



# Morecambe Town Council

Morecambe Town Hall,  
Marine Road  
Morecambe  
Lancashire  
LA4 5AF

[www.morecambe.gov.uk](http://www.morecambe.gov.uk)

## Members of Morecambe Town Council

*Cllr R Walsh - Chairman*  
*Cllr G Knight - Vice Chairman*

*Cllr C Ainscough, Cllr J Ainscough, Cllr D Blacow, Cllr D Bottoms, Cllr L Bradbury, Cllr P Clarke, Cllr F Cooper, Cllr C Cozler, Cllr R Dennison, Cllr W Dixon, Cllr K Gee, Cllr P Hart, Cllr J Goodrich, Cllr J Hanson, Cllr C Kent, Cllr D Knight, Cllr J Livermore, Cllr M Pattison, Cllr J Pilling, Cllr J Rogerson, Cllr J Slater, Cllr M Stenneken, Cllr D Whitaker*

**Minutes of Morecambe Town Council's Full Council Meeting held at 7pm on the 30 January 2025 at Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road, Morecambe, LA4 5AF.**

### **Record of Attendance:**

**Councillors: Geoff Knight (Vice Chairman), Joanne Ainscough, Martin Bottoms, Lee Bradbury, Trish Clarke, Claire Cozler, Roger Dennison, Wayne Dixon, Paul Hart, John Goodrich, John Hanson, Clark Kent, Debbie Knight, John Livermore, Margaret Pattison, Jackie Rogerson, Monika Stenneken, David Whitaker.**

**Officers:** Luke Trevaskis, Peter Fisher, Joel Turner.

**Press:** Beyond Radio

**Public:** 2

### Minute 2024/25 - 064- Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance received from Cllrs D Blacow, F Cooper, J Slater, C Ainscough, J Rogerson, J Pilling, K Gee, and R Walsh (Chairperson). The meeting was chaired by Cllr G Knight (Vice Chairperson).

### Minute 2024/25 - 065- Declarations of Interest

Cllrs M Pattinson, R Dennison, J Hanson and M Bottoms declared as a member of Lancaster City Council Planning Committee.

Cllr C Cozler declared membership of Lancaster City Council's Local Plan.

Cllrs R Dennison, P Hart, J Hanson, M Pattison, M Bottoms, J Livermore, J Ainscough declared an interest as a Councillor of Lancaster City Council.

Cllrs P Hart and M Bottoms declared cabinet membership of Lancaster City Council, and declared an interest in Item 13 of the agenda, the Memorandum of Understanding.

Cllr D Whittaker declared they are employees of Lancashire County Council.

Cllr M Pattison declared an interest as a Councillor of Lancashire County Council.

### Minute 2024/25 - 066 - Police

At the request of members, Superintendent Craig Kelshaw attended the meeting alongside Sergeant Lindsay Brown. Discussions focused on anti-social behaviour in Morecambe and the measures being taken to address it.

The police reported on Operation Centurion, a scheme operating in Happy Mount Park and the Poulton areas of Morecambe. This initiative, funded until the end of March 2025, provides additional police resources through overtime funding. Since its implementation, anti-social behaviour has reduced by 30%, and engagement tools for intelligence gathering have improved.

It was also reported that one new community officer has been recruited for Morecambe. Every ward now has its own PCSO and police officer. The police utilise a traffic light system to manage young offenders. Additionally, Fleetwood has implemented a Clear / Hold / Build (CHB) strategy, which was highlighted as a best practice model.

Key Issues Raised by Councillors:

- **Youth Engagement:** Cllr Martin Bottoms and Cllr Clair Cozler stressed the importance of engaging with young people. Kirkham was cited as an example of successful youth engagement.
- **Alcohol Use in Alexandra Park:** Cllr David Whitaker requested increased enforcement due to ongoing issues with alcohol consumption. Police confirmed that Criminal Behaviour Orders had been issued against street drinkers and two Community Protection Notices were issued last month.
- **Shoplifting and Security Concerns:**
  - Cllr Margaret Pattison raised concerns about increasing incidents at the Arndale Centre and people fearful of entry due to alcohol users gathering outside.
  - Cllr Geoff Knight noted a surge in shoplifting, with some shop owners reporting thefts of up to £300 per day, partially attributed to a reduction in Arndale staff from three to one.
  - Cllr Trish Clarke noted that a recent theft from the Co-op (Regent Road) was reportedly not adequately followed up due to its value being under £200.
- **E-bikes and E-scooters:**
  - Cllr Roger Denison highlighted that e-bikes and e-scooters along the promenade were becoming hazardous.
  - Cllr Wayne Dixon reported similar issues on the cycle track between Morecambe and Lancaster.
- **Parking Issues:**
  - Cllr Paul Hart raised concerns about pavement parking and requested clarity.
  - Cllr Joanne Ainscough reported that match-day parking was becoming intolerable and dangerous.
- **Potential for a Town Warden:** Cllr Clark Kent noted that BID Lancaster funds a local warden and suggested discussions with Morecambe BID about providing a similar service.

