



Morecambe Town Council

Morecambe Town Hall,
Marine Road
Morecambe
Lancashire
LA4 5AF

www.morecambe.gov.uk



12 September 2024

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 twelfth day of September 2024, you are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Morecambe Town Council to be held at 19:00 on the nineteenth day of September 2024, to transact business listed in the agenda.

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.

3. **Minutes** - to approve the minutes of the last meeting.
(Local Government Act 1972, Section 111)
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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. **Planning Application 24/00621/FUL** - to note the concerns of members regarding Planning Application **24/00479/VCN (Variation of Condition 2 at 1 Lodges Grove, Bare, Morecambe)** and ratify the below objection which was submitted to Lancaster City Council on 16 August 2024.

"RE: Planning Application 24/00479/VCN

I am writing to advise Morecambe Town Council, as a statutory consultee, objections to Planning Application **24/00479/VCN** in the strongest possible terms.

The Council objects to the proposed amendment to condition 2 attached to planning permission 86/00369/HST at 1 Lodges Grove, Bare, Morecambe. This condition currently limits the use of the property to a home for the elderly, and the application seeks to change this to a home for adults with mental health issues, learning difficulties, and/or physical disabilities. While the Council understands the need for diverse care facilities, it believes this particular application presents several issues that could negatively impact the local community and the residents themselves.

Impact on the Local Community and Environment

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of fostering strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by ensuring that development meets the needs of all community members while supporting their well-being. However, the proposed amendment could result in significant disturbances to the local area, which is predominantly residential.

Residents have already reported loud noises and disturbances originating from the property, which currently houses younger adults with complex needs. This is in stark contrast to the care of elderly residents, who generally cause fewer disruptions. The increased noise and activity associated with younger, stronger, and more active residents, can have a detrimental effect on the quality of life for neighbours, especially those with young children who feel they are now restricted from playing safely on the street.

Parking and Safety Concerns

The application does not provide sufficient details regarding the number of carers required to be on-site at any given time, nor does it adequately address the parking situation. Inadequate parking arrangements pose a significant risk, especially in a facility housing vulnerable adults. With potentially multiple carers' vehicles, as well as visitors, the current parking provisions are insufficient, leading to congestion and safety hazards in the surrounding area.

Concerns About Resident Safety and Care

There have been troubling reports from local residents that some of the young men housed at the facility have displayed challenging behaviours, including overpowering carers in public, climbing out of windows, and other actions that raise serious concerns about the adequacy of the facility and the staff's ability to manage such residents. These incidents suggest that the facility is ill-equipped to provide the level of care required, which could result in potential threats to both the residents themselves and the surrounding community.

Lack of Outdoor Space and Poor Living Conditions

The property has very limited outdoor space, which is not conducive to a healthy living environment for young adults with complex needs. Reports indicate that residents are often confined indoors, leading to a lack of fresh air and exercise, both of which are crucial for their well-being. The Council understands there have been incidents where by the young adults have climbed out of windows, and this raises significant safety concerns for local families. This not only impacts the residents but also restricts other families in the neighbourhood from fully enjoying their environment.

Disregard for Planning Protocols

It has come to our attention that this is a retrospective planning application, which indicates that the changes have already been implemented without prior approval. This shows a lack of respect for the planning process and raises concerns about the management's approach to operations and compliance with regulations. This disregard for obtaining necessary permissions beforehand further supports the argument that the facility may not be operating with the community's best interests in mind.

Conclusion

In light of the above concerns, the Council requests that Lancaster City Council refuse the amendment to condition 2. The proposed changes would not only disrupt the local community but also fail to provide a suitable living environment for the residents in need of care. It is essential that any development in the area is carefully considered to ensure it aligns with the principles of the NPPF and supports the health, safety, and well-being of all members of the community."

6. **Baylight** - to receive a presentation from Baylight regarding a request for an additional £5,000.00 for the light festival in February 2025 (if approved, the budget for which could be coded to the Council's in-house events as a partnership event, or from remaining funds within the Grants Committee budget). To further consider a future multi-year grant to secure the event's continuation.

7. **PKF Littlejohn Invoice** - to approve the payment of £13,310.40 to PKF Littlejohn for external auditing services following challenges correspondence submitted by Internal Audit Yorkshire in relation to the Council's FY2324 accounts. Noting that this payment will exceed the Council's audit budget line for the financial year.

8. **Treasury Management** - to note that the Finance and Governance Committee has given due consideration to a scheme that aims to maximise returns on public funds, and agree that the Finance and Governance Committee's Terms of Reference should be amended to include the additional wording below.

ix) *To **arrange**, monitor and review any council investments, including receipt of **quarterly regular** treasury reports on treasury activity;*

9. Morecambe Promenade Weeds

Motion Name: Approach Lancaster City Council Regarding Weed Growth on Morecambe Promenade and Car Parks

Proposed by: Cllr Geoff Knight

Seconded by: Cllr Martin Bottoms

Background:

Morecambe Town Council has been receiving regular complaints about the unsightly and unmanaged weed growth along the promenade and in car parks across Morecambe. These areas, managed by Lancaster City Council, have seen minimal improvement despite past efforts to engage contractors for manual weed removal. In some cases, weeds have been thrown over the promenade wall into the shore, rather than being properly dealt with, which only exacerbates the problem. To effectively address this issue, weeds need to be treated with a product that targets their roots and prevents regrowth.

While the Town Council understands Lancaster City Council's reservations regarding products containing glyphosate, there are other products marketed as environmentally friendly alternatives that can achieve effective results. Morecambe Town Council is willing to explore these alternative options and work with the City Council to identify and cost solutions that can be implemented sustainably. The aim would be to find a resolution where the City Council covers the costs, while Morecambe Town Council provides the necessary officer/equipment support to maintain and manage the weed growth.

The Town Rangers, who work tirelessly to maintain Morecambe's public spaces, have no authority over City Council-managed land but still receive numerous complaints about these areas. The unchecked weed growth also makes efforts to control weeds on the highway more challenging due to seed dispersal, which continues to worsen the weed problem across the town.

Motion:

Morecambe Town Council resolves to:

1. **Approach Lancaster City Council** to express concerns regarding the growing issue of weed infestation on the promenade and in car parks across the town, and to seek a cooperative solution that addresses both aesthetic and environmental concerns.
2. **Acknowledge past efforts** by Lancaster City Council to engage contractors for manual weed removal but emphasise that the current methods have not resolved the issue as the roots remain untreated, leading to continuous regrowth.
3. **Propose a discussion** about alternative weed treatment methods that do not involve the use of glyphosate but are effective in reducing regrowth. The Town Council is open to exploring these options and costing them, aiming to work with the City Council to implement a solution that benefits the entire community.
4. **Highlight the wider impact** that the visible neglect of public spaces can have on the town. Uncontrolled weeds and unmaintained areas can damage town morale, affecting the sense of pride that residents feel in their surroundings. When public areas appear neglected, it reflects poorly on the town, potentially discouraging visitors and impacting the local economy and tourism.
5. **Stress the importance of pride in place** by noting that well-maintained public spaces not only boost the wellbeing and morale of local residents but also create a more welcoming environment for tourists. Improved aesthetics lead to better experiences for visitors, which can encourage positive word-of-mouth and repeat visits, ultimately benefiting local businesses.
6. **Reducing Resource Demands on Lancaster City Council:** Greater control of weed growth on the Promenade will also reduce the burden on Lancaster City Council. Currently, the absence of a long term solution has led to complaints from residents about the lack of weed management. By working with Lancaster City Council to resolve this, Morecambe Town Council will help to alleviate these concerns and prevent unnecessary strain on the City Council's resources, as there will be fewer complaints. This partnership approach allows the Town Council to be proactive in meeting residents' expectations, while freeing up Lancaster City Council to focus on other priority areas.
7. **Underscore the need for a mutual resolution** between both Councils, which can lead to a long-term solution. By collaborating, both Councils can share expertise, ensuring that Morecambe's public spaces are well-maintained, uplifting for residents, and attractive to tourists.

Finding a mutually beneficial solution to the weed problem will have far-reaching positive effects for the town. It will reduce complaints, enhance the wellbeing of residents, foster local pride, and improve the experiences of tourists, contributing to the economic vitality and social cohesion of Morecambe.

10. Morecambe Spring Planting

Motion Name: Enquiry to Lancaster City Council Regarding Phased Spring Bedding Plant Schemes

Proposed by: Cllr Geoff Knight

Seconded by: Cllr Martin Bottoms

Background:

For several years, Morecambe has been without spring bedding plant schemes, which has diminished the visual appeal of our public spaces. Lancaster City Council previously indicated that due to resource limitations, it is no longer able to undertake this work. Recognising the importance of well-maintained green spaces for both residents and visitors, councillors of Morecambe Town Council wish to explore the possibility of reintroducing phased spring planting to enhance our town's public areas.

Introduction:

The introduction of phased spring bedding plant schemes in Morecambe will bring significant economic and social benefits to the town, enhancing both its visual appeal and the wellbeing of the local community. Research consistently shows that well-maintained public spaces contribute to the vibrancy and sustainability of towns, benefiting residents, visitors, and local businesses alike.

- 1. Boosting Wellbeing and Community Pride:** Attractive and well-kept public spaces improve mental and physical wellbeing. Studies show that access to green, aesthetically pleasing environments reduces stress, promotes relaxation, and encourages outdoor activity, enhancing the quality of life for local residents. Moreover, well-maintained spaces help foster community pride, bringing people together around a shared vision of a more beautiful and inviting town. This sense of ownership can increase community engagement and volunteerism, further improving the town's public areas.
- 2. Attracting Visitors and Boosting Local Businesses:** A visually appealing town is more likely to attract tourists, who contribute significantly to the local economy. Research by The Royal Horticultural Society found that attractive floral displays and well-kept public spaces encourage visitors to spend more time in town centres, increasing footfall for local shops, cafes, and restaurants. In turn, this stimulates economic activity and creates opportunities for local businesses to thrive. Morecambe's reintroduction of spring planting schemes will align with efforts to boost tourism, making it a more attractive destination for visitors from near and far.
- 3. Environmental Sustainability:** Phased planting schemes also provide important ecological benefits. The introduction of vibrant, pollinator-friendly plants will create vital food sources for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, which are essential to maintaining local biodiversity. Planting schemes can contribute to environmental sustainability by supporting urban wildlife, enhancing green spaces, and promoting a healthier ecosystem within Morecambe. Additionally, green initiatives like this align with broader efforts to create more environmentally conscious communities.
- 4. Creating a Welcoming Atmosphere:** Public spaces with thoughtfully designed plant schemes can create a welcoming atmosphere, offering a sense of pride to locals and making visitors feel more connected to the town. Morecambe's history as a coastal destination can be reinforced by enhancing the town's aesthetic appeal with vibrant displays, turning previously underused areas into points of interest for all who pass by.
- 5. Reducing Resource Demands on Lancaster City Council:** The introduction of phased spring planting will also reduce the burden on Lancaster City Council. Currently, the absence of spring planting has led to complaints from residents about the lack of flowers and the increase in weeds in flower beds. By taking on this responsibility, Morecambe Town Council will help to alleviate these concerns and prevent unnecessary strain on the City Council's resources, as there will be fewer complaints and less need for interim weeding before summer planting takes place. This partnership approach allows the Town Council to be proactive in meeting residents' expectations, while freeing up Lancaster City Council to focus on other priority areas.
- 6. Examples from Other Towns:** Towns such as Knutsford and Lytham St Annes have successfully implemented similar planting schemes, resulting in boosted tourism, increased community participation, and

improved local environments. These examples show that such initiatives can deliver tangible results by transforming the town's image and contributing to its long-term success.

By introducing phased spring planting schemes, Morecambe Town Council can improve the town's social, environmental, and economic landscape, offering benefits that will resonate across the community, while reducing the pressure on Lancaster City Council's resources. This initiative will revitalise public spaces, enhance community pride, and contribute to the overall sustainability of Morecambe as a welcoming and thriving town.

Motion:

Morecambe Town Council resolves to:

1. **Make enquiries** with Lancaster City Council to seek permission for Morecambe Town Council to introduce phased planting for spring bedding plant schemes in public spaces throughout Morecambe. The Town Council will assure the City Council that all plants will be purchased/grown by Morecambe Town Council and all planting will be undertaken by Morecambe Town Council officers, with no resources required from Lancaster City Council unless they wish to support a partnership approach, which will remain at their discretion.
2. **Request detailed information** from Lancaster City Council regarding:
 - Areas previously planted with spring bedding schemes.
 - Any logistical or legal considerations involved in Morecambe Town Council taking over the responsibility for planting spring bedding schemes, while noting that the Town Council does not seek any long-term lease or asset transfer of the flower beds. The Town Council wishes only to undertake the planting and maintenance work, with full autonomy over the choice of plants, colour schemes, and methods.
3. **Report back** to the Environment Committee with findings and recommendations for introducing phased spring planting schemes, including:
 - Potential costs and budget considerations for FY2526, and beyond.
 - Partnership opportunities with local businesses, volunteers, and community groups.
 - Any requirements from Lancaster City Council regarding the scheme.

11. Police and Crime Plan Public Consultation

Clive Grunshaw, Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner has launched his [Police and Crime Plan Public Consultation](#). This survey is an opportunity for everyone who lives, works and travels in Lancashire to share feedback on crime and policing as well as the proposed priorities in the PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan 2024- 2029.

As the public's voice in policing, the Commissioner wants to hear from as many people as possible to ensure that the Police and Crime Plan reflects the views of the people of Lancashire and therefore would appreciate if you were able to share the consultation as appropriate.

To consider and approve the below response which has been compiled from feedback received by the Council:

Response to Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner Survey

General Safety Concerns in Morecambe: There are areas of Morecambe where some residents feel less safe than others. These concerns are often related to a perceived lack of police visibility, especially in areas with higher incidences of anti-social behaviour. Some residents report feeling less safe in certain parts of town, particularly at night, where street lighting is poor, and there is limited foot patrol presence. This perception of unsafety is heightened in areas where there are visible signs of vandalism, loitering, and drug-related activities.

Local Crime Issues: In the view of Morecambe Town Council, the biggest problems in the local area are a combination of anti-social behaviour and a lack of sufficient police resources. Anti-social behaviour, including vandalism, public disturbances, and low-level crime, continues to affect the quality of life in some

neighbourhoods. Residents have reported that these issues can escalate during peak times, particularly on weekends and during school holidays, but police resources seem stretched too thin to provide a consistent deterrent.

There is also concern around substance misuse, with drug and alcohol-related incidents being prevalent. These issues are compounded by limited social services available to intervene and support vulnerable individuals. Additionally, an increase in fly-tipping and littering adds to the overall deterioration of some areas, giving the impression of neglect and making residents feel unsafe.

Lancashire Police Strengths: In our opinion, Lancashire Police perform well in responding to serious incidents and dealing with major crimes. The response times to urgent calls are commendable, and their ability to manage large public events safely is well regarded. Lancashire Police's community engagement efforts, such as attending local meetings and holding public consultations, are appreciated by the community.

Areas for Improvement: However, there are areas where Lancashire Police could improve. There is a strong need for more neighbourhood policing, particularly a greater visible presence in the community. Having regular foot patrols would help deter anti-social behaviour, reassure residents, and build trust within the community. In addition, tackling drug and alcohol-related issues could be enhanced by increasing collaborative efforts with local support services. More proactive prevention work, such as targeted youth interventions and educational programmes, could help reduce these issues over time.

Furthermore, an active presence on social media could be beneficial. Increased communication via social platforms would allow residents to stay informed about ongoing operations, success stories, and safety tips. This would also foster better engagement between the police and the community.

Priorities:

- **Building up neighbourhood policing:** Strongly agree
- **Tackling anti-social behaviour:** Strongly agree
- **Preventing violence against women and girls:** Strongly agree
- **Targeting serious and organised crime:** Agree
- **Ensuring an effective and efficient policing service for Lancashire:** Agree

In addition to tackling anti-social behaviour, drug, and alcohol-related issues, there is a clear need for a more active presence on social media to foster better communication between Lancashire Police and the community.

Conclusion: The key to improving safety and reducing crime in Morecambe lies in bolstering neighbourhood policing and addressing anti-social behaviour. While the police's response to serious incidents is effective, increasing visible patrols and community engagement will go a long way in making residents feel safer and more supported.

