

Lytham Town Council

c/o Lytham Institute, 27 Clifton Street, Lytham, Lancashire. FY8 5EP

MINUTES - ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Wednesday 27th May 2026, 6:30pm | Lytham Institute, 27 Clifton Street, Lytham, FY8 5EP

Chair: Cllr Suzanne Bramall | Vice Chair: Cllr Mark Bamforth | Clerk: Mr Luke Russell MA

IMPORTANT NOTICE: These are the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting – a meeting of local government electors for the parish of Lytham, held under Schedule 12, Part III of the Local Government Act 1972. It was NOT a meeting of the Town Council. All registered electors of Lytham were entitled to attend, speak and vote. The press were welcome. Non-electors were welcome to attend but had no right to speak or vote. Voting was by show of hands of electors present.

No.	Agenda Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>The Chair, Cllr Suzanne Bramall, opened the meeting and welcomed those present. She introduced Luke Russell (Clerk to the Council) and Cllr Mark Bamforth (Vice Chair), noting that their role for the evening was primarily to facilitate.</p> <p>Cllr Bramall set the tone for the meeting, emphasising that – unlike a regular Council meeting – this was the residents' meeting, and the Council was there to listen. She encouraged attendees to share their views, raise concerns, and indicate what they would like the Council to prioritise over the coming 12 months. She noted that with Local Government Reorganisation on the horizon, the Council's window to act was finite, making residents' input particularly valuable.</p> <p>She explained that whilst formal voting would not take place, a show of hands might be used during discussions to gauge the strength of feeling on particular topics.</p>
2.	<p>Audio Recording Notice and Health & Safety</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the meeting was being audio recorded in accordance with the Council's recording policy, for the purpose of assisting with minute-taking.</p> <p>Attendees were asked to note that they had been asked to sign in for two reasons: first, to identify those present who are electors with the right to speak and vote; and second, so that any contributions to discussion could be attributed by attendee number rather than full name in the published minutes, for those who preferred that.</p> <p>The Clerk drew attention to the QR codes on the tables, which linked to the agenda and supporting documents on the Council's website. Printed copies were also available for those uncomfortable scanning unfamiliar codes.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that draft minutes would be published promptly after the meeting, with the formal opportunity to approve them for accuracy arising at the next Annual Town Meeting.</p> <p><i>Note: No separate health and safety announcement was made on the night.</i></p>
3.	<p>Attendance and Apologies</p> <p>41 persons were present, which included all 10 Lytham Town Councillors and the Clerk.</p> <p>32 of those present were registered Electors within the Lytham Wards when compared to the Electoral Roll;</p> <p>Attendees signed the attendance register on arrival. The register was used to identify those present who are on the Electoral Roll and therefore entitled to speak and vote at the meeting. Councillors in attendance did so in their capacity as electors, not as members of the Council.</p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jane Russell, who wrote to express her regret at being unable to attend. • Cllr Peter Anthony, who was committed to hosting an event at Lytham Hall.

