
LEADER'S POLICY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Wednesday 11 February 2026

Present: Councillors Munsif Dad BEM JP (in the Chair), Councillors Melissa Fisher and Kimberley Whitehead
Apologies Councillors Zak Khan and Kath Pratt

12 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Zak Khan and Kath Pratt..

13 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday, 23rd October 2025 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Agreed - **That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.**

14 Matters arising (other than those already included on the agenda)

Jane Ellis, Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services) raised the following matters:

(a) Integrity of the Standards Process

Since the discussion on standards at the last meeting of the Board, further standards issues had arisen. It might, therefore, be necessary to review the Council's procedures and to discuss any suggested improvements cross-party. Ms Ellis would hope to commence the review within the next few weeks with a view to any changes proposed being submitted to the Council's Annual Meeting for approval.

(b) Members Allowances

The proposed amendments to the Members Allowances Scheme had been approved at the Council meeting held on 15th January 2026.

(c) Mayoral Car

An order had now been placed for the new Mayoral car. The Council would lease a petrol/electric hybrid BMW 5 Series saloon.

Julian Joinson, Member Services Manager reminded councillors that the following matter had been raised at the Council meeting on 13th November 2025.

(d) Question Time

A request had been made by Councillor Zak Khan for Board to consider whether to seek an amendment to the Council Procedure Rules to allow a supplementary question to be asked in the case of a question originating from a member of the public. Councillor Dad indicated that he would prefer that supplementary questions only be permitted in the case of

councillors' questions.

Councillor Whitehead enquired if officers responded directly to members of the public who had submitted a question. Councillor Dad noted that it was usually the role of the Portfolio Holder to send a reply. Officers confirmed that they captured postal address information regarding the questioners to facilitate this and to ensure that the questions had been submitted by residents of Hyndburn. Councillor Fisher asked if the current procedure had been communicated to all councillors. This was confirmed.

Councillor Whitehead described the process adopted by Lancashire County Council for public questions. Those persons who had submitted questions and who were present at the meeting would have their question taken as tabled unless they had requested in advance of the meeting to read it aloud. No supplementary questions were allowed. If a member of the public who had submitted notice of a question was unable to be present at the meeting, the question would not be answered during the meeting. However, the Council would provide a written response to all questions listed on the agenda. Ms Ellis confirmed that, in Hyndburn, members of the public had never been permitted to read out their own question.

Agreed - **To reaffirm the procedure for Question Time as previously approved.**

15 Nominations for the Appointment of Aldermen and Freemen

Members were invited to propose potential nominees for the honours of Aldermen and Freemen in 2026. The intention was to broach cross-party support for any nominations proposed and to seek the consent of the individuals concerned in advance of a Special Meeting of the Council to be held on 26th March 2026, on the rising of the ordinary Council meeting.

An extract from the Civic Protocol was provided, which set out guidance on the selection of suitable candidates.

If appointed, the new Aldermen and Freemen would then be invited to the Mayor Making Council on 20th June 2026 to receive their awards and for a celebration of their achievements.

Councillor Dad commented that the award of Freeman for Councillors Marlene Haworth (deceased) and Dave Parkins had already been discussed and agreed by the political group leaders. Ms Ellis confirmed that there were precedents for allowing awards to be made posthumously. The Leader noted the proposed timescale for the awards to be agreed and the presentation ceremony.

Members considered two further potential names for the award of Freeman. The names would be treated as confidential until the individuals concerned had been approached to see if they would accept the award. Councillor Dad would discuss the latest names with Councillor Khan, who was believed to be in agreement with the appointment of up to four new Freemen.

In respect of the appointment of new Aldermen, Councillor Whitehead requested a list of those former councillors who would be eligible for the award in accordance with the Civic Protocol. One possible name was suggested. It was acknowledged that care would need to be taken around any nominations where this might give rise to controversy or adverse publicity. The Leader commented that he would envisage the creation of around 5 new Aldermen.

Agreed

- (1) To note the proposal to appoint 4 new Freemen, including the proposed award to Councillors Marlene Haworth and Dave Parkins and that further cross-party discussions would be held about the additional names put forward.**
- (2) To note the proposal to create at round 5 new Aldermen and that further cross-party discussions would be held about any names put forward.**
- (3) To request the Member Services Manager to provide a list of those former councillors who would be eligible for the Alderman award, in accordance with the criteria set out in the Civic Protocol.**

16 Nominations for the King's Honours Lists

Julian Joinson, Member Service Manager, introduced this item, which flowed from announcements made at the Council meeting on 15th January 2026 of CBE and MBE awards to two citizens with a local connection, but who were not residents of the Borough. The Chief Executive had subsequently asked for the Board to consider the possibility of proposing a number of Hyndburn citizens to be recipients of awards under the King's Birthday or New Years Honours Lists.

Nominations could be made to the Cabinet Office for consideration by the Independent Honours Committee. There were no deadlines for the receipt of nomination forms, but any nominations might take between 12 to 18 months to be determined. The honours should be reserved for people:

- who had changed things especially by solid, practical achievement;
- whose work had brought distinction to British life or enhanced the UK's reputation;
- who had excelled in their area or activity.

