



Morecambe Town Council

Morecambe Town Hall,
Marine Road
Morecambe
Lancashire
LA4 5AF

www.morecambe.gov.uk



14 July 2023

To: Members of Morecambe Town Council - Cllr C Ainscough, Cllr J Ainscough, Cllr D Blacow, Cllr D Bottoms, Cllr L Bradbury, Cllr T Clarke, Cllr B Cooper, Cllr F Cooper, Cllr C Cozler, Cllr R Dennison, Cllr W Dixon, Cllr K Gee, Cllr J Goodrich, Cllr J Hanson, Cllr P Hart, Cllr C Kent, Cllr D Knight, Cllr G Knight, Cllr J Livermore, Cllr M Pattison, Cllr J Pilling, Cllr J Rogerson, Cllr J Slater, Cllr M Stenneken, Cllr R Walsh, Cllr D Whitaker.

Dear Councillor,

Dated this fourteenth day of July 2023, you are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of Morecambe Town Council to be held at 19:00 on the twentieth day of July 2023.

The meeting will be held in Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road East, Morecambe, LA4 5AF to transact business on the agenda.

Note to Councillors:

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please notify the Proper Officer of your apologies.

Note to Public:

Electors of the town wishing to address the Council are advised to notify the Proper Officer before 10am on the day of the meeting. Permission to speak at the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chairman. Public participation session at a meeting shall not require response or debate and shall solely consist of matters relating to items on the agenda. If the representation made is considered outside the remit of Morecambe Town Council, electors will be referred to the principal authority or other appropriate body.

Your sincerely,

Mr Luke Trevaskis, CiLCA, PSLCC.
Chief Executive

Agenda

1. **Apologies** - to receive apologies for absence and consider any reasons for acceptance.
(*Local Government Act 1972, Section 85*)
2. **Declarations** - to record any declared interests relating to the business of the meeting and receive any dispensation requests from the Proper Officer.
(*Localism Act 2011, Section 31*)
3. **Minutes** - to approve the minutes of the last meeting.
(*Local Government Act 1972, Section 111*)
4. **Public Participation** - to receive representations from electors that have requested to speak by 10am regarding a matter on the agenda.
(*Morecambe Town Council Standing Orders - Sections 1d-1l*)

Note: any electors addressing the Council must not exceed a three minute time limit.

5. Morecambe Ticket Office

It has been announced that considerations are being given to the closure of ticket offices at railway stations throughout the country and it is understood the Rail Delivery Group is speeding up proposals to close up to 1000 railway station ticket offices across Britain in a move to save costs.

The loss of the ticket office at Morecambe Railway Station could make travel more difficult for many people and especially people with disabilities or older constituents.

The ticket office at Morecambe Railway Station provides a vital service to our residents to enable them to make enquiries, purchase tickets, and travel with confidence. Not all residents are able to use a ticket machine or have access to the technology to book a ticket in advance.

It is proposed that Morecambe Town Council announces resistance to these proposals and resolves to write to Mark Harper MP, Secretary of State for Transport, Jacqueline Starr, Chief Executive of the Railway Delivery Group, and the CEO's of all railway companies that operate from Morecambe Railway Station, to advise them of the challenges that would be experienced by residents should these plans progress.

Proposed: Cllr David Whitaker
Seconder: Cllr Margaret Pattison

6. Morecambe Skatepark

Morecambe has a problem with anti-social behaviour, similar to that of many towns. This is combined with a lack of facilities to encourage young people to get involved in recreational activities.

The surface of the skate park on Central Drive, Morecambe, requires repair work and the Council has received several complaints from users.

The skatepark is currently an underused facility for young people which could, with some improvement work, help to encourage positive interaction with public realm infrastructure, and reduce the likelihood of young people engaging in anti social behaviour.

