

**Present:** Councillor Alan Briggs (*in the Chair*),  
Councillor Debbie Armiger, Councillor Biff Bean,  
Councillor James Brown, Councillor Chris Burke,  
Councillor Bob Bushell, Councillor Liz Bushell,  
Councillor Natasha Chapman,  
Councillor Martin Christopher, Councillor Annie Currier,  
Councillor Laura Danese, Councillor Gary Hewson,  
Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Councillor Bill Mara,  
Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Councillor Neil Murray,  
Councillor Donald Nannestad,  
Councillor Lucinda Preston, Councillor Callum Roper,  
Councillor Anita Pritchard, Councillor Clare Smalley,  
Councillor Hilton Spratt, Councillor Rachel Storer,  
Councillor Dylan Stothard, Councillor Naomi Tweddle,  
Councillor Pat Vaughan, Councillor Calum Watt and  
Councillor Joshua Wells

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor Sarah Uldall,  
Councillor Aiden Wells, Councillor Emily Wood and  
Councillor Loraine Woolley

**66. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**67. Motion Under Council Procedure Rule 14 - Liberal Democrat Group Motion -  
Vote of No Confidence - Leader of the Council - Naomi Tweddle**

A motion under Rule 14 of the Council's Constitution was moved and seconded that this Council has no confidence in the Leader of the Council. Due to the mishandling of the leisure centre contract, and therefore resolves to remove the Leader of the Council.

1. A number of Councillors felt that the closure of Yarborough Leisure Centre and Birchwood Leisure Centre, both of which were located in Lincoln and contracted to Active Nation had been mismanaged by the Executive and Councillor Naomi Tweddle should be removed from her position as Leader. It was argued the closures had caused tremendous devastation to Lincoln itself as well as neighbouring towns and villages and affected many activities including school swimming, sports clubs, gym memberships and bookings. Many staff at both the centres had also expressed devastation by the closures.

Councillors had been told at a meeting in January 2025 that Active Nation was experiencing financial difficulties however, it was argued that in the months prior to the meeting there had been several red flags that failure was inevitable, and it was felt the Executive should have been more proactive in finding an alternative provider sooner.

The meeting in January had been the first time Councillors had been made aware of Active Nation's predicament. The Council had offered £0.5million to Active Nation, however this had been declined and there had been little

detail for Councillors or debate about the offer at the time. Shortly after, Active Nation had ceased trading, however gym memberships had continued to be sold by the provider right up to the closure.

It was felt there had been a lack of scrutiny within the Council around the issue, and opposition groups had not been given an opportunity to be involved with helping to shape decisions. In addition, critical information regarding the closure had not been naturally forthcoming for Councillors outside of the Executive, and specific requests had to be made.

There could be a whole manner of consequences as a result of the closure which could potentially cost Lincoln taxpayers, and in addition the loss of many jobs for the staff at both leisure centres.

2. In response to these arguments, it was noted that there had been no negative comments seen on social media regarding the Council's handling of the leisure centres closing. On the contrary, some Councillors had received expressions of thanks and positivity from members of the public at the way the situation had been dealt with.

With support from the Lincoln City Foundation (for whom there was a vote of thanks), the outdoor areas of the leisure centres had been reopened for use within 10 days of Active Nation's closure.

It was highlighted that other leisure facilities in the city were of the highest standard with the four main parks all having achieved the Green Flag Award which recognised well-managed parks across the UK and internationally.

The process of closing the leisure centres and starting to look at retendering the contract had been done swiftly between the Executive and senior officers with strong and reliable legal advice.

With third and private sector organisations not being within the public domain, confidentiality with commercially sensitive information was crucial, however the Leader had offered regular meetings to opposition groups to allow for questions, and when asked for certain information, it had been shared internally.

It was noted that the Council's external auditors had given an unqualified opinion on the Council's finances which was the most positive audit outcome awarded and was testament to the Council's senior leadership and officers.

At a meeting on 19 May 2025, Executive would be appointing a provider to manage both the Yarborough and Birchwood leisure centres following a tendering process.

Councillors voted on the motion and a recorded vote was requested. The result of the vote was as follows:

Name	For	Against	Abstain
Cllr D Armiger		✓	
Cllr B Bean		✓	
Cllr A Briggs			✓
Cllr J Brown	✓		
Cllr C Burke		✓	
Cllr B Bushell		✓	
Cllr L Bushell		✓	
Cllr N Chapman	✓		
Cllr M Christopher	✓		
Cllr A Currier		✓	
Cllr L Danese		✓	
Cllr G Hewson		✓	
Cllr R Longbottom		✓	
Cllr B Mara			✓
Cllr A McNulty		✓	
Cllr N Murray		✓	
Cllr D Nannestad		✓	
Cllr L Preston		✓	
Cllr A Pritchard		✓	
Cllr C Roper		✓	
Cllr C Smalley	✓		
Cllr H Spratt			✓
Cllr R Storer			✓
Cllr D Stothard		✓	
Cllr N Tweddle		✓	
Cllr P Vaughan		✓	
Cllr C Watt		✓	
Cllr J Wells		✓	

The vote on the motion fell and was not carried.