
COUNCIL

Thursday, 7th March, 2024

Present: Councillor Terry Hurn (Mayor), Councillors Judith Addison, Josh Allen, Heather Anderson, Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Peter Britcliffe, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Bernard Dawson MBE, Peter Edwards, Melissa Fisher, Marlene Haworth, Carole Haythornthwaite, Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Dave Parkins, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson, Kate Walsh and Mohammed Younis

Apologies: Councillors Dominik Allen, Steve Button, Danny Cassidy, Susan Hayes, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie and Kimberley Whitehead

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the March Council meeting. The meeting had been programmed earlier in the month than usual to avoid clashing with the observance of Ramadan and was slightly later in the evening than usual to allow councillors to attend a public information session about a planning matter.

Councillor Hurn also mentioned that this would be his last full meeting in the chair. He thanked all councillors for their support over the last year.

336 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dominik Allen, Steve Button, Danny Cassidy, Susan Hayes, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, and Kimberley Whitehead

337 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations indicated on this occasion.

338 Announcements

The Mayor made the following announcements:

1) School Careers Day Visit

The Mayor reported that the Council had, this afternoon, hosted a careers event for pupils from Accrington Academy, about the work of the authority and the role of its councillors. The young people had also participated in a mock Council meeting in the Queen Elizabeth Room, at Scaitcliffe House, which had included some lively debate and demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm from our young people for the democratic process.

Councillor Peter Britcliffe, Acting Leader of the Council, made the following announcement

2) Lancashire Combined County Authority

Councillor Britcliffe reported that County Councillor Phillippa Williamson, Leader of Lancashire County Council, had recently reported that the overall response to the Lancashire Devolution Deal had been positive. The three upper tier authorities would now meet in March 2024 to determine if the Deal for a Combined County Authority should go ahead.

With the consent of the Mayor, Councillor Britcliffe invited Councillor Zak Khan, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, to speak about Bury Meadows.

3) Bury Meadows

Councillor Zak Khan announced that the Net Zero Working Group, yesterday, had heard that work as due to start in spring on the creation of a nature reserve at Bury Meadows. The work would include an 18 months' programme and discussions with interested parties. Councillor Khan thanked Anne Hourican, Senior Environmental Initiatives Officer and Councillor Caroline Montague, for their work in this regard. Forestation and other 'greening up' projects were also taking place at this site. The community woodland project was ahead of schedule with over 4,500 trees planted by some 200 volunteers.

4) Huncoat Garden Village Development

Councillor Britcliffe reminded Members that a grant of £30m was being sought from Homes England, for the Huncoat Garden Village development, which was due to be determined by the end of March 2024. The award of this grant would be very welcome news.

5) Wilson's Leisure and Sports Project

Councillor Britcliffe announced that next Wednesday a ground breaking ceremony would take place at Wilson's Playing Fields for the new £13m Leisure and Sports Complex.

6) Market Hall and Traders

The Acting Leader reported that, last week, Councillor Younis had attended a ground breaking event for the Market Hall redevelopment. Other work was continuing behind the scenes and next week it was hoped to reinstate the Thursday and Sunday flea markets. The intention was to make pop up stalls available on Broadway, which should help to drive up footfall and support the creation of a vibrant town centre. Traders in the temporary cabins in the Town Square were already reporting that they were doing well. In fact, three of the traders were now opening additionally on Wednesdays.

Councillor Britcliffe added that the Controlling Group was proud of these achievements which were just the start of more ambitious plans to follow.

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive on this occasion.

339 Question Time

One question had been received. The Mayor read aloud the question as shown below.

1) Update on Milton Street Play Area

*To the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services
(Councillor Steven Smithson)
Submitted by Councillor Colin McKenzie*

“What is the current status of the refurbishment project at Milton St Play Area in my Overton ward?”

Response:

Councillor Smithson reported that the tender was out for the project and due to be returned by 25th March 2024. The refurbishment would commence before the end of June and was expected to be completed by August 2024.

