

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough, on Monday, 18 July 2011, at 7.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor William Parry (In the Chair)
Councillor Jessie Milne (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Gillian Bardsley	Councillor Malcolm Parish
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Irmgard Parrott
Councillor Nigel Bowler	Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Ken Bridger	Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Jackie Brockway	Councillor Sue Rawlins
Councillor Alan Caine	Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor David Cotton	Councillor Di Rodgers
Councillor Stuart Curtis	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 Geoff Wiseman
Councillor Angela Lawrence	Councillor Trevor Young
Councillor Malcolm Leaning	

Also Present: Three Members of the public

Apologies: Councillor Chris Darcel
Councillor Ray Sellars
Councillor Mick Tinker
Councillor Anne Welburn
Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost

In Attendance: Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources
Director of Strategy and Regeneration and Monitoring
Officer
Chief Finance Officer
Democratic Services Team Leader

Also in Attendance: The Reverend Gillian Barrow
Two members of Torksey Action group

25 PRAYERS

The meeting commenced with prayers by the Reverend Gillian Barrow.

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were given for Councillors Chris Darcel, Ray Sellars, Mick Tinker, Chris Underwood-Frost and Anne Welburn.

27 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Annual Council held on 23 May 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

28 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Doran declared a prejudicial interest in Paper C as he had been lobbied by telephone.

Councillors Shore and Brockway declared personal interests in Paper C because of their Union membership and previous involvement.

29 MATTERS ARISING

The Chief Executive updated Members on the Boundary Commission consultation. Concerns had been expressed in West Lindsey District Council's response in that the number of Parish Council meetings could not be considered, however because the District is so sparse and that engagement with parishes was part of the Localism agenda, this was felt to be important.

The Council is awaiting the final decision from the Boundary Commission.

30 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions had been received.

31 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman

The Chairman announced that the Council's partners at Hill Holt Wood had won a Community Forestry Award as part of The Royal Forestry Society (RFS) Excellence in Forestry Awards 2011.

Many Members had attended the funeral of Councillor Cotton's father and the Chairman expressed sincere condolences. Councillor Cotton responded by thanking Members and also all the officers that had attended the funeral and

he expressed appreciation for the many messages and flowers that had been received.

Councillor Rawlins joined the meeting at this point.

The Chairman then proceeded to highlight some of the engagements he had undertaken in recent weeks. A horse-drawn carriage ride at the Caistor-in-Bloom event was interesting and enjoyable. The Chairman noted that he had visited several stands at the Lincolnshire Show. The West Lindsey District Council stand had been well attended particularly by children. The Chairman had also enjoyed a performance by Thoresby Colliery Band at Gainsborough Parish Church, in celebration of the 90th Anniversary of the formation of the Gainsborough Branch of The Royal British Legion.

Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council described how the Council was entering a momentous period which was to set the tone for the next four years, with the four yearly election cycle for the first time. The Localism Bill was set to be an Act of Parliament and receive Royal Assent later in the year. West Lindsey District Council was to be able to 'self manage' and spread its money across the district where it was needed, with more power and control for towns and villages. The Community Chest and Councillor Initiative Fund should be utilised to their full extent, and the Tax Increment Finance scheme could enable a borrowing against predicted growth in business rates.

Local Authorities, previously subject to limitations, were now becoming more like businesses, and being entrepreneurial. Partnership activity had a big role to play and the development on the South Humber Bank could see the creation of many new jobs which could have an impact on the district.

The Corporate Plan was an instruction book to proceed. Improved housing for all and the use of renewable energy sources were priorities. There was to be a firm policy on the standards for renewable energy with decisions based on scientific evidence. MOD sites were to be given priority consideration to instil neighbourhood pride in the communities.

Other initiatives included improvements to the triple bin scheme, Revenues and Benefits and Planning Enforcement. The support of the talented officers of West Lindsey District Council was appreciated, in terms of their work at present and also in the past. This sentiment was echoed around the Chamber.

32 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

Councillor Irmgard Parrot read out a question submitted by Councillor Anne Welburn to the Chairman of the Challenge and Improvement Committee.

“Green Waste Re-cycling Sites.