12. Response to Call for Evidence for the National Independent Curriculum and Assessment Review - to consider the below response to the Department for Education's call for evidence due to launch this month.

Background:

The Government has established an independent Curriculum and Assessment Review, covering key stages 1 to 5, chaired by Professor Becky Francis CBE, an expert in education policy, including curriculum and social inequality. The government's ambition is for a curriculum that delivers excellent foundations in reading, writing and maths, and ensures every young person gets the opportunity to develop creative, digital, and speaking and listening skills particularly prized by employers.

Introduction:

Parish and town councils play a crucial role in local democracy, often acting as the first point of contact between citizens and their local government. Despite their importance, knowledge of these councils remains limited among many young people. This gap in understanding undermines their ability to engage meaningfully in local governance and community development.

Education and encouragement for young people to participate in parish and town councils is crucial, especially considering the current average age of councillors across the 10,000 parish and town councils in the UK is 61 (Source: National Association of Local Councils, NALC¹). This age demographic highlights a significant generational gap in local governance, which poses several challenges:

1. Ensuring Diverse Representation

- **Generational Inclusion:** Younger people bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and a different understanding of issues such as technology, housing, climate change, and social justice. By encouraging their participation, councils can ensure that the needs and aspirations of all generations, especially younger ones, are represented.
- **Engaging with Future Stakeholders:** Young people are directly affected by local government decisions concerning education, transport, employment, and public services. Engaging them in governance ensures that these issues are addressed from the perspective of those who will inherit and live with the long-term impact of these decisions.

2. Sustaining Local Democracy

- **Addressing the Aging Councillor Base:** As many current councillors approach retirement age, there is a risk of a leadership vacuum in local governance if younger individuals do not step up. Proactive efforts to educate and encourage young people to participate in councils will help secure the continuity and sustainability of local democracy.
- **Creating a Pipeline of Future Leaders:** Engaging younger generations in councils helps foster a pipeline of future community leaders. Early exposure to governance roles will develop their skills in leadership, negotiation, and decision-making, preparing them for more prominent roles in public service or even national governance.

3. Building Civic Responsibility and Engagement

- **Instilling Civic Duty:** Educating young people about the role of parish and town councils encourages a sense of civic duty, empowering them to understand that their voices and actions can directly influence the development of their communities.
- **Encouraging Active Citizenship:** Participating in councils enables young people to become actively involved in resolving local issues. This hands-on engagement fosters a stronger sense of community, while empowering them to tackle real-world challenges through democratic means.

4. Adapting to Contemporary Issues

- **Modernising Councils:** Younger councillors are more likely to be familiar with digital tools and modern approaches to communication and problem-solving. Their participation can help councils embrace technology, social media, and digital governance, making councils more accessible and responsive to contemporary issues.
- **Addressing Youth-Specific Concerns:** Young people face challenges that are unique to their generation, such as affordable housing, mental health, and employment opportunities. By participating in local governance, they can ensure that these issues are prioritised and addressed by decision-makers who understand their lived experiences.

5. Bridging the Gap Between Communities and Governance

- **Increasing Trust in Governance:** Encouraging younger people to join councils can help bridge the disconnect between younger generations and local government, which is often perceived as inaccessible or irrelevant. By having younger representatives, councils can foster greater trust and engagement from the wider community.

¹ <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/1101-nalc-launch-new-diversity-report-1>

- **Strengthening Local Community Bonds:** Youth involvement in governance fosters stronger connections between local government and the communities they serve. By actively participating, young people can bring community concerns, including those of their peers, directly to the council's attention, ensuring decisions are community-driven.

By prioritising education and participation in parish and town councils, we can create a more inclusive, dynamic, and forward-thinking local government that is responsive to the needs of all residents, both present and future.

Key reasons for prioritising education about parish and town councils in the national curriculum:

- **Foundation of Local Democracy:** Parish and town councils are the most accessible form of government for individuals. Educating students about their roles ensures they understand how decisions that affect their everyday lives are made at the most local level.
 - **Civic Engagement:** Local councils provide an opportunity for young people to get involved in their communities, including decision-making on important issues like planning, green spaces, and local services. This form of engagement fosters a sense of responsibility and civic pride.
 - **Bridging the Knowledge Gap:** While secondary education focuses on Parliament and national governance, understanding local councils is often neglected. Incorporating this education would give students a more comprehensive view of the political structures that shape their communities.
 - **Future Participation:** Educating young people about these councils encourages future participation, whether through voting, standing for election, volunteering, or future career paths as civil servants. A curriculum that includes parish and town councils will nurture informed, active citizens who are better equipped to contribute to society.
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13. Website and Digital Document Delivery Solutions - to consider the report and recommendation.

14. Festivals and Events Committee

To consider the below recommendations of the Committee:

- i. To consider the criteria amends (in red);
 - ii. To agree the inclusion of the 'Checklist for Applicants';
 - iii. To note no amends to the application form;
 - iv. To agree the inclusion of the 'Grant Appraisal Form' to be used by members to assess each application.
 - v. To consider implementing two application windows per annum.
 - vi. To note that the budget for festivals and event grants has now been allocated, and note that the award window will need to be closed for new applications for this financial year, unless members wish to consider any virements from other budget lines.
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15. Grants Committee

To consider the below recommendations of the Committee:

- i. To consider the criteria amends (in red);
- ii. To agree the inclusion of the 'Checklist for Applicants';
- iii. To note no amends to the application form;
- iv. To agree the inclusion of the 'Grant Appraisal Form' to be used by members to assess each application.
- v. To consider implementing two application windows per annum.

16. Lancaster Local Plan - Issues and Opportunities Consultation

To consider the below draft responses to Lancaster City Council's Local Plan consultation:

Question 1: Do you feel that the Draft Vision presented reflects the right ambitions for this Local Plan Review? Which ambitions do you feel are the most important? Are there any ambitions missing from the Vision?

MTC Response: Vision Feedback

The Morecambe Town Council acknowledges the ambitions outlined in the Draft Vision for the Local Plan Review. However, there are concerns that the Vision does not fully reflect the importance of partnership working with lower-tier authorities, such as town and parish councils, in shaping the future of local areas. Place-shaping requires not just strategic planning at a higher level but also meaningful collaboration with those authorities who have intimate knowledge of the communities they serve.

Key Concerns:

- 1. Lack of Emphasis on Collaborative Governance:** Lower-tier authorities like town councils play a pivotal role in community engagement, service delivery, and local identity. However, the Draft Vision does not adequately highlight the necessity of engaging these councils in the planning process. Successful place-shaping depends on partnership working, and it is crucial that their input and local knowledge are given significant weight in both the development and implementation phases of the plan.
- 2. Community-Led Development:** The Vision should place greater emphasis on creating mechanisms for direct collaboration with town and parish councils to better reflect the needs, aspirations, and unique characteristics of local areas. By involving lower-tier authorities from the outset, the plan can foster stronger community ownership, aligning strategic objectives with grassroots realities.
- 3. Enhanced Local Identity:** Morecambe Town Council believes that lower-tier authorities are vital in enhancing and maintaining the local character and identity of an area. Local councils bring an understanding of place that should be leveraged to ensure that development is contextually appropriate and meets the needs of residents.
- 4. Missed Ambition: Formalising Partnerships for Delivery:** The Vision is missing a clear ambition to formalise and structure partnerships between higher-tier and lower-tier authorities to ensure that place-shaping objectives are achievable. This could include joint working frameworks, shared resourcing models, and regular consultation to ensure alignment in delivering key projects.

In summary, the Council supports the ambitions for sustainable growth and well-being, but believes that a greater emphasis on partnership working with town and parish councils is necessary to ensure successful delivery and meaningful engagement in place-shaping.

Morecambe Town Council looks forward to seeing this inclusion as the plan evolves.

Question 2: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with addressing the Climate Emergency? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response: Morecambe Town Council appreciates the ambitious approach to climate action outlined in the Local Plan. The objectives, such as staying within the district's carbon budget and future-proofing developments against climate-related risks, are commendable. However, there are several opportunities that have not been fully considered in the plan. These are key areas where the Local Plan could further strengthen its vision and make a greater impact on the sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience of the district:

1. Partnerships with Lower-Tier Authorities

The Local Plan does not fully explore the potential for collaboration with **lower-tier authorities**, such as town and parish councils, to achieve its climate and development goals. These councils, with their close ties to local communities, can provide valuable insight and play a vital role in the successful delivery of climate action strategies. Morecambe Town Council urges the district to formalise partnerships that enable lower-tier authorities to actively contribute to:

- **Local renewable energy initiatives** (e.g., solar community schemes).
- **Biodiversity projects**, such as urban rewilding and green infrastructure expansion.
- **Sustainable travel networks**, especially those that connect smaller communities to larger hubs.

2. Retrofitting Existing Buildings

While the Local Plan focuses on the sustainability of new developments, **retrofitting existing buildings** offers a significant opportunity to reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency. The Council recommends that the Local Plan:

- Develop incentives for retrofitting older, energy-inefficient buildings to meet **modern energy efficiency standards**.
- Create a **district-wide strategy** for retrofitting public and commercial properties, potentially aligning with national schemes like the Green Homes Grant, where applications will be looked on favourably should they be able to demonstrate such innovations.

3. Focus on Coastal Resilience and Blue Carbon

Given Morecambe's proximity to the coast, the Council is particularly concerned about **coastal resilience**. In addition to protecting areas vulnerable to coastal erosion, there should be a greater focus on:

- Enhancing **blue carbon** ecosystems (e.g., salt marshes and seagrass meadows), which act as critical carbon sinks and protect against coastal flooding.
- Incorporating **sustainable coastal management practices** in planning and infrastructure projects near the coast to reduce the risks associated with rising sea levels.

4. Circular Economy Opportunities

The Local Plan should consider how development can contribute to a **circular economy** by:

- Encouraging **reuse and recycling** of building materials in construction projects.
- Promoting **local supply chains** to reduce transportation-related emissions.
- Supporting businesses that focus on **repair, reuse, and recycling**, helping to create local jobs while reducing waste and emissions.

5. Inclusive Community Engagement in Sustainability Efforts

The plan rightly emphasises climate resilience, but there is an opportunity to further **engage communities** in climate action. The Council suggests:

- Creating **community-based projects** that focus on sustainability education, food growing initiatives, and urban greening.
- Involving residents in **citizen science** efforts to monitor biodiversity and climate impacts, fostering a deeper connection to local nature and climate initiatives.

6. Economic Growth and Green Jobs

The Local Plan should also consider the economic dimension of sustainability by focusing on **green job creation** and **skills development** in the renewable energy, sustainable construction, and conservation sectors. This approach would:

- Support **economic recovery** post-pandemic and ensure sustainable, long-term growth.
- Encourage **youth engagement** through apprenticeships and education programs centered on the green economy.

7. Holistic Water Management

While flood risk management is mentioned, **holistic water management** should be a key part of the plan, integrating:

- **Greywater recycling systems** and rainwater harvesting in all new developments.
- Incentives for households and businesses to adopt **water-saving technologies**.

8. Digital Connectivity and Remote Work

The shift towards remote work during the pandemic has demonstrated the need for **enhanced digital connectivity**. The Local Plan should prioritise:

- **High-speed internet access** in public areas to reduce commuting and support flexible working, which in turn reduces carbon emissions.

Question 3: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with Nature Recovery and Biodiversity? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response: Morecambe Town Council welcomes the emphasis on nature recovery and biodiversity within the Local Plan, particularly given the unique environmental and ecological significance of Morecambe Bay. However, the Council feels that there are critical issues that require more direct attention, specifically the impact of stormwater overflows into the bay and the ongoing presence of sewage in the water, which poses a significant threat to biodiversity, public health, and the local economy.

Stormwater Overflows and Sewage Pollution

One of the most pressing concerns in Morecambe Bay is the **regular discharge of untreated sewage** during stormwater overflows. These events introduce harmful pollutants into the bay, which not only disrupt local ecosystems but also degrade water quality, threatening marine life and undermining the Council's efforts to improve Morecambe's attractiveness as a visitor destination. The bay is home to internationally important species and habitats, and it is crucial that more is done to address these pollution issues.

Opportunities for Improvement

1. **Water Gardens in New and Existing Developments** - to mitigate the impact of stormwater overflows, Morecambe Town Council advocates for the inclusion of **water gardens** and other **sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)** in both new and existing developments. Water gardens help manage stormwater runoff by allowing rainwater to be absorbed into the ground, reducing the volume of water entering the sewage system during heavy rainfall. These green infrastructure solutions can also contribute to biodiversity, creating habitats for pollinators and other wildlife.
2. **Stricter Regulation of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)** - there should be a stronger framework addressing **combined sewer overflows (CSOs)**, with clear targets and enforcement mechanisms to reduce the frequency and impact of sewage discharges. Lancaster District Council should work in partnership with water companies, the Environment Agency, and other stakeholders to **invest in infrastructure upgrades** that prevent overflows and ensure that the waters of Morecambe Bay remain clean and safe for both wildlife and people.
3. **Enhancing Public Awareness and Engagement** - alongside infrastructure improvements, there is a need to engage local communities in **water conservation** and **pollution prevention efforts**. Educational campaigns about the impact of pollution on biodiversity and the importance of green infrastructure can encourage residents and businesses to support and adopt these initiatives.

Question 4: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with protected Landscapes and Townscapes? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response: Morecambe Town Council welcomes the focus on protected landscapes and townscapes as an essential component of the Local Plan. The visual character and environmental quality of Morecambe and the

surrounding areas play a crucial role in shaping the town's identity, supporting local well-being, and driving economic activity. However, we feel that some issues and opportunities deserve further attention.

Key Issues and Opportunities

1. **Preservation of Coastal Views and Heritage Assets** - the **seafront and coastal views** of Morecambe Bay are not only iconic but also integral to the town's appeal as a tourist destination. Protecting these views from inappropriate development is crucial. It is vital that planning policies reflect the need to **preserve and enhance coastal landscapes**, ensuring that new developments do not detract from the natural beauty that draws both residents and visitors to Morecambe. Additionally, the protection of **heritage assets**, including historically significant buildings and townscapes, should be prioritised. These contribute to the town's unique character and cultural identity.
2. **Enhancing Public Realm and Green Spaces** - public spaces, parks, and green areas contribute significantly to the well-being of the local community and the overall aesthetic of the townscape. Morecambe Town Council supports initiatives to **enhance the public realm**, particularly through improvements in **green spaces, pedestrian areas, and community hubs**. Future developments should prioritise public access to well-designed and maintained green spaces, with **tree planting and native landscaping** to enhance both visual appeal and biodiversity. The Local Plan should include **policies that encourage green infrastructure** in urban areas to improve the overall townscape. This could include funding for **community-led greening projects** that allow residents to take ownership of their local environment.
3. **Sensitive Development in Town Centres** - while development is necessary for economic growth, it is essential that it is carried out in a way that is sensitive to the existing townscape. New buildings and refurbishments should **respect the architectural heritage** and scale of the surrounding area, particularly in historically significant parts of town centres. The Council is keen to ensure that modern developments do not **overpower the traditional architecture** that defines much of Morecambe's character. A **design review process** could be introduced to ensure that new development proposals complement the existing townscape. This could involve collaboration with local heritage groups, ensuring that new developments enhance, rather than detract from, the town's visual identity.
4. **Integration of Sustainable Design** - protecting landscapes and townscapes should go hand in hand with promoting **sustainable and energy-efficient building designs**. New developments should incorporate **sustainable materials** and designs that minimise environmental impact, reduce energy consumption, and enhance resilience to climate change. Moreover, any new building should strive to **integrate seamlessly with the surrounding natural and built environments**, maintaining the town's visual harmony while ensuring sustainability. The Local Plan should set higher standards for **sustainable design and low-carbon construction** in all future developments, particularly in areas with sensitive landscapes and townscapes.

Missing Considerations

1. **Light Pollution Management** - as development progresses, **light pollution** can become an issue, particularly in areas where natural landscapes are part of the town's identity. **Dark skies** are a valuable asset in areas around Morecambe Bay, contributing to biodiversity and the quality of life for residents. More should be done to **limit light pollution** through careful urban planning and the use of **sustainable lighting technologies** that minimise environmental disruption.
2. **Accessibility and Inclusivity in Landscape and Townscape Design** - more emphasis should be placed on creating **inclusive landscapes** and public spaces that cater to the needs of all residents, including those with disabilities, the elderly, and families with young children. **Accessibility** should be at the heart of all townscape and landscape planning, ensuring that everyone can enjoy the beauty and amenities of Morecambe and its surrounding areas.

