Lytham Town Council

Minutes – Annual Council Meeting - Wednesday 6th May 2026

Minutes of the Council Meeting held:
Wednesday 6th May 2026, at 6.30pm at Lytham Institute, 27 Clifton St, Lytham, FY8 5EP

Present: Councillors Simon Newell (Outgoing Chair), Edward Cook, Amy Barnes, Hilary Warburton, Anne Aitken, Cath Powell, Kelly Farrington, Mark Bamforth, Brenda Blackshaw & Suzanne Bramall.
Apologies received: N/A
Officers: Clerk / RFO
Members of the Public: 39 members of the public were present at the start of the meeting with an additional 2 people arriving after the meeting had commenced

No.	Agenda Item
INTRODUCTION	
	Welcome, introduction, Audio Recording notice and Health & Safety. The Clerk opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. He advised that the meeting was being audio recorded for the sole purpose of assisting in the production of accurate minutes. Members and attendees were reminded that the Council's audio recording policy is available to view online. Recordings are deleted after six months unless subject to challenge; a written transcript is retained for the record. The Clerk noted that the agenda was procedurally heavy, as is customary for the Annual Council Meeting, covering a number of documents as well as the election of Chair and Vice Chair, which would be the first order of business.

	Attendees were advised that they were welcome to leave at any point should they have other commitments, with the request that any departures did not disrupt the meeting. The Clerk also provided clarification that any members of the public wishing to make comment to or with **Lytham Voice** should do so by contacting that group directly through their own channels — including their email address and Facebook page — as this is not a matter for the Town Council. The Clerk then invited the outgoing Chair, **Mr Newell**, to raise the first item.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS	
1.	**Election of Chair of the Council (2026/27)** This item was chaired by the outgoing Chair, **Councillor Newell**. Councillor Newell invited nominations for the position of Chair of Lytham Town Council. **Councillor Bramall** was proposed by **Councillor Blackshaw** and seconded by **Councillor Aitken**. Councillor Bramall confirmed she was willing to accept the nomination. No further nominations were received. A vote was taken and the nomination was carried **unanimously**. **Councillor Bramall was duly elected as Chair of Lytham Town Council.** **Decision Item 31/2026**
1a.	**Declaration of Acceptance of Office — Chair** Following the vote, the Clerk asked Councillor Bramall to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, a copy of which would be retained by the Council and forwarded to the Democracy Team at Fylde Borough Council. With the formalities complete, Councillor Newell stood down as Chair and Councillor Bramall took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.
2.	**Election of Vice-Chair (2026/27)** This item was chaired by the newly elected Chair, **Councillor Suzanne Bramall**. Councillor Bramall invited nominations for the position of Vice Chair of Lytham Town Council for 2026/27. **Councillor Mark Bamforth** was proposed by **Councillor Farrington** and seconded by **Councillor Powell**. Councillor Bamforth confirmed he was willing to accept the nomination. No further nominations were received. A vote was taken and the nomination was carried **unanimously**. **Councillor Mark Bamforth was duly elected as Vice Chair of Lytham Town Council for 2026/27.** **Decision Item 32/2026**

2a.	**Declaration of Acceptance of Office — Vice-Chair** Councillor Bamforth signed the **Declaration of Acceptance of Office**.
	Address by the incoming Chair The newly elected Chair, Councillor Suzanne Bramall, addressed the meeting and took the opportunity to thank the outgoing Chair, Councillor Simon Newell, on behalf of the Council for his service over the past year. Councillor Bramall noted that it had not been an easy start to the year, with the Council having gone four months without a Clerk, and acknowledged that Councillor Newell had provided strong leadership during that challenging period. She remarked that without that steady hand at the helm, the Council would have struggled considerably. Councillor Bramall also recognised the positive working relationship that had developed between Councillor Newell and the new Clerk, and expressed hope that the Council would continue to build on that foundation going forward. She concluded by thanking Councillor Newell on behalf of all councillors for the considerable work he had put in over the past twelve months, noting that the Council had seen a number of good outcomes during his tenure.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
3.	**Apologies for Absence** There were no absences to note
4.	**Declarations of Pecuniary and Other Interests** **Councillor Blackshaw** declared that, as she had not been present at the previous meeting, she wished to place on record the following interests: • She is Chair of the Friends of Lytham Railway Station. • She is a member of the Lytham Business Partnership in a general capacity, having been so for many years, though not as part of any private group. She attends meetings in the same capacity as any other member of the public. • She is a supporter of local charities and community groups generally. • She wished to state clearly that he has never been, and will never be, a member of Lytham Voice, and has never supported that organisation. **Councillor Farrington** declared that he had attended a number of Lytham Business Partnership meetings, principally in connection with the Christmas event, and believed he had been acting in his capacity as a Town Councillor at those meetings. He advised that