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4.	<p>Approval of Minutes of the Previous Annual Town Meeting</p> <p>As this is the Council’s first full year, no previous Annual Town Meeting had been previously held - consequently no previous minutes existed.</p>
5.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made by any person present.</p>
6.	<p>Chair’s Annual Report – Lytham Town Council 2025/26</p> <p>Cllr Bramall presented the Chair’s Annual Report, copies of which had been circulated to attendees. Rather than reading it in full, she highlighted the key themes.</p> <p>Establishment and the first year</p> <p>The Council was established in May 2025 with ten councillors – eight independents and two Conservatives. Cllr Bramall acknowledged that the first year had involved a steep learning curve, compounded by the departure of the Council’s first Town Clerk within two months of the Council’s formation. This left a four-month gap (May to September 2025) before Luke Russell was appointed. She placed on record her thanks to Kevin Martin, formerly of St Annes Town Council, who provided invaluable support during that interim period to keep the Council on track.</p> <p>Over the year, the Council held 15 full council meetings, passed 80 decisions and resolutions, and adopted over 34 policies and procedures. Cllr Bramall acknowledged that the volume of governance work had been demanding, but emphasised that the policies existed to underpin the Council’s practical actions, which remained the real priority.</p> <p>Liggard Brook</p> <p>Cllr Bramall highlighted work on Liggard Brook as one of the Council’s most significant achievements. A longstanding drainage and flooding concern for residents in the east of the town, the Council had sought to understand the issue properly – engaging with Paul Rigby, a waterways expert and former United Utilities professional, and meeting with the Environment Agency. Initially the Agency indicated that reactivating the sluice gates to restore tidal flow was not a high priority and would require grant funding. However, the Agency has since reversed that position and has committed to getting the sluice gates working, with the aim of using the force of tidal water to shift accumulated silt. Cllr Bramall noted this was a significant shift and felt the Council had not yet celebrated it as loudly as it deserved. She also mentioned that a resident had written to the Council that very morning to report noticing fewer mosquitoes following recent clearance work – an early and encouraging sign.</p> <p>Speed indicator devices</p> <p>Following a public meeting about speeding and parking concerns, the Council has ordered speed indicator devices (SIDs) to be deployed at several locations around the town. Following public feedback, the agreed sites are East Beach, Church Road (inbound), Hallam Road near Hall Park School (outbound), Mythop Road, and one further location. Some devices are two-sided to cover traffic in both directions.</p> <p>Volunteering Night</p> <p>The Council hosted a Volunteering Night which attracted over 250 attendees and showcased more than 60 voluntary organisations active in Lytham. Cllr Bramall described it as a memorable and at times emotional event, reflecting the remarkable depth of voluntary effort across the community.</p> <p>Other activity</p> <p>Further work during the year included engagement on planning matters, guidance on A-board signage policy, and a bid for Town of Culture status – prepared at short notice by Cllr Kelly Farrington, to whom Cllr Bramall extended her thanks. The outcome of that bid is awaited, and even if unsuccessful, the work done is expected to inform future strategic planning.</p> <p>Allotments on Mythop Road</p> <p>The Council has been in discussion with Fylde Borough Council regarding the potential transfer of allotments on Mythop Road, which fall within the Town Council’s area. Progress has been slow, with the Council awaiting due diligence information from Fylde – including costs, insurance liabilities, and maintenance responsibilities – before making a formal decision. The Clerk confirmed he had written to Fylde’s Deputy Head of Legal seeking that information, and the Council remained open to taking on the allotments once it could make a properly informed decision.</p>

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	<p>Looking ahead</p> <p>Cllr Bramall noted that with a new Unitary Authority due to come into existence as part of Local Government Reorganisation, the Council's window to deliver within the current structure is finite. She invited residents to use the remainder of the meeting to share their priorities for the year ahead.</p> <p>Community Grants</p> <p>Vice Chair Cllr Bamforth spoke warmly about the Council's first community grant award – £500 to Lytham Community Workshop, towards materials for their projects. He encouraged residents to visit the station to see one of their recent creations: a model railway carriage and engine, built largely from reclaimed and discarded materials. He praised the Workshop as a fine example of community endeavour well worth supporting.</p> <p>Cllr Bamforth noted that only one grant had been awarded so far, reflecting that the scheme is still in its early stages. He emphasised that the scheme exists to benefit the people of Lytham, and that future grants will be assessed with that principle firmly in mind.</p>
7.	<p>Clerk's Report</p> <p>The Clerk provided a brief operational update to complement the Chair's Annual Report.</p> <p>Governance and audit</p> <p>The Council has successfully completed its internal audit for Year One, with an independent reviewer examining the Council's processes, accounts, and structures. The Clerk confirmed he would next be submitting the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to PKF Littlejohn for external audit – the second stage of the assurance process that applies to all parish and town councils – and that this would be his immediate priority following the meeting.</p> <p>Annual Council Meeting outcomes</p> <p>At the Annual Council Meeting earlier in May, the Council elected its new Chair and Vice Chair and unanimously re-adopted Fylde Borough Council's Code of Conduct for elected members. The Council also re-adopted its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations – the two legally required governance documents that underpin how the Council operates.</p> <p>Next steps – June meeting</p> <p>At the next full Council meeting on 10 June, the Council intends to revisit its committee and working group structure, confirming which members will sit on each, and refreshing terms of reference where needed. The Community Grants, Honours and Awards Committee will also be reinvigorated for the new municipal year.</p> <p>Strategic planning</p> <p>Councillors have asked the Clerk to develop a strategic plan and strategic budget for the Council. He acknowledged this was a more complex task than usual given the upcoming election cycle – with elections expected in May 2027, the current Council effectively has around nine months rather than a full year – overlaid with the uncertainty of Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>On the question of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (town plan), the Clerk relayed a suggestion from Cllr Jane Russell (who had sent apologies) that this work might be better deferred until after the 2027 elections, allowing the next full Council a complete four-year cycle to do it properly. The St Annes neighbourhood plan took four years to complete, and given the statutory consultation requirements, it would not be possible to complete one within the current timeline. The Clerk suggested that preparatory work – including budgeting, community engagement, and establishing a working group – could begin now, with the formal plan following under the next Council.</p> <p>Annual Town Meeting timing</p> <p>The Clerk also flagged that he would review the timing of future Annual Town Meetings. Holding it immediately after an election, as this year, risks the new Council being consumed by its own set-up. Holding it earlier in the year – before the election cycle begins – would give residents a better opportunity to influence the incoming Council's priorities. He confirmed he would take guidance from Fylde on the most appropriate timing.</p>

