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# COUNCIL

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**Thursday, 9th November, 2017**

**Present:** Councillor Peter Britcliffe (Mayor), Councillors Judith Addison, Lisa Allen, Mohammad Ayub, Noordad Aziz, Stephen Button, Clare Cleary, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad, Tony Dobson, Stewart Eaves, Diane Fielding, Melissa Fisher, Glen Harrison, June Harrison, Eamonn Higgins, Terry Hurn, Abdul Khan, Julie Livesey, Gareth Molineux, Jenny Molineux, Ken Moss, Tim O'Kane, Bernadette Parkinson, Miles Parkinson, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Malcolm Pritchard, Jeff Scales and Paddy Short

**Apologies:** Councillors Jean Battle, Bernard Dawson and Stephanie Haworth

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## **215 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Jean Battle, Bernard Dawson and Stephanie Haworth.

## **216 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations.

## **217 Announcements**

### 1) The Late Paul Thompson

The Mayor paid tribute to Councillor Paul Thompson who died on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Paul was a Hyndburn UKIP Councillor and Leader of his Group and represented the St. Oswald's Ward in Oswaldtwistle from his election in May 2014 until his death. Paul was well known for his charity work, particularly for his support and fund raising for the Derian House Children's Hospice at Chorley.

**A minutes silence was held as a mark of respect.**

### 2) Armistice Day Service

The Mayor announced that the Armistice Day Service on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2017 would be held at 10.50 a.m., at the Cenotaph at Oak Hill Park, Accrington. The change of venue was due to work being carried out on the Town Centre Square.

### 3) Presentation - Campaign for Changing Place Facilities at Motorway Service Stations

The Mayor introduced Zack Kerr, a 22 year old Accrington Resident living with cerebral palsy, who gave a short presentation relating to his Campaign for Changing Place Facilities at Motorway Service Stations. Zack was accompanied by his step father, Ceri Davies, who assisted with the presentation. Presentation slides were circulated at the meeting.

**Resolved** - **That the Campaign for Changing Place Facilities at Motorway Service Stations be supported by the Council.**

**218 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017 were submitted for approval as a correct record, subject to the word "Labour" contained in Minute 159(1) being amended to read "Conservative".

**Resolved** - **That, subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017 be approved as a correct record.**

**219 Question Time**

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 2.2(vi).

**220 Presentation from Home-Start Rossendale, Burnley and Hyndburn**

The Mayor reported that due to illness, representatives from Home-Start Rossendale, Burnley and Hyndburn were unable to attend the meeting to make a presentation. Arrangements would be made for the presentation to be made at a future meeting of the Council.

**221 Minutes of Cabinet**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017 were submitted.

**Resolved** - **That the Minutes be received and noted.**

**222 Minutes of Committees**

The Minutes of the following meetings were submitted:-

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Planning Committee	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Audit Committee	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Judicial Committee (Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing)	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Licensing Sub-Committee	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
Planning Committee	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
Judicial Committee (Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing)	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Resolved** - **That the Minutes be received and noted.**

## 223 Motion Submitted on Notice - Universal Credit Rollout in Hyndburn

The following **motion** was moved by Councillor Tim O’Kane and seconded by Councillor Jenny Molineux under Council Procedure Rule A9:-

“That this Council notes that Universal Credit (UC) is a single monthly payment which replaces six working age benefits (known as legacy benefits). These are Housing Benefit (HB), Income Support (IS), Working Tax Credits (WTC), Child Tax Credit (CTC), Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related) and Job Seekers Allowance (Income-related). It supports residents on low incomes who are both in and out of work.

Universal Credit has been in Hyndburn since 2015 but on a mainly limited scale. However, the numbers of residents moving onto Universal Credit from 2015 have been restricted to new claimants and straightforward cases. The pilot for Hyndburn commences in February 2018 and the roll out of the full service of Universal Credit is a new entirely online-based system and claimants must apply for and manage their claim online. It also brings in a wider range of claimants including more complex cases. It affects claimants when they make a claim for the first time or have a change in circumstances that means their existing claim for one of the legacy benefits has to be cancelled.

