

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Tuesday 18 March 2014 commencing at 6.30 pm.

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

Councillor Stuart Curtis
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Mick Tinker

In Attendance:

Mark Sturgess Chief Operating Officer
Lyn Marlow Customer Strategy and Services Manager
Suzanne Fysh Head of Development and Neighbourhoods
Dinah Lilley Governance and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Malcolm Leaning
Councillor Sue Rawlins

Membership: No substitutes were appointed for the meeting.

63 MINUTES (CAI.38 13/14)

Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 28 January 2014.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 28 January 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

64 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

65 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE (CAI.38 13/14)

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule. The Governance and Civic Officer informed the Committee that the Terms of

Reference for the Tourism Working Group had been entered in the Forward Plan and scheduled for the June meeting.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising Schedule be received and noted.

66 MEMBERS' VERBAL UPDATE REPORTS

(a) Wi-fi (Councillor Alan Caine)

The Chairman gave the meeting an update on progress made with the provision of wi-fi. A contract had now been signed with Quickline for the installation of Broadband at village halls and a 5m periphery, to give wireless access to officers and also emergency services. The scheme would help with the economic development of areas otherwise without connection. 38 halls had now been equipped.

Members noted that the scheme was highly commendable, but that it was important to have the 5m periphery as if the village halls were not open access could not be gained. The Chairman stated that it was part of the contract to have the radius, so this was still being worked on.

If any village hall connections appeared not to be working Members should contact council officers who would investigate as there was a maintenance agreement.

67 ELSWITHA MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (CAI.39 13/14)

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the report, which, following the audit of the process of the Elswitha project, a working group had been requested by the Governance and Audit Committee to look at the implementation of the actions arising from the audit. The recommendation in the report was that the Governance and Audit Committee monitor the action plan quarterly until satisfied it was complete.

Councillor Bowler, who had chaired the working group thanked all officers and Members who had been involved, and noted that it was still a working document. The work of the task group was now complete, but there were still lessons to be learned, and further member training was still required. The action plan contained sample letters from the Monitoring Officer to be used. Questions were asked regarding tenders and the procurement process, and it was explained that Procurement Lincs would be involved to give advice and assemble documents.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the SMART action plan agreed by Special Governance and Audit Committee on 27 February 2014 be noted; and

- ii) the monitoring of the SMART action plan take place through the Governance and Audit Committee.

68 E-ACCESSIBILITY – BRIEFING / UPDATE REPORT (CAI.40 13/14)

The Customer Strategy and Services Manager informed the Committee of progress on the implementation of e-accessibility across council services. Good progress was being made and a software package had been procured which would enable the capture of customer contacts. Citizens would be able to access their own records and track progress.

A list of forms was being designed and the council was working with North Kesteven. Facilities to be offered would include pest control, Chairman's invitations and missed bins. Business reviews had been completed in several areas and achieved efficiencies were being monitored. It was anticipated that most of the new systems being designed would be available by the end of April, however the licensing system needed more work.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the project governance arrangements that have been put in place to manage, control and report upon the progress of the E-accessibility project be noted; and
- ii) the actual progress being made on the implementation of the E-accessibility Project be noted.

69 MOBILE ACCESSIBILITY ROUNDTABLE – FEEDBACK FROM MEETING (CAI.41 13/14)

The Chairman informed the Committee that a meeting had taken place in December 2013 with two companies undertaking work on behalf of the Department for Culture Media & Sport on the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP). This was a £150m infrastructure project funded through Central Government to assist rural areas by making improvements to mobile coverage. In order to facilitate this, the MIP had been given target "not spots" (data provided by Ofcom). However, the 'not spot' criteria definition differed from the council's, and individual "not spots" identified by Ofcom were commercially sensitive and therefore could not be divulged.

It was not anticipated that anything would happen before the end of March, and the lack of connection had implications for economic development in the district.

A number of options were set out in the report which included letting the MIP project run its course, which was felt to be the best option.

