



Morecambe Town Council

Morecambe Town Hall,
Marine Road
Morecambe
Lancashire
LA4 5AF

www.morecambe.gov.uk

Members of Morecambe Town Council

Cllr R Walsh - Chairman (Outgoing)
Cllr G Knight - Vice Chairman (Outgoing)

Cllr C Ainscough, Cllr J Ainscough, Cllr D Blacow, Cllr D Bottoms, Cllr L Bradbury, Cllr P Clarke, Cllr F Cooper, Cllr C Cozler, Cllr R Dennison, Cllr W Dixon, Cllr K Gee, Cllr P Hart, Cllr J Goodrich, Cllr J Hanson, Cllr C Kent, Cllr D Knight, Cllr J Livermore, Cllr M Pattison, Cllr J Pilling, Cllr J Rogerson, Cllr J Slater, Cllr M Stenneken, Cllr D Whitaker, Cllr John Bates.

Minutes of Morecambe Town Council's Annual Full Council Meeting held at 7pm on the 15 May 2025 at Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road, Morecambe, LA4 5AF.

Record of Attendance:

Councillors: Russell Walsh (Chairman), Geoff Knight (Vice Chairman), Lee Bradbury, Faye Cooper, Dan Blacow, Debbie Knight, Clark Kent, Jackie Rogerson, Keri Gee, Martin Bottoms, Margaret Pattison, John Goodrich, John Hanson, Christian Ainscough, Joanne Ainscough, David Whitaker, John Livermore, John Bates, Jim Pilling, Roger Dennison.

Officers: Luke Trevaskis, Peter Fisher, Joel Turner, Luke Agnew.

Press: None.

Public: 2

Minute 2025/26 - 001 - Election of Chairman

Nominations were received for Cllr Clark Kent and Cllr Joanne Ainscough.

Cllr Clark Kent was duly elected to the office of Chairman of Morecambe Town Council and read the following declaration:

"I, Cllr Clark Kent, having been elected to the office of Chairman of Morecambe Town Council declare that I take that office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgement and ability. I undertake to observe the code of conduct which is expected of members of Morecambe Town Council."

Cllr Clark Kent thanked Cllr Russell Walsh for his sage chairmanship during the previous twelve months. Congratulations were also passed to Cllr Margaret Pattison on becoming the Mayor of Lancaster, and Cllr John Hanson for becoming the Deputy Mayor.

(Cllr Keri Gee arrived to the meeting.)

Minute 2025/26 - 002 - Election of Vice Chairman

Nominations were received for Cllr Lee Bradbury and Cllr Joanne Ainscough.

Cllr Lee Bradbury was duly elected to the office of Vice Chairman of Morecambe Town Council. Cllr Bradbury will sign his declaration of acceptance of office prior to the next meeting.

Minute 2025/26 - 003 - Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance received from Cllrs Claire Cozler, Paul Hart, Monika Stenneken, Jason Slater.

Minute 2025/26 - 004 - Declarations of Interest

Cllrs M Pattison, R Dennison, J Hanson, D Whitaker, J Livermore and M Bottoms declared membership of Lancaster City Council.

Cllr M Bottoms declared cabinet membership of Lancaster City Council.

Cllrs M Bottoms, R Dennison, John Hanson, and John Livermore declared membership of Lancaster City Council's Planning Committee. Cllr R Dennison advised he would remain in the meeting to discuss Item 7 (Planning Application 25/00392/ADV - Unit 1, Hilmore Way). Other members advised they would withdraw. The Proper Officer advised that it is within Lancaster City Council's constitution that members of their Planning Committee, who are also members of MTC do not need to withdraw from meetings as a matter of course (unless in cases where MTC may submit an application to LCC, in which dual hatted members would be expected to withdraw from LCC's meeting when the matter is discussed).

Cllr Russell Walsh declared membership of Lancashire County Council.

Minute 2025/26 - 005 - Minutes

The minutes of the last full council meeting were unanimously approved.

Minute 2025/26 - 006 - Public Participation

A request to speak was received. The speaker raised queries regarding the notice periods for meetings and the lack of MTC noticeboards throughout the Town. Cllr Joanne Ainscough advised that it had previously been minuted that MTC is purchasing new substantial noticeboards which will be installed once they have been manufactured. There is currently a local company manufacturing the noticeboards and they are anticipated to be in situ by August 2025.

