

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough, on Monday 9 September 2013, at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillor Irmgard Parrott (In the Chair)
Councillor Malcolm Parish (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Gillian Bardsley	Councillor Stuart Kinch
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Mark Binns	Councillor Malcolm Leaning
Councillor Nigel Bowler	Councillor Giles McNeill
Councillor Ken Bridger	Councillor Jessie Milne
Councillor Jackie Brockway	Councillor William Parry
Councillor Alan Caine	Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor David Cotton	Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Stuart Curtis	Councillor Reg Shore
Councillor Chris Darcel	Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor David Dobbie	Councillor Geoff Wiseman
Councillor Richard Doran	Councillor Anne Welburn
Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Trevor Young
Councillor Burt Keimach	

Apologies: Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Sue Rawlins
Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Di Rodgers
Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Mick Tinker
Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost

In Attendance:

Manjeet Gill	Chief Executive
Mark Sturgess	Director of Regeneration and Planning
Tracey Bircumshaw	Group Accountant
Alan Robinson	Head of Central Services and Monitoring Officer
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer

Also in Attendance: Rev Penny Green
Steve Hyde and Roger Ferguson – L.I.V.E.S.

Also Present: two members of the public
one member of the press

47 PRAYERS

The meeting commenced with prayers by Reverend Penny Green.

Note Councillor Keimach joined the meeting at this point.

48 COUNCIL MINUTES 29 JULY 2013 (Paper A)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 29 July 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

49 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

50 MATTERS ARISING (Paper B)

The Council Chairman introduced the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 30 August 2013.

Councillor Welburn confirmed that the "the future of healthy democracy" was to be on the next Member Forum agenda.

The Director of Regeneration and Planning confirmed that the West Lindsey response to the Core Strategy had been sent.

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

51 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman of the Council

The Chairman noted that a list of her engagements had been circulated to all Members, and made particular reference to the university graduation ceremonies, at which it had been a privilege to attend. It had been noted that with the help of the Vice Chairman it had been possible for a West Lindsey representative to be present at all the ceremonies, an achievement not held by any other authority.

The Chairman also noted that the Council had a new interim Director, Jeanette McGarry.

Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council highlighted progress made with the Universal Credit scheme. Main categories were digital and financial inclusion. West Lindsey was one of 12 LA led pilots nationally and had already been singled out for praise in different elements of our pilot. Our partnership model was being described in the forthcoming DWP Local Support Services Framework, as a model of good practice.

The Leader wished to express his thanks to the officers leading on this project, in particular Nicoya Palastanga.

Note Councillor Wiseman joined the meeting at this point and was thanked by the Chairman for collecting and returning Councillor Underwood-Frost and family, having attended for a presentation.

Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive made mention of the award of £2.1m from Defra to Woldgrain Co-operative, following support from the Council. Further work had also been undertaken with the Housing and Communities agency and DCLG, and a provisional further allocation of £420k on top of the £600k already allocated for empty homes in the South West ward.

Note was also made of a national announcement of £3.8b available for an integrated health scheme, the District Council was working with the County Council on this. A further £3.7b was to be made available to LEPs across the country to stimulate growth. The South Humber LEP was considering proposals.

In terms of the Council's budget and Revenue Grant Funding, the DCLG had issued a consultation paper proposing that the predicted 10% reduction could be as much as 16% for the year after next, in addition to a 35% top slicing off the New Homes Bonus. A response was being worked on, with support from Sir Edward Leigh MP, and representatives on SPARSE and the District Council's Network.

52 PRESENTATION - L.I.V.E.S.

Steve Hyde and Roger Ferguson, of L.I.V.E.S. attended the meeting to give a presentation on the work of the L.I.V.E.S. First Responder Scheme. The history and subsequent development of the scheme were described, and the role of the volunteers. The importance of early access to treatment was emphasised and First Responders were usually the first to arrive at the scene of an emergency, often making a significant difference to rates of survival.

There were 164 active groups and they were mobilised by Ambulance Control, with an average response time of six minutes. The organisation was dependent upon charitable funding and volunteers, and so was seeking support from Councillors.

Members acknowledged the work of the organisation as being important and worthwhile, Councillor Cotton noting that he owed his life to First Responders following an accident. L.I.V.E.S. was one of the Chairman's nominated charities for the 13/14 Civic year.

Thanks were expressed for a very interesting and informative presentation.

53 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

54 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

There were no questions submitted by Councillors.

55 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES (Paper C)

The report set out the wishes of the Administration regarding a change to the membership of the Challenge and Improvement Committee.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the provisions of section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the wishes expressed by political groups, members be appointed to serve on the Council's Challenge and Improvement Committee for the remainder of the 2013/14 civic year.

Challenge and Improvement Committee (11 members)

Councillor Alan Caine (Chairman)
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Vice Chair)
Councillor Nigel Bowler (Vice Chair)
Councillor Stuart Curtis
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Malcolm Leaning
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Sue Rawlins
Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Mick Tinker

Note Councillor Shore declared an interest in the following item as he was the County Councillor in whose portfolio libraries rested, so would leave the room for consideration of the item in order not to prejudge any response.

Councillors Fleetwood, Kinch, Keimach and Brockway also declared that they were County Councillors.

56 RESPONSE TO THE LINCOLNSHIRE LIBRARY SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (Paper D)

The Director of Regeneration and Planning described how the Lincolnshire County Council Library Service was seeking a service re-design in order to make £2 million worth of cost savings and respond to the changing trends of how libraries were used in the county.

A public consultation document had been produced with details of the proposed changes and the deadline for responses was 30 September 2013. Four tiers of service were proposed offering different levels of service from a monthly mobile to full static library and the proposed changes would significantly affect the way library services were delivered in West Lindsey. The proposals would reduce West Lindsey's current static library provision from nine to two and the community was being asked to volunteer to run some libraries otherwise they would be closed and replaced with a mobile service.

A further 36 villages would no longer receive a mobile service but would be eligible for the Home Library Service. There had been widespread coverage of these proposals in the local and national media but, so far, the Council's voice had been silent. It was felt that the best approach was for a public response to be agreed by Members before releasing any media comments.

Members of the Council discussed the proposals at length, and some were sceptical about the value of the consultation and whether comments submitted would make any difference to the outcome. Councillors emphasised the importance of libraries to residents and felt that to close them would be to rip the heart out of communities

Libraries were used for so much more than book borrowing, they had social, educational and ICT benefits, and the users that would lose out most were the elderly, those without transport or access to IT. It was proposed that in order to formulate a response, a cross party working group liaise with the Director of Regeneration and Planning, and other Members feed their comments to the group to be collated.

RESOLVED – that Councillors Cotton, Caine, McNeill, Bowler, Summers, Bierley and Darcel work with the Director of Regeneration and Planning to formulate a response to consider the proposed changes to the library service in West Lindsey.

Note Councillor Shore returned to the meeting.

57 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT (Paper E)

The Council Chairman introduced the Group Accountant who presented the Annual Treasury Management 2012/13 report to Members. Appendix A of the report had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee, and set out the Council's

financial performance for capital and investment activity. There had been no breaches of the prudential borrowing limit.

Members noted that the Council was fortunately in a strong financial position, but concerns were expressed regarding low interest rates. The Group Accountant affirmed that a draft investment strategy was to be presented to the next meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee.

RESOLVED that

- a) the Annual Treasury Management Report be noted, and
- b) the Actual 2012/13 Prudential and Treasury Indicators be approved.

58 CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES (Paper F)

The Leader of the Council introduced the report describing how in order for Members to be engaged, they had been requested to score priorities from a list of 31 in order of importance.

The consensus arrived at four headings, which were then sub-divided into nine sub-headings.

Prosperous

- Asset acquisition and management
- Job creation, NEETS and apprenticeships
- Open for business

Connectivity

- Broadband
- E-accessibility

Green

- Energy Solutions
- Drive down waste and Rural Affairs

Active and healthy

- Increasing community action and volunteering
- Promote well-being and healthy lifestyles

Members with either a specialist knowledge or a strong interest in the subjects have been appointed to work with dedicated officers to drive the subjects forward. All those taking part were thanked for their contribution.

Councillor Shore suggested that two additional priorities could be included: Mobile connectivity and micro energy generation. The Leader agreed that the two suggestions could be included under the headings already listed, however Councillor Shore, whilst acknowledging that the energy generation would fit under the 'Energy Solutions' heading, felt that Mobile Connectivity was an important enough issue to be a priority on its own, and proposed this as an amendment.

Councillor Shore's motion was then seconded and voted upon.

RESOLVED that the priorities identified within the report be endorsed with the addition of Mobile Connectivity to the list.

59 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS PUBLISHED SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING ON 29 JULY 2013.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Committee meetings published since the last Council meeting on 29 July 2013 be received.

The meeting concluded at 8.50 pm.

Chairman