MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 26TH MARCH, 2026

PRESENT –

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

Councillors

M. Adnan
F. Ahmad
N. Ahmed
S. Ahmed
N. Ashraf
M. Aslam
Z. Ali
A. Bell
C. Church
D. Cockburn-Price
S. Cockburn-Price
D. Gallear
M. Hanif
D. Hartley
M. Iqbal
Y. Iqbal
M. Kaleem
S. Land
D. Lord
A. Mahmood
B. Newman
R. O'Connor
K. Salter
M. Stone
A. Sutcliffe
Y. Tennant
D. Whipp
L. Whipp

Public: 17
Press: 1

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Anwar, M. Atkinson, N. Butterworth and B. Hartley).

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78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the legal requirements concerning the declaration of interests and other registrable interests.

Councillor D. Whipp declared Other Registrable Interests (ORI) in Minute 80 – Emergency Resolution – M65 and Notices on Motion - Minutes 87(d) and 87(e) as he was an Elected Member of Lancashire County Council

Councillor B. Newman declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Notices on Motion - Minute 87(b) as he was a supplier of LPG to rural areas in the Borough. He left the meeting, when it became apparent, that he had a declarable pecuniary interest in this item and took no part in the debate.

79. MINUTES

It was moved by Cllr D Whipp and seconded by Cllr A. Mahmood that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd March, 2026 be agreed as a correct record and signed by His Worship the Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the of the Council meeting held on 2nd March, 2026be agreed as a correct record and signed by His Worship the Mayor.

80. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

His Worship the Mayor had circulated his Mayoral update since the Annual Council meeting (reproduced below for information purposes) by e-mail to all Members of the Council prior to this meeting.

"Colleagues

I've continued to feel pride in Pendle during my Mayoral engagements over the last 3 months.

In January I was able to thank Peter and Andrea Smith, who embody civic pride in action. They founded Pick Up For Pendle 10 years ago. The community-based volunteer group is dedicated to keeping Pendle tidy through litter picking and raising environmental awareness. It was an honour to present a certificate of thanks to Peter and Andrea.

At the end of January I welcomed 11 pupils, all Barrowford Primary School Pupil Leaders, and 2 members of staff on a Town Hall Tour. These Pupil Leaders were a credit to their school and asked some great questions. The feedback from the Assistant Headteacher was that they had thoroughly enjoyed the Town Hall Tour and took away lots of information. Indeed, we were able to put them in touch with the Council's Climate Programme Manager as the school expressed an interest in possible collaboration for climate projects.

I met another impressive group of young people at a Student Youth Council meeting at The Zone in Nelson earlier in my Mayoral year. One of these young people, Jaden, went on to undertake work experience with the Mayoral team and the Policy and Commissioning Team in February. He was hard-working and reliable and showed a real interest in how the Council works.

In February I hosted a Mayoral reception for the Armed Forces Support Group, who are based in Barrowford. It was a great opportunity to thank them for the important signposting, support and camaraderie they provide to the service community.

This month I was delighted to be invited to 3 Community Iftars in different parts of Pendle – Leisure Box at Brierfield, Barrowford Primary School and Minhaj Welfare Foundation in collaboration with Marsden Heights Community College and Pendle Community Radio. It was great to see people of different faiths, backgrounds and cultures coming together to share food, conversations and a sense of togetherness.

I took a food donation to the food bank at Colne Open Door Centre at the beginning of March. This centre offers so much, including a community café, counselling, and a crisis support service.

In recent weeks I attended the Recipe 4 Health awards at Nelson Town Hall where I presented certificates to local food businesses who have achieved either a bronze, silver or gold Recipe 4 Health award.

I look forward to continuing to work at the heart of the Pendle community for the remainder of my Mayoral year".

Councillor D. Whipp, Leader of the Council had the following announcements.

The first related to an announcement yesterday (25th March, 2026) in terms of the devolution priority programme for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) for some local authorities in the South of England. The outcome of the number of new Unitaries that would be created were at the maximum of five. Many of the new Authorities were also less in population size that those included in the proposal put forward by PBC for Local Government Reorganisation.

He also reminded Council that today (26th March, 2026) was the last opportunity for people to comment on consultation in Lancashire on LGR and encouraged all Members to put in a response if they had not already done so

He mentioned that yesterday (25th March, 2026) work at the former Brierfield Mill, now known as Northlight, was celebrated. The building after significant investment from Pendle Borough Council (PBC) was now home to about 1,000 jobs. A brochure, which would be published on the PBC website, had also been produced to celebrate the Pearl Joint Ventures work in achieving this successful regeneration project.

He further mentioned other investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Over the last 4 years, PBC had received over £5.3m from this fund which had been invested in various schemes across Pendle. He also referred to public realm improvements that had been undertaken at various locations across the Borough.