	he was not aware of holding any formal membership of the organisation but felt it appropriate to declare their attendance. He indicated he would seek further clarification on this matter following the meeting. **Councillor Bamforth** declared an interest in relation to Community Internal Scrutiny and Public Protection, carried forward from the previous meeting.
7.	**Review of the Council's First Year (May 2025 – April 2026) *TAKEN OUT OF AGENDA ORDER*** The outgoing Chair, Councillor Simon Newell, addressed the meeting and reflected on the Council's first year in operation. He noted that, as a newly established council, there had been no existing infrastructure in place at the outset, and considerable work had been undertaken to build the organisation from the ground up. **Governance and Administration** The Council had established a comprehensive suite of documents, now publicly available on the Council's website, comprising 15 written policies, 13 governance documents, 4 finance documents and 2 further documents — 34 in total. The Council had recently undergone an audit, which it passed successfully. **Clerk Appointment** Following an initial period of four months without a Clerk, the Council appointed Luke Russell as Town Clerk following a thorough recruitment process. **Traffic, Parking and Highways** The Council had identified road traffic and parking as a priority issue following community concern. Work had been undertaken to progress the installation of speed indicator equipment across the town, with locations identified. Rights of way, passageways, and street furniture had also been reviewed, with redundant furniture removed. Councillor Warburton had led work on the management of A-boards to improve accessibility for visitors and residents. **Clifton Street Trees** Following significant community concern regarding the trees on Clifton Street and their impact on pavements, the Council had engaged with Fylde Borough Council. The outcome was that the trees had been retained, reduced in height, and would be managed on an ongoing basis, with pavement repair and street furniture improvements to follow. **Lytham Green** The Council had been actively working to protect Lytham Green, which was gifted to the people of Lytham by the Clifton family. Concerns had been raised about its future ownership and management in the context of local government reorganisation, and efforts were being made to explore a trust arrangement to preserve it for the benefit of the community, in a similar fashion to Lowther Gardens and the Lowther Pavilion. **Planning and Licensing**

The Council had engaged actively on planning and licensing matters, seeking to ensure a fair and level playing field for residents, small businesses and hospitality operators. The Council had supported calls for a cumulative impact policy in respect of licensing, and had contributed to a review of Fylde's licensing policy.

Community Engagement

A community groups event held at the Lowther Pavilion had brought together approximately 50 local voluntary and community organisations; and this was considered a considerable success in fostering connections across the town.

The Council had established a Community Grants, Honours and Awards Scheme, with the first grant of £500 awarded to the Men's Shed, operating out of the YMCA, to support materials for community and environmental projects.

Environment and Planting

Planting activity had taken place at Sparrow Park and Green Drive, with a further planting day planned at Lytham Railway Station on Sunday 17th May.

Banking Provision

Efforts had been made to explore the provision of a banking hub for Lytham, though this had not yet been successful.

Liggard Brook

A presentation had been made regarding Liggard Brook, with steps being taken to progress matters in the right direction.

Wind Farm Liaison

The Council had contributed £1,500 toward legal costs associated with a wind farm liaison committee, in recognition of the potential disruption to access routes into Lytham during any associated infrastructure works.

Town of Culture

The Council had submitted an application for Lancashire Town of Culture status, led by Councillor Farrington. The application focused on culture, heritage, architecture and the arts. If successful at the Lancashire stage, a funding pot of £60,000 would be available. Lytham is categorised in the under-20,000 population category for the purposes of the competition.

Community Outreach

Councillors had represented the Council at a wide range of community events and organisations over the year, including meetings with the Scouts, Probus Club, local schools, the Heritage Centre, being represented at the Remembrance Day events for 2025, as well as a community celebration event.

Councillor Newell concluded by thanking all councillors for their commitment and voluntary service, noting that no councillor claims expenses, and expressed his gratitude to the Clerk and to the wider community.