A copy of the Cabinet Office Nomination Guidance was provided.

Additionally, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) had recently written to local authorities and other bodies to invite them to consider the submission of nominations for the 2027 New Years Honours List. MHCLG was looking for nominations for people from across the UK who worked or volunteered in the following areas:

- Local Government
- Faith, integration and communities
- Planning
- Housing
- Holocaust Memorial
- Rough sleeping and homelessness
- Resilience (supporting / preparation / response to local emergency situations)
- Building safety
- Refugee resettlement.

A separate on-line form was available for applications submitted via MHCLG, but the process was similar to that publicised by the Cabinet Office. The closing date for nominations for the 2027 honours via MHCLG was midnight on 6th March 2026.

A further nomination stream was available for voluntary groups who might be eligible to receive the King's Award for Voluntary Service.

Councillor Whitehead indicated that three nominations had been proposed around 12 months ago. The nomination process required that names should be treated as confidential.

It was reported that the opportunity to nominate deserving individuals was already being taken up personally by councillors and that formal nomination by the Council was not considered to be necessary.

Agreed - **To note the approach currently in place for the nomination of individuals and voluntary groups for the various King's Honours Lists.**

17 Other Business

1) Town Twinning

Councillor Fisher requested an update in relation to town twinning between Accrington and Khust, in Ukraine. Councillor Whitehead indicated that this had been agreed and that the Acting Mayor of Khust had invited representatives of Hyndburn to visit the city. However, travel to Ukraine remained restricted. Ukrainian delegates had visited Accrington on a number of occasions, although this was not the official civic party. The Council remained in touch with the Acting Mayor of Khust.

Mr Joinson indicated that because of the travel difficulties the formal town twinning agreement had not yet been signed. A joint ceremony had originally been envisaged. However, this was not a legally binding document. Councillor Fisher added that twinning would be an important legacy for Councillor Haworth, who had promoted the initiative.

The Leader enquired about the process to complete town twinning. Ms Ellis suggested that the draft document should be signed here and returned to Khust for their respective signatures.

Mr Joinson reported that the most recent correspondence from Khust, dated 30th January 2026, had included a request for generators to power essential services in the wake of Russian targeting of Ukrainian power infrastructure. Councillor Whitehead undertook to discuss this matter with Dr Valeriy Hrymchak, a representative of the Ukrainian Community in Hyndburn.

Agreed - **To note the update on town twinning and to request that the Member Services Manager seek to finalise the signing of the formal town twinning agreement between Accrington and Khust, Ukraine.**

2) Conference Microphone System

Mr Joinson reported that Democratic Services officers were due to meet the conference system contractors, Public-i, at the Town Hall, Accrington, on Monday 16th February to plan for the installation work, which due to take place in the week commencing 2nd March 2026.

3) Provision of Security for Cabinet Meetings

Ms Ellis enquired whether the continued provision of external security for meetings of the Cabinet held at Scaitcliffe House was required. Councillor Dad responded that this had been discussed with officers yesterday and it had been agreed to retain the security for the Cabinet Budget meeting, but to review this thereafter with a view to ceasing provision if there were no security issues arising.

Councillor Whitehead highlighted the introduction of Operation Ford, which was a new national policing provision aiming to strengthen protective security and policing support for councillors, elected mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and candidates for those roles. The scope of the initiative was broader than simply providing support during elections. A Force Elected Official Adviser (FEOA) would provide briefings on personal security to the council and its councillors/candidates and would help to coordinate relevant intelligence on threats/risks to elected officials in the local area. Operation Ford would shortly be rolled out across Lancashire.

4) By-election for the St Oswald Ward

Councillor Dad enquired if a by-election would be arranged for the vacancy in the St Oswalds ward.

Ms Ellis reported that if a casual vacancy occurred in the six months before the date on which that elected member would have retired, a by-election was not to be held (the Six Month Rule). Councillor Haworth had been due to retire on 11th May 2026, so a by-election could not be called in this instance.

In respect of the Government's proposal to postpone the local elections in May 2026, the Order had now been made but was not yet in force. A Judicial Review of the Government's decision had been submitted by Reform UK and was due to be heard at the end of February 2026. If the Judicial Review was unsuccessful and the Order to postpone the local elections commenced, the Council would aim to run a by-election on 7th May 2026. The Returning Officer would liaise with councillors, as appropriate, and the relevant election notices would be published.

Councillor Dad noted that the Judicial Review would consider the decision-making process followed by the Government and would determine whether to allow or quash the decision. He asked what would happen if the claimant lost the case. Ms Ellis indicated that there was a right of appeal by the claimant, subject to leave being granted by the High Court. However, it was unlikely that there would be sufficient time to hear the matter before the election process needed to commence. In any event, a judge might refuse leave or Reform UK might decide not to pursue an appeal. She added that once the Order had commenced the courts could not quash the decision. The outcome of the case would be difficult to predict, as there was no precedent for this matter.

18 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The date of the next Leader's Policy Development Board meeting would be determined as appropriate.

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed