

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough, on Monday, 3 September 2012, at 7.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Jessie Milne (In the Chair)
Councillor Malcolm Parish (Vice-Chairman)

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

Apologies:

Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor David Cotton
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
Alex Reeks	Assistant Chief Executive
Russell Stone	Chief Finance Officer
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer

Also in Attendance:

The Reverend Phillip Wain
Alan Robinson – Head of Central Services
Steve Wallace – Governance and Audit Committee

Also Present:

Four members of the public

37 PRAYERS

The meeting commenced with prayers by the Reverend Phillip Wain.

38 COUNCIL MINUTES (Paper A and Paper B)

Councillor Darcel referred to minute 30 and sought assurance that Members would be consulted on the options for the redevelopment of the Old Guildhall. This was affirmed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 2 July 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 1 August 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

39 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

40 MATTERS ARISING (Paper C)

The Governance and Civic Officer updated Members on items within the Matters Arising Schedule, noting that the report on West Lindsey Honours which had been deferred at the 2 July Council meeting had been referred back to the Challenge and Improvement Committee. The item was now on the agenda for the meeting on 11 September which had just been published, and if Members had any further comments on the report to please feed these back prior to the meeting.

The Chairman of the Challenge and Improvement Committee updated Council on Mobile connectivity, which had been incorporated into the work of the Broadband working group. Members expressed disappointment that the District was disadvantaged by the lack of Broadband in some areas, which affected both residents and businesses. Councillor Caine assured Members that various options were being considered, and the work of the Group was ongoing.

41 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman of the Council

The Chairman thanked those Members that had been able to support the office of Chairman and attend the Civic Service. Councillor Milne then described events that she had attended in recent weeks, one of which, although not as part of her Chairman's duties, was to attend a YASIG summer project for young people, part funded by the Community Safety Partnership which had been an amazing experience.

Other very enjoyable events included a Go-Kart Rally, Marshall's Traction Engine Rally and RAF Scampton Family Day.

The Chairman then informed Members that West Lindsey District Council had been shortlisted for various awards through the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) including Council of the Year. In this category the Council was the only District up against large Unitary authorities, so thanks were expressed to all that had been involved.

Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council thanked the Chairman for her efforts in representing the Council. The Leader informed the meeting that he would be attending the APSE awards ceremony in Glasgow, and that the categories for which the Council was shortlisted were: Council of the Year; Workforce Transformation; Local Democracy; and Flooding.

Other good news included the Council's success in bidding to be a pilot for Universal Credit to be implemented by DWP. The Leader then outlined impending changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme, and also noted the work in progress on the Core Strategy, in which there had been significant public interest.

Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive reiterated comments made by the Chairman and Leader of the Council regarding the APSE awards, and also noted that she had used the month of August to get out and about around the District visiting various settlements, and also networking with other local authorities, particularly in terms of Broadband provision. Budget preparations were now underway in anticipation of the November Government grant settlement.

42 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

43 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

Councillor Strange submitted the following question to the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee:-

Dear Chairman,
I gather that Lincolnshire has been successful in obtaining post Olympic sports cash, I also understand that North Kesteven has secured nearly £200,000 of that cash towards upkeep of their swimming facilities.

I do hope that our officers are exploring this horn of plenty, as it would seem another avenue that our beleaguered sports facilities in our smaller rural settlements could make much use of.

Chairman, would you agree with me that West Lindsey, should do all it can to secure some of this reported one and a half million in cash.

If we are already doing so, then that is excellent news.

Thank you.

Councillor Parish responded to Councillor Strange confirming that North Kesteven DC had been awarded £150,000 of funding from Sport England's Inspired Facilities Fund which was set up to provide an Olympic legacy. The fund was a £50 million pot in total available between 2011 and 14. The application deadlines for rounds four and five would be released after the Paralympics have finished.

Local authorities were able to bid for funding to upgrade their current facilities. Applications would be looked upon favourably where a review had identified the facility as a top priority and where it was the only publically owned facility in the area.

This would need to form part of the review of our leisure facilities which is due to commence on the 3rd September. The scope of the review includes assessing the future costs of desirable and essential refurbishment and the results of the consultant's report could form the basis of an application.

It was then confirmed that APSE were undertaking a scoping project to assess the district's leisure provision and Members were requested to submit ideas and suggestions for leisure provision proposals.

Councillor Summers submitted the following question to the Chairman of the Council:-

Madam Chairman.

2012 has already been a year to remember.

In addition to our popular councillor initiative fund, we delivered the Jubilee and Olympics fund with great efficiency.

The Community Initiative fund and the Capital Asset fund are presently under administration. Uptake has been good with numerous projects across West Lindsey already completed for the Initiative fund and a significant number of expressions of interest for the Capital Asset Fund already received.

