MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations of interest.

95. MINUTES

Councillor E. Jones proposed the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21st July 2025 and the minutes of the special meeting held on Monday 8th September be approved, which was seconded by Councillor J. Stoneley.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21st July 2025 and the minutes of the special meeting held on Monday 8th September be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

96. FLINT FESTIVAL & TOWN EVENTS

The Clerk circulated a report detailing the proposed expenditure and income for the Festive Fair and the Festival 2026. This enabled Councillors to make informed decisions relating to the authorisation and approval of bookings and payments for the town events. The Clerk also provided details of the Council's current General Fund and explained that, as the Festival expenditure falls within the 2026/27 financial year, this may have implications on future budget planning.

With regard to the Festival - Rock the Castle security services and staging/lighting, the Clerk reported that only one quotation for each had been obtained due to the limited number of local providers. The companies proposed for use is trusted, reliable, and has a strong knowledge of the location. As Financial Regulations require three quotations for contracts over £5,000, the Clerk sought the Council's approval to accept these single quotation and agree to proceed contrary to the Financial Regulations in this instance.

Councillor M. Perfect stated that the Festival will be bigger and better, with innovative approaches being taken to help reduce costs and enable funds to be given back to the community. She further noted that Flint's Christmas lights are the envy of many towns, and therefore proposed that the Council accepts the costs for both the Festival 2026 and the

Festive Fair, and also proposed that the Council accepts the single quotation for security services. This proposal was seconded by Councillor M. Hanson.

RESOLVED: That the Council approves the proposed expenditure for the Festival 2026 and the Festive Fair, and agrees to accept the single quotations for Rock the Castle security services and staging and lighting services.

97. TRANSPORT BRIEFING

Councillor N. Davies reported that transport surveys were carried out on Thursday 31st July 2025, travelling from Flint to Shrewsbury and Birmingham and returning on two occasions. Passengers were spoken to on the trains to gain their views on the service provided by Transport for Wales. The survey results will be considered by TfW, who aim to address the issues raised. Free tickets for the train journey were provided by Ms. G. Jones, TfW Community Stakeholder and Engagement Manager.

Passenger numbers were found to be around 25–30% lower than last year, raising concerns over reduced commuter and tourist usage which TfW should examine.

Key issues highlighted included:

Ongoing need for more than two carriages on the North Wales line.

Trains failing to stop at intermediate stations, causing inconvenience to passengers.

Poor connections with ferry services leading to missed sailings.

Ongoing car parking difficulties for commuters.

Excessive gaps/steps between some platforms and trains.

Lack of bus/rail connectivity in Flint, leaving passengers stranded.

Positive feedback was noted regarding customer service and the efficiency of passenger assistance.

The next passenger surveys will take place in spring 2026.

Councillor M. Whittaker asked whether discussions were continuing regarding historic rail fares being higher in the North compared to the South. Councillor N. Davies confirmed that she would raise this matter at the next Transport Meeting.

Councillor M. Hanson noted that fewer people are now using rail services for commuting, which is likely due to TfW and Avanti frequently cancelling services. In particular, TfW often cancels the last train home from Chester, leaving passengers stranded. She also highlighted the disparity in fares between TfW and Avanti, with Avanti services costing around £3.50 more and commented that, on a daily basis could severely impact the income of someone on the minimum wage.

The Chair, Councillor M. Buckley, reminded Members that if they have any concerns relating to these matters, they should bring their comments to this Committee so that Councillor N. Davies can raise them at the Transport Meeting.

RESOLVED: The report is noted and that Councillor N. Davies will take issues raised to the next Transport Meeting.

98. GRIT BINS

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors that this item had been placed on the agenda to allow sufficient time for any requests for grit bins ahead of installation for the winter months.

Following discussion, no requests for additional grit bins were made.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted no requests for grit bins at this time.

99. REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The Town Clerk reported that Flintshire County Council had requested details of the Remembrance Parade and following the disaffiliation of the local Legion branch from the Royal British Legion, the Council has now been asked to take over the planning of the Remembrance Service, including responsibility for all associated costs. A financial report was circulated to seek authorisation for the booking and payment of the relevant services.

Councillor E. Jones suggested a proposed parade route and provided context as to why these changes were necessary. She also confirmed that she had previously spoken with the Town Clerk regarding the need for invitations to be sent to guests and for all parties to be informed of the new arrangements.

Councillor I. Roberts noted that the event is held in high esteem and discussed options for both the Service and the Reception. He proposed that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Town Clerk meet to discuss and plan all arrangements for this years' service and report back to the next meeting. This was seconded by Councillor J. Stoneley.

RESOLVED: That the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Town Clerk meet to consider all arrangements for the Remembrance Service and Reception, and report back to the next Council meeting, and that the financial report circulated be approved to allow the relevant bookings and payments to be made.

100. SILENT SOLIDER SILHOUETTES

The Town Clerk reported that the Silent Soldier silhouettes, which the Council had displayed for many years, were now no longer fit for purpose. Quotations had been sought from both the Royal British Legion shop and a local company, and the costs were circulated for consideration.

Councillor M. Buckley proposed that the new Silent Soldier silhouettes be purchased from the Royal British Legion. This was seconded by Councillor M. Perfect.

RESOLVED: That the Council approves the purchase of Silent Soldier silhouettes from the Royal British Legion.

101. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Town Clerk reported that the Christmas light contractor had raised health and safety concerns regarding the "Welcome to Flint" light display across the road. It is proposed that a heavy-duty pole be installed in the middle reservation of the road to support the weight of the display. The associated costs were circulated, however installation is subject to authorisation by Flintshire County Council. The Town Clerk requested that the Council

approve the costs pending the County Council's decision, as installation will need to proceed promptly once approval is received.

Councillor M. Perfect proposed that the Council accepts the proposal and associated costs, but requests that the pole be in keeping with the existing street furniture. This was seconded by Councillor M. Hanson.

RESOLVED: That the Council approves the costs for the installation of the heavy-duty pole for the "Welcome to Flint" Christmas light display, pending authorisation from Flintshire County Council, and requests that the pole design is in keeping with existing street furniture.

102. CHAINS OF OFFICE

Councillor R. Davies expressed how fortunate both he and Councillor N. Davies felt to wear the Mayor and Mayoress chains of office. He suggested that a possible future improvement could be to provide a velour backing to the Mayoress Chain.

Councillor R. Davies also noted that the Consort Chain is very basic in comparison to the Mayoress chain, being a small badge and a simple blue ribbon rather than a chain. He observed that the Mayoress Chain could now be considered outdated and gender-specific. He proposed that the Council consider having one Consort Chain that is gender inclusive. He acknowledged that, in the current financial climate, the cost of a new chain would be too high to fund in a single year and suggested that the Council start to earmark funds annually until sufficient resources are available to upgrade the Consort Chain.

Councillor I. Roberts emphasised the historic value of the current chains, which were donated to the Council many years ago. He suggested that the current badge would be more appropriately replaced with the town crest or the Castle by the Water, as displayed on the dais. However, he confirmed that he did not support the proposal.

Councillor M. Perfect noted she also had the honour of wearing the chains of office and suggested that the Mayoress and Consort Chains could be retired, as they are very delicate, in order to preserve them for historical purposes.

Councillor M. Hanson stated that, given the current financial climate, she could not support the proposal.

Councillor N. Davies expressed pride in wearing the Mayoral and Mayoress Chains. She emphasised that the purpose of Councillor R. Davies' report was to highlight that the Consort Chain is small and unequal in appearance to the other chains. She opposed comments made by other Councillors that she felt misrepresented the recommendation by Councillor R. Davies, which she considered positive.

Note: Councillor M. Perfect left the meeting.

Councillor R. Davies reiterated his pride in wearing the chain of office and noted that he regularly speaks about the chains when attending events and visiting neighbouring towns. He requested that comments misrepresenting his proposal be withdrawn. He explained that the Consort badge is currently on a worn ribbon and is not fit to represent the town of Flint. He reiterated that the proposal was not to spend a large sum immediately, but to contribute annually to a reserve fund to enable a future upgrade.

Councillor V. Perfect noted that all chains of office represent historic times and hold historic value.

Councillor I. Roberts commented that the Francis Carrington chain is the working chain and should be worn for events, while the Muspratt chain should be reserved for limited occasions to preserve its value. The Town Clerk added that she had been informed by both past and current Council Leaders that the Francis Carrington chain was only worn by the Mayor in October and November; however, this policy had recently been changed.

Councillor N. Davies seconded Councillor R. Davies' proposal. A vote was taken, but the majority voted against, therefore proposal did not carry.

RESOLVED: That the Council notes the discussion regarding the chains of office and that no further action will be taken at this time.

103. WELSH WATER

Councillor M. Buckley raised this item following the recent burst water main that affected the majority of residents in Flint. She reported that a water station had been set up at Jade Jones Pavilion, however many priority customers did not receive water. She stressed that the priority customer list should be reviewed and updated to ensure all those in need are reached in future incidents and further noted that where water was delivered, it was often left on doorsteps, which caused difficulties for residents unable to carry it into their homes. She emphasised that assistance should be provided to those who require it.

Councillor I. Roberts added that Welsh Water have serious questions to answer. He expressed concern that a burst water main in Broughton could cause such significant issues in Flint. He reported that Flintshire County Council had been required to turn off the water supply at the tower blocks, as when the burst was repaired there was a risk of a water surge causing further bursts and flooding. He suggested that a Welsh Water representative be invited to attend a Council meeting to explain their contingency plans for ensuring water supplies in future emergencies.

Councillor N. Davies expressed thanks to residents who had supported others during the incident. She further suggested that a letter be sent to Flintshire County Council to ask about their contingency arrangements for ensuring disabled and infirm residents can access water during such events.

Councillor M. Moore proposed that all the above suggestions be actioned. This was seconded by Councillor R. Davies.

RESOLVED: That the Council writes to Welsh Water requesting that a representative attend a future Council meeting to address contingency planning; that a letter be sent to Flintshire County Council seeking clarification on their arrangements for supporting vulnerable residents; and that thanks be recorded to Flint residents who assisted others during the recent water supply disruption.

104. NO ENTRY SIGN OPPOSITE MCDONALDS

Councillor M. Moore, referring to a previous report, raised ongoing concerns regarding vehicles exiting McDonald's and turning right across the A548 towards Flint town centre. He proposed that a No Entry sign be installed to prevent this.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor M. Buckley.

RESOLVED: That a letter be sent to Flintshire County Council requesting the installation of a No Entry sign at McDonalds.

Date of Council Meeting	Monday 15th September, 2025
..... Chair	