Contact Officer: Andrea Woodside

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

At the Meeting of the Council of the Borough of Kirklees held at Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield on Wednesday 17 December 2025

PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Elizabeth Smaje) in the Chair

COUNCILLORS

Councillor Beverley Addy
Councillor Munir Ahmed
Councillor Itrat Ali
Councillor Ammar Anwar
Councillor Timothy Bamford
Councillor Tanisha Bramwell
Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor Andrew Cooper
Councillor Aziz Daji
Councillor Paola Antonia Davies
Councillor Tyler Hawkins
Councillor Yusra Hussain
Councillor Viv Kendrick
Councillor Jo Lawson
Councillor Vivien Lees-Hamilton
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor Matthew McLoughlin
Councillor Darren O'Donovan
Councillor Andrew Pinnock
Councillor Jane Rylah
Councillor Imran Safdar
Councillor Joshua Sheard
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Mark Thompson
Councillor Alex Vickers
Councillor Masood Ahmed
Councillor Karen Allison
Councillor Zarina Amin
Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Donna Bellamy
Councillor Cahal Burke
Councillor Aafaq Butt
Councillor Moses Crook
Councillor Hanifa Darwan
Councillor Eric Firth
Councillor Caroline Holt
Councillor Zahid Kahut
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Susan Lee-Richards
Councillor David Longstaff
Councillor Tony McGrath
Councillor Alison Munro
Councillor Amanda Pinnock
Councillor Ashleigh Robinson
Councillor Cathy Scott
Councillor Angela Sewell
Councillor Anthony Smith
Councillor Mohan Sokhal
Councillor Graham Turner
Councillor Habiban Zaman

1 Announcement by the Mayor and Chief Executive

On behalf of Council, the Mayor conveyed thoughts and prayers to those that had been affected by the atrocities that had taken place in Sydney on 14 December 2025.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Arshad, Brook, Dad, Greaves, Hall, Holmes, Homewood, Khan, Lowe, McCarthy, McKerchar, Pattison, K Pinnock, Simpson, Taylor, Ullah and A Zaman.

3 Declaration of Interests

Councillors Sheard, and Bellamy declared an ‘other’ interest in Agenda Item 7 on the grounds that they have family members who are in receipt of PIP.

Councillors Kendrick, Sokhal, Firth, Bolt, Turner, Armer and Sewell declared an ‘other’ interest in Agenda Item 12 on the grounds that they are in receipt of a concessionary travel pass.

4 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Ethical Procurement and Investment Policy

It was moved by Councillor Scott and seconded by Councillor Darwan that;

“This Council notes:

1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considered updates to the Council’s Procurement Strategy, including elements relating to ethical procurement, on 14 November 2025 (Agenda Item 9), and that these proposals are now scheduled for consideration by Cabinet in December 2025.

2) That the UK Government and the United Nations have both recognised that human rights due diligence is a core component of responsible business conduct and public sector accountability.

3) That the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI) provide internationally recognised frameworks for governments for ethical sourcing, investment, and supply-chain due diligence.

4) That Section 26 and 27 of the Procurement Act 2023 sets out discretionary exclusion grounds.

5) That several UK local authorities, including Oxford City Council, North Somerset Council and others have strengthened their investment frameworks to ensure that public funds are not used to support companies implicated in serious human rights violations or breaches of international law.

This Council believes:

1) That Kirklees Council has a responsibility to ensure that all procurement, commissioning, and investment decisions reflect its stated values on equality, justice and human rights.

2) That taxpayers’ money must not support organisations or companies that are complicit in, or benefit from, breaches of international humanitarian law or international human rights standards, including (but not limited to) violations occurring in occupied territories, apartheid systems, forced labour contexts, or other internationally recognised abuses.

3) That ethical procurement and ethical investment are not only moral imperatives but also form part of robust risk management, reducing exposure to reputational harm, financial instability, and supply-chain vulnerabilities.

4) That while Scrutiny has reviewed proposals related to ethical procurement, these do not yet fully align with (i) the UNGPs (ii) the UN PRI (iii) the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 (iv) modern social value standards (v) net-zero and environmental duties or (vi) contemporary expectations around transparency, due diligence, and supply-chain accountability.

This Council therefore resolves to:

a. Request that Cabinet review and strengthen the Council's Investment and Procurement Strategies so that they (i) remain fully compliant with the Procurement Act 2023, including the statutory objectives on integrity, transparency, maximising public benefit, and removing barriers for SMEs and VCSEs and (ii) integrate modern requirements on social value, net-zero commitments, climate impact, and supply-chain transparency.

b. Request that Cabinet bring forward a fully updated and comprehensive Ethical Procurement and Investment Policy for adoption, to include clear governance arrangements for (i) implementation (ii) monitoring (iii) reporting (iv) supplier conduct checks (v) ethical investment screening and (vi) risk management and escalation processes.

c. Mandate that all Council contracts, commissioned services and financial investments be reviewed against the updated Ethical Procurement and Investment Policy, with a full progress report brought to Cabinet within six months of its adoption.

d. Reaffirm this Council's commitment to transparency, ethical stewardship and responsible use of public resources, ensuring that public money is managed in a way that strengthens human rights, promotes social and economic justice, and upholds the values of this Council and the communities it serves."

RESOLVED – That the Motion be approved.

5 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Firework Use, Enforcement and Community Safety

It was moved by Councillor Anwar and seconded by Councillor Scott that;

"Council notes that:

1) Fireworks are an important part of many celebrations and can be enjoyed safely when used responsibly.
2) However, councillors across Kirklees continue to receive reports of fireworks being used irresponsibly — late at night, in residential streets, and outside

recognised celebration periods — causing significant distress to residents, pets, wildlife and people with sensory or health conditions.

3) The sale and use of fireworks for private use remains permitted nationally, though many safety and animal-welfare organisations, including the RSPCA, RoSPA and the National Fire Chiefs Council, have called for tighter controls.
4) Kirklees Council already has Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) in place to restrict fireworks in certain public areas, but local powers over retail sales are limited without national legislation.

Council therefore believes that:

1) Fireworks should primarily be used at organised, licensed public displays and community events.
2) Restricting general retail sales for private use would help reduce nuisance, distress and risk, while allowing communities to continue celebrating safely.
3) Stronger local enforcement, clearer public information and national legislative reform are all necessary to improve public safety and wellbeing.

Council resolves to:

1) Write to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade and the Secretary of State for the Home Department to request consideration of tighter national controls limiting the retail sale of fireworks to licensed organisers of approved public events.
2) Ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Safety to review local licensing and trading-standards arrangements to ensure all available powers are being used to regulate sales and prevent nuisance.
3) Work with West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, and local animal-welfare organisations to promote a public awareness campaign each autumn on the safe and considerate use of fireworks.
4) Encourage town and parish councils and community groups to host and promote organised displays as safer, inclusive alternatives to private use.
5) Request that the relevant Scrutiny Panel consider the inclusion of a review on the local impact of fireworks misuse within its workplan, and report back to Council with recommendations within six months."

Whereupon it was moved by Councillor R Smith and seconded by Councillor Bamford, by way of AMENDMENT, that;

After "This Council therefore believes that…", delete paragraphs 1 and 2.

After "Council resolves to...", delete paragraphs 1 and 5 and add new paragraph: "Write to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade to request that duty be levied on fireworks with greater gunpowder content, with the aim of limiting noise nuisance at un-organized displays."

The AMENDMENT, upon being put to the vote, was NOT CARRIED.

The SUBSTANTIVE MOTION, upon being put to the vote was CARRIED and it was therefore;

RESOLVED -

That Council notes that:

1) Fireworks are an important part of many celebrations and can be enjoyed safely when used responsibly.
2) However, councillors across Kirklees continue to receive reports of fireworks being used irresponsibly — late at night, in residential streets, and outside recognised celebration periods — causing significant distress to residents, pets, wildlife and people with sensory or health conditions.
3) The sale and use of fireworks for private use remains permitted nationally, though many safety and animal-welfare organisations, including the RSPCA, RoSPA and the National Fire Chiefs Council, have called for tighter controls.
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2) Ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Safety to review local licensing and trading-standards arrangements to ensure all available powers are being used to regulate sales and prevent nuisance.
3) Work with West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, and local animal-welfare organisations to promote a public awareness campaign each autumn on the safe and considerate use of fireworks.
4) Encourage town and parish councils and community groups to host and promote organised displays as safer, inclusive alternatives to private use.
5) Request that the relevant Scrutiny Panel consider the inclusion of a review on the local impact of fireworks misuse within its workplan, and report back to Council with recommendations within six months.

6 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Raising the Flag of Palestine on Town Halls Across Kirklees

It was moved by Councillor Anwar and seconded by Councillor Bramwell that;

“Council notes that:

1) On 29 November 2012, the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to grant Palestine non-member observer State status, effectively recognising it as a state within the international community.

2) 29 November is also observed annually as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, established by the UN in 1977.

3) The people of Kirklees have a proud record of standing up for peace, justice, and human rights around the world. Our communities are deeply diverse, with many residents who have direct family and cultural ties to Palestine and the wider Middle East.

4) Displaying flags in recognition of international days and events has been a longstanding way for Kirklees Council to express solidarity with oppressed peoples and affirm our commitment to universal human rights.