- **Parental Responsibility:** Cllr John Hanson noted that parents also bear responsibility when children are involved in criminal behaviour.

The police acknowledged these concerns and will continue working with the Council and community to address them.

#### **Minute 2024/25 - 067 - Minutes**

The minutes of the last full council meeting were approved.

#### **Minute 2024/25 - 068 - Public Participation**

No members of the public attending the meeting requested to speak.

#### **Minute 2024/25 - 069 - Halifax Morecambe Branch**

The following motion was unanimously approved:

Morecambe Town Council is deeply concerned about the announced closure of the Halifax Building Society located in The Arndale Centre. The Halifax is one of the last remaining banks in Morecambe providing a service to customers who might require in-person financial advice. Many people will be concerned about the loss of this facility so therefore it is important as a Town Council we send a letter to The Halifax headquarters, copied to Lizzi Collinge MP asking that they reconsider this closure, highlighting how important this service is to the people of Morecambe, especially residents who may be digitally excluded, disabled, or elderly.

#### **Minute 2024/25 - 070 - Neighbourhood Plan Update**

Members received an update, noting that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has made significant progress in shaping Morecambe's future through a community-driven approach. A revised engagement strategy has been adopted to ensure representation from all demographics, including younger residents, minority communities, and those who are digitally excluded. This initiative aims to reflect local needs, aspirations, and emerging challenges accurately.

Key discussions have focused on identifying what Morecambe should preserve, enhance, and create. Priorities include protecting the town's heritage, improving public spaces, housing, and communication channels. New initiatives such as arts and culture hubs, enhanced visitor infrastructure, and improved accessibility along the promenade were proposed.

The group has explored strategies to enhance community engagement, targeting diverse groups such as working families, carers, and non-English-speaking communities. Innovative outreach methods, including targeted events and partnerships with local organisations, are being considered to address digital exclusion.

Thematic breakout sessions are ongoing, covering areas such as high street regeneration and skills development. These sessions have helped formulate a vision for Morecambe's retail sector and establish a 'Skill Vision Tree' outlining short- and long-term priorities for education and employment. The outcomes will shape an upcoming community survey, ensuring alignment with shared goals.

Skill gaps within the group were identified, particularly in circular economy principles, which are increasingly relevant to national and regional policies. To address this, an officer will undertake further training in this area to strengthen the plan's robustness at the examination stage.

The group reaffirmed its commitment to collaboration and transparency, outlining a draft timeline for the plan's development.

The next steps involve gathering survey feedback by May, which will guide the formulation of an evidence-based Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Draft Timeline Overview:**

- **Phase 1 (Dec 2024 – May 2025):** Initial scoping, community engagement, formation of working groups.
- **Phase 2 (June 2025):** Evidence gathering and analysis.
- **Phase 3 (July – Aug 2025):** Land assessment and infrastructure review.
- **Phase 4 (Sept 2025 – Feb 2026):** Drafting the vision and policies.
- **Phase 5 (March 2026):** Community workshops on draft policies.
- **Phase 6 (April – May 2026):** Formal consultation period.
- **Phase 7 (June – July 2026):** Refinements based on feedback.
- **Phase 8 (Aug – Dec 2026):** Submission to the Local Authority and independent examination.
- **Phase 9 (Jan – Feb 2027):** Public referendum and plan adoption.

**The Council unanimously approved the below motions:**

1. The Council accepted the content of the Neighbourhood Plan update.
2. The Council noted that the Neighbourhood Plan is progressing in accordance with the Terms of Reference previously approved.
3. The Council anticipates that the resulting Neighbourhood Plan will provide a valuable framework for influencing and shaping local development, noting that an officer will undertake further training in this area to strengthen the plan's robustness at the examination stage.

Members also requested an update regarding the current status of the digital screens which were being funded by the UKSPF. It was noted that the presentation delivered by Lancaster City Council was over twelve months ago, and at least one outdoor screen was supposed to have been installed.

Members also asked if a broader section of the public could be included in the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, and if times of meetings could be varied.

**Minute 2024/25 - 071 - Addressing the Challenges Facing Young People in Morecambe**

Members noted recent discussions with residents in Poulton, and Lizzi Collinge MP, which highlighted the significant challenges facing young people in Morecambe, particularly as a coastal community with limited opportunities and facilities. The Council recognises the acute need for investment in local youth services, especially in areas such as Poulton, where a lack of provision further compounds the difficulties experienced by young people.

The Council noted the announcement of the new National Youth Strategy and the forthcoming Local Youth Transformation pilot (2025–2026), which aims to rejuvenate local authority capabilities in the youth space. This initiative offers a unique opportunity to ensure Morecambe's young people are involved in shaping solutions that directly affect them.

