

## PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 6.10 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 December 2025, when the following Members were present:-

Margaret Pattison (Mayor)

Suhir Abuhajar

Catherine Armistead

Matthew Black

Martin Bottoms

Gerry Blaikie

Dave Brookes

Roger Cleet

Wilson Colley

Claire Cozler

Roger Dennison

Martin Gawith

Tim Hamilton-Cox

Prof Chris Harris

Colin Hartley

Caroline Jackson

Kate Knight

John Livermore

Abi Mills

Paul Newton

Jean Parr

Joyce Pritchard

Robert Redfern

James Sommerville

Paul Stubbins

Sue Tyldesley

David Whitaker

Nick Wilkinson

John Hanson (Deputy Mayor)

Joanne Ainscough

Mandy Bannon

Phillip Black

Louise Belcher

Phil Bradley

Keith Budden

Ruth Colbridge

Brett Cooper

Maria Deery

Gina Dowding

Alan Greenwell

Chris Hanna

Paul Hart

Ross Hunter

Peter Jackson

Jack Lenox

Sarah McGowan

Hamish Mills

Andrew Otway

Sue Penney

Sarah Punshon

Sam Riches

Jackson Stubbs

Sandra Thornberry

Paul Tynan

John Wild

Jason Wood

**80 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom Fish, Andrew Gardiner, Sally Maddocks, Izzy Metcalf-Riener and Catherine Potter.

**81 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on 5 November 2025 and 26 November 2025 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**82 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members advised of the following interests at this stage:

Councillor Bottoms declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in relation to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 report (Item 9) as a recipient of Council Tax Support. (Minute No. 88 refers.)

Councillor Whitaker declared a DPI in relation to Vale View Day Centre referred to in the Leader's report in view of his employment there. The item was not for decision. (Minute No. 87 refers.)

**83 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillors were notified of a change to the order of the agenda. Item 13, the Councillors Allowances Scheme would be brought forward to be heard before Item 8, the Leader's report. This was to reduce the waiting time for the Chair of the Panel who was in attendance to present the report.

**84 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.

**85 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES**

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

**86 COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCE SCHEME: REVIEW**

Mr Ameer Hakim, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel, presented the Panel's report reviewing Councillors Allowances.

Councillor Budden thanked the Panel for their work. He proposed the recommendations as set out in the report, seconded by Councillor Deery.

There was no debate, a vote was taken on the proposition, which was clearly carried.

***Resolved:***

With regard to Allowances:

- (1) That the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances (including the Mayor/Deputy Mayor allowances) be increased by 3.2%, as detailed in the report, with effect from 6 April 2026.

Regarding Dependents Carers Allowance:

- (2) 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 £13.45 per hour).

## 87 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader presented her report updating Members on various issues since her last report to Council. The Chief Executive gave an update on Local Government Reorganisation.

The Leader and Councillor Hamilton-Cox responded to questions from Councillors.

### ***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

## 88 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026-27

***Councillor Bottoms, having previously declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following item, left the Chamber at this point.***

Councillor Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member with particular responsibility for Finance and Property, presented a report of Cabinet to enable Council to consider approving a Localised Council Tax Support ("LCTS") Scheme for application in 2026/27. He responded to a number of questions from Councillors.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox proposed Option 1, as set out in the report:

"That the existing Localised Council Tax Support Scheme be retained for 2026/27."

The proposition was seconded by Councillor Deery.

At the close of debate, the Mayor called for a vote. The proposition was clearly carried.

### ***Resolved:***

That the existing Localised Council Tax Support Scheme be retained for 2026/27.

***Councillor Bottoms returned to the Chamber at this conclusion of this item of business.***

## 89 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2025/26

The Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2025/26 was presented to Council by Councillor Hamilton-Cox.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox responded to a number of questions from Councillors before he proposed, seconded by Councillor Bottoms:-

"That Council

- (1) Notes the various matters in connection with the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2025/26 set out in the report; and
- (2) Approves the changes to the investment counterparty criteria and the sovereign limit as set out in the report."

The proposal was clearly carried when put to the vote.

***Resolved:***

That Council

- (1) Notes the various matters in connection with the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2025/26 set out in the report; and
- (2) Approves the changes to the investment counterparty criteria and the sovereign limit as set out in the report.

**90 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE 2026-7 - 2030-31**

Councillor Hamilton-Cox presented a report prepared by the Chief Finance Officer to provide an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts for 2026/27 to 2030/31 and outline the approach to balancing the budget.

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**91 AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024**

The Chair of the Audit Committee, Councillor Paul Stubbins, presented the 2023/24 Annual Report of the Council's External Auditor, KPMG. The report was for noting.

Councillor Stubbins and the Section 151 Officer responded to a number of questions from Councillors.

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**92 LANCASTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWAL BALLOT - CITY COUNCIL'S VOTING INTENTION**

Council considered a report of the Chief Officer, Sustainable Growth informing Councillors about the ballot of Lancaster city centre ratepayers on Lancaster Business Improvement District's proposal to renew the Business Improvement District in Lancaster. The ballot would run from 9 January to 5 February 2026.

The report provided Council with information to assist in making a decision on how to use the Council's ballot voting entitlement.

Councillor Peter Jackson, the Cabinet Member for Lancaster Regeneration and Local

Economy, presented the report and responded to questions from Councillors. He then proposed:

“That

- (1) The council’s voting allocation is used to vote in favour of Lancaster BID’s Renewal Proposal.
- (2) The Chief Officer Resources (S151) is instructed to complete the ballot papers accordingly and submit them by the end of the ballot period on 5 February.”

Councillor Bottoms seconded the proposition, which was clearly carried when put to the vote.

***Resolved:***

That

- (1) The council’s voting allocation is used to vote in favour of Lancaster BID’s Renewal Proposal.
- (2) The Chief Officer Resources (S151) is instructed to complete the ballot papers accordingly and submit them by the end of the ballot period on 5 February.

**93 APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR-ELECT**

The Chief Executive advised that he had contacted Councillor Colin Hartley JP, being the most senior Member of the City Council, who had indicated that he would be happy to accept the office of Mayor if offered by the Council.

It was then moved by Councillor Armistead and seconded by Councillor Blaikie:

“That Councillor Colin Hartley JP be invited to hold the office of Mayor of the City of Lancaster for the Municipal Year 2026/27.”

A vote was taken on the motion which was carried unanimously. Councillor Hartley responded.

***Resolved unanimously:-***

That Councillor Colin Hartley JP be invited to hold the office of Mayor of the City of Lancaster for the Municipal Year 2026/27.

**94 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Changes to Committee memberships since the last Council meeting were reported. These were:

- Councillor Joanne Ainscough replacing Councillor Catherine Potter as substitute for Budget and Performance Panel
- The Conservative group appointing Councillor Keith Budden to fill a vacant seat on Budget and Performance Panel; and
- Councillor John Wild taking up the Conservative vacancy on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**95 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12**

The Mayor advised that no questions on notice from Councillors had been received by the Chief Executive.

**96 MINUTES OF CABINET**

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2025. The Leader responded to a question from Councillor Gawith.

***Resolved:***

That the minutes be noted.

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Mayor

(The meeting finished at 8.00 p.m.)

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