

PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 24 January 2024, when the following Members were present:-

Roger Dennison (Mayor)	Suhir Abuhajar
Joanne Ainscough	Mandy Bannon
Matthew Black	Phillip Black
Louise Belcher	Gerry Blaikie
Phil Bradley	Dave Brookes
Keith Budden	Roger Cleet
Ruth Colbridge	Claire Cozler
Gina Dowding	Tom Fish
Andrew Gardiner	Martin Gawith
Alan Greenwell	Erin Hall
Tim Hamilton-Cox	John Hanson
Chris Hanna	Prof Chris Harris
Paul Hart	Colin Hartley
Ross Hunter	Caroline Jackson
Peter Jackson	Jack Lenox
John Livermore	Sally Maddocks
Sophie Maddocks	Sarah McGowan
Abi Mills	Paul Newton
Margaret Pattison	Sue Penney
Catherine Potter	Joyce Pritchard
Sarah Punshon	Sam Riches
Grace Russell	James Sommerville
Paul Stubbins	Sandra Thornberry
Sue Tyldesley	Paul Tynan
David Whitaker	John Wild
Nick Wilkinson	Jason Wood

97 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Armistead, Martin Bottoms, Brett Cooper, Hamish Mills, Jean Parr, and Robert Redfern.

98 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2023 were agreed and would be signed by the Mayor as a correct record following the meeting.

99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

100 ANNOUNCEMENTS - COUNCILLOR PAUL GARDNER AND FORMER COUNCILLOR JAMES OUTRAM

The Mayor reported the sad deaths of serving Councillor Paul Gardner and former Councillor James Outram, before Christmas.

Councillor Gardner was a Councillor for Carnforth and Millhead Ward. He was elected in May 2023 having previously served on the City Council from 2003-2007 and 2011-2015. Paul's funeral was held on 9 January 2024.

Mr James Outram had been elected to serve Scotforth ward in the 1970's and had passed away in December after a long illness, aged 85.

The Mayor reminded Councillors that 5 February 2024 would mark the 20th anniversary of the cockling tragedy in Morecambe Bay, when 23 cockle picking fishermen and women lost their lives.

He asked that Members join him for one minute of silence to remember Councillor Paul Gardner, former Councillor James Outram and all those who had perished in the cockling tragedy in 2004.

Members stood in a minute's silence in their memory.

101 ANNOUNCEMENTS - 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE MORECAMBE BAY COCKLING TRAGEDY

The Mayor reminded Members that they had been sent an email inviting them to a candlelight memorial and vigil to be held at 6pm on 5 February 2024 to remember the cockle pickers who lost their lives 20 years ago in Morecambe Bay.

He hoped that Councillors would be able to attend.

102 ANNOUNCEMENTS - FIRE AT LUNE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

The Mayor invited Councillor Dowding to speak.

Councillor Dowding spoke on behalf of Marsh Ward Councillors to thank Fire and Rescue, other services and Council officers for their concerted effort to extinguish the fire at the

Lune Industrial Estate.

The Mayor echoed these thanks on behalf of all other Councillors.

He then informed Members that he would take the IRP report, Item 10 on the agenda, after item 7 to reduce the waiting time for the Chair of the IRP, who was present to introduce the report. He also reminded Councillors that Item 9, the setting of the Lancaster City Council's portion of Council Tax, would require a recorded vote, in line with legislation and Council Procedure Rule 19.7 in the Constitution.

103 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

The Mayor advised that no questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11.

104 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES

The Mayor informed Members that no petitions or requests to address Council had been received from members of the public.

105 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel, Mr Ameer Hakim, introduced the Panel's review of the Councillors' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25, undertaken from October-December 2023.

There were no questions for Mr Hakim about the report.

Councillor Wood proposed:

"That the recommendations of the IRP, as set out in the Panel's report, be approved."

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Gardiner.

The proposer and seconder thanked Mr Hakim and the other members of the Panel, Mrs Harsha Shukla and Mr Ryan Hyde, for the work they had undertaken to complete the review.

There was no further debate. The proposition was clearly carried when put to the vote.

Resolved:

With regard to the Basic Allowance:

- (1) ***That the basic allowance be increased by 3% from £4,200pa to £4,326pa with effect from 5 April 2024.***
- (2) ***That, for future years, the IRP will review the level of basic allowance and make a recommendation to Council for consideration at its January meeting.***

With regard to Special Responsibility Allowances (including the Mayor/Deputy Mayor allowances):

- (3) ***That Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) be increased by 3%***

with effect from 6 April 2024.