The Council unanimously resolved to:

1. Mandate officers to work collaboratively with Lizzi Collinge MP to better understand and address the issues facing local young people.
2. Prioritise exploring opportunities through the National Youth Strategy, with a specific focus on whether Morecambe could feed into the co-creation process with young people and position itself as a pilot area for the Local Youth Transformation programme.
3. Identify and pursue funding, tools, and resources available through the pilot to develop impactful local youth offers.
4. Develop a specific focus on improving facilities for young people in Poulton and other underserved areas of the town.
5. Incorporate this work into the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, addressing the previously noted lack of evidence gathered from young people. This will help ensure the outcomes of the Neighbourhood Plan are robust, evidence-based, and meet the minimum requirements of the inspectors.
6. Form partnerships with local organisations (such as Stanley's and Escape to Make) to identify ways which we can work together.
7. Organise talks in schools regarding citizenship and youth councils, giving consideration to the creation of a Young Persons Champion.

**Minute 2024/25 - 072 - Website Accessibility Statement**

The Council unanimously approved the Website Accessibility Statement, and noted the ongoing work to the redesign of the website and branding refresh to support greater outreach and community engagement.

**Minute 2024/25 - 073 - Budget and Precept FY2526**

Members recognised the significant undertaking by officers to prepare a balanced budget, and extended thanks to the outgoing Chairperson of the Finance and Governance Committee for their hard work to date. In the absence of a Chairperson, members believed it prudent to defer the budget-setting meeting to allow for the election of a new Chairperson to the Finance and Governance Committee, ensuring the Committee had an opportunity to meet again with the new Chairperson so they can familiarise themselves with the proposed budget and confidently present it to Council at its next meeting. It was requested that further attention be given to exploring any further potential savings to reduce the financial burden on taxpayers while safeguarding the quality of services. It was resolved to defer this item until the Council's next meeting on 20 February 2025.

### **Minute 2024/25 - 074 - NALC - MHCLG CPO Consultation**

The Council unanimously resolved to express its interest in engaging with the Principal Authority on the potential use of CPO powers for affordable housing schemes. Noting that this could align well with the Council's goals and contribute to addressing local housing needs. It was also resolved that members review any potential land areas in Morecambe that could benefit from this approach that we can use as examples with which to demonstrate to NALC the importance of this issue in Morecambe.

### **Minute 2024/25 - 075 - MHCLG Consultation on Local Government Standards**

The Council resolved to respond to the consultation advocating for an enhanced standards regime.

### **Minute 2024/25 - 076 - Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Council resolved that, in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

### **Minute 2024/25 - 077 - Emerging Memorandum of Understanding with Lancaster City Council**

The Council evaluated whether the draft MOU accurately reflects the Town Council's ambitions, particularly in advancing further localism and delivering meaningful outcomes for residents.

Members acknowledged the limited time constraints before the next elections to plan, implement, and complete projects. The Council assessed whether the MOU provided enough of a robust framework to achieve measurable progress within this period.

The Council considered lessons learned in previous election cycles, including the risk of policy reversals and delays, and whether the MOU provides sufficient safeguard against such setbacks.

The Council noted that it felt it was important to underscore the importance of strong collaboration between the two authorities to ensure the MOU enables effective joint working that delivers tangible outcomes for residents.

The Council resolved that any MOU must include an appendix specifying key projects that the Town Council would like Lancaster City Council to help it deliver. It was resolved that the MOU should focus on deriving short term outcomes including the delivery of spring planting in Morecambe by MTC, a transfer of requested land parcels for transformation into community gardens, and a commencement of discussions regarding a localism and devolution framework. The Council would also welcome outcomes that look to safeguard culture and arts delivery in Morecambe, and promote environmental sustainability.

### **Minute 2024/25 - 078 - Devolution**

The Council discussed the implications of the recent devolution white paper and potential changes to Lancashire's administrative structure, including moves towards unitary authorities. Concerns were raised that without proactive engagement, Morecambe could be overlooked in governance decisions, limiting the Town Council's influence over its future.

It was noted that some town councils have successfully taken on new service delivery roles, while others have been forced to manage assets without adequate resources. The importance of early and proactive discussions on devolution was emphasised to ensure Morecambe has a strong voice in shaping its governance.

Resolutions:

- 1. Resident Survey:** officers to conduct a survey (extending an offer of collaboration to Lancaster City Council) to understand residents' priorities for localism and devolution.
- 2. Engagement with MP:** a letter to be sent to Morecambe's MP, expressing the Council's desire to be involved in devolution discussions.
- 3. Government Correspondence:** officers and the Chairman to write to the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government and the MP, and NALC, welcoming devolution while outlining challenges faced in securing local assets for community projects and the impact this has had on its ability to deliver for a community in significant need.

Members noted that further discussions on devolution will continue through MTC strategy meetings, ensuring alignment with the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.