Council believes that:

1) Raising the flag of Palestine is a peaceful and symbolic gesture of solidarity with those striving for freedom, equality, and self-determination.

2) Such an act reflects our borough's values of inclusivity, justice, and international cooperation, and aligns with the UK's own stated support for a two-state solution based on international law.

3) Public recognition on this day will send a clear message that Kirklees stands for peace and supports a future where Israelis and Palestinians can live side by side in safety and dignity.

Council therefore resolves to:

1) That in line with the Council's Flag Flying Policy, the Leader, Chief Executive and Mayor be requested to support the Raising of the flag of Palestine on all Kirklees Council town halls and civic buildings on 29 November each year, in line with the UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

2) Issue a public statement reaffirming Kirklees Council's commitment to peace, justice, and the right of all peoples to self-determination under international law.

3) Encourage community engagement and education around international solidarity and human rights, including opportunities for residents to learn about the significance of this day."

Whereupon it was moved by Councillor Bolt, and seconded by Councillor Thompson by way of AMENDMENT, that;

"All text after "Council notes that" be deleted and replaced with:

"… the long-standing Kirklees policy on flying flags over the town halls, viz. *Ad-hoc requests to fly flags will be determined by the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and the Mayor (or their nominees).*

Council believes that this is a fair policy which works well.

Council therefore resolves to continue to support this policy."

The AMENDMENT, on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

The Motion, AS AMENDED, was therefore put to the vote and it was;

RESOLVED –

That this Council notes the long-standing Kirklees policy on flying flags over the town halls, viz. Ad-hoc requests to fly flags will be determined by the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and the Mayor (or their nominees).

Council believes that this is a fair policy which works well.

Council therefore resolves to continue to support this policy.

7 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Opposition to Disability Benefit Reforms

It was moved by Councillor H Zaman and seconded by Councillor Scott that;

"This Council notes with serious concern:

That the Government has passed the Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment Bill, implementing parts of the earlier Pathways to Work Green Paper published in March 2025.

That the original Green Paper proposed wide-ranging reforms to PIP and long-term sickness benefits, including (i) stricter eligibility thresholds (such as the "4 points in one activity" test) (ii) reductions in support for people with mental health conditions and (iii) a shift toward linking disability benefits more closely with work and health treatment.

That while some of these proposals were dropped following public and parliamentary opposition (notably the new PIP scoring rule), others remain in force or are being implemented in stages, particularly those related to Universal Credit, the Work Capability Assessment, and health-related conditionality.

That the Government has confirmed existing PIP claimants will not be immediately affected, but that new claimants from late 2026 onwards may face stricter rules depending on further guidance and secondary legislation.

That changes to Universal Credit include plans to remove or reduce the "limited capability for work-related activity" element for new claimants, especially under-22s, potentially leaving thousands of vulnerable people with significantly less support.

This Council further notes:

That campaigners and expert organisations including Citizens Advice, Health Equity North, and the Resolution Foundation have warned of substantial financial losses and increased hardship under the reforms.

That research by Health Equity North estimates Huddersfield constituency alone could lose £17 million annually under the original package of proposals, with lasting consequences for residents, the local economy, and essential services.

That many of the worst-affected areas are in the North, with longstanding structural inequalities, poorer health outcomes, and stretched public services, including Kirklees.

That local councils like Kirklees are likely to face additional pressures on:
Adult social care, Housing and homelessness services, Welfare support, advice, and crisis payments, Mental health and public health provision, without any clear guarantees of increased funding or capacity.

This Council believes:

That the reforms represent a regressive shift in disability and sickness support, undermining the rights, dignity and independence of people with long-term conditions.

That there is insufficient evidence that the reforms will lead to improved outcomes for disabled people, and growing concern they may increase poverty, reduce access to support, and worsen health inequalities.

That Kirklees has a duty to speak out against national policies that will directly harm its most vulnerable residents and shift costs onto already overstretched local services.

This Council therefore resolves to:

(1) Formally oppose the changes to Universal Credit and disability benefits as enacted under the Universal Credit and PIP Bill, and any future secondary legislation that restricts access to PIP, particularly for people with mental health conditions or fluctuating needs.
(2) Write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, and Chancellor of the Exchequer to (i) express the Council's objection to the enacted reforms (ii) call for a halt to any further erosion of disability-related entitlements and (iii) request a cross-party review of the long-term adequacy of disability and sickness benefits.
(3) Write to all Kirklees MPs urging them to (i) oppose any additional regressive measures in forthcoming legislation (ii) speak up for disabled and chronically ill constituents and (iii) support amendments or repeal of the most damaging elements of the reforms.
(4) Publish a public statement outlining the Council's position, and commit to working with local charities, advocacy groups, carers, and disabled residents to monitor and raise awareness of the changes.
(5) Request that the Overview and Scrutiny function undertakes a full impact review of the reforms on (i) local service demand (ii) financial risk to the Council and (iii) lived experience of Kirklees residents, particularly in relation to care, health, and income security.
(6) Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions seeking formal assurances that (i) existing PIP claimants will not be reassessed under any new rules without full consultation and safeguarding (ii) all further benefit changes will be subject to published Equality Impact Assessments and (iii) that local authorities will receive

sufficient funding to manage additional demand and hardship resulting from national reforms."