Councillor D. Whipp then referred to incidents earlier in this week on the M65 motorway due to heavy rainfall with the motorway being closed for a period. With the Mayor's consent, he proposed the following emergency resolution to ask the Lancashire County Council to act on PBC's concerns:

Further to the Council resolution on 18th December regarding, continuing, persistent, flooding on the M65 causing serious safety concerns, and the response from Lancashire County Council to our request for urgent effective action to prevent flooding on the M65, Council notes:

- the statement issued to the BBC by the county council that, ***"Through our investigations we've identified two locations where heavy rain can cause localised flooding, and improving these sites will require significant investment. Until funding is available, we will continue to respond to any flooding reports, working closely with the police to keep road users safe.";***
- Meetings between Pendle and LCC have revealed that no specific funding is in place to deal with drainage issues on the M65 through the borough;
- Lancashire County Council is suggesting that Pendle Council should be clearing litter and debris, contributing to flood risk, from the motorway in Pendle.

And that there has been yet more flooding, leading to crashes and partial motorway closures, including an incident only this week.

Accordingly, Council resolves to reaffirm its resolution from December and requests the Chief Executive to write once more to Lancashire County Council requesting immediate action on M65 flooding due to the great risk of injury or loss of life from flood water.

Councillors N. Ahmed, A. Bell, M. Iqbal, D. Lord, A. Mahmood, M. Stone, A. Sutcliffe and L. Whipp all commented on and supported this emergency motion. Councillor D. Whipp further responded

to the emergency motion and further points raised by Members including in relation to responsibilities for removal of debris and litter and drainage on the M65 Motorway.

The above emergency resolution was moved by Councillor D. Whipp, seconded by Councillor A. Mahmood, and upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly

81. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE LEADER

There were no questions from members of the public.

82. 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.

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

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

Councillors D. Cockburn-Price, S. Cockburn-Price and A. Sutcliffe all asked questions of the Leader of the Council both in relation to Colne Conservation Area consultation proposals (Keighley Road Conservation Area) and the Pride in Place Impact Fund, both matters considered by the Executive at its meeting on 19th March, 2026.

Councillor L. Whipp commented on both the Colne Conservation Area consultation proposals (Keighley Road Conservation Area) and the Pride in Place Impact Fund. She also commented on the implications of the Renters Right Act and for the potential increase in No Fault evictions. The Leader of the Council requested that Officers provide Councillor L. Whipp with a response to these concerns following the meeting.

Councillors A. Bell, M Iqbal, and K. Salter also commented on the report of the Leader on the work of the Executive. Councillor M. Iqbal also referred to the Overview and Scrutiny “Call-In” process. that could be used in relation to Executive decisions. In response, he was informed that No Call-In’s had been received as at the time/date of this Council meeting (26th March, 2026).

The Leader of the Council responded that the decision of Executive to defer the Colne Conservation Area consultation proposals (Keighley Road Conservation Area) was a neutral act to allow for further consultation. He further reiterated the rationale behind Executive’s decision in relation to the Pride in Place Impact Fund and responded to comments that had been made by Jonathan Hinder, MP in relation to the Pride in Place Impact Fund. He also praised the work undertaken by PBC Officers in undertaking the scoring and evaluation of the Pride in Place Impact Fund schemes.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

84. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

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.

85. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT (TMSS)

The Leader of the Council presented a report which recommended that Full Council approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS). He referred to a slightly corrected updated version of this report, which had been e-mailed to all Members earlier this week following the dispatch of the agenda.

Councillor D. Cockburn-Price commented on the report.

It was moved by Councillor D. Whipp and seconded by Councillor A. Mahmood, and:

RESOLVED:

That Council approves the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) incorporating the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement, the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and Prudential Indicators for 2026/27 to comply with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, the Council's Treasury Management Policy and good practice generally.

86. HARTLEY HOMES TRUST

Council was informed of the following request received from Mr Philip Mousdale, the Trust Officer for Hartley Homes Trust:

"The Trust is currently investigating possible changes to its governance and status and one issue is the nomination right of Pendle Borough Council to appoint 4 trustees. The Trust's governance scheme gives the Council this right and the other 7 trustees are appointed as Life trustees by the Trust itself.

The Trust scheme does enable the Trust to amend certain provisions in the scheme and this includes removing the right of the Council to nominate trustees if the Council consents to this.

The Trust Officer informs that from recent history the Council has had some difficulty in finding nominations. With (Local Government) reorganisation on the near horizon and the probability of things passing to a new, larger and more distant authority, the Trustees are enquiring whether the Council would consider relinquishing its nomination right.

If the Council consented to this, one option for the Trust would be to continue with just the 7 Life trustees appointed by the Trust. Many trusts are able to operate satisfactorily with such a number.