(Cllrs John Hanson, Martin Bottoms and John Livermore withdrew from the meeting for the following item.)

Minute 2025/26 - 007 - Planning Objection - 25/00392/ADV (Unit 1 Hilmore Way, Morecambe - McDonalds)

The Council noted the objection that had been submitted by the Chief Officer, and agreed with its content.

The CO reminded members that the representation did not object to a siting of a McDonald's at the location, but it does raise concerns regarding the proposed 12-m high totem advertisement, which is considered disproportionately tall and visually intrusive in relation to the surrounding streetscape. In contrast to other signage in the area - such as the 5.8M Morrisons totem set back 16m from the carriageway and screened by mature trees - the proposed McDonalds sign would sit prominently within 5m of the road and be one of the first things people see arriving in Morecambe by train and it really could set the wrong tone for the ecological centre we are striving to become with Eden.

The Town Council agreed that a reduced height, limited to 5m, would be more in keeping with the current signage nearby.

Cllr Bates also reminded members to be wary of a future application that may arise, as was the case on Morecambe Road, whereby the applicant retrospectively applied to raise the agreed height of the McDonalds advertisement totem.

(Cllrs John Hanson, Martin Bottoms and John Livermore returned to the meeting.)

Minute 2025/26 - 008 - Policies and Procedures

The Council approved the amend to the Financial Regulations, which amended the wording of Section 6.17 to read:

"Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used unless access to a corporate facility is unavailable, and only with the permission from the Clerk, RFO, or Line Manager."

The Council approved the amend to the Standing Orders, which amended the wording of Section 1A to read:

"Meetings of the Council shall be held on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direction, except during the months of April, July/August and December. The Council should publish a list of full council meetings annually. The Chief Officer has delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman, to cancel a meeting should there not enough business to consider, or it be considered an appropriate course of action (for example, during pre-election periods)."

The Council approved the amend to the Standing Orders, which amended the wording of Section 1C to read:

"Council members shall receive a summons sent by the Chief Officer, or another appropriate officer, specifying the business to be transacted...."

The Council approved the amend to the Standing Orders, which amended the wording of Section 1E to read:

"Subject to Standing Order 1(d) above, members of the public who are registered local government electors and/or business-rate payers may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend strictly in respect of the business on the agenda, provided that their primary residence (or business) is within the administrative boundary of Morecambe Town Council. Qualifying members of the public who would like to make representations at a meeting must contact the Proper (Chief) Officer no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting to advise both of their wish to speak and the full content (providing a transcript if available). Other issues could be raised if written notice of the question/matter is submitted to the Proper (Chief) Officer ten working days prior to the meeting and the matter is considered appropriate for the agenda. A request to speak does not confer an automatic right to do so. All requests will be reviewed by officers, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Council or Committee, prior to the meeting. This is to safeguard the integrity of Council proceedings, prevent procedural misconduct, and mitigate legal and financial risks. Comments that could lead to undue disruption, expose the Council to legal challenge, or impact the wellbeing of staff - potentially resulting in avoidable costs to the public purse - will not be permitted. This approach ensures that public participation remains constructive while protecting the responsible use of public funds and resources. For the avoidance of doubt, and to ensure a constructive and orderly meeting, and in accordance with established protocols, public participation must not be used to:

- Make personal or defamatory remarks about individual councillors. While the public may raise concerns about council decisions or policies, personal attacks or allegations regarding the conduct of councillors are not appropriate for public discussion. Complaints regarding breaches of the Councillors' Code of Conduct should be referred to the Monitoring Officer, who is responsible for investigating such matters.*
- Discuss individual staff members, their performance, or any matters which may relate to them personally (HR or otherwise). Employment issues, including complaints about staff, are confidential and should be addressed through the appropriate procedures. Any concerns about staff conduct must be submitted in writing to the Proper (Chief) Officer. If the concern relates to the Proper (Chief) Officer, it should be directed in writing to the Chairperson of the Council and/or the Personnel Committee. However, members of the public may raise general concerns about service delivery, provided that any comments do not target specific individuals or relate to individual roles."*

Minute 2025/26 - 009 - Full Council Meeting Dates Civic Year 2025/26

The Council agreed the following meeting dates for full council meetings for the Civic Year 2025/26:

Thursday 19 June 2025

Thursday 18 September 2025

Thursday 16 October 2025

Thursday 20 November 2025

Thursday 29 January 2025

Thursday 19 February 2025

Thursday 19 March 2025

Minute 2025/26 - 010 - Supporting the Trans Community Following the Supreme Court Ruling on the Equality Act

Motion on notice proposed by Cllr David Whitaker (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion), and seconded by Cllr Joanne Ainscough.

