

## **WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on 4 September 2014 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Tom Regis (Chairman)  
Councillor Ian Fleetwood (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley  
Councillor Nigel Bowler  
Councillor Ken Bridger  
The Revd Councillor David Cotton  
Councillor Chris Darcel  
Councillor Giles McNeill  
Councillor Reg Shore  
Councillor Jeff Summers  
Councillor Anne Welburn

**In Attendance:**

Ian Knowles	Director of Resources
Tracey Bircumshaw	Group Accountant
Ady Selby	Team Manager Operations
Kim Leith	Health and Safety Co-ordinator
Katie Coughlan	Governance and Civic Officer

**Also Present:** Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan  
Councillor Geoff Wiseman

**Apologies:** There were no apologies

### **24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Committee were advised that Paper G (Request for Free Parking) had been withdrawn from the agenda, the reason being that the report had not been supported by the Prosperous Communities Committee at its meeting on 2 September and thus there was no recommendation to consider.

### **25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

## 26 MINUTES

- i) **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 July 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.
- ii) **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee 12 August 2014 be noted.

## 27 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Reg Shore declared a pecuniary interest in report PR.17 14/15 (Paper F - Countywide Agreement – Recycling Contract) as the Executive Member and Portfolio Holder for Waste at Lincolnshire County Council. Furthermore, Councillor Shore indicated he would withdraw from the Chamber prior to consideration of this item and would take no part in the debate.

## 28 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 27 AUGUST 2014 (PR.13 14/15).

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 27 August 2014.

With regard to the green action, Officers indicated that an update would be provided through the presentation of report PR.15 14/15 (Paper D – Finance Quarterly Monitoring).

**RESOLVED** that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule as set out in report PR.13 14/15 be noted.

## 29 LONE WORKING POLICY (PR.14 14/15)

Consideration was given to a report which presented the Lone Working Policy. Consultation had been undertaken with staff representatives, Unison and the Joint Staff Consultative Committee. In presenting the report, the Health and Safety Co-ordinator indicated this Policy was applicable to both Council Employees and Elected Members. Training would be provided to all staff and a condensed version of such would be offered to Elected Members.

In response to the latter, Members suggested that, in light of the importance of staying safe whilst working alone, a presentation should be made to Full Council as opposed to a separate training session.

Officers undertook to circulate the information contained in Appendix D to all Members. Members were also of the view that this subject should be incorporated into the Members Induction Programme for May 2015.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the Lone Working Policy be approved for formal adoption; and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Service for Public Protection to make minor house-keeping amendments to the Policy in the future, in consultation with the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

### **30 FINANCE QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT Q1 (PR.15 14/15)**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which set out the revenue, capital and treasury management activity during the period 1 April to 30 June 2014.

The Group Accountant reported on the 2013/14 out-turn position, (which Members noted was still subject to Audit.)

The out-turn position of a £1.841m surplus differed from the previously reported forecast surplus of £0.835m.

The variance related to a number of items these being;

- £0.741m deferred creditor which would be payable to the Government in 2014/15 and would not therefore contribute to the General Fund working balance.
- £0.143m additional grant funding received during March.
- £0.122m various other service surpluses above those previously forecast.

Members were requested to approve the contributions to Earmarked Reserves and to note the contribution of £0.291m to the General Fund Working Balance.

With regard to the 2014/15 Quarter 1 Revenue budget monitoring the current forecast out-turn position was a surplus of £0.358m, details of which were contained within the report, budgets would be closely monitored and variances reported throughout the financial year.

The Capital programme expenditure was forecast as £3.8m for the year, with schemes being delivered over the medium term, formalisation of carry forwards would be undertaken as part of the Quarter 2 monitoring cycle.

With regard to asset purchases, 2 houses had been purchased as part of the Empty Homes Scheme and were detailed in the report.

There had been no breaches of Treasury and Prudential indicators.

In terms of investments, there had been no change in the bank interest rate, West Lindsey had again out-performed the 7 day LIBID benchmark.

Details of current investments were contained within the report and Members noted that an investment had been made in the CCLA Local Authority Property Asset Fund; the first quarterly interest payment was awaited.

