

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 17th NOVEMBER, 2025**

PRESENT –

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

Councillors

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

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M. Atkinson.

Press: 1

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor D. Whipp declared a Personal and Other Registrable Interest in Minute 53 below as he was an Elected Member on Lancashire County Council.

53. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) – DRAFT STRATEGIC BUSINESS CASE FOR A FIVE-UNITARY COUNCIL MODEL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN LANCASHIRE

Cllr D. Whipp, Leader of the Council introduced the report on LGR – draft strategic business case for a five-unitary Council model of local government in Lancashire.

The submitted report presented the draft Strategic Business Case for a Five-Unitary Council model for Lancashire following the Government's invitation to Councils in Lancashire to submit proposals for local government reorganisation in the area.

Council was informed other draft Strategic Business Cases have been produced for a Two-, Three- and Four-Unitary Models. As part of this Case-Making, Councils across Lancashire had used a shared evidence base and had worked together to establish a baseline financial position.

The draft Strategic Business Case now presented sets out how Lancashire looks today, reflecting on the challenges and opportunities that exist across the County area. It also considered the current model of local government.

Council was further informed that an Options Appraisal and a financial assessment had been undertaken on the proposed Unitary models of Local Government. In addition, a Lancashire-wide consultation had also been conducted and there had been a local consultation and engagement programme covering both the Pendle and Burnley areas.

In summary, the draft Strategic Business Case concluded that the Five-Unitary Council model for Lancashire both met the criteria for Unitary Local Government in Lancashire set by the Government and was the preferred model. The proposed model had a compelling theme – that Local Government built on local, natural community areas delivers better outcomes.

Council further noted that draft Strategic Business Cases for a Two-, Three- and Four-Unitary (two models) model of Local Government in Lancashire had been produced by other Councils in Lancashire, details of those other models that had been received prior to this meeting had been shared with Council accordingly.

Further Council acknowledged that the decision to submit the Strategic Business Case for a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire was a matter for the Executive to determine, and that Council agree that the minutes of this meeting be submitted to the Executive on 20th November, 2025 for consideration in its decision to submit the Strategic Business Case by the deadline for submission of 28th November 2025.

Also attached to the submitted report were:

Appendix A - Draft Strategic Business Case for a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire

Appendix B – Lancashire Local Government Reorganisation Survey Report – Community/Stakeholder Survey Reports

Appendix C – Local Government Reorganisation in Burnley and Pendle: Consultation Survey Findings

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Whipp and other Members of the Council then commented on the draft Strategic Business Case for a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire.

Cllr D Whipp further commented that the Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire would be big enough to deliver and local enough to connect. He added that feedback from the recent consultation with Burnley and Pendle residents showed 80% were in favour of the Five

Unitary model. The evidence presented showed that such a model would be more innovative and agile to respond to the needs of the area than any other model of local government in Lancashire.

He added that ultimately the final decision on LGR in Lancashire would be made by central government ministers.

He moved that Full Council recommends to Executive that the Strategic Business Model for a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire be submitted as Pendle Borough Council's response.

Councillor A. Mahmood, leader of the Independent Group and Deputy Leader of the Council spoke and seconded the proposal of Cllr D. Whipp that Full Council recommends to Executive that the Strategic Business Model for a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire be submitted as Pendle Borough Council's response. He reiterated and agreed with the points already raised and on local identity and keeping services local.

Councillor A. Sutcliffe, Leader of the Conservative Group spoke. He wanted great services to be delivered to the people of Pendle at the best possible cost following LGR. He did raise a note of caution, where was the inclusion of Rossendale BC in this proposal? He agreed whilst we had a strong cultural identity with Burnley, but not so much with Rossendale. He felt the Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire was the right model for Lancashire but needed to be underpinned by strengthened data.

Councillor Y. Iqbal, Leader of the Pendle True Independents spoke and was also supportive of the Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire which he felt would be the best model for the residents of Pendle.

Councillor D Cockburn-Price raised several queries regarding the accuracy of the financial figures in specific parts of the draft business case.

Councillor M Stone commented and thanked both Senior Officers and political leadership in drawing up the draft business case. He wanted to see the best outcomes for the people of pendle and indeed Lancashire as a whole because of LGR.

Councillor N Ahmed felt there were many unknowns about what the outcomes would be through LGR. However, the Council did have to make a difficult choice on behalf of the residents of Pendle.

In summing up Cllr D. Whipp expressed he was fighting for the greatest devolution deal for everyone locally in Lancashire and to have two voices in a Combined Authority. He added that he was pleased there was a cooperation across the Council and with other Council's in Lancashire in setting the financial baselines.

In response to the concerns raised by Cllr D. Cockburn-Price regarding about the graphs and financial figures he added that both the Chief Executive and Director of Resources had already identified these anomalies, and these figures would be corrected in the Strategic Business case.

In terms of a name for a Unitary Authority covering Pendle, his preferred name for a new Unitary Council would be Pennine Council.

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Councillor D. Whipp in response to the enquiry from Councillor Sutcliffe referred to the many thousand lines of datasets all Councillors had been given access to. He also commented on the Pendle Local Plan and that it was anticipated it would be submitted to the December Council meeting for adoption.

Having been moved by Cllr D. Whipp, seconded by Cllr A. Mahmood in support of a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire, upon being put to the vote:

RESOLVED:

That Full Council recommends to Executive that the Strategic Business Case for a Five-Unitary model of Local Government in Lancashire be submitted as Pendle Borough Council's response.

His Worship the Mayor _____