5.	**Public Participation (Open Forum)** (Max 15 minutes, 3 minutes per speaker) • **Person A** addressed the meeting and expressed appreciation to the Council and all councillors for their work over the past year, describing the changes made as significant and positive. Person A also commented favourably on the community groups evening held at the Lowther Pavilion, noting it had been a wonderful occasion and a valuable opportunity to meet other volunteers and share ideas. • **Person B** representing Lytham Club Day, addressed the meeting and thanked the Council for its assistance in securing the necessary licence to allow bunting to be displayed in the town for Club Day. Person B noted that additional expertise had been required to complete the licensing application, and expressed appreciation to the Council for undertaking this on behalf of Club Day. Person B asked where the bunting would be positioned, given concerns that it may not be possible to attach it to the new lampposts. The Chair advised that this was still being investigated. It was noted that bunting had been successfully displayed on similar new lampposts in St Annes, and that this matter would need to be clarified. **Borough Councillor Andrew Redfern** (Lytham West Ward), who was present in the audience, contributed to the discussion. It was noted that a meeting regarding the new lampposts was scheduled for the following Monday, and it was agreed that an update on the bunting situation would be sought and fed back to Lytham Club Day following that meeting. The possibility of assistance from the local fire station in erecting the bunting was also raised, it being noted that this could form part of ladder training for the crew. • **Person C** asked how heavy the Bunting was, and there was not a clear answer. • **Person D** asked whether Town Councillors would be able to participate in the **Lytham Club Day** procession, suggesting it would be a welcome gesture. The Chair confirmed that councillors were very willing to do so, noting that the Council had previously participated in the **Christmas procession** and had also been represented at the **Remembrance** commemoration. She indicated that the Council would endeavour to have as many councillors as possible take part, acknowledging that some members had other commitments and responsibilities on Club Day itself. It was noted that the Club Day Committee had been welcomed at the Town Council previously, and that this would continue. The Chair then drew the Public Participation session to a close.
6.	**Approval of Minutes** **To consider and resolve** the approval of the minutes for: Full meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 29th April 2026 **Moved by:** Cllr Bamforth. **Seconded:** Cllr Farrington **Decision** – Agreed unanimously **Decision Item 33/2026** **Allocation of Budget for Planters**

	Following the approval of the previous meeting's minutes, Councillor Powell recommended that £1,000 be set aside from the Council's budget to fund the purchase of planters for Lytham, in order that they could be ordered within the coming weeks. This recommendation followed a detailed discussion on the matter at the previous meeting. The Clerk advised that, as this constituted a budgetary decision, it would require a formal proposal, seconding, and vote of the Council. Councillor Powell proposed the motion. It was seconded by Councillor Newell. A vote was taken and the motion was carried unanimously. **Resolved:** That £1,000 be allocated from the Council's budget for the purchase of planters for Lytham. Decision Item 34/2026

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW	
8.	**Review and Re-adoption of Standing Orders** The Clerk advised that the Council's Standing Orders, based on the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) model document and adopted approximately six months previously, were presented for review and re-adoption for the 2026/27 municipal year. A small amendment had been made in response to recommendations from the internal audit. All members had been circulated on the amendments in advance. The motion was proposed (Cllr Warburton) and seconded (Cllr Bamforth). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the Standing Orders, incorporating the internal audit recommended amendment, be re-adopted for the 2026/27 municipal year.** Decision Item 35/2026
9.	**Review and Re-adoption of Financial Regulations** The Clerk advised that the Financial Regulations, also based on the NALC model document, were presented for review and re-adoption. One amendment had been made, again in response to internal audit recommendations, introducing an explicit requirement that any communications regarding changes to officer salaries must form part of the formal decision-making process. The motion was proposed (Cllr Bamforth) and seconded (Cllr Powell). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the Financial Regulations, incorporating the internal audit recommended amendment, be re-adopted for the 2026/27 municipal year.** Decision Item 36/2026

10.	**Review and Re-adoption of Code of Conduct** The Clerk advised that at the Council's inaugural meeting, members had adopted the **Fylde Borough Council Code of Conduct for Elected Members**, which is based on the Local Government Association national standards. The Clerk recommended re-adoption of this Code for the 2026/27 municipal year, noting the practical benefits of alignment with Fylde Borough Council, including access to the Monitoring Officer at borough level. It was noted that the Nolan Principles of public life — including honesty, transparency and integrity — are explicitly referenced within the Code. The Clerk suggested that should the Council wish to add any town council-specific provisions in future, these could be incorporated as an addendum. The Clerk also noted that a link to the Code of Conduct document would be included in the minutes for ease of reference. Embedded Link The motion was proposed (Cllr Bamforth) and seconded (Cllr Newell). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the Fylde Borough Council Code of Conduct for Elected Members be re-adopted for the 2026/27 municipal year.** **Decision Item 37/2026**
11.	**Risk Register** The Clerk advised that a thorough and updated Risk Register had been circulated to all members electronically. The document identifies foreseeable risks, assesses and mitigates them, and includes provisions specifically addressing the risk of supplier fraud, added in response to internal audit recommendations. The motion was proposed (Cllr Blackshaw) and seconded (Cllr Powell). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the updated Risk Register for 2026/27 be approved.** **Decision Item 38/2026**
12.	**Internal Financial Controls** The Clerk advised that members had, through a number of recent decisions — including approval of the counter fraud policy, supplier fraud policy, financial regulations, risk register, and budget review — effectively discharged their oversight of the Council's internal financial controls. The Council's accounts are also subject to independent review. Members confirmed they were satisfied that adequate and appropriate internal financial controls were in place. The motion was proposed (Cllr Bramall) and seconded (Cllr Bamforth). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**.