- (4) ***That, for future years, the IRP will review the level of SRAs and make recommendations to Council for consideration at its January meeting.***

With regard to the Dependents Carers Allowance:

- (5) ***To reconfirm that the Dependents Carers Allowance should allow for reimbursement of up to a maximum of the Real Living Wage as determined by the Living Wage Foundation (currently £12.00 per hour).***

106 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader presented his report updating Members on various issues since his last report to Council. He also provided a verbal update on two matters which had arisen since his report had been drafted. These were:

- An announcement of additional monies from Central Government for District Councils. This would be a one-off payment the exact amount not yet known
- The receipt of the Subsidy Advice Unit's assessment report for the Eden North Project

The Leader then responded to a number of questions from Councillors and agreed to send a written answer to Councillor Sally Maddocks regarding recouping money the Council had spent on the Lune Industrial estate fire, including the possibility of using the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

107 BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK UPDATE 2024/25 - 2028/29

Councillor Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member with particular responsibility for Finance and Resources, presented a report of Cabinet updating Council on the budget strategy for 2024/25 and financial outlook up to 2028/29.

Specifically, the report considered the budget and Council Tax proposals for 2024/25 and recommended that Council approve a 2.99% increase to the Band D Council Tax (from £249.18 to £256.63) as the Lancaster City Council element of the Council Tax charge for 2024/25.

Members asked a number of questions, which Councillor Hamilton-Cox responded to.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox, seconded by Councillor Phil Black, proposed:

- “(1) That Council approves a City Council Tax increase of 2.99% to the Band D Council Tax (from £249.18 to £256.63), together with a year-on-year target of the maximum allowable under the Government's local referendum thresholds for future years.”

Council noted the proposed revenue budget for 2024/25 as set out in the report and there was some debate on the budget proposals.

At the conclusion of the debate, a recorded vote was taken on the proposition as required by legislation and Procedure Rule 19.7 in the Council's Constitution. The results of that vote were recorded as follows:

For: Councillors Abuhajar, Ainscough, Bannon, Belcher, Black (Matthew), Black (Phil), Blaikie, Brookes, Budden, Cleet, Colbridge, Dennison, Dowding, Fish, Gardiner, Gawith, Greenwell, Hamilton-Cox, Hanna, Hanson, Harris, Hart, Hartley, Hunter, Jackson (Caroline), Jackson, (Peter), Lenox, Livermore, Maddocks (Sally), Maddocks (Sophie), McGowan, Mills (Abi), Newton, Pattison, Penney, Potter, Pritchard, Punshon, Riches, Russell, Sommerville, Stubbins, Thornberry, Tyldesley, Tynan, Whitaker, Wild, Wilkinson and Wood.

Against: Councillor Bradley (1)

There were no abstentions.

Resolved:

- (1) That Council approves a City Council Tax increase of 2.99% to the Band D Council Tax (from £249.18 to £256.63), together with a year-on-year target of the maximum allowable under the Government's local referendum thresholds for future years.

108 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections, had submitted a report asking Council to consider nominating a Councillor for appointment to the Lancaster and Skipton Rail User group. The report explained that the basis of this appointment had been determined by Council in May 2023 as one which should be filled by nomination and voting at full Council.

The Mayor called for nominations.

Councillor Pritchard nominated Councillor Blaikie. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Hart.

Since there were no further nominations, the Mayor declared Councillor Blaikie appointed to the Lancaster and Skipton Rail User group.

Resolved:

That Councillor Blaikie be appointed to the Lancaster and Skipton Rail User group.

109 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Changes reported since the last Council meeting were from the Labour Group, as follows:

Councillor Gawith would become a member of the Planning Regulatory Committee to fill the vacancy left by the sad passing of Councillor Paul Gardner. Councillor Bradley would replace Councillor Gawith as a substitute member of that Committee and Councillor Wood had been appointed a named substitute for the Standards Committee.

110 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

The Mayor advised that no questions been received by the Chief Executive in accordance

with Council Procedure Rules.

111 MINUTES OF CABINET

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meetings held on 24 October 2023 and 5 December 2023. No questions were raised.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

Mayor

(The meeting finished at 7.22 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,
please contact Debbie Chambers, Senior Manager, Democratic Support & Elections/Deputy
Monitoring Officer - email dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk**