

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 27th MARCH, 2025**

PRESENT –

His Worship the Mayor (Councillor M. Aslam – in the Chair)

Councillors

M. Adnan

F Ahmad

N. Ahmed

S. Ahmed

M. Ammar

A. Bell

N. Butterworth

C. Church

D. Cockburn-Price

S. Cockburn-Price

D. Gallear

M. Hanif

D. Hartley

M. Iqbal

S. Land

D. Lord

A. Mahmood

B. Newman

K. Salter

M. Stone

Y Tennant

D. Whipp

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Z. Ali, R. Anwar, M. Kaleem, R. O'Connor, M. Strickland, A Sutcliffe and T. Whipp).



74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the legal requirements concerning the declaration of interests.

Councillor M Adnan declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in minute number 87(f) as he held a taxi driver's licence and left the Council Chamber whilst the matter was considered.

75. PRESENTATION OF PETITION

In accordance with Part 4 of the Constitution, Paragraph 10 – Presentation of Petitions, a member of the public could present a petition on any matter relevant to the Borough on giving notice to the Chief Executive at least seven clear days before the meeting. Such notice had been given by Mr Ian Chapman.

Mr Ian Chapman the petition organiser, addressed Council and presented a 1,600 signature petition to Council re: Renewable Energy and Battery Storage Facilities.

In particular, he requested Council to:

- (1) Undertake, explore and evaluate and to discuss in detail, Council's own knowledge and understanding of Central Government's position which he stated was "into the failing national

infrastructure and the major upheaval required of our electricity network to supply renewable energy nationwide and particularly within the Borough of Pendle.

(2) For the need for Pendle Borough Council to discuss “the underlying major issues caused by the backlog of planning applications, network connections and phantom projects (upwards of 1,700 schemes) being brought forward into the connections process, nationally and locally and how it was affecting the Borough of pendle and its own commitment to its Climate Emergency Plan; and

(3) Requested Elected Members “to consider how as a Council, that you could set new or revise live policies, or add conditions to planning applications to accommodate Renewable Energy, i.e. wind farms, battery storage or solar farms within Pendle Borough, without it being detrimental to the open aspect and encroachment into the green belt of our countryside”.

Councillor S. Cockburn-Price commented on the petition and suggested the petition be referred to the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) for consideration.

Councillor D. Whipp commented on the petition and was not clear exactly from the petition presented, what the petition was actually about?

RESOLVED: That

(1) Mr Chapman be thanked for presenting his petition to Council;

(2) the petition be received; and

(3) the petition be referred to the Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG).

76.

MINUTES

(a) 19th December, 2024 Council meeting

It was moved by Cllr A. Mahmood and seconded by Cllr M. Iqbal that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19th December 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

Councillor D. Whipp moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor S. Land, that minute 47(a) relating to Notice of Motion, Taxi App - Resolution (b) was incorrect insofar as the wording should reflect by the inclusion of a three months’ suspension of the implementation of any App or Substitute and should now be amended and read as follows:

“(b) that the implementation of any App or Substitute is suspended for three months”.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The amendment then became the substantive motion and upon being put to the vote was carried.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19th December 2024 be agreed as a correct record, and signed by His Worship the Mayor, subject to Minute 47(b) being amended to now read: that the implementation of any App or Substitute is suspended for three months.

(b) 29th January, 2025 Extraordinary Council meeting

It was moved by Cllr A. Mahmood and seconded by Cllr D. Whipp that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29th January, 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by His Worship the Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29th January, 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by His Worship the Mayor.

(c) 27th February, 2025 Special Budget Council meeting

It was moved by Cllr A. Mahmood and seconded by Cllr N. Ahmed that the minutes of the Special Budget Council meeting held on 27th February, 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by His Worship the Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Special Budget Council meeting held on 27th February, 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by His Worship the Mayor.

77. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

His Worship the Mayor provided Council with the following verbal update on engagements and visits he had undertaken since the last Full Council meeting:

“As Mayor of Pendle I have continued to be busy in the local community. I have been visiting and talking to those involved in numerous initiatives throughout Pendle.

In January I attended the opening of a solicitors’ practice in the very impressive Northlight House in Brierfield.

It is an honour to work with the young people of Pendle. In mid-January I attended the grand opening of a sensory room at Primet Primary School in Colne.

In February I was delighted to engage with more young people at Pendle Youth Employment Service (YES) Hub in Nelson.

Later the same day I attended the Community Project Handover by youngsters on the Lancashire Fire & Rescue – King’s Trust scheme. This scheme is an excellent 12-week personal development programme for unemployed and employed young people aged between 16 – 25. It develops young people for further education, progression into the workplace or creates opportunities for those already in employment. This particular Community Project Handover was a great example of the young helping the more elderly as the project was undertaken at the Age UK Lancashire Day Centre on Leeds Road in Nelson.

During the same week it was a privilege to visit a 100 year-old resident to mark their birthday at Marsden Grange Care Home.

Nearing the end of the winter months it was a delight to see the spectacular WinterBloom Light Festival in Colne.

Towards the end of February, I very much enjoyed meeting with the Member of Youth Parliament at Nelson Town Hall and again at a Youth Council Meeting at The Zone in mid-March.

I am very grateful for all those who attended and enjoyed my Hollywood and Bollywood-themed Charity Ball at The Fence Gate. The Helen Green Academy of Dance from Pendle did a wonderful showcase of Hollywood and Bollywood-themed dances. My Charity Ball was a fantastic opportunity to have a great time for good causes. These good causes are mine and the Mayoress' chosen charities, which are close to our hearts: Pendleside Hospice and Armed Forces Support Group. I was delighted to have Helen McVey and Louisa Mayor from Pendleside Hospice and Mike Sutcliffe and guests from Armed Forces Support Group there on the night.

At the beginning of March I very much enjoyed participating in Community Iftars at Mohammadi Masjid in Nelson and the wonderful Leisure Box in Brierfield.

I am very proud of the collaborative working between my Office and Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service (BPRCVS) to host The Mayor's People of Pendle Volunteers' Recognition Awards. It was a privilege to present local volunteers with certificates to recognise the fantastic work they do for the Pendle community.

This is just a fraction of the activities I've participated in since my last update. It is a privilege to highlight organisations that are doing a great job for the people of Pendle".

Upon Council hearing Cllr T. Whipp was ill and absent from the meeting and had been admitted as a patient at Airedale General Hospital, his Worship the Mayor and Council Members wished Cllr T. Whipp a speedy recovery to better health.

Cllr A. Mahmood firstly thanked the mayor for a certificate of appreciation he had sent to him as Leader of the Council over the weekend. He then went on to officially welcome, Lawrence Conway, the Council's Interim Chief Executive who was already having a positive impact on the work of the Council.

Cllr S. Cockburn-Price mentioned to the His Worship the Mayor how grateful volunteers from Colne Youth Action group were for their recent awards.

78. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE LEADER

There were no questions from members of the public.

79. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS TO THE LEADER, A COMMITTEE CHAIR OR A REPRESENTATIVE ON AN OUTSIDE BODY ON MATTERS NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA

There were no questions from Members of the Council.

80. REPORT BY THE LEADER ON THE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Leader of the Council submitted a report on the work of the Executive.

The Leader of the Council commented on his report and decisions made since the last ordinary meeting of Council.

Councillor D. Whipp commented on the Colne Market Hall proposals for the future management and operations and development of the first floor, which had been considered as an exempt item at the 20th February, 2025 meeting of the Council including whether plans were on track to progress the proposals and change of use on the first floor.

Phillip Spurr, Director of Place added that tender for the market operator had now been put out and it was anticipated the market hall would be opened by the end of August, 2025.

81. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Chris Church, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report on the work of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

82. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2025/26

The Director of Resources submitted for approval the Council's Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2025/26.

The document set out how the investment and borrowing operations of the Council were to be managed within the framework established by the Treasury Management Policy Statement. It was noted that the Statement should be read in conjunction with the Council's Capital Strategy which was approved by the Council on 27th February, 2025.

Councillor D. Cockburn-Price commented on the financial aspects of the report and supported the paper.

It was moved by Councillor A. Mahmood, seconded by Councillor M. Hanif and –

RESOLVED

That the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement, incorporating the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, the Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators for 2025/26, as set out at Appendix A attached to the report be approved.

83. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025

In accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 the annual Pay Policy Statement for 2025 was submitted for approval.

It was moved by Councillor A. Mahmood, seconded by Councillor N. Ahmed and –

RESOLVED

That the Council's Pay Policy Statement for the 2025 financial year be approved and that it be published on the Council's website.

84. PROHIBITED TYPES AND DANGEROUS DOGS POLICY

The report of the Assistant Director, Operational Services was submitted which sought Council's approval of the Operational Services Policy, which was appended to the report and would cover the actions to be taken when a straying or prohibited type or dangerous dog was to be detained.

At the meeting of Executive on 20th March, 2025, it was resolved:

"That Executive recommend the adoption of the Prohibited Types and Dangerous Dogs Policy and for this report be referred to Full Council for approval".

It was moved by Councillor A. Mahmood and seconded by Councillor F. Ahmad and –

RESOLVED:

That the adoption of the Prohibited Types and Dangerous Dogs Policy be approved.

85. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th January, 2025 it was resolved following the work of a Task and Finish Group - Implementation of the Member Code of Conduct:

"That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be agreed and Council be recommended to approve the following -

- (1) That Council notes the proposed changes to the Hearings Panel Hearing Procedure and approves the revised procedure as set out as an appendix to the report.
- (2) That Council adopt the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct in full, without amendment".

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) added in his covering report that recommendations (1) and (2) above if agreed, should take effect from 16th May 2025 (the beginning of the Municipal Year).

It was moved by Cllr C. Church and seconded by Cllr M. Stone that –

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Council notes the proposed changes to the Hearings Panel Hearing Procedure and approves the revised procedure as set out as an appendix to this report.

- (2) Council adopt the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct in full, without amendment.
- (3) Recommendations (1) and (2) above take effect from 16th May 2025 (the beginning of the Municipal Year).

86. CHANGES TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION – EXERCISE OF POWERS RELATING TO LAND

At the request of both Directors, Council was asked to re-delegate the below powers, currently delegated to the Director of Place, to the Director of Resources. It is more appropriate for these powers to be exercised by the head of the Resources Directorate, because as the title implies, the administration of property matters now rests there.

15. To agree terms and enter into leases at Market Rent of land and buildings and to negotiate and agree all new and ongoing terms relating to such agreements.

16. Disposal of land and building – to agree terms and sell any land or buildings of the council at Market Value up to a value of £100,000 which are declared surplus to requirements in accordance with criteria and procedures agreed from time to time by the Executive.

17. Acquisition of land - to agree terms and acquire the freehold or leasehold of any land and buildings where the estimated Market Value of the freehold up to £100,000 or annual rent does not exceed £10,000.

18. To settle all compensation payments in connection with the compulsory acquisition of land.

RESOLVED:

That the redelegated powers, as outlined above, be agreed.

87. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Protecting Disability Benefits and Defending the rights of Disabled Residents

It was moved by Councillor M. Iqbal and seconded by Councillor D. Whipp -

Council notes:

The Labour Government is proposing severe cuts to disability benefits, which will have a detrimental impact on disabled residents across Pendle.

These cuts include:

- Restricting access to Personal Independence Payment (PIP): This would make it harder for disabled people to receive essential financial support to cover the extra disability costs, such as therapies, treatments, and specialist equipment

- Forcing disabled people into unsuitable work: Moving thousands of people currently too ill to work into the main Universal Credit category, meaning they will lose financial support and face sanctions if they turn down work that could worsen their health.
- Reducing and freezing benefit rates: Freezing PIP rates and cutting the Limited Capability for Work element of Universal Credit effectively reduces the income of disabled residents even if they meet tougher eligibility criteria.

Council believes:

- That these cuts violate the Labour Government's manifesto pledge to fully co-produce disability benefits rules with disabled people and their organisations.
- These changes do not support disabled people into employment but instead remove financial lifelines from some of the most vulnerable members of our community.
- These measures will further entrench poverty, inequality, and social isolation among disabled residents across Pendle, many of whom are already struggling with the cost of-living crisis.

Council resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions expressing this Council's opposition to the proposed cuts and calling for meaningful co-production with disabled people in shaping disability benefits policy.
- Work with local disability organisations to assess and publicly report on the impact these changes will have on disabled residents in our community.
- Call on both Pendle MPs to oppose these cuts and raise concerns in Parliament about their impact on disabled constituents.
- Explore ways to support disabled residents locally, including signposting them to advice, advocacy services, and hardship funds.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(b) Pendle Priorities

It was moved by Councillor D. Whipp and seconded by Councillor C. Church, to include an amendment, included in the text below, to paragraph 3, line 2, through the insertion of the word "action" between the words "updated" and "plan"

Council notes the impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) on the short and medium-term priorities of the authority and the consequent need to re-set strategies in light of the new circumstances, and the risk that consideration of LGR will distract attention from the pressing problems currently facing residents in Pendle.

Council also notes that the advent of unitary councils on a much larger footprint than the present Pendle boundaries will result in an erosion of local control over services and

facilities used by residents across the borough, and that the council has a well-established programme of service and asset transfer to town and parish councils

Council therefore resolves that the interim Chief Executive be requested to review the Corporate Plan as a matter of urgency, with a view to an updated action plan being agreed at the Annual Council in May, and that the new plan includes as a priority an accelerated programme to localise assets and services important to local people, rather than see them become transferred to a remote successor authority with the consequential reduction in local influence over them.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(c) National Health Service

It was moved by Councillor A. Bell and seconded by Councillor C. Church.

Council notes that life-expectancy and health outcomes for many people in Pendle are much lower than in other parts of the country; that inadequate preventative and primary care, including shortages of GPs, Dentists and Pharmacists, continue to have a negative impact on the health of local residents, and that there's a chronic crisis in acute services with over-run A&E departments and failing hospital trusts.

Council also notes the recently announced changes to the administration of the NHS together with the reported halving of budgets of Integrated Care Boards.

Council welcomes any changes to NHS structures that result in better health care, but expresses concern at budget reductions which will lead to a continued spiral of decline of treatment for Pendle residents.

Council is also concerned at: the apparent lack of local democratic input in the reforms that have been announced; continued gross underfunding of social care; the failure of successive Governments to tackle inadequate cross-border patient information communication; and, the inadequacy of primary health facilities, particularly in West Craven.

Council resolves to instruct the chief executive to relay the concerns of the council to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and that Pendle's MPs are asked to support the council's position on these issues.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(d) Planning and Infrastructure Bill

It was moved by Councillor D. Whipp and seconded by Councillor S. Land.

Council notes that the Planning and Infrastructure Bill will effectively remove the ability of local residents to influence the outcome of development proposals, and that the role of elected representatives in planning matters will be significantly eroded as the Bill stands.

Accordingly, Council resolves to request Pendle's MPs to support residents' rights to comment on planning applications and take part as at present when applications are decided, and that the MPs also support the continued input of locally elected representatives in planning matters.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(e) Road and Pavement Repairs

It was moved by Councillor D. Hartley and seconded by Councillor D. Lord

Council notes the continued downward spiral in the condition of local roads and pavements, despite claims that record amounts are being spent on resurfacing, and that the administration at County Hall has consistently failed to deal with priority issues in Pendle during the eight years it's been in control.

Council also notes that pavement improvements are being carried out in some Pendle townships despite Lancashire County Council's refusal to fund work, and that the work, funded by Pendle Council and with UKSPF monies puts LCC's efforts to shame with their short-lived patchwork potholing approach.

Therefore, Council resolves to put on record its dismay at the continuing unsatisfactory state of pavements and streets in Pendle and the wasteful pothole bodging, and that the county council be advised accordingly.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(f) Taxi Safety

It was moved by Councillor B. Newman and seconded by Councillor M. Strickland.

Council notes that it's now three months since the use of an 'app' to record daily safety checks on taxis was suspended, pending "meaningful dialogue" with hackney and private hire representatives to address the safety of vehicles serving Pendle residents.

Council also notes that the absence of adequate national standards for taxi licensing, the subsequent "shopping around" for licenses at different councils, and the inadequate controls inherent in the current system severely undermines confidence in taxi-safety. It's also noted that new structures in local government may lead to different arrangements being put in place.

Council resolves that a detailed report on these taxi-safety issues is presented at the earliest opportunity to the Taxi-licensing Committee, and that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to review the current local and national arrangements as soon as possible.

Several Members commented on this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(g) Santander Bank Closure, Colne

(Note: This motion, received after the deadline for submission of motions for this meeting was allowed to be considered by His Worship, The Mayor, by reasons of urgency).

It was moved by Councillor A. Bell and seconded by Councillor D. Lord.

Council notes the announcement by Santander UK that they are closing their Colne branch on 14th July, 2025.

Council resolves to have urgent discussions with the bank to try and stop the closure, and to contact LINK to request that a Banking Hub is provided in Colne.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

His Worship the Mayor _____