

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Wednesday 28 September 2011 at 7.00 pm.

Present : Councillor Malcolm Parish (Chairman – In the Chair)
Councillor Jeff Summers (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Gillian Bardsley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Nigel Bowler
Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Stuart Kinch
Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Ray Sellars
Councillor Geoff Wiseman
Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost

In Attendance : Director of Strategy and Regeneration
Director of Neighbourhoods and Health
Public Protection Services Manager
Group Accountant
Senior Democratic Officer

Apologies : Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Trevor Young

Membership : Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost substituting for
Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Judy Rainsforth substituting for Councillor
Trevor Young

28 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman welcomed all Members and Officers to the meeting and in opening made reference to the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee, the importance and implications of the policies they were drafting and role this Committee would play in the adoption thereof. To this end, the Chairman urged all Members of the Committee to attend the forthcoming planning training being held on 5 October 2011.

29 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

30 MINUTES

Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 20 July 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 20 July 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

31 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT THE CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 20 SEPTEMBER 2011. (PRCC.11 11/12)

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 20 September 2011.

It was noted that all actions had been completed on target.

RESOLVED that progress on the matters arising scheduled as set out in report PRCC.11 11/12 be noted.

32 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this point of the meeting

33 REPORT FROM MOTION TASK AND FINISH GROUP MEETING OF 20 JULY 2011 - MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR UNDERWOOD-FROST - POLLUTANTS AFFECTING THE WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA (PRCC.12 11/12)

Consideration was given to a report which sought to advise Members of the outcome of the meetings of the Task and Finish Group established to investigate the motion from Councillor Underwood-Frost relating to pollutants affecting the West Lindsey District Council Area.

The report further set out the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group that no further investigations be carried out at this time and thus the Group be dissolved.

Debate ensued, during which Members commented on a number of anomalies evident in the data provided and questioned the reasons for these. Officers and Members of the Task and Finish Group gave their assurances that they too had raised similar questions and shared with the Committee the explanations that had been provided.

In response to Members' questions, Officers further explained how Cancer data was collected. The relevance of the methodology was questioned by the Committee.

Members' wished to place on record their thanks to Officers for the work they had undertaken and considered the exercise had been worthwhile, allayed any previous concerns and provided future assurances.

On that basis it was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) the evidence presented by experts which found no causal links between air pollution in the West Lindsey area and cancer rates within the population of West Lindsey be accepted and in doing so the recommendation from the Task and Finish Group, that no further investigation of this matter is warranted at this time be supported and agreed; and

(b) in light of resolution (a) above, the Task and Finish Group established to investigate the motion from Councillor Underwood-Frost be dissolved.

Note: Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost declared a personal interest in the above item of business as a recent cancer sufferer.

34 LOCALISM PROGRAMME (PRCC.13 11/12)

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with information on the progress of the Localism Programme and focussed on the necessary actions required to be undertaken in the next 6 months. The report further provided details as to the process of Area Working arrangements, the realignment of staff roles and the launch of the Community Asset and Community Action and Volunteering (CAV) Fund.

In presenting the report Officers stressed this was a radical and ambitious programme and would transform the way the Authority thought and worked, shifting the focus to the “the place” rather than “the service”.

The objectives were outlined in detail, and full explanation as to how the area working, area summits and staff re-alignment would further facilitate these was provided. It was stressed that area boundaries were fluid and would not create in effect six mini councils.

Further explanation was provided regarding the rationale for the proposed approach for managing the Community Asset Fund, along with details of the envisaged benefits this would afford and the timescales related to the Schemes launch.

Lengthy debate ensued and Members as whole welcomed the report and the proposals contained therein. There were, however, some Members who held reservations regarding the proposed approach for managing the Community Asset Fund, and there were concerns regarding the level of control the Council / Members would retain as result. Some were of the view that the Council should have in place a rolling community asset capital programme however others were of the opinion in the current economic and financial climate this was unrealistic.

In response the benefits this management approach would afford were re-iterated and it was emphasised that a requirement of the successful operator would be to lever in additional monies to the Fund, thus increasing the total funds available for the community and thereby maximising the potential benefits achievable. Officers confirmed Elected Members would form part of the “Decision Panel” however, the exact mechanism as to how such Members would be selected was still to be finalised.

Members urged Officers to ensure the “detail” of the management arrangement was precise and considered this to be of critical importance if the desired outcome were to be achieved.

Members welcomed the proposals relating to the Community Action and Volunteering (CAV) Fund and wished the Fund be promoted as widely as possible.

Following full and lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the approach and arrangements for Area Working including Area Profiles and Summits as outlined in report PRCC.13 11/12 be approved; and
- (b) the procurement processes for the Community Asset and Community Action and Volunteering Funds as outlined in report PRCC.13 11/12 be approved.

Note: Councillors Chris Underwood-Frost, Lesley Rollings and Geoff Wiseman abstained from voting on the above item of business and requested that this fact be recorded.

35 PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS (PRCC.14 11/12)

Members gave consideration to a report which sought to inform the Committee of proposed future informal working arrangements for the Prosperous Communities Committee and which sought support thereto.

The Chairman urged all Members of the Committee to actively engage in the proposed ways of informal working and cited the benefits such an approach would afford.

Members made reference to Health, which had been highlighted as one of the important issues for the Committee during 11/12 and sought clarity and how it was intended to further progress this area. A number of Members with experience in this area highlighted a number of key obstacles they considered would need to be overcome in order to target and engage the intended audience.

In light of the interest and appetite and working knowledge shown by Members in respect of the Health agenda it was suggested that a Health Policy Development Panel be established.

On that basis it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the proposed ways of informal working for the Prosperous Communities Committee as set out in report PRCC.14 11/12 be noted and supported; and
- (b) a Health PDP be established and the Public Protection Services Manager be assigned lead officer.

Note: Councillor Lesley Rollings declared a personal interest in the above item of business as a PE Teacher

36 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

37 UPDATE ON WORK OF THE INCOME AND TRADING TASK AND FINISH GROUP FOLLOWING THEIR MEETING HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2011 (PRCC.15 11/12)

Consideration was given to a report which presented Members with information and outlined future proposals relating to the work currently being undertaken by the Income and Trading Task and Finish (ITTF) Group following its last meeting held on 6 September 2011.

Lengthy debate ensued particularly regarding those proposals relating to the Beaumont Street Multi-Storey Car Park and Members posed a number of questions and raised concerns with Officers.

In response Officers further clarified how the proposal could achieve savings along with possible additional benefits for residents. Officers acknowledged Members comments relating to the terms of the leasing / mortgage arrangements of the Car Park but re-iterated and stressed to Members the very different economic climate in which the Council had been operating within when it had entered into the agreement.

In relation to Gainsborough Market, Members raised a possible alternative future arrangement and sought clarity as to whether this option had been explored to date. In response Officers advised the primary focus short term was to see the Markets operating on a cost neutral basis. However, this did prevent longer term such options been further explored.

RESOLVED that the contents of report PRCC.15 11/12 be received and noted.

Note: Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost declared a personal interest in the above item of business as a former employee of Lincolnshire Co-operative.

The meeting concluded at 9.30 pm.

Chairman