	Resolved: That the internal financial controls be confirmed as adequate and appropriate for the Council's activities. Decision Item 39/2026
13.	Asset Register The Clerk advised that the Council's Asset Register had been circulated and reflected total assets with a value of **£569**. The Council's current assets comprise one laptop, two pull-up banners, one external banner, and a part-share in a notice board. The Clerk noted that a projector used at meetings is his own personal equipment, and that the Council may wish to consider purchasing a dedicated projector and speaker microphone in the coming year to improve accessibility. Members confirmed they were satisfied with the Asset Register as presented. The motion was proposed (Cllr Warburton) and seconded (Cllr Bamforth). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the Asset Register be approved.** Decision Item 40/2026
14.	Insurance Arrangements The Clerk advised that the Council holds an insurance policy with **Zurich Insurance**, taken out in August of the previous year. The policy includes **£12,000,000 of public liability cover**, employer's liability cover, and fidelity guarantee cover, the latter providing protection in the event of financial misconduct by an officer. A copy of the insurance schedule had been circulated to all members. Members confirmed they were satisfied that the Council's insurance arrangements were adequate. The motion was proposed (Cllr Bamforth) and seconded (Cllr Blackshaw). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the Council's insurance arrangements be confirmed as adequate.** Decision Item 41/2026
15.	Review of Delegation Arrangements The Clerk advised that the scheme of delegation, under which the Council empowers the Clerk to act on its behalf, was unchanged since its agreement approximately six months previously. Re-adoption was required for the 2026/27 municipal year. The motion was proposed (Cllr Powell) and seconded (Cllr Farrington). A vote was taken and carried **unanimously**. **Resolved: That the existing delegation arrangements to the Clerk be confirmed and re-adopted for the 2026/27 municipal year.** Decision Item 42/2026

16.	**General Power of Competence** The Clerk advised that the General Power of Competence did not yet apply to the Council, as two criteria must first be met: a) at least two thirds of members must be elected rather than co-opted, and b) the Clerk must hold a qualifying qualification under the SLCC Level 3 pathway (CiLCA) The Clerk confirmed he is actively working towards this qualification and would bring the matter back to Council for formal resolution once both criteria are satisfied. It was noted that this item is conventionally considered at the Annual Meeting, which is why it appeared on the agenda. **No decision was required at this meeting.**

COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND APPOINTMENTS	
17.	**Review of Council Structure, Committees and Working Groups** The Clerk recommended that this item be deferred to allow more detailed preparatory work to be undertaken in advance. **Resolved: That this item be deferred to the meeting of 10th June 2026.** It was agreed that members would bring diaries to the June meeting to enable dates for subgroup meetings to be confirmed. Members also noted the benefit of consolidating smaller meetings into a single all-member meeting where possible, to improve efficiency.
18.	**Appointment of Committee Members** Given the deferral of Item 17, it was agreed that appointment of members to committees and confirmation of committee chair arrangements would also be deferred. **Resolved: That this item be deferred to the meeting of 10th June 2026.**
19.	**Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies** The Council noted the current arrangements for councillor representation on external organisations and partnership groups. The following appointments and arrangements were confirmed or noted: • **Lytham Festival** – **Councillor Bramall** confirmed she would continue as the Council's representative, with continuity having been specifically requested.

	• **Lytham Business Partnership** – It was noted that several councillors attend meetings of the Business Partnership in various capacities. The Clerk advised that clarity was needed as to who attends as a formal Council representative. This will be clarified outside of the meeting. • **Christmas Switch-On** – **Councillor Farrington** confirmed he would be leading on this, working in partnership with the Lytham Business Partnership. • **Wind Farm Liaison Committee** – **Councillors Bramall** and **Newell** confirmed their continued involvement. • **Fylde Area Committee** – noted as an ongoing area of representation. • **Lancashire Association of Local Councils / NALC** – members noted their individual membership as councillors within the association. • **Lytham Project Board** – **Councillor Powell** confirmed as the council representative. • **Local Conservation / Wildlife Group** – **Councillor Warburton** noted attendance at a recent conservation walk in a personal capacity and agreed to explore whether a formal council invitation could be extended. The Clerk was asked to follow this up.