In responding to Members' questions, it was confirmed that staff savings was as a result of both vacant posts and pension contributions.

The term "Transfer Payments" was explained and it was noted that in the main this related to benefit payments to individuals.

Finally Members referred to page 12 of the report and indicated they would have welcomed the inclusion of comparative data regarding investment returns. Officers undertook to include this in future.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the out-turn position be noted;
- (b) the contributions to Earmarked Reserves and Revenue carry forward to 2014/15 be approved;
- (c) the revenue position as at 30 June 2014 be noted;
- (d) the Capital carry forward requests from 2013/14 of £0.268m and the Revised Capital Budget of £4,735,145 be approved;
- (e) the Treasury Management position for the three months to 30 June 2014 be noted.

### **31 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN (PR.16 14/15)**

The Governance and Civic Officer presented the Committee Work Plan which set out those items for future Committee consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Plan be noted.

### **32 EXCLUSION OF 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.

**Note:** Councillor Reg Shore withdrew from chamber at this point in the meeting and did not return.

### **33 COUNTYWIDE AGREEMENT - RECYCLING CONTRACT (PR.17 14/15)**

Members gave consideration to a report which sought opinion on the future disposal route for kerbside household dry recyclate collected in West Lindsey.

Officers outlined in detail the three elements of the proposed agreement and what each hoped to achieve.

The Leader of the Council addressed the Committee and indicated that he was of the belief that economies of scale could be achieved by the proposed course of action. Broad agreement was in place to move forward on an equal basis across all seven Districts. It was acknowledged that an “equalling out period” was required over the next three years but part (a) of the agreement aimed to address this.

He was of the view that debates at a Chief Executive and Leader level had been open and transparent and all authorities were truly working together.

A slight amendment to the recommendation was requested, in response to concerns that Officers were exercising their delegations without due consultation. The words “and with the written agreement of” were therefore included and on being moved and seconded, the amendment was agreed.

Lengthy debate ensued and Members expressed concern that the report lacked “options” for consideration, this was something Members were of the belief that it had been agreed would be included in all committee reports. In the absence of options some Members indicated it would be difficult to make an informed decision.

In response Officers outlined the alternative options which had been explored over the past months, and the reasons why these had been deemed non-starters. Whilst acknowledging the verbal information provided, the Committee were of the view they should have had an opportunity to consider the report at an early stage, when alternative options may have been available.

A Member recalled when such a proposal had previously been on the table back in 2006 and outlined the problems which had been experienced and as a result, why he was now dubious of integrated waste contracts.

In responding to Members’ questions regarding how this would affect the service offered to our residents, including whether mixes would have to change, and whether this in turn would affect recycling rates, Officers advised that there was no suggestion the mix would need to change. The contract would be let in 7 District lots, which would mitigate the need to change service provision and thus it was not anticipated recycling rates would be affected. It was accepted that

residents liked and appreciated the current service provision and Members were keen that this did not change.

Officers also outlined the reasons why it was unlikely any of the partner authorities would withdraw from the proposed arrangements and there was a real belief this approach would pave the way for a much more collaborative approach, and would also put in place a legally binding contract.

In responding to concerns relating to Value for Money for the recyclates collected, Officers indicated that there were a number of variables which could affect values, however, it was stressed that to achieve the best rates, the way in which waste was collected would need to be revised and this would come at extra cost and would undoubtedly affect the tonnage collected.

It was stressed that this Authority had a legal duty to deliver its waste to the Waste Disposal Authority, this being Lincolnshire County Council. The costs and risks associated with any legal challenge were outlined to the Committee.

On that basis it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- (a) sign up to the County-Wide agreement for the disposal of dry recycle be agreed; and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Team Manager Operations (in consultation with, and with the written agreement of, the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee) to finalise such agreement based on the principles referred to in report PR.17 14/15).

**Note:** Councillors Bowler and Cotton abstained from the above vote and requested that this be recorded.

Councillor Darcel voted against the above recommendation and requested that this be recorded.

The meeting concluded at 7.56 pm.

Chairman