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# LEADER'S POLICY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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**Wednesday 29 April 2026**

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

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**19 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

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

**20 Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

**Agreed**

- **That, subject to the deletion of the following words at the end of the last paragraph of Minute 16:**

**“and that formal nomination by the Council was not considered to be necessary”**

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

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

There were no matters arising on this occasion.

**22 Charter Trustees**

Jane Ellis, Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services), presented a report on the possible creation of charter trustees following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

She commented that members had expressed some support for the preservation of a sense of local identity following the establishment of any unitary authority for the area under LGR. Other East Lancashire districts were also known to be considering this matter. There were two potential courses of action, of which the establishment of community trustees was one, the other being creation of new town or parish councils, which was considered at Agenda Item 5. Either proposal would require inclusion as part of the Structural Changes Order for the area.

The report outlined the following matters:

Provision for charter trustees was made by way of Section 246 Local Government Act 1972 and the Charter Trustee Regulations 1996 and 2009.

Charter trustees could be created by the Structural Changes Order that would give effect to LGR. They could be put in place for a part, or parts of the Borough where there was not

already a town or parish council. The charter trustees were a corporate body and would be known as "The Charter Trustees of .....".

Charter trustees could be created for all, or part of a district (so, in the case of Hyndburn, for all, or part of the current Borough) and would comprise the new unitary councillors for the wards within the area concerned. If there were less than 3 charter trustees, local people could be selected to make up the numbers.

Trustees would have a civic, ceremonial role for the area concerned to enable the continuation of historic traditions. The following would vest in them in respect of that area:

- insignia (e.g. mayoral chains)
- plate
- any charters.

They should also elect a mayor and deputy mayor annually from amongst the charter trustees. However, they would not hold land and buildings or any property used for the statutory functions of the new unitary council. Unlike a town / parish council, they also had no powers to provide local services and no role in local governance.

The charter trustees would be required to meet within 6 weeks of reorganisation and would have to elect a mayor and deputy mayor as the first item of business. Thereafter, the trustees could meet as often as they wished. In subsequent years, the annual meeting would have to be held within 21 days of the unitary council's Annual Meeting.

The charter trustees could set a precept to cover their reasonable costs, and this would be added to the Council Tax payable in the area concerned. There would be no precept for the charter trustees' first year of operation and the reasonable costs of the charter trustees would be funded by the new unitary council. The charter trustees were required to keep accounts of their expenditure and they would be subject to audit.

Charter trustees were intended to be temporary, but in fact, they would continue unless and until a parish / town council was set up for the area concerned. If a parish / town council was created then it would automatically take over the rights and property of the charter trustees. It was noted that some charter trustee arrangements set up during local government reorganisation in 1974 were still in existence.

Ms Ellis reminded members that the mayoral chains of the former urban district councils were currently on display in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall and that charity trustees would provide a way to preserve these locally and to do similarly for the Hyndburn civic regalia. There might also be scope to negotiate with the new unitary authority about use of their mayoral car for special occasions.

Councillor Dad expressed a view that it might be beneficial to establish this arrangement to encompass the whole of Hyndburn, which might include some 12-18 ward councillors from the new unitary authority as charter trustees (depending on the warding arrangements).

**Agreed**

- **To note the report on the possible creation of charter trustees following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).**

## 23 Community Governance Reviews

Jane Ellis, Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services), presented a report on the possible creation of new town or parish councils following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Ms Ellis commented that Hyndburn currently had one parished area, Altham. Districts such as Burnley, which had numerous parish councils, might conceivably wish to parish the whole of their current area.

The report outlined the following matters:

New parish / town councils could only be created following a community governance review ("CGR"). Sections 79-102 Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, set out the relevant provisions. Additional information was also contained in the Government's statutory *Guidance on Community Governance Reviews 2010*.

A CGR could:

- create new parishes;
- create new parish councils; and
- abolish or merge existing parishes and parish councils.

By law, the CGR was required to consider the following:

- the interests and identity of the community;
- effective and convenient governance; and
- impact on community cohesion.

The focus of a CGR was usually on:

- community empowerment;
- improving local democracy; and
- effective service delivery.

The statutory guidance suggested that a CGR should be carried out every 10-15 years, but the last time Hyndburn Borough Council had considered the matter was in 2009, when a CGR was proposed for Great Harwood. Ultimately, this did not proceed as preliminary public consultation had indicated a lack of public support, mainly due to the cost to residents of a possible parish council precept.

A CGR could be carried out for all, or part of the Borough.

The process was broadly as follows:

- terms of reference for the CGR should be published by the Council and the CGR would commence;
- the Council would carry out consultation and invite submissions from the public, the county council, local businesses and local voluntary bodies;
- the Council would consider the submissions received and, assuming it wished to proceed, it would formulate detailed recommendations. The recommendations would need to include the following:
  - size of new parish;
  - name of new parish;

- boundaries of new parish;
- number of parish councillors;
- whether the new parish should have a parish council;
- whether the parish council should be warded; and
- if there were to be wards, the name, size and boundaries of these;
- the Council would publish detailed recommendations and carry out further consultation on these;
- the Council would consider the responses to the consultation, and assuming it wished to proceed, would approve the recommendations (with or without amendment) by making a Community Governance Order;
- elections to the new parish council(s) would be held the following May;
- By law, a new parish was required to have a minimum of 5 parish councillors and the Government guidance suggested that a parish council should have between 7 - 25 parish councillors; and
- By law, if a new parish had an electorate of fewer than 150, it could not have a parish council. However, if it had an electorate of 1000 or more, it was required to have a parish council.

A CGR was required to be completed within 12 months of publication of the CGR's terms of reference. Because of the work involved, and the consultation requirements, a CGR would take 6-12 months to complete. If the formation of one or more new parish councils was approved, the local authority would make a Community Governance Order. There would then be elections to the new parish council(s) in the May following the making of the Community Governance Order.

Hyndburn Borough Council was still able to commence a CGR should it chose to do so, but it would not have time to implement the creation of new parish councils, by holding elections to the same, before it ceased to exist. However, the outcome of a CGR could be implemented by the shadow council for the new unitary council if the Structural Changes Order permitted this and the shadow council chose to do so.

The report included a timeline for a recent example which had been implemented in Barrow-in-Furness and details of a list of functions under the 2007 Act which had been included in the Cumbria SCO to empower the shadow authorities to implement the necessary community governance changes. This would have to be specifically asked for in the Lancashire SCO, as it was not a standard provision in SCO's generally.

Councillor Dad remarked that the previous experience in Great Harwood, where there had been no appetite for this approach, might be a useful indicator of future levels of support. The Leader of the Council would wish to see strong cross-party support if this option was to be pursued.

Ms Ellis outlined the functions and powers of a parish council generally, including the power to set a precept and the role as a statutory consultee for planning purposes. She also noted that in the case of Barrow Town Council the authority had been granted a licence by Westmorland and Furness Council to use Barrow Town Hall.

In summary, the process of establishing a parish or parishes would involve a significant amount of work. It was also worth noting that, In the case of Westmorland and Furness Council a boundary review of its whole area had been commenced within one year of its inception.

**Agreed**

- **To note the report on the possible creation of new town or parish councils following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).**

## **24 Proposed Warding Arrangements for Hyndburn under LGR**

Members were provided with a map showing proposed warding arrangements for the Hyndburn area following Local Government Reorganisation. The map illustrated a proposal to seek to split the current County Division of Great Harwood, Rishton and Clayton-le-Moors, for the purposes of any new unitary authority, into two electoral wards. The proposed unitary wards would comprise the following areas:

- The current Netherpton and Overton wards of the Borough of Hyndburn
- The current Altham ward (part thereof – polling districts ZA, ZB2, ZC and ZD), and the Clayton-le-Moors and Rishton wards of the Borough of Hyndburn

Jane Ellis, Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services), explained the rationale for the proposed split. In the two-tier local government areas of Lancashire, only Hyndburn and Pendle Borough Councils had a County Division with two seats. The above proposals would retain an appropriate level of democratic representation within the footprint of the former County Division. The split also aligned with the existing Borough Wards and County Division boundaries, (save in so far as polling district ZB1 in the Altham Borough Ward would remain within the footprint of the former Accrington North County Division).

It was envisaged that the new arrangements would provide for two (or possibly three) members per unitary ward.

In defining the ward structure there were two main considerations:

- Population sizes in each ward; and
- Local identity.

The proposed split across the current County Division had regard to the above factors. In any event, there would be a boundary review, by the Boundary Commission for England, commencing immediately upon establishment of the new unitary authority.

Ms Ellis undertook to provide a further report following the local elections.

**Agreed**

- **To note the report on the proposed warding arrangements for Hyndburn under Local Government Reorganisation LGR**

## **25 Other Business**

### **1) Integrity of the Standard Process**

Jane Ellis, Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services), reported that in relation to Minute 14(a) - Standards Process, on 11 February 2026, she intended to bring a report back to the Board at a later date. A review of the Member/Officer protocol was also taking place and a revised draft was in progress.

Councillor Whitehead commented that she supported the use of independent persons providing reports during the assessment stage of the standards process. Ms Ellis

acknowledged that this was useful on occasion, but that the use of this facility was often both time consuming and costly.

**25 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