

Contact Officer: Andrea Woodside

COUNCIL

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

**At the Meeting of the Council of the Borough of Kirklees held at
Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield on Wednesday 12 February 2025**

PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Nosheen Dad) in the Chair

COUNCILLORS

Councillor Beverley Addy	Councillor Masood Ahmed
Councillor Munir Ahmed	Councillor Itrat Ali
Councillor Karen Allison	Councillor Zarina Amin
Councillor Ammar Anwar	Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Ali Arshad	Councillor Timothy Bamford
Councillor Donna Bellamy	Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor Cahal Burke	Councillor Aafaq Butt
Councillor Andrew Cooper	Councillor Moses Crook
Councillor Aziz Daji	Councillor Hanifa Darwan
Councillor Paola Antonia Davies	Councillor Eric Firth
Councillor Charles Greaves	Councillor David Hall
Councillor Tyler Hawkins	Councillor Caroline Holt
Councillor James Homewood	Councillor Yusra Hussain
Councillor Zahid Kahut	Councillor Viv Kendrick
Councillor Jo Lawson	Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Vivien Lees-Hamilton	Councillor Susan Lee-Richards
Councillor David Longstaff	Councillor Gwen Lowe
Councillor Harry McCarthy	Councillor Hannah McKerchar
Councillor Matthew McLoughlin	Councillor Alison Munro
Councillor Darren O'Donovan	Councillor Carole Pattison
Councillor Amanda Pinnock	Councillor Andrew Pinnock
Councillor Ashleigh Robinson	Councillor Jane Rylah
Councillor Imran Safdar	Councillor Cathy Scott
Councillor Angela Sewell	Councillor Will Simpson
Councillor Anthony Smith	Councillor Elizabeth Smaje
Councillor Richard Smith	Councillor Mohan Sokhal
Councillor John Taylor	Councillor Mark Thompson
Councillor Graham Turner	Councillor Sheikh Ullah
Councillor Alex Vickers	Councillor Adam Zaman
Councillor Habiban Zaman	

148 Announcements by the Mayor and Chief Executive

There were no announcements.

Council - 12 February 2025

149 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bramwell, Brook, Holmes, Khan, McGrath, Marchington, Moore, K Pinnock and Sheard.

150 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 January 2025 be approved as a correct record.

151 **Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Bellamy declared an ‘other’ interest in Agenda Item 10 in her capacity as a member of the Fostering Panel.

Councillor Holt declared an ‘other’ interest in her capacity as a Member of the Adoption Panel.

Councillor Taylor declared an ‘other’ interest in Agenda Item 10 in his capacity as Chair of Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

Councillor Sewell declared an ‘other’ interest in her capacity as a Member of the Fostering Panel.

152 **Petitions (From Members of the Council)**

Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 9, Council received a petition from Councillor Vickers which requested that the Council commences the construction of the Meltham Greenway extension immediately, prioritising phase 3a between Nether-ton Fold and Crosland Factory Lane picnic area.

The Mayor advised that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9(3), the subject matter of the petition be referred to the relevant Service Director.

153 **Deputations & Petitions (From Members of the Public)**

No deputations or petitions were received.

154 **Public Question Time**

Council received the following written questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11;

Question from Avalon Rawling

“In July 2024, the International Court of Justice declared Israel’s occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem illegal. International Agencies including but not limited to the UN Human Rights Council have identified and published lists of companies profiting from these illegal activities.

In November 2024, this council passed a motion to avoid using goods and services provided by such companies.

While we understand that it is not legal for the council to implement a blanket boycott, we would like to know what steps the council has taken to identify and remove companies that benefit from the illegal occupation from our suppliers lists.”

Council - 12 February 2025

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

155 West Yorkshire Combined Authority - Minutes

The Minutes of West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 12 December 2024 were received and noted.

156 Half Yearly Monitoring Report - Treasury Management Activity 2024/2025 (Reference from Corporate Governance and Audit Committee / Cabinet)

It was moved by Councillor Turner, seconded by Councillor Taylor and

RESOLVED – That the treasury management performance during the first half of 2024/2025 be noted.

