

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough, on Monday, 10 December 2012, at 7.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Jessie Milne (In the Chair)

Councillor Gillian Bardsley	Councillor Malcolm Parish
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Irmgard Parrott
Councillor Nigel Bowler	Councillor William Parry
Councillor Ken Bridger	Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Jackie Brockway	Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Alan Caine	Councillor Sue Rawlins
Councillor Stuart Curtis	Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor David Dobbie	Councillor Di Rodgers
Councillor Richy Doran	Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Reg Shore
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan	Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Burt Keimach	Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Angela Lawrence	Councillor Anne Welburn
Councillor Malcolm Leaning	Councillor Geoff Wiseman
Councillor Giles McNeill	Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost
	Councillor Trevor Young

Apologies:

Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Chris Darcel
Councillor Stuart Kinch
Councillor Mick Tinker

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
Rebekah Smith	Communications Officer
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer

Also in Attendance: The Reverend Phillip Wain
Jo Riddell
Chris Allen

Also Present: 35 members of the public

64 PRAYERS

The meeting commenced with prayers by the Reverend Phillip Wain.

Following the prayers, the Council's Chairman announced that one minute's silence would be held as a mark of respect for the late Councillor Mel Starkey. Councillors Caine, Shore and Keimach all spoke in tribute to Councillor Starkey.

Best wishes were sent to Councillor Mick Tinker during his illness and there was a spontaneous round of applause for the presence of Councillor Underwood-Frost.

65 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor David Cotton be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Council.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Irmgard Parrott be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Council.

On being voted upon it was :-

RESOLVED that Councillor Irmgard Parrott be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for remainder of the 2012/13 civic year.

66 COUNCIL MINUTES (Paper A)

The Chief Executive noted that in her announcements at the last meeting she had mistakenly noted the Community Covenant Scheme award to Brookenby, this should have been to RAF Scampton.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22 October 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the correction above.

67 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

68 MATTERS ARISING (Paper B)

The Governance and Civic Officer informed Members that there were just two items still pending. Members questioned why the West Lindsey Honours report had been deferred again and the Chairman affirmed that it had been her decision not to discuss the item on the same evening as the Awards ceremony.

69 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman of the Council

The Chairman noted that she had been delighted to support the ABF the Soldiers' Charity at their Presentation, Reception and Curry Lunch at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks in Grantham.

The Chairman then indicated the array of trophies and awards on display which had been achieved over recent months, which showed the recognition given to West Lindsey District Council.

Leader of the Council

The Leader informed the meeting of the further regeneration of Gainsborough town centre, including the market place, Silver Street and Lord Street. The work would commence in January, take around 14 weeks and was being funded by the East Midlands Development Agency and Lincolnshire County Council. The aim was to make the town centre more attractive to businesses and a destination for shoppers.

Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive noted the recent Civic Carol Service and the staff Christmas party which had both been enjoyable. She also described the success of the recently launched apprenticeship scheme, and announced the award for Young Officer of the year to Stacey Wrath. Councillor Brockway requested that formal congratulations be passed to Stacey.

The Chief Executive also informed the meeting that the Municipal Journal had also shortlisted West Lindsey District Council for a Corporate Governance award.

70 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

71 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

Dear Leader,

For a considerable time now there have been concerns about the Gainsborough Market. Despite it being the responsibility of WLDC, there appears to be no accurate or effective appraisal of the market and unfortunately the state of the market is now at an all time low.

There have been numerous efforts made in recent months both by Gainsborough members, local volunteers and members of the business community to communicate ideas to officers. Meetings and more meetings have been held, but no progress has been made.

Two weeks ago, two volunteers organised a Christmas Charity market. For this occasion WLDC staff put the covers on the stall and arranged the stalls in a better way. The market looked smart and was extremely well supported, despite some very poor weather earlier on in the day. If two volunteers can achieve this, why can't we?
Cllr Lesley Rollings

Councillor Gillian Bardsley responded to Councillor Rollings, noting the contribution made by volunteers as being something to celebrate, particularly their work in Market Rasen and Caistor where the markets were run by the respective town councils.

An appraisal had been undertaken some time ago which had resulted in the discounted rent scheme, and had seen an increase of 20 traders and a steadily increasing footfall since 2009. Promotion was undertaken and liaison was taking place with the GAIN partnership, the Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce. The outcome of the partnership working should be known in the new year.

