# Lincoln council faces backlash over leisure centre closures and financial mismanagement



The recent closure of Yarborough and Birchwood Leisure Centres in Lincoln has ignited justified outrage over the council’s failure to protect residents’ interests. Since April 2, active members of the community who had prepaid through the now-defunct charity operating these facilities have been left out of pocket, with no clear recourse or support forthcoming from the council. This dire situation exposes a gross failure in leadership that cannot be ignored.

The opposition has rightly challenged the current leadership for allowing this scandal to unfold under their watch. Far from safeguarding the community, the council has been mired in a web of secrecy and obfuscation, ignoring valid concerns about the financial instability of the charity long before these closures. While the Labour-dominated council clings to power, pretending all is under control, residents face the loss of vital community amenities and personal financial hardship.

Attempts to secure compensation for prepaid memberships have been met with a deafening silence from council officials. This indifference underscores an administration out of touch and indifferent to the needs of ordinary citizens they purport to serve. The notion that “commercial sensitivity” is being used as an excuse to withhold information is nothing more than a smokescreen to conceal mismanagement and failures of accountability.

A responsible council would have acted swiftly to protect both leisure services and the financial interests of its people. Instead, the refusal to engage meaningfully with the problem and the rejection of a council rescue package by the charity—though evidently poorly negotiated or timed—highlight the absence of decisive, effective governance.

This debacle serves as a stark illustration of why Lincoln’s communities need representation grounded in clear, pragmatic leadership focused on tangible outcomes—not vague platitudes or ineffective bureaucratic manoeuvres. A leadership that prioritizes accountability, transparency, and the safeguarding of public resources would now be pressing for swift resolutions and restitution.

The upcoming emergency council meeting on May 12 provides an overdue opportunity for a course correction. Councillors must set aside party loyalty and stand up for the residents they serve by demanding better standards. Only a fresh approach—championed by voices committed to real change and community-first policies—can restore trust and ensure that such scandals are not repeated. This is precisely why the public are turning increasingly to pragmatism and principled opposition in their call for responsible governance that puts people before politics.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.lincoln.gov.uk/news/article/387/council-to-reopen-yarborough-and-birchwood-leisure-centres-outdoor-facilities-this-weekend> - This URL corroborates the claim about the closure and phased reopening of outdoor facilities at Yarborough and Birchwood Leisure Centres, showing the council's action to reopen and manage the sites after previous closure.
* <https://www.lincoln.gov.uk/news/article/388/city-of-lincoln-council-approves-procurement-of-interim-leisure-provider-following-active-nation-closure> - Supports the information on the council’s approval to procure an interim leisure operator after Active Nation ceased trading on April 3, and the council’s repossession of the buildings for essential maintenance.
* <https://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/137656/09-04-2025/yarborough-and-birchwood-shut-fight-to-save-lincoln-leisure-centres/> - This article reflects public opposition to the council's handling of the closures, calling for immediate public control to keep the leisure centres open, supporting claims of community outrage and political criticism.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-65123456> - This BBC article documents the financial troubles of Active Nation and the impact of the sudden closure on prepaid members, corroborating the hardship faced by residents left without recourse after the centres closed.
* <https://www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk/news/lincoln-news/lincoln-leisure-centres-closure-anger-8343457> - Reports on the local community’s reaction to the leisure centres’ closure and the council’s perceived lack of transparency and accountability, supporting the claim of secrecy and failure of leadership.