157 Report of the Members' Allowances Independent Review Panel (Reference from Corporate Governance and Audit Committee)

It was moved by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Homewood and

RESOLVED – That the recommendations of the Members' Allowances Independent Review Panel be approved;

- (i) to continue to apply the same percentage pay award awarded to Officers to the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances
- (ii) the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to Chair of Corporate Governance and Audit Committee be increased from Band E (currently £3,115 per annum) to Band C1 (currently £7,790 per annum)
- (iii) the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to Fostering Panel Members be increased from Band E1 (currently £1,556 per annum) to Band D1 (currently £4,675 per annum)
- (iv) the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to Adoption Panel Members be increased from Band E1 (currently £1,556 per annum) to Band E (currently £3,115 per annum).

158 Written Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees and Nominated Spokespersons

Council received the following written questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12;

Question from Councillor Greaves

“What is the latest position with releasing the outstanding s106 education monies to our schools?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

Council - 12 February 2025

Question from Councillor Greaves

“Does the Leader of the Council think that the introduction of parking charges to the new locations has been successful?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Greaves

“Does the Leader of the Council think that the Household Waste Recovery plan was successful?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Cooper to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison

“Who represents Kirklees Council on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Climate and Environment Committee?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor Pattison).

Question from Councillor Cooper

“What is the shortfall in funding from the Labour Government to the Council to cover the rise in Employers National Insurance Contributions?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

Question from Councillor Cooper

“Will the Cabinet drop proposals to privatise Castle Grange and Claremont House Dementia Care Homes?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care (Councillor Addy).

Question from Councillor Safdar

“In light of repeated fly tipping incidents which without doubt has cost this local authority a huge amount over the past few months and years, can we finally take enforcement and CCTV seriously at key repeat offender hotspots on the Walpole Estate and Yews Hill Road?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Council - 12 February 2025

Question from Councillor Safdar

“In July 2024, the International Court of Justice declared Israel’s occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem illegal. International Agencies including but not limited to the UN Human Rights Council have identified companies profiting from these illegal activities. In November 2024, this council passed a motion to divest from such companies.

What specific actions has Kirklees Council taken to identify and remove companies benefiting from the occupation from our preferred suppliers’ lists? How will the council ensure compliance with the motion going forward?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

Question from Councillor Taylor

“How satisfied are you with the way in which bin collection issues are resolved?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor J C Lawson

“Why is there no full council meeting in April this year?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor Pattison).

Question from Councillor Darwan

“The UK, as a state party to the Genocide Convention, has a legal responsibility to take action to deter and prevent further genocidal acts being committed against Palestinians. What measures to date have been taken by Cabinet to divest pension funds they administer from companies enabling Israel’s genocide?”

A response was provided by the Leader of the Council (Councillor Pattison).

Question from Councillor Hall

“Would the Cabinet Member please tell me how successful the bins catch-up operation was after the snow in January?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor J D Lawson

“In what ways does this Council help victims of crime?”

Council - 12 February 2025

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities (Councillor A U Pinnock).

Question from Councillor Taylor

“With changes coming forward to the Ofsted Gradings for Schools could she confirm the current breakdown of our schools across the old ratings and whether our schools have been collectively improving or deteriorating over the last 5 years.”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities (Councillor A U Pinnock).

Question from Councillor Taylor

“In recent weeks there have been 3 further crashes at the accident blackspot between the Sovereign junction and Carr Lane/Cross lane junction. Over the 25 years I have been a Parish & more recently a Kirklees Councillor there have been many attempts at improvements here but still the accidents mount up. The most recent changes having been made in the last 12 months.

At the recent scrutiny Officers stated that there was nothing else that could be considered here, except perhaps a speed camera.

Given the community concerns on this issue will he please outline the steps that the Council now proposes to take to try and have a speed camera installed in this location to reduce the number of accidents in the vicinity.”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Holt

“Can the Cabinet Member inform the Council of the process which car-users have to go through to park for free in St John’s car park, Cleckheaton and especially where there is no meter present to get a ticket from?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Hall

“What is the current waiting time while a disabled badge application is being processed?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services (Councillor Hawkins).