Hyndburn is one of the areas subject to the rollout of Universal Credit full service. The delivery of the new service has been an area of particular concern across the country and was subject in the last parliament to an investigation by the Work and Pensions Select Committee.

As a result, and while the DWP and Job Centre Plus are the agency responsible for managing the change, the Council is committed to pro-active and continued work with key stakeholders and partners to ensure that as much support is provided to residents as possible to help achieve a smooth transition to the new service.

However, this Council has a number of concerns about Universal Credit

- The wait times between the date of application and date of assessment. There is a built in waiting period of 6 weeks before Universal Credit is awarded and this creates hardship for residents. Any delay in DWP processing times exacerbates this hardship still further.
- The level of deductions applied to monthly payments to clawback advance payments and sanctions can be high, leaving residents with little money to cover basic income needs for their families for the weeks ahead.
- The high number of Universal Credit claimants that have been subject to sanctions in Hyndburn.
- That the provision of housing costs support for short term temporary accommodation for Hyndburn’s homeless population is not an appropriate fit for Universal Credit and should be returned to and covered by Housing Benefit at the earliest opportunity.

This Council resolves that:

The Chief Executive write to the following to register these issues and request that solutions are explored which would improve the design and delivery of Universal Credit which would mitigate impacts for low-income, working age residents in the borough;

1. The Rt. Hon David Gauke MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.
2. Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth, and Graham Jones, the MP for Hyndburn.
3. The Local Government Association (LGA).”

After a debate, the **motion** was put to the vote and declared carried.

**Resolved**

- (1) That this Council notes that Universal Credit (UC) is a single monthly payment which replaces six working age benefits (known as legacy benefits). These are Housing Benefit (HB), Income Support (IS), Working Tax Credits (WTC), Child Tax Credit (CTC), Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related) and Job Seekers Allowance (Income-related). It supports residents on low incomes who are both in and out of work.**

Universal Credit has been in Hyndburn since 2015 but on a mainly limited scale. However, the numbers of residents moving onto Universal Credit from 2015 have been restricted to new claimants and straightforward cases. The pilot for Hyndburn commences in February 2018 and the roll out of the full service of Universal Credit is a new entirely online-based system and claimants must apply for and manage their claim online. It also brings in a wider range of claimants including more complex cases. It affects claimants when they make a claim for the first time or have a change in circumstances that means their existing claim for one of the legacy benefits has to be cancelled.

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As a result and while the DWP and Job Centre Plus are the agency responsible for managing the change, the Council is committed to pro-active and continued work with key stakeholders and partners to ensure that as much support is provided to residents as possible to help achieve a smooth transition to the new service.

However, the Council has a number of concerns about Universal Credit.

- The wait times between the date of application and date of assessment. There is a built in waiting period of 6 weeks before Universal Credit is awarded and this creates hardship for residents. Any delay in DWP processing times exacerbates this hardship still further.

- The level of deductions applied to monthly payments to clawback advance payments and sanctions can be high, leaving residents with little money to cover basic income needs for their families for the weeks ahead.
- The high number of Universal Credit claimants that have been subject to sanctions in Hyndburn.
- That the provision of housing costs support for short term temporary accommodation for Hyndburn's homeless population is not an appropriate fit for Universal Credit and should be returned to and covered by Housing Benefit at the earliest opportunity.

(2) That the Chief Executive write to the following to register these issues and request that solutions are explored which would improve the design and delivery of Universal Credit which would mitigate impacts for low-income, working age residents in the borough:-

1. The Rt. Hon David Gauke MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.
2. Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth, and Graham Jones, the MP for Hyndburn.
3. The Local Government Association (LGA).

## 224 Motion Submitted on Notice - Occupational Therapy Shortage Impacting on Disabled Adaptations

The following **motion** was moved by Councillor Gareth Molineux and seconded by Councillor Glen Harrison under Council Procedure Rule A9:-

“That Council notes that:

- Occupational therapists provide life-changing support to people managing illness, injuries and a wide range of physical and mental health conditions. Uniquely, they enable people to carry out daily activities (‘occupations’) which are essential to health and happiness. This vital care helps people recover and build new skills to enjoy a full and independent life.
- There are currently 10 advertised occupational health based vacancies on Lancashire County Councils website with only 1 of these being designated for East Lancashire which covers Hyndburn.
- A report released in March 2017 by Health Education England (HEE) and The College of Occupational Therapists (COT) has highlighted national average vacancy rates for occupational therapists was 15.5% for NHS Trusts and 17.5% for Local Authorities. This compares to a national vacancy rate of 2.6% for the economy as a

whole and 3% for the health and social care sector according to the most recent statistics from the ONS.

