

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough, on Monday, 29 April 2013, at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillor Jessie Milne (In the Chair)
Councillor Irmgard Parrott (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Gillian Bardsley	Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Malcolm Leaning
Councillor Nigel Bowler	Councillor Giles McNeill
Councillor Ken Bridger	Councillor Malcolm Parish
Councillor Alan Caine	Councillor William Parry
Councillor Stuart Curtis	Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Chris Darcel	Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor David Dobbie	Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Richy Doran	Councillor Di Rodgers
Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan	Councillor Geoff Wiseman
Councillor Burt Keimach	Councillor Anne Welburn
Councillor Stuart Kinch	Councillor Trevor Young

Apologies:

Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Sue Rawlins
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Reg Shore
Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Mick Tinker
Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost

In Attendance:

Manjeet Gill	Chief Executive
Mark Sturgess	Director of Regeneration and Planning
Rachel North	Director of Communities and Localism
Russell Stone	Chief Finance Officer
Alan Robinson	Head of Central Services
Alex Reeks	Assistant Chief Executive
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer

Also in Attendance: The Reverend Phillip Wain
Michael Mason - Cherry Willingham PC
Lorraine Espin-Hempsall – Prince's Trust

Also Present: 2 members of the public

David Lomas (Independent Remuneration Panel)

106 PRAYERS

The meeting commenced with prayers by The Reverend Phillip Wain.

107 COUNCIL MINUTES 25 FEBRUARY AND 4 MARCH 2013 (Paper A & B)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 25 February 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the required amendment.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 4 March 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the required amendment.

Note Councillor Dobbie wished it to be recorded that he had voted against the approval of the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 25 February 2013.

108 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

109 MATTERS ARISING (Paper C)

The Governance and Civic Officer introduced the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 19 April 2013. It was noted that all actions had been completed on target.

RESOLVED that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule, as set out in Paper B be noted.

110 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman of the Council

The Council Chairman summarised some highlights of recent engagements undertaken including: the Easter Bonnet competition at Willow Court Care Home at Cherry Willingham; Mr and Mrs Potts' Diamond Wedding Anniversary; the Gainsborough District Scouts St George's Day Parade at All Saints Church in Gainsborough; the Heritage Groups' Conference at RAF Scampton; Gainsborough College Fun Day at Acland Hall; the Army Cadet Presentation Evening at the Drill Hall in Gainsborough; the Gainsborough Choral Society's 'Journeying South' concert; along with several Civic evenings at the Trinity Arts Centre. The Chairman

noted the excellent work undertaken by the staff at the Trinity Arts Centre and said that it was a venue to be proud of and staff were to be congratulated.

Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council made note of the work undertaken by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit in the preparation of the Core Strategy. Within the next two months the case would be presented to the Planning Inspectorate and would contain 26 policies setting the context for the next 20 years. A positive response was expected by the early autumn. The Strategy would affect all areas of West Lindsey and would be influenced by Neighbourhood Plans, which were important documents and opportunities for communities to have a say in what development they want to see in their areas.

Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive noted that much energy was currently being channelled into managing the Council's budget which was the priority at this time.

The Chief Executive also stated that she had been invited on 13 March to address the Churches Conference, and encouraged people to visit some of the beautiful churches within West Lindsey.

Finally, the Chief Executive congratulated the Council's Director of Communities and Localism, Rachel North, on being offered the post of Deputy Chief Executive at Tewkesbury Borough Council. Mrs North was expected to leave around July and the Chief Officer Employment Committee would convene to discuss the vacant post. Whilst wishing Mrs North well, sorrow was expressed at her leaving.

111 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

112 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

Question for Chief Executive

West Lindsey District Council have embraced the Government initiative to deliver "Localism" in a number of ways including area working, the Portas initiative in Market Rasen and in my own town, Caistor, Neighbourhood Planning.

As a District Council we promoted Caistor as a "vanguard" for Neighbourhood Planning. Caistor was announced as a second wave of towns in what became known as the "Front-Runner Programme" in April 2011.

Neighbourhood Planning is designed to inspire and empower local communities to

shape the future of the places in which they live. It has also been promoted as a way in which communities can circumvent some of the bureaucracy associated with our Planning system.

Caistor Town Council have embraced the concept and with the hard work of a group of community volunteers acting as Steering Group have carried out a range of public consultation and engagement events. In some tasks they have been assisted by Planning Aid England (PAE) and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE).

There has been an enthusiasm and desire to develop an effective Neighbourhood Plan, which has resulted in a clear vision being established and a draft set of policies being written. I would like to acknowledge the tremendous amount of time, effort and hard work that has been put into this so far and thank the Steering Group for the excellent job it is doing.

Now that two years have passed since the announcement of the “front-runner” status I am concerned that the enthusiasm and desire could be affected by the imposition of local government bureaucracy on to a volunteers based project. Whilst the Government's original views on timescales may have been misplaced and optimistic there is an obligation for us to support Caistor effectively as we promoted them initially.

Am I correct in my understanding that West Lindsey has a statutory and legislative duty to support a Neighbourhood Plan group? When the area boundary was confirmed as being designated by the Prosperous Communities Committee in January 2013 councillors were advised of the financial support available from DCLG and the intention to report back on the direct support to be given to Neighbourhood Plan groups. I do not believe that report has been presented to councillors.

I would therefore like to request that a detailed programme of support be established to enable Caistor to progress to a formal consultation programme in the Autumn of this year. This will provide an impetus to the project and the volunteers involved, so that an opportunity exists to take the plan to its formal examination during the winter and a referendum either later this year or early in 2014. Without such a timescale being established I fear that the work to date could be lost and a Neighbourhood Plan not completed for Caistor.

So, my question is can I have your assurance that WLDC will provide technical and evidence based assistance to the Caistor Neighbourhood Plan and may I have confirmation of timescales for delivering such work.

Councillor Angela Lawrence

A response was given by Councillor Malcolm Parish, Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee.

Neighbourhood Planning is a way local communities can take control of development which happens in their areas. It is essentially a bottom up process where

communities decide based on evidence where new development should go and what form it should take. Unlike previous community led plans neighbourhood plans, once adopted, will be statutory and will carry the same weight in the planning process as our local plan. As result of this the process it is inevitably more complicated and legalistic.

Caistor as a “Front Runner” has been ahead of the game and the District Council has worked with the Neighbourhood Planning Group to ensure that the legal requirements with regard to neighbourhood planning are met.

There is a duty on councils to offer “advice and support” to communities undertaking Neighbourhood Plans. A report to Prosperous Communities Committee on 4th June will examine the options available to this council to support neighbourhood planning and set out how that support will be delivered.

West Lindsey welcomes Caistor and other communities’ involvement in neighbourhood planning. It acknowledges the hard work done by the community in getting the neighbourhood plan this far and will support the town in seeing the process to a successful conclusion. However that support needs to be tempered with the knowledge that the neighbourhood plan is the community’s document so whilst we will support the process with providing evidence where that is available it is the community’s responsibility to analyse that evidence and prepare the plan.

Councillor Lawrence then noted a specific instance in which support had been anticipated from a JPU officer and this had not been forthcoming. The Chief Executive assured Councillor Lawrence that this would be investigated.

113 NOTICE OF MOTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10

Madam Chairman.

On the twentieth of March we held a training meeting ref “the sustainable communities act”. A very interesting piece of legislation, creating a route by which local communities (ie) West Lindsey can at speed present a proposal to national government ref a local need.

I am concerned that many rural businesses responding to higher energy prices and the needs of their customers are looking to erect wind turbines. Whilst I am not against these wind turbines in principle I do believe they need to be located close to the businesses they are intended to serve and not scattered randomly across our precious countryside.

At present local planning policy does not address this issue and national policy is also lacking. In order to protect the beautiful landscapes of this District we need to use the Sustainable Communities Act to get national government to change guidance so that it is clear proposals for small scale wind turbines should be located within 50 metres of the businesses they are intended to serve.

It appeared from the training we received that the government would approve such requests provided they contained merit and were supported locally.
Madam Chairman.