Our communities thoroughly enjoyed the two main events this summer. Helped by the contributions we were able to make, our parishes were able to express their joy on such a historic occasion. Thankfully someone made a gap in the clouds for a period of time.

To experience the Queens Jubilee and Olympic Games in the same year. Both events were spectacles to savour.

Madam Chairman.

During the civic year you have attended more celebrations than anyone else in the district, which I am sure you have thoroughly enjoyed. Therefore could I ask, would you be prepared to take a leading role in deciding what would be appropriate for the council to produce as a historic record of 2012 ?

Remembering how our West Lindsey residents revelled in those joyous occasions, experiencing events probably never to be seen in another lifetime.

Something we all enjoyed in the same year.

Thank you chairman.

Jeff. Summers.

The Chairman affirmed that she would ensure that a record of 2012 would be created, and she asked Members for suggestions as to the proposed format. Proposals should be submitted to the Chairman via the Civic office.

44 NOTICE OF MOTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10

Madame Chairman

In 2011, following the first all-out elections of this council, it was decided that this authority would have a Chief Officer Employment Committee, in preference to agreeing and assembling an interview and appointments panel as and when necessary.

This kind of committee had been talked of in the past but not had a formal structure and so had not been accepted by the Council.

The Chief Officer Employment Committee is in my view the correct way to approach the recruitment and employment of Chief Officers of this Authority.

However, I do not believe that the necessary detail is made clear, as to what level of this Council's management constitutes chief officers, and subsequent to the formation of this committee the Council has continued to under-go some level of restructure of the officer core at senior management level.

Given that the senior management is now given more responsibility and a greater role, I believe that now brings that senior management tier in to the realm of being Chief Officers.

Not in the literal sense of Chief Executive or director but in that they are chief officers in responsibility and role within the council, and with that greater sense of responsibility they are key officers for the authority which makes them chief officers in their departments.

To that end therefore I also believe that the Chief Officer Employment Committee should be the responsible Committee for all employment matters concerning those managers.

While accepting the Head of Paid Service has an overall view of employment of the staff of the council, which is a legal position, I do not believe the Head

of Paid Service should be solely responsible for recruitment, discipline or dismissal of any of these senior managers and above.

I therefore move, that this Council asks Governance and Audit to seriously consider a necessary constitutional change that, 'henceforth all employment matters concerning officers of senior management and above, are dealt with by the Chief Officer Employment Committee and through that committee; members will have a hands on role in all matters of employment of these senior officers within the council'.

I further move that Audit and Governance accept that this role includes the discipline and dismissal of senior managers, if that becomes necessary, and where this is found to be necessary, the head of paid service will be required to refer the matter to the Chief Officer Employment Committee at the earliest opportunity and before any action is commenced relating to senior managers and above.

I so move

The motion was then seconded by Councillor Darcel.

The Chairman quoted Council Procedure Rule 10.4 which allowed the matter to be dealt with at this meeting rather than referral to a Committee. The Leader of the Council stated that he wished the motion to be rejected as to further restructure and refine the organisation would be expensive and unnecessary, and that Chief Officers were defined by law and it was not within the Council's gift to change that definition.

A discussion ensued. Councillor Wiseman then moved that a recorded vote be taken, which was seconded by Councillor Darcel.

For: Councillors Bridger, Bowler, Caine, Darcel, Dobbie, Doran, Leaning, Rainsforth, Rodgers, Rollings, Shore, Starkey, Wiseman, Young.

Against: Councillors Bardsley, Bierley, Curtis, Fleetwood, Howitt-Cowan, Keimach, Lawrence, Milne, Patterson, Parish, Parrott, Parry, Rawlins, Regis, Strange, Summers, Underwood-Frost, Welburn.

A total of 14 votes for and 18 votes against.

The MOTION WAS LOST.

45 APPOINTMENT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE (Paper D)

The Director of Communities and Localism introduced the report which followed the establishment of the new Code of Conduct and Standards regime approved at the Council meeting on 2 July 2012. It was now necessary to establish the Standards Sub-Committee and the nominations were set out in

the report. It was also proposed that political balance rules be suspended for this sub-committee in order for it to transcend party politics.

On being moved, seconded and voted upon, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:-

- a) Political balance rules be suspended in respect of appointments to the Standards Sub-Committee;
- b) the six Members to be appointed to serve on the Standards Sub-Committee;
- c) in accordance with the wishes expressed by political groups, the following Members, be appointed to serve to the Standards Sub-Committee for the remainder of the current civic year.

Councillor Gillian Bardsley
Councillor Alan Caine
Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Richy Doran
Councillor Malcolm Parish
Councillor Judy Rainsforth

46 ANNUAL REPORT ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT (Paper E)

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report which was a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures, and described how the recent changes in the regulatory environment placed greater onus on Members' for the review and scrutiny of treasury management. Members congratulated officers on producing a clearly written, understandable financial report.