I have twice brought up the question of holding a Full Council review on the building of green waste sites in our District. I think that by having a full discussion on the subject, listening to the views of our residents and obtaining some facts and figures from people with experience West Lindsey would be able to formulate a policy for reacting to applications for the building of these sites and not be caught unawares as happened with the proposed plan for a site at Fiskerton. Do you agree that this exercise would be useful and if so can a date be diaried in the near future?

If successful the Council could consider extending the debate to other important subjects.”

Councillor Alan Caine responded by stating that he would like to thank Councillor Welburn for her question and he agreed that it would be a valuable topic to be considered. He appreciated that Councillor Welburn had previously raised this topic when the Performance Management and Scrutiny Committee were considering future items of business. As Chair of the Challenge and Improvement Committee under the newly formed Committee structure he had been considering priority issues and policies that could be included in the workplan for the Committee and this topic would fit well with other work such as the review of policies relating to renewable energy.

He would ensure that this topic was covered by the Challenge and Improvement Committee.

33 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION BY TORKSEY PARISH COUNCIL ON THEIR PARISH PLAN

Mr Kevin Connolly of the Torksey Action Group attended the meeting to describe the Torksey Parish Plan to Members. Torksey was the second biggest settlement in Lincolnshire 800 years ago – today it ranked as the 44th most deprived.

A survey had been undertaken with residents, and though there was general contentment, the biggest concerns were problems with speeding traffic and the lack of leisure facilities or meeting places. Communication tended to be a problem as the village notice board was not in an appropriate place, but a parish newsletter was circulated. There was a lack of facilities for young people.

Mr Connolly told the meeting how the Action Group was formed to complement the Parish Council and that several new social groups had been formed, with others being planned. Two petitions had also been submitted to Lincolnshire County Council on highways matters, with minimal results.

The Torksey Action Group was seeking the support of the Members and officers of West Lindsey District Council particularly on the highways matters and issues relating to the County Council.

Councillor Cotton declared a personal interest at this point as the church in Torksey now fell within the parish of Saxilby where he was a minister.

Members thanked Mr Connolly and his colleague for an interesting presentation and understood residents' concerns regarding traffic problems. It was noted that the Parish Plan was now on record, and the value of the social groups that had been formed was welcomed. All Parishes were being encouraged to follow suit and also to make bids for the finance that would be available through the Councillor Initiative Fund.

One Member noted the age profile of the residents and said that one route for support was through the Excellent Ageing Team at LCC which was worth pursuing. Another Member described how traffic monitoring equipment was available for parishes to borrow to obtain their own statistics in order to present their case.

34 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Director of Strategy and Regeneration and Monitoring Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to consider and agree minor changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Governance and Audit Committee.

There would still be an annual review of the Constitution, but there remained opportunities throughout the year to make minor changes or correct grammatical errors, and continuous assessment was made as required.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the suggested minor changes to the Constitution as detailed in paragraph 2 of the report, be approved for immediate implementation, and
- b) that the second paragraph of the notes of the Governance and Audit Committee in Part IV, page 7 of the Constitution be amended to read "Nominations be sought to form a pool of trained substitutes in order to ensure that decisions are made by fully trained members.

Note: Councillor Doran left the meeting for consideration of the following item having declared a prejudicial interest.

35 REPRESENTATION ON JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources presented the report which was a recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 16 June 2011 and sought agreement from the Council on the number of Councillor and employee representatives and reserves to sit on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee (JSCC), and to ask the Council to nominate

Councillors to sit on the JSCC and for Council to agree the quorum and frequency of meetings of the JSCC.

The Director of Resources affirmed that the JSCC was not a formal committee, had no decision making powers and reported to the Policy and Resources Committee. Concerns had been raised among council officers that non-union staff were not represented at the committee. The Human Resources team had conducted a staff survey and the majority opinion was that the JSCC should comprise representatives of non-union members.

The Chief Executive noted that she had received a letter from Unison seeking assurance that the proposals would have no effect on the formal collective negotiation process with unions. It was clarified that the JSCC was a committee solely for consultation.

Lengthy discussion ensued, with concerns being raised by some Councillors, and questions being asked on many aspects of the proposals.

An amendment to the recommendation was moved and seconded, that the second bullet point read:

- four employee representatives (made up of union appointed representatives) and six reserve representatives (made up of union appointed representatives).