- The lack of Occupational Therapists employed by Lancashire County Council is having a detrimental effect on Applications for Disabled Adaptations Grants being referred to Hyndburn Borough Council.”

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) are mandatory grants of up to £30,000 to help less able people live independently and safely in their own homes. These adaptations can be minor, such as installing walk in showers for residents with mobility issues or involving major building works to install a lift. Shortages of Occupational Therapists are causing delays and lower number of referrals to grant applications and therefore disabled residents from Hyndburn are missing out on being able to take advantage of these life changing grants.

“That Council resolves to:

Request the Chief Executive to write to the government to address this very serious issue by:-

- Re-adding Occupational Therapy to the priority occupation list.
- Provide assurances that it will protect the rights of qualified Occupational Therapists from elsewhere in the EU who are currently working in the UK and to remain here after the UK leaves the EU and for new applicants to be permitted to fill Occupational Therapist vacancies in the future.

Request the Chief Executive to write to the Leader of Lancashire County Council to request:

- That LCC take a more innovative approach to filling Occupational Therapy Vacancies.
- That LCC Social Services take a more pro-active approach in making referrals to Hyndburn Borough Council for Disabled Adaptation Grants.

Request the Chief Executive to write to all the G.P. Practices in Hyndburn:

- To inform them of Disabled adaptation grants, who qualifies and how to apply for them.
- To request that they refer any patient to Lancashire County Council who they feel will benefit from a disabled adaptation grant.

After a debate, the **motion** was put to the vote and declared carried.

**Resolved**

**(1) That this Council notes that:**

- **Occupational therapists provide life-changing support to people managing illness, injuries and a wide range of physical and mental health conditions. Uniquely, they enable people to carry out daily activities ('occupations') which are essential to health and happiness. this vital care helps people recover and build new skills to**

enjoy a full and independent life.

- There are currently 10 advertised occupational health based vacancies on Lancashire County Councils website with only 1 of these being designated for East Lancashire which covers Hyndburn.
- A report released in March 2017 by Health Education England (HEE) and The College of Occupational Therapists (COT) has highlighted national average vacancy rates for occupational therapists was 15.5% for NHS Trusts and 17.5% for Local Authorities. This compares to a national vacancy rate of 2.6% for the economy as a whole and 3% for the health and social care sector according to the most recent statistics from the ONS.
- The lack of Occupational Therapists employed by Lancashire County Council is having a detrimental effect on Applications for Disabled Adaptations Grants being referred to Hyndburn Borough Council.

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- (2) That this Council resolves to request the Chief Executive to write to the government to address this very serious issue by:-
- Re-adding Occupational Therapy to the priority occupation list.
  - Provide assurances that it will protect the rights of qualified Occupational Therapists from elsewhere in the EU who are currently working in the UK and to remain here after the UK leaves the EU and for new applicants to be permitted to fill Occupational Therapist vacancies in the future.
- (3) That this Council resolves to request the Chief Executive to write to the Leader of Lancashire County Council to request:-

- That LCC take a more innovative approach to filling Occupational Therapy Vacancies.
  - That LCC Social Services take a more pro-active approach in making referrals to Hyndburn Borough Council for Disabled Adaptation Grants.
- (4) That this Council resolves to request the Chief Executive to write to all the G.P. Practices in Hyndburn:-
- To inform them of Disabled adaptation grants, who qualifies and how to apply for them.
  - To request that they refer any patient to Lancashire County Council who they feel will benefit from a disabled adaptation grant.

