

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Tuesday 8 January 2013 at 7.00 pm.

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

Councillor Nigel Bowler
Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Irmgard Parrott
Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Geoff Wiseman

In Attendance :
Mark Sturgess Director of Planning and Regeneration
Chris Allen Head of Public Protection
Andy Gray Team Manager Housing and Communities
Karen Whitfield Area Development Manager (Trinity Arts Centre)
Rob Lawton Area Team Manager (Neighbourhood and Developments)
Katie Coughlan Governance and Civic Officer

Also Present Councillor William Parry

Apologies : Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Trevor Young

Membership : Councillor Irmgard Parrott to substitute for Councillor Lewis Strange

41 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

42 MINUTES

Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 6 November 2012

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 6 November 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

43 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT THE CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 27 DECEMBER 2012 (PRCC.22 12/13)

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 27 December 2012. It was noted that all actions had been completed on target.

RESOLVED that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule, as set out in report PRCC.22 12/13 be received and noted.

44 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Gillian Bardsley declared a non pecuniary interest in report PRCC.24 12/13 (Central Lincolnshire Tenancy Strategy) as a private landlord.

45 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS IN WEST LINDSEY (PRCC.23 12/13)

Members considered a report which recommended the designation of the areas for the three Neighbourhood Plans of Caistor, Nettleham and Saxilby.

In responding to Members' comments, questions and concerns, the following points were noted: -

- The Core Strategy and Development Management Policies would “protect” the smaller parishes from inappropriate development and thus Neighbourhood Plans were considered less appropriate in these circumstances.
- Previously completed parish plans would still carry weight in the planning process, however, to a lesser degree, the reason being that such documents served a different purpose, as they dealt with broader wider issues. However it was considered communities with Parish Plans were well placed to develop a successful Neighbourhood Plan. The advantages of developing a document through these routes were outlined together with details of the support available to such communities.

In concluding it was stressed that Central Government had moved the goal posts regarding local planning policies. The re-imbusement element available for

assistance with Neighbourhood Plans was prescribed in legislation and thus was neither applicable nor transferable to those communities developing Parish Plans.

RESOLVED that the Neighbourhood Plan Areas of Caistor, Nettleham and Saxilby be formally designated.

46 CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE TENANCY STRATEGY (PRCC.24 12/13)

Consideration was given to a report which set out the Central Lincolnshire Tenancy Strategy for Members' approval.

In presenting the report to Members, Officers outlined the common aims of the Joint Strategy, the rationale and benefits afforded by new flexible tenancies and how this arrangement differed from previously. In concluding, it was stressed that the Strategy was a tool by which the authority could influence as opposed to enforce.

Lengthy and detailed discussion ensued during which a number of Members cited several problems residents were experiencing, including being forced to move out of their homes or being over charged for under occupying a property, even in circumstances when no alternative accommodation had been offered, something which Members considered to be unacceptable.

It was strongly stressed and re-iterated on a number of occasions that such problems were not as a result of the proposals contained within this Strategy, rather the changes arising from the Welfare Reform Act and resulting changes to housing benefit. Officers further indicated that the Strategy was designed to be a positive tool to address such matters and assist with finding a positive solution to housing issues.

Members indicated that they would wish to see some reference within the document to the linkages between it and the Welfare Reform Act, furthermore Members considered it of paramount importance that any subsequent actions delivered were considered alongside the work being undertaken by the Council in regards to Welfare Reform and in particular changes to housing benefit.

On that basis it was

RESOLVED that:

- (a) Members approve the Draft Central Lincolnshire Tenancy Strategy and request that its contents and subsequent actions delivered are considered alongside the work being undertaken by the Council in regards to Welfare Reform and in particular changes to housing benefit; and
- (b) Members support and assist the implementation of the Strategy.

47 CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE HOUSING GROWTH STRATEGY (PRCC.25 12/13)

Consideration was given to a report which set out the Central Lincolnshire Housing Growth Strategy for Members' approval.

In responding to Members' comments, it was noted that this Strategy underpinned the Core Strategy. The targets contained therein were aspirational, however it was acknowledged that these would be challenging to achieve. Recent changes to grant funding from Central Government were further impeding the delivery of affordable housing units, however it was hoped that this fact had now been recognised and acknowledged by Government Ministers.

RESOLVED that the Central Lincolnshire Housing Growth Strategy be approved on behalf of the Council.

48 JOINT LINCOLNSHIRE FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (PRCC.26 12/13)

Consideration was given to a report which set out the final version of the Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Strategy 2012 - 2025, as approved by Lincolnshire County Council Executive on 4 December 2012, for Members' endorsement.

Members wholeheartedly welcomed the document and all were in agreement that the pooling of resources and working in partnership could only bring about improvements and benefits for the District and its residents.

RESOLVED that the final version of the Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Strategy 2012- 2025 be endorsed.

49 TRINITY ARTS CENTRE UPDATE (PRCC.27 12/13)

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with a position statement with regards to Trinity Arts Centre. The report further detailed and sought Members' approval of a proposed way forward for the Centre over the next 12 months.

Members made reference to the table set out at paragraph 3.2 of the report and sought clarification as to what sort of expenditure was included within "Other Expenditure", this was duly received. Members indicated that a more detailed breakdown would have been of assistance and did hold some concerns that it may prove difficult to further reduce these outgoings due to their nature.

Whilst acknowledging that the Centre still had a way to go, Officers outlined in detail the various options which were continuing to be explored with a view to not

only reducing the centre's subsidy but also to continue to increase its revenue. Recent investments in the Centre would further assist in achieving such and the Committee were in agreement that it was vital that the centre remained open if the Corporate Plan Outcomes were to be delivered. Reference was also made to the detrimental social and environmental impact its closure could potentially result in.

Members' were fully supportive of the proposed work to develop the Centre's wider community usage and services on offer and considered an "Independent Trust" could prove successful. Members further welcomed the proposal to look at including the Centre in the ongoing leisure review

The Committee congratulated all those who had been involved with the Centre over the past 12 months with special thanks to The Rev'd Gill Barrow

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the progress to date and the improvements be noted;
- (b) the recommendations to form a board of community champions and undertake further work alongside the current leisure review be supported;
- (c) Policy & Resources Committee be **RECOMMENDED** to consider and approve the proposed use of the Council asset and the implications on the Authority's resources of the proposal approved by the Prosperous Communities Committee; and
- (d) a further progress report be presented for consideration by Members in 12 months time.

50 MARKETS UPDATE (PRCC.28 12/13)

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with a performance update with regard to Gainsborough Market.

In opening, the Chairman advised that the forthcoming meeting of the Gainsborough Market Development Group was the appropriate forum to debate the contents of the report in detail. However, a number of Members wished to place on record some general observations they considered were in need of addressing as a priority, including the layout and appearance of the stalls to not only improve the markets appearance and performance, but also to assist the retailers within the Market Place. Greater advertising and promotion of the Market was also considered to be something that had been lacking previously and which would only assist in improving the markets success going forward.

There was a general consensus that there needed to be a commitment to improve the quality of the market not only in terms of appearance but also the produce available in order to entice people. In conclusion, reference was made to the

PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 8 January 2013

Subject to Call-in. Call-in will expire on Wednesday 23 January 2013 at 5.00 pm

make-up and ownership of the newly established development group and some were of the view that this in fact should be a sub-group of the Town Centre Partnership, with a wider more independent membership in order to facilitate and deliver the changes needed.

RESOLVED that the update as set out in report PRCC.28 12/13 be received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 pm.

Chairman