Question 5: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with Transport and Connectivity? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response: Morecambe Town Council, alongside local stakeholders, welcomes the emphasis on improving transport and connectivity within the district. An effective transport network is essential for the town's economic vitality, accessibility, and environmental sustainability. However, there are several key issues and opportunities we believe require greater consideration and emphasis to fully support the development of a well-connected, thriving Morecambe.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- 1. Public Transport Enhancements** - Morecambe's public transport infrastructure needs significant improvements to support sustainable travel options, reduce reliance on cars, and alleviate congestion. Although some efforts have been made to improve bus and rail links, **more frequent services, particularly in the evenings and weekends**, are necessary to better serve both residents and visitors. Expanding **bus routes** to better connect Morecambe with rural areas and other towns in the district will improve mobility for residents who rely on public transport.
Opportunity: The Local Plan should advocate for a **comprehensive public transport strategy**, focusing on expanding bus routes, increasing service frequency, and promoting **integrated ticketing** across different modes of transport. Partnering with transport operators to provide **real-time information systems** and improve service reliability should also be a priority.
- 2. Active Travel and Sustainable Transport** - The promotion of **active travel options** such as walking and cycling is crucial for improving connectivity while reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions. Morecambe has significant potential to become a **cycling-friendly town**, particularly given the popularity of its promenade and links to national cycling routes. However, infrastructure for cycling and walking is currently fragmented.
Opportunity: The Local Plan should place a stronger emphasis on developing **safe, continuous cycling and walking routes** that connect residential areas with town centres, schools, and employment hubs. In addition, the development of **secure bicycle parking facilities** and **cycle hire schemes** would encourage more people to opt for cycling as a primary mode of transport. Streetscapes could also be redesigned to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over cars in key areas.
- 3. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure** - The transition to **electric vehicles (EVs)** is a critical element in reducing carbon emissions. However, the current infrastructure for EV charging in Morecambe is limited. The Local Plan should address the need for a widespread rollout of **EV charging points** in residential areas, public car parks, and key commercial locations to encourage residents and visitors to make the switch to electric vehicles.
Opportunity: A comprehensive plan to install **EV charging points** should be integrated into all new developments, with a focus on ensuring accessibility to EV infrastructure for those living in apartments or homes without off-street parking.
- 4. Congestion and Traffic Management** - Congestion during peak times, particularly around key entry points into Morecambe, remains a concern. **Traffic management strategies** that reduce bottlenecks and promote more efficient flow should be prioritised. Additionally, there should be better measures to encourage **park-and-ride schemes**, which can alleviate the traffic burden in central areas and promote the use of public transport.
Opportunity: Exploring **smart traffic management solutions** and implementing **park-and-ride services** could significantly reduce congestion, particularly during the busy tourist seasons. Investment in **junction improvements** and traffic flow technology will also be necessary to keep the town moving efficiently.
- 5. Rail Connectivity** Morecambe's rail services play a vital role in connecting the town to Lancaster, as well as larger cities such as Manchester and beyond. However, current services are limited in frequency and capacity, particularly during peak times. An increase in rail service frequency and better **integration with bus routes** is necessary to support the needs of residents, visitors, and businesses.
Opportunity: The Local Plan should actively seek partnerships with **rail operators** to increase train services and ensure that rail transport is a viable alternative to car travel. There should also be a focus on improving the **accessibility** of rail stations with secure bicycle storage, EV charging points, and easy connections to local bus routes.

Missing Considerations

- 1. Rural Connectivity** - The **rural communities** surrounding Morecambe are often underserved by public transport, which leads to greater isolation for residents without access to private vehicles. Improved bus links and **on-demand transport services** for rural areas should be considered in the Local Plan, ensuring that all parts of the district are well-connected to Morecambe and key service areas.
- 2. Digital Connectivity** - Transport and connectivity in the modern world are not just about physical travel. **Digital infrastructure**, such as high-speed internet, is vital for connecting residents and businesses alike. Morecambe requires better **broadband and 5G coverage** to support remote working, digital businesses, and access to online services. This is especially important as more people transition to **flexible working**

arrangements post-pandemic, reducing the need for daily commuting but increasing demand for reliable digital connectivity.

- 3. Accessibility for All** - Accessibility must be a core focus for all transport developments. Ensuring that public transport, pedestrian routes, and cycling infrastructure are fully accessible to those with **disabilities** is essential. In addition, the planning process should involve **consultation with disabled residents** and advocacy groups to identify barriers and opportunities for more inclusive transport systems.
- 4. Tourism and Seasonal Traffic** - As a coastal town with a growing tourism sector, Morecambe experiences a seasonal influx of visitors that impacts the local transport network. The Local Plan should consider the unique challenges of **seasonal traffic** and propose strategies to manage this influx without compromising the quality of life for residents.

Question 6: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with Meeting our Housing Needs? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

Question 7: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with Providing the Right Type of Homes? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response: We wish to highlight specific concerns, particularly regarding the suitability of the former Frontierland site for residential development.

Site Suitability: Former Frontierland Site

Strong Local Opposition: There remains strong opposition locally to permitting any housing development on the former Frontierland site. The community has expressed significant concerns about this site's suitability for residential development due to its unique characteristics and historical significance.