Discussion took place on figures shown on 'snapshot' statements which had been provided to some Members, and also questions were asked regarding the amount of money held by the Council. It was explained that due to frequent transactions a statement merely gave a snapshot of the moment in time that it was produced and this would vary daily. The Chief Finance Officer then clarified that due to the significant funds which the Council administers and the varying timings of these cashflows such as Council Tax and NNDR collection, and payments for precepts and benefits there would inevitably be times when significant amounts of cash were held although this would reduce significantly by the year end.

Members were assured that the council worked alongside other authorities and undertook benchmarking in terms of investments, and that regular scrutiny was undertaken by auditors. Councillors were reminded that they were welcome to attend the Governance and Audit Committee at any time and that financial training could be provided for any Members that wished it.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- a) the Annual Treasury Management Report be noted, and
- b) the Actual 2011/12 Prudential and Treasury Indicators be approved.

47 CORPORATE PLAN REFRESH (Paper F)

The Assistant Chief Executive gave a Powerpoint presentation which summarised the content of the Corporate Plan documents, which comprised the full document, a two page, and an eight page leaflet.

The presentation outlined the five themes and summarised the highlights so far within each theme. The process that the Plan had gone through, via the Council's Committees was described, along with refresh improvements that had been made.

Councillors congratulated officers on producing an excellent document, and on those successes achieved thus far, however would appreciate further detail on some of the achievements, e.g empty homes, the Plough etc.

The next step for the Plan was public consultation, and any further Members' comments would also be welcome.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Corporate Plan 2012-16 be approved.

48 CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO THE CORE STRATEGY (Paper G)

The Director of Regeneration and Planning summarised the report which set out the proposed consultation response to the Central Lincolnshire Partial Draft Core Strategy. The ten points had been collated by summarising the feedback given at the extraordinary Council meeting on 1 August 2012.

The main concerns expressed were: to implement a flexible planning policy for all areas rather than a rigid settlement hierarchy; the importance of agriculture to the rural economy; improvements to Broadband, transport and tourism; the provision of green public open space and the regeneration of priority areas.

Members debated whether enough emphasis had been given to rural areas, and also discussed the lack of focus on some of the road networks. The Director of Regeneration and Planning clarified that specific concerns regarding roads would be covered within the Local Transport Plan, but that some of the improvements wished for would have to be backed up by evidence of need, which was not currently supported by the modelling exercise undertaken.

Potential for growth in the rural settlements was being overlooked and this should be addressed in the Council's response to the CLJSPC.

It was felt that further explicit emphasis should be focused towards rural development, therefore it was moved and seconded, and upon being voted upon, it was **RESOLVED** that an additional paragraph referring to rural potential be added to the list of response points.

It was also pointed out that North Greetwell should be included in Policy CL4 within the definition of Lincoln principal urban area. This was an error which needed amending and would be notified to the Joint Planning Unit.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:-

Based on the information gathered at the Extraordinary Council meeting, the following consultation response to be provided to the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee on the Central Lincolnshire Partial Draft Core Strategy, with the addition of the paragraph previously agreed.

1. That the policies allow for flexible and sustainable growth of all types of development eg housing, employment, infrastructure etc. in all rural settlements, regardless of size or existing range of facilities, to ensure that they remain sustainable in the long term or improve their sustainability over time.
2. That the housing needs of all of the local community (including the rural areas) are taken into account when new housing is being planned for settlements.
3. That housing is encouraged as an economic driver across the area.
4. That regeneration of the priority areas for West Lindsey (areas within Gainsborough and the former RAF communities) continues to be supported in its own right and is not prejudiced by new housing developments, including the proposed urban extensions, to the detriment of existing housing.
5. That the growth of employment and other economically important developments is given equal weight in planning decisions as housing growth across the whole area, urban and rural.
6. That broadband connectivity is fully identified as a basic requirement in the district, particularly in more remote rural areas to assist with a community's sustainability and that this is recognised in the infrastructure delivery plan.
7. That a full range of transport solutions to address local needs are developed through the Core Strategy and infrastructure delivery plan processes.
8. The tourism or the visitor economy is recognised in the Core Strategy as an important element in the sustainability of the rural economy of the district.
9. That more green public open space is supported by the Core Strategy in new developments and that it is accessible to the whole community.
10. That the Core Strategy recognises and addresses a sustainable rural economy includes the needs of agriculture, agricultural diversity and sustainability and that agriculture is specifically identified and/or listed within policy CL22 along with other rural economic activities.
11. That the rural nature of much of the central Lincolnshire area should be recognised in the Core Strategy and its potential to provide for future economic growth had regard to in the formulation of planning policy.

**49 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS
PUBLISHED SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING ON 2 JULY 2012.**

RESOLVED that the minutes of Committee meetings published since the last Council meeting on 2 July 2012 be received.

The meeting concluded at 9.45 pm.

Chairman