

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on 12 March 2013 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Alan Caine (Chairman)
Councillor Paul-Howitt-Cowan (Vice Chair)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Malcolm Leaning
Councillor Irmgard Parrott
Councillor William Parry
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Mick Tinker

In Attendance:
Alex Reeks Assistant Chief Executive
Marion Thomas Tourism Development Officer
Nicola Calver Governance and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Richy Doran

42 MINUTES

Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 29 January 2013.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 29 January 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

43 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

44 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE (CAI.26 12/13)

The Governance and Civic Officer presented Paper A to the committee noting that all black items were completed for closing.

The Assistant Chief Executive gave an update on Parish Council Electronic Plans advising that this item was in progress. Members requested that timescales for resolving this issue be circulated to all Councillors.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising Schedule be noted.

45 LOCAL TOURISM (CAI.27 12/13)

The Tourism and Development Officer presented a report to the Committee updating on the progress of the Challenge and Improvement Sub Group working on tourism.

An event entitled 'Celebrating West Lindsey's Heritage' was to be held on 27th March at RAF Scampton to which many local heritage groups had been invited. It was reported that there were a good number attending, and Councillors undertook to publicise the event further within their local communities. A database of local groups had now been compiled and would prove useful for future events and communications.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the report and the progress of the event be noted; and
- b) through the event, investigate what individual Heritage Groups throughout West Lindsey are planning in 2013 and remain in touch for regular updates into 2014 and beyond.

46 REVISED WASTE STRATEGY (CAI.28 12/13)

The Chairman presented Paper C which set out the progress on creating a focus group to look at issues within a new Waste Strategy for West Lindsey.

A discussion took place around managing foodwaste differently, and the difference that it could make to household waste collection.

RESOLVED that Members note the current progress on the development of a Waste Strategy

47 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE (CAI.29 12/13)

The Assistant Chief Executive presented a report which provided Members with the headline performance data for planning enforcement and updated on service delivery.

Members expressed their concerns around the customer care within enforcement and other areas of the Council. In addition they were apprised of the current staffing levels within the enforcement team and the plans for future cross team working. The Assistant Chief Executive undertook to report these issues back to the management team, where they would be addressed. Members were also assured that the Head of Central Services would be happy to assist members if they were experiencing customer care below that expected.

The difference between closed and open cases within 12/13 was highlighted by members as a concern, specifically the category two cases. This was

noted by the committee. A further report back to the Committee was requested within a six month period to assist in monitoring progress. In addition, Members requested specific enforcement information to be provided to them.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the content of the report be noted; and
- b) a further report be provided to the committee in six months time.

48 RURAL BROADBAND – CLOSING REPORT (CAI.30 12/13)

Members received Paper E which provided an update on the findings of the Rural Broadband Working Group and set out the recommendations of the group for agreement by the Committee.

The Challenge and Improvement Committee welcomed the report, and applauded the hard work that had been undertaken by officers and the group in the progress made. It was felt that West Lindsey residents would greatly benefit from the improvements that could be made through provision of broadband throughout the district.

It was noted that the group was aware of the issues arising from accessing planning documents in the parishes, and assured that this would be high up the priority list for action.

Some Members raised health concerns around the use of Wifi, and the matter was discussed to the conclusion that there was no medical or scientific research that could indicate any health risks from this type of communication.

It was noted that there were no financial implications at present, but going forward a saving was anticipated.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the Rural Broadband Investment Brief referred to in this report is endorsed by the committee and issued to the market to 'test' the potential for investment;
- b) future governance of this matter is undertaken through the Prosperous Communities Committee;
- c) the operational delivery of the Rural Broadband Investment be governed by the Commercial Board;
- d) The Prosperous Communities Committee receive further updates on actions that are agreed with companies that are to deliver the Investment proposals in the Brief via the Commercial Board;
- e) Growth officers via the Growth Board are tasked to contact the mobile phone companies to encourage them to invest in additional radio base stations in the area to improve mobile phone coverage, with any findings being reported back to the Prosperous Communities Committee;

- f) Localism officers via the Localism Board be tasked to work with Community Lincs and other relevant organisations to produce a plan to support increasing community interest and use of broadband within the District. This should include working with officers within the Universal Credit Pilot and to ensure maximum usage of village halls and understand the number of digitally exclude citizens within West Lindsey. Findings to be reported back the Prosperous Communities Committee on a quarterly basis; and
- g) Planning Officers via the Growth Board be tasked to; raise with developers the topic of high-speed broadband during their discussions to encourage the installation of the appropriate infrastructure on and into development sites. Findings to be reported back the Prosperous Communities Committee on a quarterly basis.

49 COMMUNITY AWARDS 2012 (CAI.31 12/13)

The Governance and Civic Officer presented Paper F to the Committee which set out a review undertaken by the Community Awards Member Panel following the delivery of the first Annual West Lindsey Community Awards.

Members applauded the development of a way of honouring the district's communities and offered their views on alterations to the process and format for delivering a ceremony in 2013.

Although a suggestion was made to hold a ceremony out in the district, the consensus of the committee was that it should be held at the WLDC offices but not form part of a Council meeting. Extension to the provision of refreshments should be made, in addition to an altered layout. Discussion took place around the nomination forms and their content which would be altered.

Members wished for further alignment with the West Lindsey Honours (such as Honorary Freemen), and it was clarified that these appointments were made during a meeting of Council and therefore if the ceremony was on an alternative night, this could not be arranged. In addition it was felt that these awards were for citizens only and any Member appointments or honours could take place at Annual Council.

Further consideration was requested to the composition of the Member Panel which the committee felt should be politically neutral or contain one of the Council's co-opted independent Members.

An additional award was requested to honour any person or group that did not fit in to the current categories titled 'Special Recognition Award'.

RESOLVED that the recommended changes to the process and format for a future awards ceremony be submitted to Prosperous Communities Committee for agreement.

50 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY REPORT – REPORTING PERIOD 3 (CAI.32 12/13)

Members considered Paper G which provided an update on progress of the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities and updated on service area performance.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

51 FORWARD PLAN (CAI.33 12/13)

The Governance and Civic Officer presented a report setting out the items of business due to be considered through the committee system and asked Members to identify any reports that they wished to be brought before the Challenge and Improvement Committee for scrutiny.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

52 WORK PLAN (CAI.34 12/13)

The Work Plan for the business of the Challenge and Improvement Committee was discussed.

Proposals to consider Community Activity for both members and officers and Safeguarding were agreed and a scope for each requested for the following meeting to assist members in agreeing action.

Members raised their concerns in relation to customer access to services throughout the district, and officers confirmed that home visits to members of the public were proving to be successful and more cost effective than satellite offices. Further investigation was requested into this matter.

RESOLVED that Community Activity, Safeguarding and Access to Services be added to the Work Plan for Challenge and Improvement Committee.

The meeting concluded at 19.50pm

Chairman