Whilst the skatepark is owned by Lancaster City Council, it is understood the area may be repurposed upon the arrival of Eden. Therefore, funding at the higher tier authority has not been found. It is estimated that repair work would cost approximately £8,000, and would provide a temporary solution for a minimum of two years.

It is proposed that Morecambe Town Council funds the cost of the repair work to resurface the facility on Central Drive and return it to a useable recreational facility for young people.

It is also proposed that Morecambe Town Council works with Lancaster City Council and other agencies to secure a long-term provision for skateboarding in Morecambe if it is to be that the current skatepark will cease to exist when Eden is developed.

Proposed by Cllr Clark Kent
Seconded by Cllr Geoff Knight

Officer Note: any such cost incurred for public realm infrastructure improvements should be coded to Environment / Public Realm budget.

6. Frontierland Committee

The new administration of MTC has expressed a keen interest to influence and positively change the future placemaking of Morecambe.

At its meeting held on 25 May 2023, MTC resolved to form a Frontierland Committee - the terms of reference for which were to be deferred to a future meeting.

The new administration of MTC has also reformed the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - agreeing its new Terms of Reference at its meeting held on 11 July 2023.

At a recent High Street Task Force (HSTF) meeting, discussions were had about how to unlock Morecambe's potential. The HSTF is an alliance of placemaking experts supporting communities and local government to transform their towns.

It was noted that if Morecambe is going to make the most of its future, it needs a strategic regeneration plan to unify the vision, coordinate partners and guide investment and development.

Last month it was announced that Homes England's Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) can now be used for regeneration projects. However, it is required that clear and realistic regeneration strategies are implemented in order to attract funding.

There have been key challenges identified with unlocking the economic potential of Morecambe:

- There is currently a lack of branding and identity that can provide a clearer sense of place;
- Large scale spatial change is required to support greater visitor numbers;
- Risks exist of housing displacement and loss of recreational space for the local community;
- Local residents feel unheard and disenfranchised;
- Stakeholders need to identify clearer leadership and partnerships, working closely with the community to design a town that can benefit both visitors and residents alike;
- There has been a decline in the retail trading environment in Morecambe and a lack of support for independent shops;
- There is currently insufficient bed spaces to support additional leisure and recreation in the town;
- There is insufficient variety of short-term accommodation for tourists who prefer AirBnb models;
- Poor/vacant condition of properties give a negative perception of the town;
- There is limited 'all weather' leisure and visitor attractions;
- Residential areas have some of the highest levels of deprivation in England;
- There is a low skills base;
- Low house prices and commercial values limit private-sector investment interest for key sites such as Frontierland as private sector is unable to realise viable 'transformational' development;
- There is poor transportation links, especially by rail, and there is an expanse of car parking hindering movement throughout the town without clear directions for tourists;
- The town needs to unlock more productive land uses to attract the same level of interest as other successful beach resorts such as Margate and Weymouth.

There are also several positive indicators that will be key to maintaining Morecambe's existing cultural offer, including:

- Its annual programme of festivals - especially events that encourage additional overnight stays;
- Markets;
- Performances and shows;
- Interaction with the beach, and associated leisure and recreational activities;
- Local community groups.

Aerial photograph of Morecambe:



Activations that have transformed other seaside towns:

Weymouth Volleyball Court:



Margate Turner Contemporary:



Saltburn-by-the-Sea Beach Huts:



In 2021 the Council resolved to form a Frontierland Working Group following the lack of development of the site from its prior owners, Morrisons Plc.

During the same time, Lancaster City Council was engaged in discussions with Morrisons Plc and became the freehold owner of the site on 29 July 2021. The purchase price was £3 million plus VAT, funded through borrowing.

Members of MTC noted residents had raised concern regarding the future of the site, and it was understood local people were worried the site would be allocated solely for housing.

In September 2022, Lancaster City Council announced an expression of interest round for the site, calling for ideas for potential uses.

Members of MTC consulted their constituents and brought several ideas to the table.