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8.	<p>Financial Report (Provisional)</p> <p>The Clerk, in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), presented a brief financial summary for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Council's precept for 2025/26 was £95,875, rising to over £100,000 for 2026/27. The accounts have been internally audited and the Clerk confirmed that all expenditure had been legally verified – meaning not only that the Council had resolved to spend, but that a specific statutory power existed to authorise each item.</p> <p>During the year, the Council awarded one community grant of £500 under the relevant legislative provision empowering councils to make donations to community groups.</p> <p>The full statement of accounts is published on the Council's website, and the Clerk directed residents there for the detail rather than reading figures aloud. He also noted that the statutory Notice of Rights is published on the website, entitling any elector to inspect the accounts and bank records during the inspection period. He encouraged residents to satisfy themselves that their money is being managed responsibly.</p> <p><i>Note: Figures are provisional and subject to external audit by PKF Littlejohn.</i></p>
9.	<p>Community Grant Awards 2025/26</p> <p>The Vice Chair made his comments as part of Item 7.</p>
10.	<p>Reports from Local Organisations and Guest Speakers</p> <p>Lytham Business Partnership – Suzanne Taylor, Chair</p> <p>The Chair invited Suzanne Taylor, Chair of Lytham Business Partnership, to address the meeting. Whilst not a Lytham elector, Ms Taylor runs a business on Clifton Street and was welcomed as a guest speaker.</p> <p>Ms Taylor gave an overview of the Business Partnership, which has operated under various names since its origins as Lytham Action Group, becoming Lytham Enterprise Group and then Lytham Business Partnership in 2015. Membership is open to anyone who owns or manages a bricks-and-mortar business in Lytham, and currently stands at over 250 members. Membership is free of charge, with the aim of encouraging participation, communication, and collaboration. Associate membership is also available to those who align with the Partnership's aims but do not run a business.</p> <p>She outlined the Partnership's core aims, which include promoting and protecting Lytham's commerce, fostering resilience and creativity among businesses, building collaboration between the public and private sectors, and encouraging residents and visitors to patronise local businesses. A further aim, added at the most recent AGM, is to encourage businesses to be sympathetic to the conservation area whilst embracing contemporary and sustainable approaches.</p> <p>The Loyalty Card</p> <p>Ms Taylor highlighted the Partnership's loyalty card scheme, currently involving over 60 independent businesses. Customers receive a stamp each time they visit a participating business, and once 12 stamps are collected, the card is entered into a prize draw held every six months – with prizes of £150, £75, and £50 in local business vouchers. She noted that some participants choose to donate their prize to the food bank if drawn. The scheme was initially supported by UK Shared Prosperity Fund money and is now self-sustaining, with prizes sponsored externally.</p> <p>Lytham Lights Switch-On</p> <p>The Business Partnership has organised the Lytham Lights switch-on for many years, with this year's event confirmed for Saturday 14 November. Ms Taylor encouraged residents to put the date in their diaries, describing it as a family-oriented community event with singing, dancing, and children's theatre. She noted that in previous years the Partnership had spent around £5,000 of fundraised money annually on erecting and removing temporary lighting infrastructure. This year, the new permanent lights installed by Lytham Town Council will remove that cost – something Ms Taylor welcomed warmly.</p>