340 Draft Pay Policy 2024/25

Members considered a report of Councillor Peter Britcliffe, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Resources, which presented the draft pay policy for 2024/25.

Councillor Britcliffe spoke to provide a brief introduction to the report.

The Localism Act 2011 (Chapter 8 - Pay Accountability) required all local authorities to set out their position on a range of issues relating to the remuneration of their employees. The Policy must be approved by the Council in open forum, by the end of March each year and then be published on its website.

The Pay Policy set out the existing approach to the remuneration of all posts within the Council. In particular it specified certain mandatory requirements that had to be detailed within the Policy, as follows:

- The pay structure of the Council and how it was set;
- Senior Management Remuneration, providing details of the pay grade for posts defined as Chief Officer and the accompanying allowances;
- The recruitment arrangements for a Chief Officer;
- The relationship between the salaries of Chief Officers and other employees;
- Details of the lowest paid posts within the Council;
- Employer’s Pension Contribution details; and
- Termination of employment payments.

The Council already published pay and remuneration details of its senior managers on its website, within the annual Statement of Accounts.

The purpose of the Pay Policy was to ensure that there was transparency as to how pay and remuneration was set by the Council, for all of its employees and particularly for its most senior level posts.

Councillors Munsif Dad BEM JP and Noordad Aziz spoke to confirm the Opposition’s support for the Policy and were pleased to note that at the lowest grades the Council paid the Foundation Living Wage, rather than the National Minimum Wage.

Resolved - **That the draft Pay Policy be agreed and published on the Council’s website.**

341 Minutes of Cabinet

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24th January 2024 were submitted.

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

342 Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

Meeting (Municipal Year 2023/24)	Date
Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee	12 th December 2023
Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 th December 2023
Audit Committee	18 th December 2023
Judicial Committee (Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing)	19 th December 2023
Special Scrutiny Committee	19 th December 2023
Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9 th January 2024
Planning Committee	17 th January 2024

Resolved - That the Minutes be received and noted.

343 Motion(s) submitted on Notice

1) Israel/Palestine Conflict

The following motion, supported by the background information recorded below, was proposed by Councillor Paddy Short and seconded by Councillor Caroline Montague under Council Procedure Rule A9:

“Council notes:

1. The continuing rising death toll, starvation of Gaza citizens, displacement and devastation to homes, infrastructure and environment in Gaza and the continuing threat of escalation beyond Israel, Gaza and the occupied territories.
2. That the International Court of Justice interim ruling in January stated that Israel must ‘take all measures within its power’ to prevent all acts contravening the genocide convention and must immediately improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza. That the court also called for the immediate, unconditional release of all hostages.
3. That the UN General Assembly gave overwhelming backing to calls for a ceasefire and for parties' compliance with international law and the release of all hostages.
4. To date, around 70 percent of those killed have been women and children.

Council believes:

1. Residents in our district/area are rightly concerned about the situation in the Middle East, its impact directly on people in our communities and upon community relations, and the rising tide of incidents of both anti-semitism and islamophobia.
2. That the UK, and communities within the UK have the right and the duty to speak out and to take steps that can bring pressure to bear towards a ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the free flow of humanitarian aid and creation of space for dialogue towards a lasting settlement. That by refusing to call for an immediate

ceasefire, and by continuing to allow the export of military hardware essential to the Israeli offensive the UK government and Labour Party have made itself complicit in the killing.

Council resolves to write to the UK Prime Minister and Leader of the UK Labour Party:

1. Calling on the UK government and Labour Party to demand that Israel stop the killing and implement an immediate ceasefire and that Hamas must also agree to this ceasefire and release all hostages. Call on the UK government to suspend all arms export licences to Israel until the killing stops, and to cease all military collaboration with Israel, including allowing Israeli use of British bases and RAF intelligence flights over Gaza. Similarly to the measures rightly taken against Russia following its invasion of Ukraine, we further call on the UK government and Labour Party to back calls for Israel to be suspended from international sporting and music events, and to withdraw all public money from funds with investments in Israel; and end beneficial trade arrangements with Israel.
2. We believe we can increase the pressure on Israeli leaders by introducing targeted sanctions against key individuals. This would include travel bans and asset freezes on Israel's leadership and cabinet members, in particular those calling for new settlements in Gaza and the annexation of the West Bank. Finally, we would encourage UK authorities including the Metropolitan Police and Director of Public Prosecutions to pursue perpetrators of war crimes committed where UK citizens are the victims or where UK citizens are potential perpetrators.”