MTC engaged Grimshaw Architects to work with members to produce a presentation that could provide a voice to the community by showing Lancaster City Council how the space could be used to bring about transformational change to Morecambe, incorporating both private-sector investment and community use.

MTC was keen to work with Lancaster City Council, and other partners, to ensure any future development of the Frontierland site included mixed-use space for local people to enjoy. When surveyed, MTC received positive feedback from over 1.6K residents who expressed ideas for the future of the Frontierland site. An interactive community engagement session was also held and residents brought forward their own inspirational plans for mixed-use community-led projects.



Unaware of how imminently the City Council would progress the development of the site, MTC resolved to safeguard a £1M community fund in 2023 in order to bring forward a project that would enhance the space and bring free access to more local recreation and leisure facilities including open spaces, skill-sharing opportunities, and activation sites to promote and celebrate the town's art and culture.

Whilst the decision to increase the precept to accommodate the fund received mixed feedback and attracted approximately fifteen formal complaints, there was also a large number of residents who supported the Council's decision (over 70 residents requested to join a 'community voice' group to help unlock the future potential of community use on the site).

What has become clear, taking into account different sentiments towards the precept, all feedback suggests that residents feel MTC has been the first local authority in a long time listening to their voices and trying to deliver something for the town that local people could be involved with to achieve a sense of pride and community ownership for the people of Morecambe.

The current administration has the opportunity now to steer the direction of MTC's involvement in Morecambe's future and it would seem that there is a requirement for further community consultation and liaison with other agencies and local authorities. As such, it is recommended to set terms of reference for a committee that affords its current administration the ability in the coming months to undertake more discussions and firmly establish its role in the future of the town. This committee's scope could be limited to the future of the former Frontierland site, or extend beyond the site to include playing a key role in the future of the regeneration of the entire town.

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Committee Name:

1. Objective

This Committee is constituted in order to discharge the business of Morecambe Town Council in regards to planning and regeneration.

2. Membership

Membership shall consist of XX members, elected annually.

The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected by the full council. The Vice Chairman of the Committee shall be elected by the membership.

A quorum shall consist of five members.

3. Areas of Responsibility

The Committee has the authority delegated in sub paragraphs set out below.

- i) The primary responsibility of this Committee will be to play a significant role in place leadership, working with other agencies to oversee the Council's input into matters concerning the planning and regeneration of Morecambe, including projects earmarked for key sites such as Frontierland;
- ii) To explore the key challenges that Morecambe faces and propose solutions to full council on how these could be improved, playing a significant role in any rebrand of Morecambe that will provide a clearer tourism offer;
- iii) To hold regular meetings and consultations with the community, and engage with local stakeholders and authorities, to establish a vision for Morecambe's future;
- iv) To explore opportunities for community uses on sites in Morecambe (such as Frontierland) and establish how to work with other agencies such as Lancaster City Council to bring these forward;
- v) To undertake research into other funding streams and grant opportunities (such as UKSPF) to secure a fairer share of investment into Morecambe;
- vi) To meet as frequently as required to consider items of business;
- vii) This Committee is not delegated to approve any community regeneration projects that the Council may wish to undertake, and such authority is reserved for full council decision.

5. Meetings

The Proper Officer may call committee meetings when necessary. The Chairman, or two other members, of the Committee may also call a meeting of the Committee. All meetings of the Committee will be minuted.

6. Review

The terms of reference of the Committee are to be reviewed annually.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council is recommended to pass the following recommendation in relation to the following items:

“That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of that Act.”

Festival Applications

8. Festival Grant Application 2023/4-008 - to consider the grant application and agree actions.

Received: 31.5.23

At its meeting held on 11 July 2023, the Council deferred this grant application until such time that the applicant had fulfilled their obligations to the terms of the grant received in the prior year - namely the submission of a full set of accounts. Since the Council's meeting held on 11 July, the applicant has submitted the outstanding accounts.