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	<p>Partnership with the Town Council</p> <p>Ms Taylor reflected that Lytham had perhaps lacked a resource that other towns had benefited from, and that the arrival of the Town Council now provided that. She expressed optimism about the two organisations finding effective ways to work together going forward.</p> <p>Formal Thanks:</p> <p>The Chair extended her formal thanks to Jacqui at Phil’s Bakery, the local business in Market Square, for sponsoring all of the cakes used as refreshments at the meeting</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Questions and Comments from Electors</p> <p>The Chair opened the floor to residents, inviting questions and comments on any matter relating to Lytham or the work of the Council. A wide-ranging discussion followed, covering the topics summarised below. The Chair confirmed that all matters raised would be considered at the Council meeting on 10th June 2026, acknowledging that there was sufficient volume to potentially span two meetings.</p> <p>Lytham Festival – community dividend</p> <p>A resident raised the question of what financial benefit Lytham residents receive from Lytham Festival, given the significant disruption it causes and the substantial revenue generated – estimated conservatively by the resident at £12-15 million. The view expressed was that the current arrangements were inadequate, and that the Council should seek a meaningful community dividend from the festival organisers.</p> <p>Several residents and councillors contributed to the discussion. It was noted that the festival had been sold to Live Nation, an international corporate, which complicated any negotiation for additional community benefit. Cllr Kelly Farrington acknowledged that the current contractual arrangements dated back to an original agreement with Fylde Borough Council and reflected a weak negotiation at the time. The existing contract runs to 2028, at which point renegotiation will be possible – though it was noted this would fall to the new Unitary Authority rather than Fylde Borough Council.</p> <p>It was confirmed that some community funding does flow from the festival to local groups, and suggested that greater transparency about the amounts involved would strengthen the case for improvement. The Council agreed to progress a meeting with festival representatives, likely in late summer, and to use the 2028 contract renewal as a key opportunity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A show of hands confirmed strong resident support for securing a greater financial return for the town. <p>Lytham Green – charitable trust status</p> <p>A resident (Attendee 1) asked for an update on the Council’s request to Fylde Borough Council regarding the charitable trust status of Lytham Green, and raised wider questions about the precise extent of the Green, its associated revenues, and the implications of establishing a charitable trust ahead of Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed he had written to Fylde raising this matter, citing the precedents of Lowther Pavilion and Lytham Institute, and that the 28-day response window had not yet expired.</p> <p>Mr Andy Carr, Chair of the Lytham Institute charitable trust that the Green appears to be registered at Land Registry in several separate parcels – broadly covering the area from the seafront through to Granny’s Bay – and that the position would need to be clarified before LGR transferred ownership to the Unitary Authority.</p> <p>It was discussed that under charitable trust law, any revenue generated by an asset held in trust must be applied for the purposes of that trust – so festival income, car parking revenue, and similar receipts would be reinvested in the Green itself rather than flowing to a future Council’s general funds. The example of Lowther Pavilion was cited, which took approximately 20 years to break even after Fylde Council pump-primed it. The Council could potentially become one of a number of trustees. A resident with knowledge of trust law added that the objectives of any trust scheme, once approved by the Charity Commission, would determine what the income could be spent on – leaving some flexibility if the objectives were drawn broadly enough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A show of hands indicated strong resident support for pursuing charitable trust status for the Green ahead of LGR.

