

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 12th JANUARY, 2026**

PRESENT –

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

Councillors

*M. Adnan
F Ahmad
N. Ahmed
S. Ahmed
R. Anwar
N. Ashraf
M. Aslam
Z Ali
A. Bell
C. Church
D. Gallear
M. Hanif
D. Hartley
M. Iqbal*

*Y. Iqbal
M. Kaleem
D. Lord
S. Land
A. Mahmood
B. Newman
R O'Connor
K. Salter
M. Stone
A. Sutcliffe
Y. Tennant
D. Whipp
L. Whipp*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Atkinson, N. Butterworth, D. Cockburn-Price, S. Cockburn-Price and B. Hartley.

Press: 1
Public: 2

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

66. LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2026

Cllr D. Whipp, Leader of the Council responded to a report which sought the Council's view on the postponement or otherwise of the local elections scheduled to take place on 7th May, 2026.

Circulated with the agenda was a letter attached at Appendix A to that submitted report from Alison McGovern, MP, Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness, which had been sent to the Leaders of Councils with elections scheduled in those areas where proposals for reorganisation had been submitted and decisions not yet taken.

Cllr D Whipp, Leader of the Council expressed the view that local Council elections must take place in May, 2026 and it would be a denial of democracy if the Elections didn't go ahead. Accountability was key and Councillors must be accountable to local voters. Cancellation of the elections would undermine local decision making.

He added that some Pendle Borough Councillors, including himself elected in 2022 would serve a six-year term if the elections were cancelled. Also, there were no capacity concerns to holding an election in Pendle and further commented that Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was not an excuse to cancel the election.

Cllr D. Whipp moved, seconded by Cllr A. Bell that the Council respond to Central Government that this Council rejects the invitation to cancel the local Council Elections in 2026 and that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to convey that response.

Cllr A. Sutcliffe, Leader of the Conservative Group spoke and stated he was also in favour of local Council elections in 2026 in Pendle. He added that his Group Members were not whipped in this matter and it would be for Members of his Group to express their own views and vote accordingly on whether to support the proposal now put forward by Cllr D. Whipp or not. He also spoke to the amendment.

Cllr M. Iqbal commented that LGR would see the greatest changes in Local Government since 1974. There was still a concern a Mega-Council across Lancashire could be one potential outcome of LGR and it was important that this Council retained highly skilled and experienced Councillors to guide the Council through the challenging period that lay ahead.

Cllr M. Iqbal moved an amendment, seconded by Cllr A. Mahmood that the Council request the Government to postpone the Local Council Elections scheduled for 7th May, 2026.

Cllr M. Stone spoke in favour of the amendment.

Cllrs D. Whipp and L. Whipp both spoke against the amendment.

Before the amendment was put to the vote, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18.4, Cllr D. Whipp and Cllr A. Bell requested a recorded vote.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment was carried.

For: 18	His Worship, the Mayor, Councillor M. Ammer and Councillors M. Adnan, F. Ahmad, N. Ahmed, S. Ahmed, Z. Ali, R. Anwar, N. Ashraf, M. Aslam, D. Gallear, M. Hanif, M Iqbal, Y. Iqbal, M. Kaleem, A Mahmood, R. O'Connor, K. Salter, M. Stone.
Against: 10	Councillors A. Bell, C. Church, D. Hartley, S. Land, D. Lord, B. Newman, A. Sutcliffe, Y. Tennant, D. Whipp, L. Whipp

The amendment, then became the substantive motion and again, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18.4, Cllr D. Whipp and Cllr L. Whipp requested a Recorded Vote. It was voted on and carried.

For: 17	His Worship, the Mayor, Councillor M. Ammer and Councillors M. Adnan, F. Ahmad, N. Ahmed, S. Ahmed, Z. Ali, R. Anwar, N. Ashraf, M. Aslam, D. Gallear, M. Hanif, M Iqbal, Y. Iqbal, M. Kaleem, A Mahmood, R. O'Connor, M. Stone.
Against: 10	Councillors A. Bell, C. Church, D. Hartley, S. Land, D. Lord, B. Newman, K. Salter, A. Sutcliffe, D. Whipp, L. Whipp
Abstention: 1	Councillor Y. Tennant.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Full Council, following consideration of the letter attached at Appendix A to the submitted report, and following the recorded votes on the matter as set out above, expresses the view that it would like the postponement of the elections scheduled for 7th May, 2026; and
- (2) That noting the deadline for submissions, gives delegated authority to the Chief Executive to communicate the view to Central Government as expressed in Resolution (1) above on the Council's behalf.

His Worship the Mayor _____