The trustees are keen however to retain local democratic input into its operation and would look favourably on giving a nomination right to Colne Town Council".

Currently Colne and District Committee agreed to nominate just one member to the Trust, Councillor Neil Butterworth.

Council is informed that there are also two life trustees on the committee who are also PBC Councillors (Dorothy Lord and Kevin Salter).

Full Council was asked to consider and provide a response to the Hartley Homes Trust's request.

Councillor K. Salter spoke in support of the proposal made by the Hartley Homes Trust

It was moved by Councillor K. Salter and seconded by Councillor D. Whipp and –

RESOLVED:

That Council accedes to the request to relinquish its nomination right to Hartley Homes Trust.

(Councillors M. Adnan, N. Ashraf, D. Cockburn-Price, S. Cockburn-Price, M Iqbal and Y. Tennant left the meeting at the conclusion of this item).

87. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Investment in Advanced Manufacturing

Two friendly amendments were put forward for the inclusion of the word "apprenticeships" in proposed resolution (3) below and for the insertion of the words "Armed Forces Organisations" in resolution (5) below. Both friendly amendments were accepted.

It was then moved, incorporating the amendments, by Councillor D. Whipp, and seconded by Councillor B. Newman that:-

Council notes that:

- Pendle has a rich history and heritage of advanced manufacturing and precision engineering, including development of the jet engine. We are proud to be the home of innovative companies such as Rolls-Royce, Zenix Aerospace Weston, ELE Advanced Technologies and Pendle Engineering - all globally renowned as being leading suppliers to aerospace and other advanced sectors.
- The cluster of advanced manufacturing and precision expertise is vital for the Pendle economy, accounting for one in four jobs and almost 40% of the Borough's economy. With around 7,000 people employed, this sector generates c£700 million of gross value added (or GVA).
- The choice of Barnoldswick to develop the jet engine was, in part, because of the strong skilled workforce. This key sector in our economy has been built on the skills, knowledge, experience, hard work and dedication of this workforce, apprentice trained at outstanding local colleges.
- This council's commitment to promoting the sector, which is the bedrock of our local economy.

- The strength of the sector relies upon continued investment in research, new materials, sustainable initiatives and innovation, underpinned by a growing highly skilled workforce.

This Council commits to: working with strategic partners including Lancashire's Combined County Authority and the North-West Aerospace Alliance, to ensure the continued strategic importance of this advanced engineering cluster; gain national recognition for the sector; take advantage of opportunities to leverage national and regional investment; and develop training initiatives for the skills of the future.

Council resolves to: -

1. Reaffirm Council's resolution (2024-09-26) that the skills of our area should be harnessed for a fresh revolution in new renewable energy technologies to complement the existing engineering base;
2. acknowledge the significant contribution that advancing manufacturing and precision engineering sector makes to the Pendle economy;
3. allocate funding of £100k from the Budget Support Reserve for the development of an investment proposition to support the advanced manufacturing and precision engineering sector with a focus on research and development, workforce skills improvements, improvement in facilities and apprenticeships;
4. Develop the investment proposal in collaboration with the advanced manufacturing and precision engineering sector in Pendle, the North West Aerospace Alliance and the Pendle Vision Board;
5. Request the support of the Lancashire Combined County Authority and its Business and Economic Advisory Boards for this initiative, together with that of local Members of Parliament and neighbouring councils and Armed Forces organisations.

Several Members spoke in support on this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(Councillors F. Ahmad and Z Ali left the meeting at this juncture).

(b) **Impact of War with Iran**

A friendly amendment was put forward by Councillor M. Stone for an additional resolution that Central Government be asked to consider the wider future impact on the cost-of-living crisis because it will impact on food, transport and many other things down the line in the supply chain. The friendly amendment was accepted.

It was moved by Councillor S. Land and seconded by Councillor D. Hartley that:-

Council notes with extremely grave concern the innocent civilians being killed and injured by the illegal war with Iran and the potential consequences for the men and women from Pendle who serve in Britain's forces.

Council also notes the immediate impact of the conflict on the costs of heating oil and LPG used by many off grid homes in Pendle, and the longer-term effect the war is likely to have on home energy costs generally.

Council resolves to request that:

1. VAT is suspended on heating oil and LPG supplies;
2. The Government implement a price cap on such supplies;
3. The Government re-introduce energy price guarantees if household bills are set to rocket following July's price cap review;
4. Pendle's MPs be asked to support the above actions.