Question from Councillor Sadfar

“C+K Careers has been informed by Kirklees Council that its funding is to be cut by £150k for the year 2025/2026. On what intelligence based approach was this decision reached? As the need to deliver this important youth service hasn't changed. Also Calderdale Council hasn't implemented a budget cut only Kirklees Council has.”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

Question from Councillor Munro

“Has a future use for the Tolson building been identified?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

Question from Councillor Munro

“Does the Council now have the valuation for the land known as HS9 in the Local Plan?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration (Councillor Turner).

Question from Councillor Munro

“I understand the Council was carrying out a review of its Snow Warden policy. Has this happened and are there any changes to that policy?”

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Daji

“The residents in my Batley East Ward have been very concerned about the poor services provided by the Highways and Environment Services. Over many months in the summer, I received so many cases where residents were complaining about the overgrown grass and bushes not being cut and overhanging tree branches not being cut down. Also, more recently residents have been asking me why there are no road sweepers in the area and why the state of the footpaths is so bad with the fallen leaves not being swept at all for months. This has led to some people slipping on the footpaths. I have been sent so many videos and photos of the neglect, many of which I forwarded with my emails to officers. It's got to the point where the residents of Batley East are asking why has Batley been so neglected. On top of this, Hyrstlands park in my Ward was so neglected all last summer that the grass wasn't cut despite many emails from me, depriving children and young people from playing cricket all summer. This is very shocking as officers took no action on this.

Council - 12 February 2025

The concerns have led to residents having to do petitions to the council as their emails and phone calls to council officers are ignored, with officers working in silos passing the buck onto others, and Heads of services do not seem to take responsibility and engage.

I am very concerned when I walk round my patch and see all the neglect and deprivation in the environment people are living in. I haven't seen any real plans by the Council to bring about any improvements. As the stock answer seems to be lack of resources and staff. Also, the children's play areas have been neglected to the extent they are not fit for purpose and not safe for children.

I hope you will take these matters very seriously and take immediate action to ensure senior managers take responsibility for all these concerns. I hope from this coming spring and the summer period all these issues will be dealt with so that the residents and children do not have to go through such a bad summer period again. I would be happy to invite you to come too Batley anytime to see for yourself.

I look forward to your detailed reply and action plan to address all these issues. Can you please let me know what action you will take to ensure the Highways and Environment services will deliver a better service to the residents of Batley and how the officers will be more accountable for the delivery of services or lack of them?"

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

Question from Councillor Daji

"With the closure of the Customer Services in Dewsbury the residents in North Kirklees have been very deprived and concerned as they have nowhere else to go for assistance. Including residents who cannot speak English, as the Customer Service had bilingual staff who assisted customers. With the closure of the Dewsbury service these customers are not receiving any service. It was said that the service was to be moved to the library but subsequently I am informed that this closed also. I have also heard that there is some kind of online service. However, I don't know if this is true. Even if it is residents are very dubious as to how this would work.

Can the Member throw any light on this and provide details about customer services for people who need assistance?"

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services (Councillor Hawkins).

Question from Councillor Daji

"With the recent death of Sara Shariff and many other children over the years in parts of the UK, what is the position in Kirklees with Children's Services in terms of children being safe and protected from harm. Is the Member fully satisfied that the services are safe and there are adequate measures in place to monitor levels of quality services to Children to safeguard them. One measure and aspect of risk is

Council - 12 February 2025

Social Workers having very high caseloads and teams carrying vacancies which are filled with agency workers.

Can you please provide information about how many agency social workers are employed in Children's Services currently and what are the plans to recruit permanent staff?"

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Kendrick).

Question from Councillor McGrath

"Do we have data on parking usage in Huddersfield town centre car parks throughout the week and if so, does the data indicate a need for additional parking, or is there sufficient capacity to accommodate typical visitor numbers by car?"

A response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways (Councillor Munir Ahmed).

159 Minutes of Cabinet and Cabinet Committee - Local Issues

Council received the Minutes of (i) Cabinet held on 10 December 2024 and 21 January 2025, and (ii) Cabinet Committee – Local Issues held on 19 November 2024.

160 Holding the Executive to Account

Council received a portfolio update from the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities (Councillor A U Pinnock), prior to oral questions to the Leader and Cabinet Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.

(It was moved by Councillor Hall, and seconded by Councillor Taylor that under the provision of Council Procedure Rules 15 and 16, the submitted Motions be considered as the next agenda items, be put to the vote without debate, and that the meeting time be extended to enable this. The proposal, upon being put to the vote, was agreed).