## 225 Motion Submitted on Notice - Leaving the European Union

The following **motion** was moved by Councillor Kathleen Pratt and seconded by Councillor Tony Dobson under Council Procedure Rule A9:-

“That this Council recognises that the people of Hyndburn voted overwhelmingly to leave the European Union. Under these circumstances we feel that this council should write to the Prime Minister wishing the negotiators a successful outcome for the constituents of this Borough.”

An **amendment** was then proposed by Councillor Gareth Molineux and seconded by Councillor Noordad Aziz, as follows:-

That the following words be added after the word “Borough”:-

“whilst also raising the following point:-

- Our concerns of the potential harm to our local economy if the Government and the European Union are unable to reach an agreement.”

The amendment was put to the meeting and declared carried.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

### Resolved

- That this Council recognises that the people of Hyndburn voted overwhelmingly to leave the European Union. Under these circumstances we feel that this Council should write to the Prime Minister wishing the negotiators a successful outcome for the constituents of the Borough whilst also raising the following point:-
  - Our concerns of the potential harm to our local economy if the Government and the European Union are unable to reach an agreement.

## 226 Motion Submitted on Notice - Investment in Disabled Facilities Grants

The following **motion** was moved by Councillor Tony Dobson and seconded by Councillor Judith Addison under Council Procedure Rule A9:-

“That the Leader of the Council writes to the Prime Minister thanking her Government for the £1.5 million of investment in DFG grants between 2016 and 2018 which has resulted in 89 grants being completed in 2016/17 and a further 132 to be completed in 2017/18 and asks all councillors to raise the profile of DFG grants in their wards to alleviate hardship for the disabled.”

An **amendment** was then proposed by Councillor Gareth Molineux and seconded by Councillor June Harrison, as follows:-

“That the Leader of the Council writes to the Prime Minister thanking her Government for the £1.5 million of investment in DFG grants between 2016 and 2018 and asks why the current formula awarded a neighbouring borough with the same demographic and health problems as ours £2,035,442 this year whilst Hyndburn only received £828,559 and asks that all councillors raise the profile of DFG grants in their wards to alleviate hardship and improve the quality of life for residents living with a disability.”

The mover of the motion accepted the proposed amendment.

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

The substantive motion was put to the vote and carried. It was therefore:-

**Resolved** - **That the Leader of the Council writes to the Prime Minister thanking her Government for the £1.5 million of investment in DFG grants between 2016 and 2018 and asks why the current formula awarded a neighbouring borough with the same demographic and health problems as ours £2,035,422 this year whilst Hyndburn only received £828,559 and asks that all councillors raise the profile of DFG grants in their wards to alleviate hardship and improve the quality of life for residents living with a disability.”**

## 227 Motion Submitted on Notice - Role of Transport for the North

The following **motion** was moved by Councillor Noordad Aziz and seconded by Councillor Abdul Khan under Council Procedure Rule A9:-

“That this council resolves to write to the Department of Transport to seek clarification on what the role of Transport for the North will be. Hyndburn Borough Council has made a strong case in lobbying for better infrastructure links in East Lancashire especially East – West Connectivity in the region through a road and rail infrastructure investment programme. This council has been at the forefront of lobbying for the following:

1. M65 linking to Yorkshire (A1 and M62)
2. Re-establishment of Skipton to Colne Rail link

The lack of clarity from central government over the status of TfN is a worrying development and shows that this government is not addressing one of the biggest hindrances to economic growth in our region which is a lack of connectivity and capacity in our transport infrastructure.”

After a debate, the **motion** was put to the vote and declared carried.

**Resolved**

- **That this Council writes to the Department of Transport to seek clarification on what the role of Transport for the North will be. Hyndburn Borough Council has made a strong case in lobbying for better infrastructure links in East Lancashire especially East – West Connectivity in the region through a road and rail infrastructure investment programme. This council has been at the forefront of lobbying for the following:**

1. **M65 linking to Yorkshire (A1 and M62).**
2. **Re-establishment of Skipton to Colne Rail link.**

**The lack of clarity from central government over the status of TfN is a worrying development and shows that this government is not addressing one of the biggest hindrances to economic growth in our region which is a lack of connectivity and capacity in our transport infrastructure.**

Signed:.....

Date: .....

Chair of the meeting  
at which the minutes were confirmed