On being voted upon the **AMENDMENT WAS LOST.**

It was then moved and seconded that all references to 'Unison' in the report and its recommendations be changed to refer to 'union', so as not to preclude other unions from taking part in the process.

On being voted upon the **AMENDMENT WAS AGREED.**

Questions were then asked as to the validity of the survey that was undertaken and whether it had been possible for anyone to have voted more than once. Some Members felt that the survey was inadequate, and therefore did not necessarily reflect true opinion, and that a formal ballot should be undertaken before any decision be made.

It was moved and seconded that the report be deferred to the next meeting of Council and that a formal ballot take place.

Two Members requested that a recorded vote be taken.

For Councillors Bridger, Bowler, Cotton, Dobbie, Leaning, Rainsforth, Rodgers, Rollings, Shore, Starkey, Young.

Against Councillors Bardsley, Bierley, Brockway, Caine, Curtis, Fleetwood, Howitt-Cowan, Keimach, Lawrence, Patterson, Parish, Parrott, Parry, Rawlins, Regis, Strange, Summers, Wiseman.

A total of 11 votes for and 19 votes against.

The **AMENDMENT WAS LOST.**

Note: Councillor Shore left the meeting at this point.

The recommendation in the report with the amendment previously agreed was then voted upon and it was **AGREED:**

- a) that the following representatives make up the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.
 - four elected Members and four elected Member reserves
 - four employee representatives (made up of two union appointed and two staff elected employee representatives) and six reserve employee representatives (made up of three union appointed and three staff elected employee representatives)
- b) that the quorum for the Joint Staff Consultative Committee be four, made up of two elected Members and one union appointed and one staff elected employee.
- c) that Joint Staff Consultative Committee meet at the same frequency as the Policy and Resources Committee.
- d) that the following named elected Members sit on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee

Councillors Bowler, Brockway, Cotton and Welburn, and Councillors Darcel, Parish, Starkey and Summers be the reserve Members

Note: Councillors Cotton, Dobbie, Rainsforth and Rollings wished it to be recorded that they had voted against the recommendations.

Note: Councillor Doran returned to the meeting at this point.

36 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Director of Strategy and Regeneration presented the report which summarised two Outside Body appointments which required approval by Council.

The membership of the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire had been deferred at the meeting on 23 May, whilst officers clarified the membership requirements with the County Council.

Representation on East Midlands Councils was also being sought, this was presumed to be the Leader of the Council. Confirmation of this was not requested until after the Annual Meeting on 23 May 2011. East Midlands

Councils had also requested that an Alternate Member be nominated in the event of a substitution being required.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) Councillor Irmgard Parrott be the West Lindsey District Council representative on the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire, and
- b) Councillor Burt Keimach be the West Lindsey District Council representative on East Midlands Councils, and that Councillor Ian Fleetwood be the Alternate Member.

Note: Councillor Shore returned to the meeting.

37 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

38 PURCHASE OF LAND AT HEMSWELL CLIFF

Councillor Parish introduced the report, as the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee. The report had not been to the Prosperous Communities Committee for consideration as an urgent decision was required.

This report presented an opportunity to support the community and provide much needed assets. Further details were included within the report and discussion took place on the support to be offered, the negotiations with the MOD and the timescales involved.

Appreciation was expressed for the involvement of the local MP in the matter and also the work undertaken by Councillor Howitt-Cowan, Mary Hollingsworth and other council officers.

Councillor Shore moved an amendment that recommendation 2 be changed to offer a grant of £6,000 and the difference to be made up from the Local Councillor Initiative Fund, however this was not seconded.

Note: Councillor Rollings left the meeting at this point.

RESOLVED that, subject to the relevant statutory and legal processes involved in land purchase to use money from the newly-established Community Assets Fund:

- a) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to negotiate the purchase of the ball park and surrounding land from the MOD for the figure set out in the report, for the use of the Hemswell Cliff community and transfer this asset to Hemswell Cliff Parish Council. Subject to due diligence being carried on the land and relevant Parish Council approvals, and
- b) a grant of up to £10,000 be offered in support of the development of community facilities at Hemswell Cliff Primary School.

39 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS PUBLISHED SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING ON 18 APRIL 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of Committee meetings published since the last Council meeting on 18 April 2011 be received.

The meeting concluded at 9.22 pm.

Chairman