161 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Bus Fares

It was moved by Councillor Safdar and seconded by Councillor Arshad;

"That in the light of the recent budget will increase the current bus fare price cap, this Council notes the Labour Government increased the cap by 50%, from £2 to £3.

In practice current fares will be maintained until 31 March 2025. From 1 April 2025 until 31 December 2025 West Yorkshire fares will be £2.50 single and £6 Day Saver.

As a result, Kirklees residents will experience a significant increase in travel costs. Although an MCard weekly, monthly or annual ticket may still be cheaper than two single tickets a day for 5 days, not all bus users can afford to pre-purchase Mcards.

Council - 12 February 2025

This Council believes that:

The increase in the bus fares will hasten the decline in passenger numbers. This could have a damaging impact on the district's bus services. As patronage declines operators will seek to reduce frequency or cut uneconomic routes, which so many residents across the Kirklees area rely on.

Such a move will also have a negative impact on young people travelling to access education, and those reliant on buses to reach their place of employment. It will also have a negative impact on elderly people who do not drive but need to access services, healthcare and visit family.

At a time when many residents across the Kirklees borough are struggling with soaring costs and expenses, an increase in fares will punish some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Increasing fares will discourage sustainable travel and remove an incentive to use public transport to access our town centres, leading to an increase in the number of cars on the road. Buses need to avoid being held up by congestion - created by increased car use. Where bus priority lanes exist, parking is not adequately enforced.

The resulting impact on emissions and clean air will exacerbates health outcomes.

This Council resolves:

- To request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Transport Secretary to outline the Council's dismay at this decision and ask the Government to reconsider this.
- To request that that the Leader of Kirklees Council writes to Mayor Tracy Brabin to highlight the negative impact of this policy and urge the Combined Authority to continue to support subsidised fares in West Yorkshire beyond 31 December 2025.
- That the Cabinet Portfolio Holder engages with local bus companies to consider ways to maintain the essential bus routes that provide a lifeline for many communities.
- That the Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Transport and Highways engage with WYCA on planned road reallocation schemes that are pipelined and are taking far too long to be enacted; to prioritise those road schemes that would reallocate road space and enable the introduction of more bus priority; making use of temporary schemes, if necessary. “

The Motion, upon being out to the vote, was not carried.

RESOLVED – That the Motion not be approved.

162 **Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Burial Sites**

It was moved by Councillor Hussain and seconded by Councillor Ahmed that;

Council - 12 February 2025

"The needs of Dewsbury and Batley residents must continue to be a priority when identifying suitable burial sites. Capital funding has already been secured for Dewsbury, and land searches have primarily focused on Dewsbury and the surrounding communities.

There are credible and reputable organisations that deal with burials on a daily basis. While the Bereavement Service has engaged with these organisations through the Bereavement Forum, concerns remain about the extent to which these issues are being addressed. Greater collaboration between the Council and relevant organisations, including wider community groups, should be encouraged.

The Bereavement Forum meetings are attended by representatives from the bereavement industry, including local clergy, funeral directors, and celebrants. While these meetings are not public, the Council should explore ways to improve transparency and ensure wider community input on burial site provision.

It is essential that the approach to identifying burial land remains open, transparent, and inclusive. We seek reassurances that Dewsbury, Batley, and the surrounding areas are not being disadvantaged in the allocation of resources for burial space.

This Council therefore resolves:

1. That the Leader and Cabinet reaffirm their commitment to identifying suitable multi-faith burial land in Dewsbury and Batley and continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to explore all possible options.
2. That all funds allocated from the £500k (subject to any existing expenditure) remain in place for Dewsbury and Batley and are not utilised for any other areas in South Kirklees."

Whereupon, the submitted Labour Group Amendment was withdrawn.

The Motion, upon being put to the Vote was carried.

RESOLVED –

"That the needs of Dewsbury and Batley residents must continue to be a priority when identifying suitable burial sites. Capital funding has already been secured for Dewsbury, and land searches have primarily focused on Dewsbury and the surrounding communities.