I propose we contact with haste our neighbouring authorities, particularly Bassetlaw and the East Riding of Yorkshire asking them if they would join us in making a request via the sustainable communities act for more appropriate government guidance to be approved for our rural areas. This guidance would ensure wind turbines are located in positions less sensitive to local communities and our natural landscapes.

I so move.
Councillor Jeff Summers

A response was given by Councillor Stuart Curtis, Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee.

I understand Councillor Summers' concern about the erection of single/double wind turbines away from the premises they are meant to serve. To use the provisions of the Sustainable Communities Act in this way might allow this Council to have greater influence on their siting. I would suggest that the motion is referred to the Prosperous Communities Committee where it can be fully debated.

Some Members expressed concerns regarding the pre-determining of applications before they were submitted to the Planning Committee. Assurance was given that approving the motion for submission to the Prosperous Communities Committee would not prejudice Planning Committee Members, the desire was simply for the Government to take more notice, and there was no reference to any specific applications, which would be judged on their own merits when submitted to the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that the motion stand referred to the Prosperous Communities Committee for discussion.

114 PRESENTATION OF CHERRY WILLINGHAM PARISH PLAN

Michael Mason, Chairman of the Cherry Willingham Parish Plan Steering Group gave a presentation to the Council meeting. The presentation set out the history of the formulation of the Plan with the establishment of a Steering Group of community volunteers and representatives of the Parish Council. Via the Cherry News (village newsletter), all residents were invited to identify: three things they liked about living in the village; three things they didn't like and three things they would like to see improved. The results of the Survey were used to create an agenda for the Steering Group. Further consultation based on this took place. Based on these the following summary Vision for Cherry Willingham looking towards 2020 was suggested:

Building on all that is good about the village and community now, our vision is:

- to create a friendlier, greener, safer, healthier place to live;
- with enhanced facilities and services which meet the needs of all residents;
- supported by a volunteering community, vibrant voluntary organisations and partnerships and strong relationships with other agencies whether statutory or charitable.

The next steps were listed as being:

- Report presented to Parish, District and County Councils inviting their response
- Creation of an Implementation & Monitoring Group including Parish Councillors, representatives of Youth Forum, CW2020 Steering Group and Neighbourhood Plan Group plus any residents who want to be involved – first meeting 2 May
- Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan process to build on information gathered for CW2020
- Exploration of creation of a Community Partnership to take forward some aspects of the Plan

Members congratulated Cherry Willingham Parish Plan Steering Group on a very interesting presentation and a comprehensive Plan. Questions were asked on the experience of compiling the Plan and note made of the funding that would be available from May 2013 for progressing towards a Neighbourhood Plan which would carry more weight in determining planning applications. Mr Mason was thanked for the presentation.

115 PRESENTATION BY THE PRINCE'S TRUST

Lorraine Espin-Hempsall, Team Leader with the Prince's Trust, attended the meeting to show Members a DVD showing the work undertaken with young people by the Prince's Trust. The scheme was open to all young people aged 16-25 and no qualifications were needed, regardless of background or past misdemeanours. The project gave young people with no purpose or future to look forward to, an opportunity to reveal their hidden talents. The dvd showed many of the activities undertaken by the participants, including charity work within the community and depicted the journey they undertook towards obtaining qualifications and work placements. One girl had, however, missed her work placement due to injury.

Members applauded the amazing work undertaken by the Prince's Trust with young people, and were incredulous that it was difficult to recruit people to take part, and to find projects to support. Officers gave assurance that the Council did already work alongside the Trust on a regular basis, and the Chief Executive resolved to find a work placement for the girl who had missed hers.

Ms Espin-Hempsall was thanked for her very interesting presentation.

116 APPOINTMENT TO THE REMUNERATION PANEL (PAPER D)

Members were advised that the terms of office of two members of the Independent Remuneration Panel were due to expire. The recruitment process had been undertaken and interviews carried out.

RESOLVED that the following be appointed to serve on the Remuneration Panel until May 2016.

- David Lomas
- Richard Quirk

117 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS PUBLISHED SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING ON 4 MARCH 2013.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Committee meetings published since the last Council meeting on 4 March 2013 be received.

The meeting concluded at 8.25 pm.

Chairman