It was suggested that the project remain as part of the Committee workplan until its completion, and it was noted that the matter would be reported to full Council through the usual route of the Minute book.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the discussions that have taken place be noted; and
- ii) Option 1 detailed within the report, which in summary recommends that the current MIP project is the most appropriate solution in relation to improving mobile accessibility across the District, be agreed; and
- iii) the project remain as part of the Challenge and Improvement Committee workplan.

70 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY (PERIOD 2) (CAI.42 13/14)

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the second of the Progress and Delivery reports for the year, and informed Members that after the next, year end, report the design and format would be changing to make the content more easily digestible.

RESOLVED that the content of the report and the progress made in achievement of corporate priorities and the performance of the Council's service areas be noted.

71 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY WORKING GROUP – FEEDBACK AND FINDINGS REPORT (CAI.43 13/14)

The Chief Operating Officer informed Members of the changes proposed to the reporting mechanism for Progress and Delivery following examination of the process by a working group.

The proposed changes were set out in the report.

- That the structure of the document at chapter three be adjusted to match the themes and priorities approved by Council in September 2013;
- That the delivery tables reflect the projects underway for each priority with measures being the measures from the business cases that supported those projects;
- That all new style reports are based on the principle of reporting by exception – either measures which show projects or services are off track are reported or have performed exceptionally;
- That the report will be split into two parts:
 - i) Progress and delivery of projects which deliver the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.
 - ii) Those measures that demonstrate service effectiveness

The next Corporate Plan would give greater focus to the delivery of Members' priorities, so the work of the group was ongoing. Members agreed that a shorter document would be more acceptable and would facilitate more effective scrutiny.

RESOLVED that:

- i) it be noted that the report provides assurance that progress has been made by the working group and that clear next steps to deliver its objectives are in place; and

- ii) the recommendations made to date be agreed.

Note Councillor Tinker left the meeting at this point.

72 REVIEW OF GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT (CAI.44 13/14)

A request had been received from the Prosperous Community Committee on 4 February 2014 for the Challenge and Improve Committee to set up a Task Panel to review the brief, methodology and robustness of the “need” figure for the number of new pitches identified for West Lindsey in the Central Lincolnshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2013 (GTAA) by June 2014.

Concerns were expressed at the short timescale involved, however assurance was given that officers were already undertaking work on the matter, as there was a need to move quickly. The requirement was simply a refresh of the evidence base as opposed to a new study, this was needed in the preparation of the Local Plan. This could be kept under review as the work of the Task Panel progressed.

Some Members expressed concerns regarding the number of pitches allocated to West Lindsey, and also the unlawful encampments. It was noted that the withdrawal of the Core Strategy gave West Lindsey the opportunity of a second chance to address the concerns. There was a need to have dialogue with neighbouring authorities – through the duty to co-operate.

Volunteers were sought for the Task Panel. Councillors Dobbie, Strange, Howitt-Cowan and Curtis agreed to be on the panel, the Terms of Reference of which were set out in the report recommendation.

RESOLVED that:

- i) a Task Panel be arranged to review the brief, methodology and robustness of the “need” figure for the number of new pitches identified for West Lindsey in the Central Lincolnshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2013 (GTAA);
- ii) the Task Panel comprise Councillors Dobbie, Strange, Howitt-Cowan and Curtis;
- iii) the Task Panel will report its findings back to the Prosperous Communities Committee on 4 June 2014 due to the tight timescales around the production of the evidence base for the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan;
- iv) It be agreed that the Task Panel be time limited and its remit will come to an end after it has reported to the Prosperous Communities Committee on 4 June 2014, unless commissioned to carry out further work by that Committee; and
- v) It be agreed that the first meeting take place on Wednesday 2 April 2014 at 6.30pm.

73 FORWARD PLAN (CAI.45 13/14)

The Governance and Civic Officer presented and updated 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.

74 WORK PLAN (CAI.46 13/14)

The Work Plan for the business of the Challenge and Improvement Committee was discussed. Whilst it was acknowledged that there were few items in the Work Plan for the Committee, there were several working groups with ongoing projects, and as the next meeting would be in the new civic year it would be an opportune time to review the Forward Plan to consider future work programmes.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.35 pm

Chairman