There are credible and reputable organisations that deal with burials on a daily basis. While the Bereavement Service has engaged with these organisations through the Bereavement Forum, concerns remain about the extent to which these issues are being addressed. Greater collaboration between the Council and relevant organisations, including wider community groups, should be encouraged.

The Bereavement Forum meetings are attended by representatives from the bereavement industry, including local clergy, funeral directors, and celebrants. While these meetings are not public, the Council should explore ways to improve transparency and ensure wider community input on burial site provision.

Council - 12 February 2025

It is essential that the approach to identifying burial land remains open, transparent, and inclusive. We seek reassurances that Dewsbury, Batley, and the surrounding areas are not being disadvantaged in the allocation of resources for burial space.

This Council therefore resolves:

1. That the Leader and Cabinet reaffirm their commitment to identifying suitable multi-faith burial land in Dewsbury and Batley and continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to explore all possible options.
2. That all funds allocated from the £500k (subject to any existing expenditure) remain in place for Dewsbury and Batley and are not utilised for any other areas in South Kirklees."

163 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Exempting Social Care from the National Insurance Hike

Motion Withdrawn.

164 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Political Governance in Kirklees

It was moved by Councillor Pattison and seconded by Councillor Crook that;

"This Council notes:

That within the last 2 years, following extensive and thorough cross-party work by the Democracy Commission and supported by the LGA, a finding and recommendation was made that a move to a committee system was not in the interests of this Council nor of the residents of Kirklees

That the above recommendation along with further recommendations to strengthen our scrutiny function was subsequently endorsed by Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and then by a democratic majority of members in full Council in January 2023

That a report on progress made against these recommendations was brought to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in April 2024 and that no further change was recommended

That the recent statement made by representatives of three of the smaller parties on this Council stating an intention to petition the public for a referendum, overruling the decision of both Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and this Council, to decide on our future political governance structure, is counter to the established will of this Council.

This Council believes:

That the time and resources required in the administration of a petition and referendum, which would cost the taxpayers of Kirklees in excess of £300,000, and the costs of any subsequent reorganisation which would be far higher, would be an unnecessary drain on our already pressured financial position.

Council - 12 February 2025

Any reorganisation would not be complete for several years which would lead to a protracted period of confusion and distraction, preventing the council from supporting the residents of this borough effectively.

That a committee system of governance is less transparent than a Cabinet model and requires a significantly higher commitment of time from both members and officers.

That a committee system does not ensure that smaller parties or independent councillors have any more say in decision making than they do currently through our robust scrutiny function.

Therefore, this Council reaffirms its decision to remain a Council run by a Leader and Cabinet system.”

The Motion, upon being put to the Vote was carried.

RESOLVED –

“This Council notes:

That within the last 2 years, following extensive and thorough cross-party work by the Democracy Commission and supported by the LGA, a finding and recommendation was made that a move to a committee system was not in the interests of this Council nor of the residents of Kirklees

That the above recommendation along with further recommendations to strengthen our scrutiny function was subsequently endorsed by Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and then by a democratic majority of members in full Council in January 2023

That a report on progress made against these recommendations was brought to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in April 2024 and that no further change was recommended

That the recent statement made by representatives of three of the smaller parties on this Council stating an intention to petition the public for a referendum, overruling the decision of both Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and this Council, to decide on our future political governance structure, is counter to the established will of this Council.

This Council believes:

That the time and resources required in the administration of a petition and referendum, which would cost the taxpayers of Kirklees in excess of £300,000, and the costs of any subsequent reorganisation which would be far higher, would be an unnecessary drain on our already pressured financial position.

Council - 12 February 2025

Any reorganisation would not be complete for several years which would lead to a protracted period of confusion and distraction, preventing the council from supporting the residents of this borough effectively.

That a committee system of governance is less transparent than a Cabinet model and requires a significantly higher commitment of time from both members and officers.

That a committee system does not ensure that smaller parties or independent councillors have any more say in decision making than they do currently through our robust scrutiny function.

Therefore, this Council reaffirms its decision to remain a Council run by a Leader and Cabinet system.”

165 Minutes of other Committees

Item not considered (Meeting terminated in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16:2).

166 Oral Questions to Committees/Sub Committees/Panel Chairs and Nominated Spokespersons of Joint Committees/External Bodies

Item not considered (Meeting terminated in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16:2).