The Motion, upon being put to the vote, was NOT CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That the Motion not be approved.

8 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Abolition of the Council Committee System

Motion withdrawn from business (heard at the meeting of Ordinary Council on 10 December 2025).

9 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to the Growing Epidemic of Violence towards Women and Girls

It was moved by Councillor Davies and seconded by Councillor J C Lawson that;

"This Council notes:

1) Violence against women and girls (VAWG) includes female homicide, rape, sexual assault, domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and controlling and coercive behaviour. Some of these are complex crimes which have a devasting and often life-changing impact on victims, their families and friends;
2) Between 2018/19 to 2022/23, police records of VAWG in England and Wales rose by 37%. In West Yorkshire, domestic abuse related crimes make up 21% of all recorded crimes in region. However, this is the tip of the iceberg, as often abuse is never reported;
3) It has been reported recently that approximately 2 million women a year in England and Wales are victims of male violence. It's also estimated that at least 1 in 12 women are victims of violence perpetrated by men, which includes harassment, sexual assault and domestic violence;
4) According to the Home Office, the national average cost to the UK of violence against women and girls is estimated to be in the region of £37 billion annually (including cost of health, legal and social services). In Kirklees, the Kirklees Joint Strategic Assessment (KJSA) has indicated that the estimated cost of domestic violence/abuse to agencies locally is in the region of £43 million each year;
5) While victims of domestic abuse are not confined to a particular gender, the evidence shows that the majority of victims are women. Between November 2022 and November 2023, there were 59,681 total reported cases of domestic abuse across West Yorkshire, with 43,691 (73%) of the victims being female.

This Council believes that:

1) Violence against women and girls is a significant issue on a local, regional and national level. It is a national emergency, and the scale of violence is akin to a public health crisis;

2) There is a lot of good work being done at a local and regional level to tackle the issue of violence against women and girls and this Council commends the work already being done. For instance, Kirklees Council is a supporter of the White Ribbon campaign, which encourages men to challenge misogynistic behaviour. The Council also has a strategic focus on tackling VAWG through its *Kirklees Communities Partnership Plan* and focus on multi-agency collaboration and public safety initiatives. At a regional level, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is also taking a strategic approach through its *Safety of Women and Girls Strategy*, which includes a commitment to embed healthy relationships education in schools and communities, behavioural change through intervention programmes, improving safety in public spaces and strengthening services for victims and survivors;
3) While Kirklees Council is actively working to tackle VAWG, there is room to do more, especially in terms of leadership, visibility and long-term investment. The Council should publicly appoint an elected member VAWG Champion – to provide visible leadership, ensure accountability and champion the voices of survivors in policy-making. The Council should also improve public engagement, as there is limited public-facing communication about VAWG initiatives. Furthermore, public reporting on outcomes and progress is limited, while the Council should also take a whole council approach, embedding VAWG awareness and prevention across all council services (including housing, education and licensing).

This Council, therefore, resolves:

1) To conduct a review into Kirklees Council's procurement practices for commissioning VAWG services to ensure they align with statutory guidance and meet the needs of all survivors, including the most marginalised survivors;
2) To appoint a Kirklees councillor as a VAWG Champion, to hold the council to account on these pledges and amplify the voice of survivors. The VAWG Champion will be a designated individual within the council who will be responsible for leading efforts to address and reduce violence against women and girls, including advocating for survivors, implementing strategies to prevent VAWG and ensuring that appropriate support services are available;
3) To improve public engagement and transparency by publishing regular updates on VAWG-related initiatives, outcomes and community impact;
4) For the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary demanding an urgent Royal Commission into male violence against women. A Royal Commission is the highest form of public inquiry in the UK, and it would be set up to gather evidence and make binding recommendations. The Royal Commission could examine the root causes of male violence, investigate the failures of the criminal justice system, recommend long-term cross-government reforms (e.g. to education, health, policing and social care) and help to drive systemic change by focusing on the voices of survivors and marginalised communities."

RESOLVED – That the Motion be approved.

10 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to the Need for SEND Profit Caps on Private Providers

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

11 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Labour's Welfare Cuts

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

12 Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Disabled Bus Access

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