ORDINARY COUNCIL BUSINESS	
20.	**Acceptable Standards of Behaviour and Communication** The Clerk advised that this item did not require a decision at this meeting but was brought forward as a signpost for future work. He noted that whilst the Code of Conduct and his recently circulated social media guidance provide a framework; there is a gap in explicit guidance around how councillors and officers should communicate professionally and fairly, particularly in written and digital communications. The Clerk proposed developing a clear guidance document to address this. Members were supportive of this work being taken forward. **Noted: The Clerk to develop a guidance document on acceptable standards of communication for consideration at a future meeting.**
21.	**Development Monies for Lytham Held by Fylde Borough Council** The Clerk introduced this item, noting that approximately £600,000 of development and regeneration funding designated for Lytham remains held by Fylde Borough Council, being the balance remaining following expenditure on the new lampposts and tree works. Concern was expressed that, in the context of local government reorganisation and the transition to a unitary authority, there is a risk that this funding could be lost or absorbed if not adequately protected. It was noted that whilst the funding had been understood to be ring-fenced, this may not currently be the case, making the matter more urgent. Members were mindful that once a shadow unitary authority period commences, restrictions on the transfer and expenditure of funds are likely to apply, potentially creating a period of limbo during which decisions cannot be made. It was noted that this may occur as early as September 2026, meaning time is of the essence.

	Town Councillors Farrington and Bamforth, who also serve as Fylde Borough Councillors for Lytham, along **with Borough Councillor Andrew Redfern** and a further Fylde Borough Councillor for Lytham, **Peter Anthony** agreed to work collaboratively to make representations to the Leader of Fylde Borough Council, Karen Buckley, to seek assurances that the funding is protected and ring-fenced for Lytham ahead of local government reorganisation. It was suggested that where Councillors Farrington and Bamforth make such representations, they do so explicitly in both their capacities as Town Councillors and Borough Councillors. The Clerk confirmed he would also write separately on behalf of the Town Council to Fylde Borough Council, formally expressing the Council's concern and urging that the matter be resolved as a priority before local government reorganisation takes effect. It was noted that the Council would seek further guidance from the Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC), with a meeting already scheduled. **Resolved:** That the Clerk write to Fylde Borough Council on behalf of Lytham Town Council to formally register concern regarding the protection of development monies held for Lytham, and to seek written assurance that the funding will be ring-fenced ahead of local government reorganisation.

FORWARD PLANNING	
22.	**Calendar of Meetings (2026/27)** The Clerk advised that the full schedule of Full Council and committee meetings for 2026/27 has been published on the Council's website, running through to the end of March 2027. An additional meeting is likely to be scheduled in approximately April 2027 to allow the Council to close down budgets, sign off relevant documents, and complete the internal audit submission process ahead of the local elections in May 2027. The Clerk noted that during the pre-election period, members will be restricted from electioneering or making directional policy decisions, but that essential governance and financial processes must and will continue. Members sought clarification on whether the May 2027 elections would be solely for Town Council seats, given that Fylde Borough Council elections are not anticipated to proceed in the usual way given the local government reorganisation timetable. The Clerk confirmed he would seek clarification from the Democracy Team at Fylde Borough Council on the election timetable and the implications for communication to the public, given the significant reduction in the number of elected councillors anticipated under reorganisation. **Resolved:** That the Calendar of Meetings for 2026/27 be approved.
23.	**Annual Town Meeting – 27 May 2026** The Clerk advised that the Annual Town Meeting, required under Schedule 12, Part III of the Local Government Act 1972, had been rescheduled from the previously notified date to Wednesday 27 May 2026, to be held at Lytham Institute. The change followed feedback received after the previous week's meeting.

	The Clerk reminded members and those present that the Annual Town Meeting is a meeting of the local electorate and is not a council meeting. Councillors attend as electors, on the same basis as any other resident. The meeting will be facilitated by the Clerk and the Chair, and will focus on priorities for the coming twelve months. Members were encouraged to spread the word to residents and community groups, as the meeting represents a valuable opportunity for the community to shape the Council's direction. **Noted: The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 May 2026**. The Clerk and Chair will facilitate.
24.	**Date, Time & Location of Next Meeting** Full Council Meeting: Wednesday 10th June 2026 6:30pm Lytham Institute, 27 Clifton Street, Lytham, Lancashire, FY8 5EP
	Meeting Close 7:42pm

The chair of this meeting believes that the minutes of the meeting of Lytham Town Council held on 29th April 2026 are a correct record and are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.
Chair