Councillor Rollings then requested that the matter be discussed again by the Prosperous Communities Committee to determine why progress was apparently so slow. Councillor Malcolm Parish, as Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee, assured Councillor Rollings that he would ask for the matter to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting, and in the meantime he would happily meet with her for them to visit the market together.

Chairman,
You will be aware of the deep concerns of many West Lindsey residents over current and future large renewable energy projects in our District, can you assure this council that these views are being transmitted to the Joint Planning Unit which you chair, and that the views of the elected members are being listened to. Can you also put on record this councils support for solar energy, anaerobic digesters, deep water heat pumps and that wherever possible, these forms of renewables are pursued with the support of this council.

Will you also ensure, that all opinions expressed in public documents by the joint planning team will be signed off by the senior planning officer Mr Michael Braithwaite, also that the elected members will be aware of those documents.

Thank you,
Lewis Strange

The Leader of the Council responded by stating that the problem needed to be approached sensitively. Each application had to be considered on its own merits and no one form of renewable energy production singled out. Due consideration would be given to the impact of any proposal.

72 NOTICE OF MOTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10

Motion from Councillor Anne Welburn

Madam Chairman

West Lindsey DC is leading the way in developing an approach to Localism – supporting and empowering our communities to take control and drive action in their local areas.

The Sustainable Communities Act agreed by the last government has recently been reviewed with new regulations being passed in June 2012 to streamline and improve the processes which underpin it.

Overall the Act is an empowering piece of legislation which gives local authorities the power to challenge central government to further assist local communities by unblocking barriers or reducing complexity – in any of the following areas;

- To improve the local economy
- To protect the environment
- To promote social inclusion
- And to increase participation in civic, political and democratic activity

The Act can be a great tool to help improve the sustainability of our local communities.

West Lindsey District Council needs to consider how the Sustainable Communities Act can be used within the context of our Localism Programme to drive further community action and I would like Council to ask for a speaker to be invited to address all Members to increase our understanding and opportunities to utilise the Act's provision within our district.

I so move

The Leader of the Council fully supported the motion and said that it was important to utilise the opportunities afforded by the Act. The Leader of the opposition voiced his support and said that it was important to listen to local people.

It was moved, seconded, voted upon and subsequently **RESOLVED** that a speaker be invited to address all Members.

Motion from Councillor Lewis Strange

Councillors will be aware of the very difficult financial constraints that this and other authorities face, especially those in Rural areas who traditionally receive far less in rate support grant than the metropolitan councils, The SPARSE group of mainly rural councils has asked all member councils to write to their MPs asking for their support in lobbying treasury ministers not to remove hard won concessions on funding, to redress by a small amount of funding from the urban to the Rural authorities. These concessions are now threatened by the damping formula, and negates practically all advantages gained with Government ministers over many months, by the Sparse group.

I am therefore asking for cross party support tonight, for the motion to be sent to Edward Leigh MP from the elected West Lindsey members, on behalf of the residents of West Lindsey, asking him to bring, what- ever pressure he can to bear, in collaboration with other MPs from Sparse districts (5 in Lincolnshire) on government treasury ministers. This is desperately important for the finance of this authority.

I so move.

The Leader of the Opposition, whilst supporting the motion, felt that it would be difficult to ask for more money when the Council's reserves were so healthy. However, it was pointed out that the Government grant formula was revenue based, whilst reserves were capital, and that the Council's capital reserves were for the most part earmarked, and that the district auditor had been satisfied with the explanation.

A request for a recorded vote was subsequently withdrawn.

The motion was then voted upon and it was:-

RESOLVED that cross party support be given for the motion to be sent to Edward Leigh MP.

Note Councillor Strange had withdrawn his second motion

73 APPOINTMENT TO VACANCY ON THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Anne Welburn be nominated to fill the vacancy on the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel.

RESOLVED that Councillor Anne Welburn be appointed to the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel.

74 MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report which was a regular monitoring report in line with best practice, and noted that there were no issues to report. Councillor Summers noted that the report had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee, and moved that the report be noted.

RESOLVED

- a) that the report be noted; and
- b) the treasury management activity for the six months to 30 September 2012 be noted.

75 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS PUBLISHED SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING ON 22 OCTOBER 2012.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Committee meetings published since the last Council meeting on 22 October 2012 be received.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 8.05 pm and was followed by the West Lindsey Awards Ceremony.

Chairman