“On 16 April 2025, the UK Supreme Court ruled that for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the term "sex" refers strictly to biological sex as assigned at birth, even in cases where an individual holds a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). This decision has been upsetting, frustrating and deeply personal for many in the LGBTQ+ community, particularly those who are transgender or non-binary, causing widespread confusion and concern.

To clarify:

- A **transgender** person is someone whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth.
 - A **non-binary** person does not identify exclusively as male or female.
- The ruling raises serious and urgent questions about the future of equality legislation in the UK and how we ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity, fairness and respect - regardless of gender identity.

While the court has provided a legal interpretation, it is increasingly clear that the Equality Act - now nearly 15 years old - may not fully reflect the lived realities, rights, or challenges faced by trans people in modern Britain. Advances in medical, social and legal understanding of gender identity have far outpaced the legislation, creating gaps and inconsistencies in the law's application, and this ruling arguably fails to account for advances in gender-affirming healthcare or the psychosocial impacts of gender identity recognition, amongst other matters.

Trans people have always been a part of our world, and always will be. For many trans people, transitioning is not simply a matter of legal documentation. It is a journey - often marked by emotional, social, medical and legal obstacles - taken in pursuit of living a life that feels authentic to them.

Some individuals will have spent more of their lives post-transition than in the gender they were assigned at birth. For many of us, using a public toilet is such an ordinary part of life that we barely think about it. But imagine for a moment if stepping into that space meant risking your safety - not because of anything you've done, but simply because of who you are. For trans people, being told they must use facilities that don't align to who they are - and how they live every day - isn't just uncomfortable, it can be traumatic, dehumanising, and, sadly, dangerous. Being forced into a space that doesn't align with their identity can "out" a trans person against their will. Just imagine being in a situation where using a particular bathroom tells the whole room that you're trans - whether you wanted them to know or not. It's like being made to wear a sign that says "different", when you just want to go about your day like everyone else. This visibility can make people targets. Trans people are already more likely to experience harassment or violence in public spaces - something most of us thankfully don't have to think about when popping to use a bathroom in a café, shopping centre or train station. As writer Shon Faye puts it: "to be trans is to be made hypervisible and invisible all at once - seen as a spectacle, but not as a human being".

What this ruling has created is a legal confusion:

- Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, a person's legal sex changes upon receiving a GRC (a Gender Recognition Certificate).
- Yet this latest ruling effectively decouples the Equality Act from the GRA, meaning legal recognition does not translate to protections in all settings - such as single-sex services.
This contradiction creates a grey area for public bodies, employers, and service providers, leaving frontline staff uncertain and vulnerable people without clear recourse. It may also lead to a patchwork of inconsistent approaches, which is not compatible with the principles of equality law.

It is especially important to recognise that the gender reassignment provisions within the Equality Act - designed to offer explicit protection to trans people - must not be overlooked, undermined, or misinterpreted. Section 7 of the Act protects individuals who are undergoing, have undergone, or are proposing to undergo gender reassignment. These protections remain legally in force, and it is critical that public bodies do not use this ruling to dilute or bypass them (EHRC, 2023).

Until further legislative reform or clarification is provided, there is a real risk that the existing legal framework undermines the safety and dignity of trans individuals - and that organisations may misinterpret or misuse this judgment, intentionally or otherwise.

What we're talking about here isn't abstract or theoretical - it's about real people trying to live their lives with dignity and without fear.

