

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)	John Hanson (Deputy Mayor)
Suhir Abuhajar	Joanne Ainscough
Catherine Armistead	Mandy Bannon
Matthew Black	Phillip Black
Martin Bottoms	Louise Belcher
Gerry Blaikie	Phil Bradley
Dave Brookes	Keith Budden
Roger Cleet	Ruth Colbridge
Wilson Colley	Brett Cooper
Claire Cozler	Maria Deery
Roger Dennison	Gina Dowding
Martin Gawith	Alan Greenwell
Tim Hamilton-Cox	Chris Hanna
Prof Chris Harris	Paul Hart
Colin Hartley	Ross Hunter
Caroline Jackson	Peter Jackson
Kate Knight	Jack Lenox
John Livermore	Sarah McGowan
Abi Mills	Hamish Mills
Paul Newton	Andrew Otway
Jean Parr	Sue Penney
Joyce Pritchard	Sarah Punshon
Robert Redfern	Sam Riches
James Sommerville	Jackson Stubbs
Paul Stubbins	Sandra Thornberry
Sue Tyldesley	Paul Tynan
David Whitaker	John Wild
Nick Wilkinson	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.

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