

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 13 October 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)

Councillor Alexander Bridgwood
Councillor Stuart Curtis
Councillor Chris Darcel
Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor Steve England
Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Pat Mewis
Councillor Angela White

Visiting Members: Councillor Gillian Bardsley
Councillor David Boles
Councillor Mick Devine
Councillor Jessie Milne
Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Thomas Smith
Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Anne Welburn

In Attendance:

Ian Knowles	Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer
Penny Sharp	Commercial Director
Alan Robinson	Monitoring Officer & Strategic Lead, Business and Democratic
Sarah Troman	Strategic Lead, Housing and Regeneration
James O' Shaughnessy	Team Manager, Business Improvement and Corporate Governance
Andy Gray	Team Manager, Housing and Communities
Michelle Howard	Team Manager, Home Choices
Nicola Calver	Governance and Civic Officer
Inspector Simon Outen	Lincolnshire Police
Paul Woollam	Operations Director, Acis Group Ltd

Apologies: Councillor David Bond (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Trevor Young (Vice-Chairman)

Membership: There were no substitutes appointed for the meeting.

29 MINUTES

- (a) Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 1 September 2015 (CAI.19 15/16)

Minor grammatical amendments were passed to the clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting and these would be incorporated in to publication of the Minutes of the meeting on 1 September.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 1 September 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

30 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

31 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE (CAI.20 14/15)

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions, as at 5 October 2015.

It was reported that all actions within the report were marked as completed since the previous meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising Schedule be received and noted.

32 SCRUTINY OF PUBLIC BODY – ACIS GROUP LTD

The Committee welcomed Paul Woollam, Operations Director of Acis Group Ltd to the meeting, and invited him to make a presentation to Members to answer their previously prepared questions detailed in Appendix A to the Agenda.

The presentation covered areas such as:

- the background to the company, and their growth including diversification in to the student housing market;
- the amount of housing stock they held and their location, operating across 14 Local Authority areas within a 35 mile radius of Gainsborough and Sheffield;
- the Housing Register, with particular note that they were on track to reach the 75% target for letting to Council-made nominations. In addition, launch of the 'Tenancy Matters' service and closer working with partners would assist in providing all residents with the support they required.

- Acis's response to welfare reform, including steps taken to work alongside WLDC on the Universal Credit Pilot and consultation and support to residents around the spare room subsidy;
- Right to buy changes, implications and planning, with receipts for homes sold reinvested in housing stock;
- Merger intentions and their position to pursue opportunities that arose and the implications that this may have on working arrangements with Local Authorities.
- Acis's 5-year investment programme of circa £6m per annum and stock disposal;
- Their £50K per year Disabled Facilities Grant provision and their commitment to working with partners to deliver necessary in-home changes; and
- Affordable Housing.

Whilst the presentation aimed to answer all questions Members had devised in advance of the meeting, they asked a number of pertinent supplementary questions of Mr Woollam who offered further written information on shared ownership properties and the process undertaken to apply intelligence around residents and their circumstances to finding suitable properties.

The Committee thanked Mr Woollam for the informative presentation and looked forward to a continued good relationship between Acis and WLDC.

RESOLVED that that the presentation be noted.

33 CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR 6 MONTH UPDATE

Inspector Simon Outen of Lincolnshire Police was welcomed back to the Committee to give a verbal update position report on crime and anti-social behaviour within the district.

He reported successes of a recently executed warrant resulting in the recovery of in excess of £100K of stolen goods, and six year sentence issued for an individual who carried out an armed robbery in Fiskerton.

Lincolnshire Police were aware and active in the prevention of mobile phone theft, targeting schools and issuing Crime Behavioural Orders which was proving successful. In addition, Forced Labour has been targeted resulting in 15 individuals being charged with a wide variety of offenses including conspiracy to hold individuals in slavery.

Inspector Outen promoted vigilance around securing large vehicles such as Land Rovers, and urged for residents to take steps to discourage determined offenders, such as applying trackers.

Lincolnshire Police had a stable establishment number, and were working with regional partners to provide resilience when required. Resources were

currently focused on tackling cyber-crime, forced labour and domestic violence.

Members raised concerns about the lengthy processing time for firearms licenses, and it was confirmed that this was managed by G4S, and not Lincolnshire Police. However, through experience, Inspector Outen suggested that large peaks in the number of licence renewals often occurred at periodical intervals due to repercussions in changes made after tragedies such as Dunblaine.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

34 FORWARD PLAN (CAI.22 15/16)

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 pre-scrutiny.

At this stage Members did not require sight of any forthcoming items of Committee business.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

35 WORK PLAN (CAI.23 15/16)

The Work Plan for the business of the Challenge and Improvement Committee was presented, and Members were content with the document as written.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted.

36 EXCLUSION OF THE 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

37 STRATEGIC REVIEW OF CAR PARKING (CAI.21 15/16)

Sarah Troman presented options available to the Council for a strategic plan for car parking across the district, requesting Pre-Scrutiny of the options with a view to making recommendations to Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committees.

Each of the seven options were based on a number of assumptions which included full cost recovery and no charge for disabled parking. Officers recommended Option 3a which included introducing charging within the Market Rasen area, and an element of free parking to support local businesses by increasing footfall. In addition, new machines throughout the district would provide good information on the way parking is used which would be analysed to assist in future decision making.

Members wished for officers to consider the following in the development of a car parking strategy:

- More dynamic use of car parks to open spaces for other users;
- Parking during school-time pick-ups;
- Supporting businesses by free 'quick errand' spaces;
- Parking for residents;
- Incremental increases in season tickets;
- Free parking towards the end of the trading day when business is slower; and
- Uniformity for charging across areas.

Overall, Members were in support of the option suggested by officers, and encouraged by the detail provided.

RESOLVED that Option 3a be recommended to Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committees to be taken forward for implementation and developed in to the wider strategy.

38 PREPARATION FOR SCRUTINY OF PUBLIC BODIES (CAI.24 15/16)

Paper F set out a list of strategic questions to be finalised prior to inviting officer representatives from the Lincolnshire West CCG to a future meeting of the Committee. Members were satisfied that the list reflected the aims of the scrutiny session.

RESOLVED that the list of strategic questions set out in Appendix A of the report be approved.

The meeting concluded at 8.50 pm

Chairman