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	<p>Town centre – pavements, cleanliness, and disability access</p> <p>CLlr Brenda Blackshaw raised this issue, stating that several residents had also raised concerns with her about the condition of the town centre, encompassing the state of pavements, street furniture, and cleanliness – particularly on Henry Street, where businesses had reported significant issues with anti-social behaviour, litter, and the aftermath of late-night activity.</p> <p>A resident raised the specific issue of disability access across the town, including dropped kerbs, parking, and pavement condition, noting that this had been raised with both Lancashire County Council and Fylde Borough Council over many years without resolution. A show of hands confirmed widespread resident concern on this issue.</p> <p>CLlr Kelly Farrington stated that there is approximately £700,000 of regeneration funding held by Fylde Borough Council, originally earmarked for Lytham town centre improvements, which has not yet been committed to specific schemes. He confirmed he had been in contact with Mr Charlie Richards at Fylde, who had agreed to meet with the Council to discuss how the remaining funds might be directed. It was noted that any scheme involving the pavements would need to be routed through Fylde to avoid VAT complications. The question of the high street trees – whether remedial works could preserve them rather than requiring removal – was also raised, with a request that the Council pursue an independent expert arboricultural report as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>The Chair floated the idea of the Council employing a lengthsman – a part-time operative who could carry out small maintenance and tidying tasks across the town – and invited a show of hands on whether residents would support this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response was broadly positive, and the Chair confirmed it would be discussed at the next meeting. <p>Coastal signage</p> <p>A resident who regularly monitors the promenade raised concerns about the safety information displayed on signs near the seafront access points, suggesting that some contained inaccurate maps and misleading information – including an indication that certain mudflat areas were accessible, when they are in fact dangerous. The resident considered the signs potentially hazardous and asked the Council to take the matter up with the responsible authority. The Clerk noted this for follow-up.</p> <p>Mobile phone signal</p> <p>Residents raised concerns about mobile phone signal in Lytham, both generally and specifically during Lytham Festival, when signal reportedly becomes unusable. One resident noted that he had been in contact with Ofcom, who confirmed the situation should not occur and that emergency service access must be maintained. The point was made that this was not solely a festival issue – general signal quality in Lytham is poor – and that the Council should gather clear evidence of the problem before escalating. The Council agreed to consider how it might collate resident reports to build an evidence base, and to seek representation at the festival's risk assessment meetings.</p> <p>Youth provision and community wellbeing</p> <p>A resident raised the question of what structured provision exists in Lytham for young people – not just recreational space, but mentoring and skills development. The Clerk noted that youth and cross-generational engagement had been a central element of the Town of Culture bid. The Council acknowledged it had not yet taken specific actions on this but confirmed it was on its radar.</p> <p>Related comments were made about provision for residents living with dementia, mental health challenges, and those who are digitally excluded. The Chair undertook to convene a communications focus group to consider how the Council can better reach residents who are not engaged through social media. The value of the library as a resource for digital support was highlighted by a resident.</p> <p>Volunteer network</p> <p>A resident representing Lytham Club Day suggested that the town's many voluntary organisations do not collaborate or share resources as effectively as they could, and proposed that the Council facilitate a gathering of volunteer groups. CLlr Cath Powell confirmed this had already been discussed following the Volunteering Night, and proposed a meeting in early September – aiming to bring together two representatives from each of the 60-plus groups – to be held at Lytham Institute. A date in the second week of September was provisionally suggested.</p> <p>Lytham Institute</p> <p>A trustee of Lytham Institute thanked the Council for making the building its home, and outlined an exciting vision for the building's future – including an art gallery to display the Lytham art collection, a heritage museum space in collaboration with the local heritage group, and a broader</p>

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	<p>community hub. The trustee announced a public event on Monday 16 June at the Institute, where the plans would be presented alongside a talk on the art collection. The Council was asked to support a future grant application from the trustees.</p> <p>Farmers' market</p> <p>A resident asked whether there was any prospect of reviving a farmers' market in Lytham. The Chair said this had been raised before and was worth exploring, with care taken not to duplicate what existing businesses already offer.</p> <p>Allotments</p> <p>A resident asked why the Council was not simply accepting the transfer of Mythop Road allotments from Fylde. The Clerk clarified that it was in fact the Town Council that had been exercising caution – Fylde was willing to transfer, but the Council wanted to complete proper due diligence on costs, boundaries, and liabilities before committing. The Chair added that the Council was broadly minded to take on the allotments, but wanted to do so with its eyes open.</p> <p>South Park speeding</p> <p>A resident raised concerns about speeding on South Park and asked whether making it access-only had been considered. The Chair noted that parts of South Park fall outside the Town Council's area, and suggested the matter be raised with the relevant county and borough councillors. She added that the Council would be monitoring the impact of the speed indicator devices before drawing conclusions.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Local Issues and Community Priorities</p> <p>The Chair summarised the issues and priorities raised at the meeting for the Council to consider. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Lytham Festival - options for any improved Dividend for the community of Lytham. Also considering the impact upon residents of all events. b) Lytham Green - pursuing the opportunities for it to be placed into Charitable Trust status c) Cleanliness of the Town Centre d) Disability Access on pavements and pedestrian areas, including drop-curbs e) Regeneration Money held by Fylde Council for improvements to Lytham f) The Signage on the promenade relating to the Coastal lands into the Ribble Estuary g) Supporting Youngsters in the community h) Reviewing the Council's A-Board guidance policy in reflection of the use of advertising boards for Charitable purposes. i) Helping Volunteer groups and organisations better connect for the benefit of the community.
<p>13.</p>	<p>Any Other Business (for information only)</p> <p>No additional business was raised.</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Date of Next Annual Town Meeting</p> <p>To note that the next Annual Town Meeting will be held in spring 2027 (date to be confirmed). The meeting must be held between 1 March and 1 June 2027.</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>Close of Meeting - The Chair formally closed the Annual Town Meeting.</p>