Historical and Cultural Significance: The former Frontierland site holds a unique place in our local history and culture. The community values its historical context and believes that its future use should reflect its heritage rather than be converted into housing.

Environmental and Infrastructure Concerns: The site presents specific environmental and infrastructure challenges, including concerns about potential contamination and inadequate infrastructure to support new residential development.

Opportunity: Given the strong local opposition and the site's specific challenges, we strongly urge that the former Frontierland site be excluded from housing development proposals. Instead, the site should be considered for alternative uses that better align with community needs and preserve its historical and cultural value. Potential alternatives include **community amenities**, **recreational spaces**, or **business developments** that contribute positively to the local economy and community well-being.

Question 8: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with Design, Healthy Lifestyles and Safe Communities? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response:

Importance of Partnership Working

Morecambe Town Council strongly supports the notion that effective partnership working between town and parish councils and higher-tier authorities is crucial for delivering healthier communities. Embracing localism and devolution can significantly enhance the ability of local councils to address community needs more effectively.

In this regard, we emphasise the following points:

1. **Local Expertise and Responsiveness:** Town and parish councils have valuable local knowledge and a deep understanding of community needs. This enables them to design and implement initiatives that are specifically tailored to local requirements, enhancing overall health and safety outcomes.
2. **Public Realm Maintenance:** It is vital to ensure that essential services, such as public realm maintenance, do not deteriorate. Town and parish councils are well-positioned to manage these services effectively, but they need appropriate support and resources to do so. Partnership working with higher-tier authorities can facilitate this by providing the necessary funding and resources, or use of equipment and infrastructure.
3. **Asset Transfers:** Consideration should be given to transferring land parcels and assets to parish and town councils and other community groups. This would enable local councils to take direct action on issues impacting their areas, from maintaining green spaces to developing community facilities. Such transfers would enhance local control and responsibility, leading to better outcomes for residents.

Issues and Opportunities

In reviewing the Issues and Opportunities related to Design, Healthy Lifestyles, and Safe Communities, we identify the following as particularly important:

1. **Designing for Health and Well-being:** Incorporating features that promote physical activity and mental well-being into new developments is crucial. This includes creating walkable neighbourhoods, ensuring access to green spaces, and designing safe, accessible community areas.
2. **Community Safety:** Ensuring that communities feel safe is fundamental to their overall health. This includes well-lit public spaces, effective crime prevention measures, and community engagement in safety initiatives.
3. **Integration with Local Plans:** We believe there is an opportunity to further integrate local knowledge and priorities into broader planning processes. This can be achieved through enhanced collaboration between local councils and higher-tier authorities, ensuring that design and development decisions reflect the specific needs and aspirations of local communities.

Missing Opportunities

One area that we feel could be more explicitly addressed is the role of local parish and town councils in managing and enhancing public spaces and community assets. By formalising processes for asset transfers and increasing support for local initiatives, there is potential to significantly improve community well-being and safety.

Morecambe Town Council advocates for a greater focus on partnership working and localism as part of the Local Plan Review. By recognising and leveraging the strengths of town and parish councils, we can create healthier, safer, and more vibrant communities.

Question 9: Do you have any views on the Issues and Opportunities raised in connection with Securing Economic Prosperity for All? What Issues and Opportunities do you feel are the most / least important? Are there any Issues and Opportunities missing in regard of this theme?

MTC Response: The Role of Planning and Collaboration

Economic prosperity is fundamentally linked to effective planning and strategic development. Morecambe Town Council believes that achieving sustained economic growth requires a focused approach to planning, particularly in identifying and developing the right locations for investment. To this end, we emphasise the following points:

1. **Strategic Masterplanning:** Developing a comprehensive masterplan for Morecambe is essential to attract inward investment and align with government funding opportunities. A masterplan would provide a clear framework for growth, ensuring that development is targeted in areas that offer the greatest potential for economic benefit. This proactive approach will help us to be well-prepared when funding becomes available, maximising the impact of any investment.
2. **Collaboration with the Town Council:** Engaging with the town council in the planning process is crucial. Town councils possess valuable insights into local needs and opportunities, which can enhance the

effectiveness of economic strategies. By working collaboratively, we can ensure that development projects are aligned with community priorities and have the support necessary for successful implementation.

3. **Preparation for Government Funding:** To leverage government funding effectively, it is important to have a pipeline of projects that are ready to proceed. By developing a masterplan and identifying key projects in advance, Morecambe can position itself to take advantage of funding opportunities as they arise. This forward-thinking approach will support economic growth and ensure that we are competitive in securing resources.

Issues and Opportunities

In evaluating the Issues and Opportunities related to securing economic prosperity, we identify the following as particularly important:

1. **Infrastructure Development:** Investing in infrastructure that supports business growth, such as transport links, digital connectivity, and utilities, is essential for attracting investment. Ensuring that infrastructure plans are aligned with economic goals will enhance the attractiveness of Morecambe as a location for businesses.
2. **Support for Local Businesses:** Providing support for local businesses, including access to funding, training, and resources, is crucial for fostering a thriving local economy. Initiatives that support business development and entrepreneurship should be a priority.
3. **Diversification and Innovation:** Encouraging diversification and innovation in the local economy can help to build resilience and drive long-term growth. Promoting sectors such as technology, green industries, and tourism can contribute to a balanced and sustainable economic strategy.

Missing Opportunities

One area that could be more explicitly addressed is the integration of local councils in the economic planning process. By ensuring that town councils have a formal role in shaping economic strategies and project planning, there is an opportunity to better align economic development efforts with local needs and aspirations.