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# COUNCIL

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**Thursday, 26th March, 2026**

**Present:** Councillor Josh Allen (Mayor), Councillors Judith Addison, Vanessa Alexander, Heather Anderson, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Danny Cassidy, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Bernard Dawson MBE, Stewart Eaves, Peter Edwards, Melissa Fisher, Andy Gilbert, David Heap, Zak Khan, Clare McKenna, Dave Parkins, Joyce Plummer, Clare Pritchard, Steven Smithson, Kate Walsh, Kimberley Whitehead, Clare Yates and Mohammed Younis

**Apologies:** Councillors Stephen Button, Shabir Fazal OBE, Kath Pratt, Ethan Rawcliffe and Tina Walker

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## **374 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Stephen Button, Shabir Fazal OBE, Kath Pratt, Ethan Rawcliffe and Tina Walker. It was also reported that Councillor Noordad Aziz would miss the start of the meeting due to travel issues. Councillor Aziz arrived shortly thereafter.

## **375 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Councillors Judith Addison and Dave Parkins indicated a potential conflict of interest in respect of Recommendation 2.1 of the report at Agenda Item 3 in relation to the appointment of Freeman, in the light of their own nominations for this award. They undertook not to vote on this Recommendation.

There were no formal declarations of interest or declarations of dispensations submitted.

## **376 Appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Freeman**

Members considered a report of Jane Ellis, Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services), seeking approval to the appointment of new Aldermen and Freeman of the Borough for 2026 in respect of the following individuals:

### Freemen

- Judith Addison
- Pam Barton (*deceased*)
- Anne Ellwood
- Saeeda Farooq
- Barbara Fielding
- Marlene Haworth (*deceased*)
- Gwen Mayor (*deceased*)
- Dave Parkins
- Tracy Simmonds
- Mohammed Yaseen

## Aldermen

- June Harrison
- Susan Haworth
- Dorothy Westell

The report set out the following information

## Freemen Appointments

To qualify for appointment as a Freeman the proposed recipient would have to be:

- (a) persons of distinction, or
- (b) persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.

The individuals proposed were notable as follows:

### ***Judith Addison***

Judith had served Hyndburn Council for many years, first as a Local Land Charges Officer for over 28 years and then in her role as councillor, in which she was in her 16<sup>th</sup> year of service. Judith had served as Mayor in 2013 to 2014 and Mayoress in 2021 and 2022. In addition, Judith had served as a trustee of numerous charities, was a school governor and was a Licenced Lay Reader in Oswaldtwistle.

Judith had a wealth of knowledge, which she was always happy to share with those in need and consistently sought to help others with problems big and small.

### ***Pam Barton (Deceased – May 2015)***

Pam had served as a councillor for the Spring Hill ward for nearly 2 decades and had been passionate about serving her residents. Pam had been a friend to all and an ambassador for her community, fighting for local services such as the Accrington Victoria Walk-In Centre.

Pam had been appointed as the Mayor of Hyndburn in 2008 – 2009 and had raised a total of £23,275.00 during her mayoral year, which had been donated to MacMillan Cancer Support, Derian House and East Lancs Hospice.

### ***Anne Ellwood***

Anne had been a trustee for the Accrington Stanley Community Trust for 9 years and was now an Ambassador of the Trust. With 30 years working in sports, community development and leadership, Anne had played a key role in establishing major initiatives including Cancer Research UK's Race for Life, with the first 5k event held at Witton Country Park.

Anne had been the first woman in the North West to qualify as a Level 2 football coach, helping to break down barriers within the game and she continued to advocate for women's and girls' football.

### ***Saeeda Farooq***

Saeeda had established Aawaz in 1998. Located in Central Ward, Saeeda's vision had been to support women in her local community to feel valued and recognise their vital role in the lives of their families.

Aawaz, meaning Voice in Urdu, now supported Asian women across Lancashire and Nationally. Aawaz engaged with over 300 women every week and had subgroups in Preston, Lancaster and Pendle.

Saeeda's work through Aawaz had resulted in numerous successful projects such as Young Aawaz, which aimed to empower young women, and Mothering Earth which worked with Prospects to emphasise the importance of growing local food.

### ***Barbara Fielding***

Barbara had won World, European and British titles in archery and had broken countless records over the years.

Barbara was a passionate teacher and mentor to the next generation of archers and had supported many into the world of archery, including British Champions. Dedicating her own time and resources, Barbara's passion could be seen through her commitments to the sport.

### ***Marlene Haworth (Deceased – February 2026)***

Marlene had dedicated nearly 2 decades to serving St Oswald's Ward as a councillor. She had been the Leader of the Conservative party from 2020 – 2024 and the first Female Leader of the Council in 2023 – 2024. Marlene had been appointed as the Mayor of Hyndburn in 2015 – 2016.

Marlene dedicated herself to her residents and had left a lasting legacy.

### ***Gwen Mayor (Deceased – March 1996)***

Teacher Gwen had given her life trying to protect the children under her care during the Dunblane Massacre. The Gwen Mayor Memorial Trust now continued to recognise her bravery and carried on her work with children, by providing financial support for projects in connection with the arts, culture, music or sport. Gwen had been a passionate and dedicated educator, who had truly been committed to providing the very best for the pupils with whom she worked.

Gwen had also received the Elizabeth Emblem in 2025, recognising her heroic public service.

### ***Dave Parkins***

Dave had served as a councillor for more than 27 years. First elected in 1994, he had served Huncoat continuously for 2 decades, before returning for additional terms in 2018 and 2023. He had been appointed as the Mayor of Hyndburn in 2001 – 2002. Dave was a dedicated community representative who went above and beyond for his residents.

### ***Tracy Simmonds***

Tracy had launched Acorn Community News in 2011, showcasing local businesses, promoting charities and bringing awareness to local organisations.

Tracy had been one of the founders of the Hyndburn Heritage Museum, had been the President of Accrington Lions Charity twice and had taken an active role in helping local organisations to fundraise and secure sponsorships.

### ***Mohammed Yaseen***

Mohammed had worked to improve the health and wellbeing of Hyndburn Residents for over 40 years, working with numerous voluntary and community groups. A founding member and chairperson of the Hyndburn Black and Minority Ethnic Forum (BMEF), Mohammed had helped to build better community relations across the Borough.

Mohammed was a Chairperson of Scaitcliffe Community Centre, which had been serving local residents since 2001.

### Aldermen Appointments

To qualify for appointment as an Aldermen the proposed recipient must have rendered eminent services to the Council as a past member of the Council, but must not currently be a member of the Council (section 249(1) Local Government Act 1972).

Additional guidance as to eligibility was provided in the Civic Protocol, including the following:

- 12 years' service.
- Consideration would be given to members not having 12 years' service but who had, during their years of office, held the title of Mayor, Mayoress, Consort, Leader of the Council or Leader of an Opposition group (providing the latter office had been held for three years or more).

The proposed recipients June Harrison, Susan Haworth and Dorothy Westell, all had lengthy and distinguished former service with the Council and/or were former Mayors or Mayoresses of the Borough. As such, they were all considered to meet the eligibility criteria.

### Voting Requirements

The legislation required that a principal council might, by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members voting thereon at a meeting of the council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, confer the honours as set out above.

The Mayor and Councillors Zak Khan, Noordad Aziz, Clare Pritchard, Andy Gilbert, Melissa Fisher, Mohammed Younis spoke in support of various nominees for the honour of Freeman of the Borough.

Councillors Munsif Dad, Zak Khan, Joyce Plummer, Clare Pritchard, spoke in support of various nominees for the honour of Aldermen.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That in accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972: Judith Addison, Pam Barton, Anne Ellwood, Saeeda Farooq, Barbara Fielding, Marlene Haworth, Gwen Mayor, Dave Parkins, Tracy Simmonds and Mohammed Yaseen be conferred with the title of Honorary Freeman of the Borough and be presented with the award at the**

**Mayor Making Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2026, or should that not prove possible due to the unavailability of the recipients or their representative, at some stage during the remainder of the Municipal Year 2026/27.**

- (2) That in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council appoints the following as Aldermen: June Harrison, Susan Haworth and Dorothy Westell with the formal presentation to be made at the Mayor Making Council on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2026, or should that not prove possible due to the unavailability of the recipient, at some stage during the remainder of the Municipal Year 2026/27.**
- (3) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make the necessary arrangements.**

The Mayor reminded members that the next meeting would be the Annual Council Meeting and that the date of the meeting had recently been altered from that published in the Schedule of Meetings and would now take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

Signed:.....

Date: .....

Chair of the meeting  
at which the minutes were confirmed