Council notes:

- The growing number of local authorities adopting Community Wealth Building approaches to ensure public spending generates the greatest possible benefit for local economies, supporting local businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises, and that, applying similar principles in Pendle will strengthen local supply chains, support SME growth and ensure that council spending actively contributes to economic resilience within the borough;
- Embedding cooperative, social and ethical values within procurement policy will create opportunities for social enterprises, worker-owned businesses and community organisations to participate more actively in local economic development;
- The opportunity that Local Government Reorganisation presents to not only reshape procurement policies, but the wider founding principles of the new unitary councils eg: participatory democracy; open & transparent; fair; co-operative; and responsive.

Council resolves to:

- Declare its aspiration to influence the new unitary council to become a cooperative council working in partnership with residents, businesses and community organisations;
- Approve in principle and request the Executive to consider the submission of an application for Pendle Borough Council to join the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN);
- Seek the support of neighbouring authorities to join CCON;
- Request that the Chief Executive bring forward proposals to the next Executive outlining how cooperative principles can be embedded within existing council governance, procurement and service delivery models;
- Promote the adoption of Community Wealth Building approaches, including procurement strategies that increase opportunities for local SMEs, independent businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises within the new unitary council and for the remaining life of Pendle Council.
- That Central Government be asked to consider the wider future impact on the cost-of-living crisis because it will impact on food, transport and many other things down the line in the supply chain.

Several Members spoke in support on this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly

(Councillors M. Hanif and R. O'Connor left the meeting at this juncture).

(c) Cooperative Councils

It was moved by Councillor L. Whipp, and seconded by Councillor A. Bell :–

Council notes:

- The growing number of local authorities adopting Community Wealth Building approaches to ensure public spending generates the greatest possible benefit for local economies, supporting local businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises, and that, applying similar principles in Pendle will strengthen local supply chains, support SME growth and ensure that council spending actively contributes to economic resilience within the borough;
- Embedding cooperative, social and ethical values within procurement policy will create opportunities for social enterprises, worker-owned businesses and community organisations to participate more actively in local economic development;
- The opportunity that Local Government Reorganisation presents to not only reshape procurement policies, but the wider founding principles of the new unitary councils eg: participatory democracy; open & transparent; fair; co-operative; and responsive.

Council resolves to:

- Declare its aspiration to influence the new unitary council to become a cooperative council working in partnership with residents, businesses and community organisations;

- Approve in principle and request the Executive to consider the submission of an application for Pendle Borough Council to join the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN);

- Seek the support of neighbouring authorities to join CCIN;

- request that the Chief Executive bring forward proposals to the next Executive outlining how cooperative principles can be embedded within existing council governance, procurement and service delivery models;

Promote the adoption of Community Wealth Building approaches, including procurement strategies that increase opportunities for local SMEs, independent businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises within the new unitary council and for the remaining life of Pendle Council.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly

(Councillors B. Newman and M. Kaleem left the meeting at this juncture).

(d) Caring for our Elderly

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

This Council notes:

- The effect on vulnerable and elderly people of Lancashire County Council's adult social care funding crisis and consequent impact on services, including LCC's left-in-limbo care home closure consultation, and the pressure to ration packages of care through processes requiring head of service and multi-manager approvals.
- Reports of social care staff being overwhelmed by workloads;
- The apparent manipulation of waiting times for packages of care assessments through the new approval system;
- The reduction of staff in community teams to achieve budget reductions resulting in office-based work, signposting, rather than supporting;
- Residential support now being time-limited following hospital discharge, and only short-term care is available to people returning home from hospital;
- That Lancashire County Councils managing "the front door" appears to be about restricting access - making it as hard as possible for people to get through.

Council resolves to request:

1. An urgent meeting between Lancashire County Council's cabinet member for Adult Social Care and members of Pendle Borough Council;
2. The future of care homes and day centres be properly decided as a matter of urgency;
3. Local county councillors support the above resolutions.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(e) Party Promises

It was moved by Councillor D. Whipp, and seconded by Councillor C. Church:–

Council notes that:

- RefUK promised to 'cut bloated salaries' at last year's elections. But in administration at County Hall, RefUK is taking a "market responsive approach" on top salaries at LCC, and has now created a 'Chief Of Staff' in addition to the Chief Executive's post at Lancashire County Council;
- Last year, RefUK promised to fill all the potholes, but there are now a record number of potholes in Lancashire; our roads and streets are crumbling away; and Pendle is receiving a fraction of spending on road resurfacing than other districts in Lancashire ;
- After promising to freeze or cut Council Tax at the county council elections, RefUK have pushed LCC's share of the Council Tax up by £65.96 to £1,801.75.

Council expresses concern that failing to fulfil such election promises undermines residents' confidence and undermines confidence in democracy as a whole.

Council requests that all candidates and local parties refrain from making unrealistic and undeliverable election promises in the Pendle Council elections this year.

Several Members spoke in support of this Motion.

Upon being put to the vote it was –

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

His Worship the Mayor _____