Therefore, this motion calls on Morecambe Town Council to:

1. **Affirm its unequivocal support for the trans and non-binary community - locally and nationally - and express support for those affected by this ruling.**
2. **Write to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to request urgent clarification, training and practical guidance on how local councils can remain compliant with the law while upholding values of inclusion and equality.**
3. **Explore ways to support local organisations, such as OITB, that provide frontline services and advocacy for LGBTQ+ people, especially those at risk of targeted abuse or exclusion.**
4. **Reaffirm our commitment to equality, and to ensuring our town remains a safe, welcoming and inclusive place for all, including those who are transgender or non-binary.
This is a moment for moral clarity. We must remember that trans people are our neighbours, friends, family members and colleagues. They are not abstract legal subjects but human beings deserving of safety, dignity and belonging.
As a local council, we may not be able to change the law - but we can lead by example, stand with those affected, and press for a more compassionate and inclusive future.**
5. **Send a letter outlining concerns to Lizzi Collinge MP."**

Cllr Whitaker acknowledged differing views on the ruling, even within the LGBT+ community itself, and outlined the concern and uncertainty it had created for many people who no longer feel safe. With echoes of Section 28, Cllr Whitaker emphasised how important it was for the Council to support the LGBT+ community. Cllr Whitaker also suggested regular EDI training should be undertaken by all councillors.

Cllr J Ainscough agreed with Cllr Whitaker and outlined how divisive this important issue has been for many communities and organisations. Cllr J Ainscough advised it wasn't good enough for NALC and the LGA to be working on what this means, stating we need action and direction now. It was agreed we need clarity urgently and quickly so people can be treated with the respect they deserve.

All five recommendations were approved by the Council.

Minute 2025/26 - 011 - Constitution of Committees

The Terms of Reference were approved for the below Committees:

- Planning and Regeneration
- Finance and Governance

- Personnel
- Environment
- Grants
- Festivals and Events

Minute 2025/26 - 012 - Membership of Committees

The below members, and Chairmen, were appointed by the Council to the below Committees:

Committee	Morecambe Bay Independents	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Reform	Independent
Grants	Cllr Jason Slater (Chairman), Cllr Wayne Dixon, Cllr Deborah Knight, Cllr Martin Bottoms	Cllr Claire Cozler, Cllr Christian Ainscough, Cllr John Goodrich	Cllr John Livermore	Cllr Russell Walsh	
Personnel	Cllr Roger Dennison (Chairman), Cllr Faye Cooper, Cllr Lee Bradbury, Cllr Jason Slater	Cllr Christian Ainscough, Cllr John Goodrich, Cllr Joanne Ainsouch	Cllr Paul Hart, Cllr Monika Stenneken		
Festivals, Sponsorships and Events	Cllr Lee Bradbury (Chairman), Cllr Geoff Knight, Cllr Faye Cooper, Cllr Roger Dennison, Cllr Deborah Knight	Cllr Margaret Pattison, Cllr Claire Cozler	Cllr John Livermore		Cllr Trish Clarke
Finance and Governance	Cllr Clark Kent (Chairman), Cllr Geoff Knight, Cllr Lee Bradbury, Cllr Martin Bottoms	Cllr Joanne Ainscough, Cllr John Goodrich, Cllr David Whitaker	Cllr John Bates, Cllr Jim Pilling,		
Environment	Cllr Geoff Knight (Chairman), Cllr Clark Kent, Cllr Dan Blacow, Cllr Jason Slater	Cllr Joanne Ainscough, Cllr Claire Cozler	Cllr Paul Hart, Cllr John Livermore	Cllr Russell Walsh	
Planning & Regeneration	Cllr Geoff Knight (Chairman), Cllr Lee Bradbury, Cllr Clark Kent, Cllr Martin Bottoms	Cllr Claire Cozler, Cllr David Whitaker	Cllr John Bates, Cllr Jim Pilling		Cllr Trish Clarke

Minute 2025/26 - 013 - Councillor Champion Roles

The below member were appointed to Councillor Champion Roles:

- Disability Champion - Cllr Claire Cozler
- Armed Forces Champion - Cllr Roger Dennison
- Multi-Dwelling Housing Champion - Cllr Martin Bottoms
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Champion - Cllr David Whitaker

Minute 2025/26 - 014 - House of Lords Built Environment Committee - Inquiry into New Towns and Expanded Settlements

Members noted the Chief Officer would circulate a response to this planning consultation following the meeting, once it had been finalised.