During the debate and with the consent of the meeting, the Mayor agreed that the 20 minutes limit on the time allowed for the debate on an individual Motion, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule A9.6, should be waived.

Councillors Sajid Mahmood, Josh Allen, Paul Cox, Dave Parkins, Mike Booth, Mohammed Younis and Peter Britcliffe spoke in favour of the Motion. Councillor Kate Walsh reminded councillors that the Opposition Group had expressed its deep concerns about the situation in Gaza on numerous earlier occasions, but felt unable to support the Motion as currently worded and was recommending to its members that they should abstain. Councillor Munsif Dad reiterated these points, whilst emphasizing that the Hyndburn Labour group did support a ceasefire.

Councillor Short summed up and called upon Members to support the Motion on humanitarian grounds.

Resolved

- That the Council resolves to write to the UK Prime Minister and Leader of the UK Labour Party:

- (1) Calling on the UK government and Labour Party to demand that Israel stop the killing and implement an immediate ceasefire and that Hamas must also agree to this ceasefire and release all hostages. Call on the UK government to suspend all arms export licences to Israel until the killing stops, and to cease all military collaboration with Israel, including allowing Israeli use of British bases and RAF intelligence flights over Gaza. Similarly to the measures rightly taken against Russia following its invasion of Ukraine, we**

further call on the UK government and Labour Party to back calls for Israel to be suspended from international sporting and music events, and to withdraw all public money from funds with investments in Israel; and end beneficial trade arrangements with Israel.

- (2) We believe we can increase the pressure on Israeli leaders by introducing targeted sanctions against key individuals. This would include travel bans and asset freezes on Israel's leadership and cabinet members, in particular those calling for new settlements in Gaza and the annexation of the West Bank. Finally, we would encourage UK authorities including the Metropolitan Police and Director of Public Prosecutions to pursue perpetrators of war crimes committed where UK citizens are the victims or where UK citizens are potential perpetrators**

With the consent of the meeting, the Mayor called for a brief adjournment to allow the public gallery to clear.

The meeting then agreed that the one and a half hours total time limit for all Motions on the Agenda, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule A9.6, should be waived, with the debate closing no later than 9.30pm.

2) Motion on Potential Link Road

The following motion, supported by the background information recorded below, was proposed by Councillor Noordad Aziz and seconded by Councillor Melissa Fisher under Council Procedure Rule A9:

“That this Council resolves to write to the Government and Lancashire County Council to make the case for a link road potentially connecting the M65 to Great Harwood, aimed at alleviating congestion on Whalley Road in Clayton-le-Moors.

The congestion on Whalley Road in Clayton-le-Moors poses significant challenges for the borough, and this will only increase as additional development takes place.”

Councillors Josh Allen, Steven Smithson, Zak Khan, Kath Pratt, Munsif Dad and Melissa Fisher spoke in favour of the motion.

Resolved

- **That this Council resolves to write to the Government and Lancashire County Council to make the case for a link road potentially connecting the M65 to Great Harwood, aimed at alleviating congestion on Whalley Road in Clayton-le-Moors.**

3) Whinney Hill Waste Transfer Site

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Steven Smithson and seconded by Councillor Loraine Cox under Council Procedure Rule A9:

“This Council recognises the threat to borough councils in East Lancashire that the potential closure of Whinney Hill Tip poses in 2026. Such a closure would mean that non-recyclable waste would need to be transferred to Leyland, at significant increased cost.

This Council understands that East Lancashire Members of Parliament have written to Lancashire County Council requesting a meeting on this subject.

Hyndburn Borough Council resolves to support any solution that would see Lancashire County Council invest in waste transfer in East Lancashire and will additionally write to Lancashire County Council seeking a solution.”

Councillors Munsif Dad, Zak Khan, Paul Cox and Noordad Aziz spoke in favour of the motion. Councillor Dave Parkins spoke to highlight his concerns about increased traffic in Huncoat, if a waste transfer station were to be constructed in the vicinity

Resolved

- (1) That the Council recognises the threat to borough councils in East Lancashire that the potential closure of Whinney Hill Tip poses in 2026. Such a closure would mean that non-recyclable waste would need to be transferred to Leyland, at significant increased cost.**
- (2) That the Council understands that East Lancashire Members of Parliament have written to Lancashire County Council requesting a meeting on this subject.**
- (3) That the Council resolves to support any solution that would see Lancashire County Council invest in waste transfer in East Lancashire and will additionally write to Lancashire County Council seeking a solution.**

4) An Option Engineering Study at the Hare & Hounds Junction

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Carole Haythornthwaite and seconded by Councillor Peter Edwards under Council Procedure Rule A9:

“This Council welcomes the £494 million investment in Lancashire’s transport infrastructure thanks to savings from the northern leg of HS2.

The Council resolves to support the efforts of Hyndburn’s Member of Parliament in seeking to secure some of this funding for an option engineering study to look at the options for solving the congestion problems at the Hare & Hounds Junction in Clayton-le-Moors.

The Council recognises that this traffic situation at the junction cannot continue, the status quo being undesirable for both drivers and residents, and will support Hyndburn’s Member of Parliament in her effort to obtain funding from Lancashire County Council for an option engineering study.”

Councillor Haythornthwaite spoke to introduce the main elements of the motion.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council welcomes the £494 million investment in Lancashire’s transport infrastructure thanks to savings from the northern leg of HS2.**

- (2) **That the Council resolves to support the efforts of Hyndburn's Member of Parliament in seeking to secure some of this funding for an option engineering study to look at the options for solving the congestion problems at the Hare & Hounds Junction in Clayton-le-Moors.**
- (3) **That the Council recognises that this traffic situation at the junction cannot continue, the status quo being undesirable for both drivers and residents, and will support Hyndburn's Member of Parliament in her effort to obtain funding from Lancashire County Council for an option engineering study.**

5) Economic Strategy

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Zak Khan and seconded by Councillor Peter Britcliffe under Council Procedure Rule A9:

"This Council welcomes proposals for an economic investment strategy to provide a basis to attract and retain business in Hyndburn."

Councillors Paddy Short, Noordad Aziz, Josh Allen, Mohammed Younis and Carole Haythornthwaite spoke in favour of the motion.

Councillor Mike Booth spoke to extol the benefits of local authorities investing in schemes which would provide cheaper energy for local businesses. Councillor Munsif Dad highlighted the opportunity for links to Accrington and Rossendale College's Business Centre.

Resolved - **That this Council welcomes proposals for an economic investment strategy to provide a basis to attract and retain business in Hyndburn.**

With the agreement of the Mayor, Councillor Noordad Aziz read aloud a message from Councillor Abdul Khan.

Councillor Abdul Khan wished to announce that he would not stand for re-election in 2024 after 12 years on the Council. He could not be present tonight due to illness and this would have been his final Council meeting. He was pleased that the date had been changed to accommodate those observing Ramadan. He had thoroughly enjoyed his time on the Council, serving the people of Hyndburn. He mentioned a number of friends and colleagues who had passed away during his tenure, of whom he had fond memories. He hoped that all would continue to work to promote community cohesion in the Borough and he thanked numerous individuals for their support over the years. Finally, he wished everyone all the very best for the future.

The Chief Executive commented that public service could be difficult at times. He expressed his thanks to all those councillors whose term of office was coming to an end, and wished them well whether they chose to retire or to stand again at the local election in May.

The Mayor thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed