WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Special Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Wednesday 3 August 2011 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:	Councillor Alan Caine (Chairman – In the Chair)
	Councillor Paul-Howitt-Cowan
	Councillor Owen Bierley
	Councillor Richard Doran
	Councillor Angela Lawrence
	Councillor Malcolm Leaning
	Councillor Irmgard Parrott
	Councillor Roger Patterson
	Councillor Geoff Wiseman
In Attendance:	Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources
	Business Improvement Manager
	Democratic Services Team Leader
Also Present:	Councillor Chris Darcel
	Councillor Ian Fleetwood
	Councillor Jessie Milne
	Councillor William Parry

11   APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive

12   MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of personal interest were made by all Councillors as each individual would be affected by the proposed changes.

Declarations of personal interest were made by Councillors Bierley, Fleetwood, Milne and Wiseman as they had sat on the Policy and Resources Committee that considered the report at Appendix A.

A declaration of personal Interest was made by Councillor Ian Fleetwood as the council's ICT Champion.

13   MEMBERS' ICT (CAI.06 11/12)

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources introduced the report which had at its appendix the report that had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 28 July 2011.   The Policy and Resources Committee had proposed several amendments to the recommendations and the minutes from the meeting had not yet been published.

The Business Improvement Manager gave a presentation to update Members on the current status of the ICT project. The council was currently spending around £70,000 per annum on paper and postage along with various other costs.   The Members' ICT project was a major part of the Corporate Transformation Programme.

For both Officers and Members the aim was to facilitate Agile Working to enable access from anywhere, to support this it was necessary to change the way information assets were managed. The reports were a culmination of a great deal of work and it was now necessary to move the project towards implementation. It was acknowledged that individual Members' needs were diverse and there was no 'one size fits all' solution.

One of the proposed amendments arising from the Policy and Resources Committee was that Members be allocated up to £400 to purchase the equipment of their choice (not £350 as originally proposed).   Discussion ensued and it was clarified that the £400 was for the four year term of office and that additional equipment could be purchased within that period as long as the total reimbursement claimed did not exceed the allocated £400. It was proposed that monies be reimbursed via proof of purchase, however it was suggested that it may prove difficult for some Members to fund the initial outlay, in that event some discretion could be afforded and alternative arrangements made. Examples were shown of what could be bought within the allocated budget, and it was reaffirmed that the £15 monthly allowance for Broadband would remain, and also £30 per annum for security management. The financial analysis of these costs equated to around £11,500 per annum during the four year period.

Some Members expressed concern regarding the timescales and implementation date of 1 September 2011, and a staged process was suggested. It was confirmed that initially the old and new systems would run parallel to each other and that all documents would be sent by email, unless particular Members specifically requested hard copies, and that hard copies cease completely by January 2012. It was proposed that all Members receive documents for all committee meetings, this would ensure all were aware of what was happening within the council and committee substitutes would have papers readily to hand.

It was felt important that a target date be worked towards. Acknowledgement was given that this was a radical change which inevitably carried complexity and risk, however the rewards would be significant, in terms of both efficiency and finance.

Further issues such as batteries, document storage, purchase of software, bulk buying of equipment, wireless connections were all discussed and concerns were allayed and issues clarified. Assurance was given that support would be available to any Member who required it.

The amendments to the Policy and Resources Committee report PR.11 11/12 were agreed as:

(i) the maximum level of re-imbursement for the self provision of computing equipment be £400 as opposed to £350;

(ii) the new option for the provision of Information and Communication Technology and support to Council Members be made available to all Members of Council as opposed to only those who currently have no ICT provision for the reasons outlined during the course of the debate and detailed above; and

(iii) alternative training mechanisms, to that set out in section 2 of the report be utilised in the first instance wherever possible.

It was then **RESOLVED** unanimously that:

a) Members support the recommendations set out in PR.11 11/12 subject to the amendments made and subject to those minutes being formally approved; and

b) Progress be monitored in terms of the implementation of paperless working and cost savings achieved.

The meeting concluded at 7.52 pm

Chairman