

## **WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Monday 8 June 2015 at 6.30pm.

**Present:** Councillor Owen Bierley (Chairman) (In the Chair)  
Councillor Gillian Bardsley (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Lewis Strange (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Michael Devine  
Councillor Adam Duguid  
Councillor Steve England  
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan  
Councillor Jessie Milne  
Councillor Di Rodgers  
Councillor Lesley Rollings  
Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance :**

Manjeet Gill	Chief Executive
Mark Sturgess	Chief Operating Officer
Alan Robinson	Strategic Lead –Democracy and Business Support
Katie Coughlan	Governance and Civic Officer

**Also Present:** Councillor Jeff Summers – Leader of the Council

**Apologies:** None Received

**Membership:** There were no substitutes appointed for the meeting.

### **7 CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME**

On opening the first meeting of the new civic year, the Chairman welcomed both newly elected and returning members.

### **8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

## 9 MINUTES

- (a) Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 24 March 2015.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 24 March 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

- (b) Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 21 May 2015.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 21 May 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## 10 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT THE CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 29 MAY 2015 (PRCC.02 15/16)

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 29 May 2015.

Making reference to the matters arising entitled “motion on rural transport”, Committee sought further information as to progress made. In responding Officers advised that consultants had been engaged in March 2015. They were currently identifying possible funding streams available and had experience at a national level. Officers were currently in the process of arranging several workshops in rural areas of the district in order to consult with local members and communities to identify current activity, existing service provision gap and to share best practice. Engagement by the County Council was also being sought.

Confirmation was sought and received that in light of the Growth Point Status of the District, representations were being made to national and regional providers as to the need for improved rail links. The Leader outlined recent regional meetings he had attended along with partners. Partnership working would be the key to influencing change.

With regard to the matters arising entitled “South West Ward Action Plan”, in response to Members’ requests for information on progress to date, the Chief Executive outlined in detail the work which had been ongoing and the focus which had been placed on partnership building. The successful appointment of Mark Housley as Chairman of the South West Ward Partnership had been a key success and the ways in which this had improved the partnership were outlined. Dedicated resources for the area were now being identified for services such as Police, health, environmental services and future consideration would be given to introducing a dedicated Area Manager. Some

Members made reference to the written monthly crime reports received by Parish Councils and were of the view that these would be of assistance to them in monitoring activity within the area.

A Member also suggested that a log of the calls received to the “out of hours” service and a summary of how they were dealt with would be of assistance, as he was of the view that in reality, the service provided very little to customers in times of need, particularly in respect of anti-social behaviour matters.

**RESOLVED** that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule, as set out in report PRCC.02 15/16 be received and noted.

## **11 MEMBERS’ DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

## **12 CO-ORDINATING MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SAFETY – ANNUAL REPORT (PRCC.03 15/16)**

Consideration was given to a report which informed Members of the background of and activity undertaken by the Co-ordinating Member for Health and Community Safety during the 2014/15 civic year.

A vote of thanks to Councillor Caine was proposed and seconded and the Committee requested that a letter, expressing thanks for the all work he had undertaken and well wishes be sent on their behalf.

Reference was made to the growing dementia alliance and Members noted that a formal membership request was expected.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (a) having reviewed the work of the Co-ordinating Member for Health and Community Safety the work undertaken be noted; and
- (b) that a letter expressing thanks for the all work undertaken and well wishes be sent to Councillor Caine on behalf of the Committee.

## **13 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY (SERVICES) – FINAL REPORTING PERIOD 14/15 (PRCC.04 15/16)**

Members gave consideration to the third of the newly styled Progress and Delivery reports, which highlighted the areas where services were “off target”, the reasons for this and the proposed rectifications. The report also provided

Members with an opportunity to examine the reasons why performance was off track and seek assurance that the measures which had been put in place were sufficient to tackle the issues which had been identified with the service.

In presenting the report, Officers highlighted to Members those service areas which were performing particularly well and were above target, these being the Leisure Centre and the Trinity Arts Centre. Those where performance was not as expected, namely Planning and Markets were also highlighted. Reference was also made to staff absenteeism and the cost of delivering the Council Tax service, as whilst these areas were not performing as expected, currently this was not considered a cause for concern.

In the ensuing debate, Members commented on staff absenteeism and whilst acknowledging this was currently above target, were of the view that this performance should be congratulated. Confirmation was sought and received that benchmarking was undertaken in this area and that the Authority performed well against similar comparators.

In responding to Members' enquiries, the way performance was managed internally was outlined with reference being made to the Corporate Plan, balance score cards, and appraisal objective setting.

With regards to Markets, as a whole, the Committee expressed disappointment and dissatisfaction at the performance level, and the reasoning commentary which had been provided. Whilst all were in agreement that a fundamental review of the market needed to be undertaken, Members urged that a timeline be associated to this activity as a matter of urgency. The Chairman of the Challenge and Improvement Committee indicated that if the situation continued he would be minded to refer this matter to them.

Members sought and received assurance that there were no risks attached to rolling forward the completion of Asset Condition Surveys. Further assurance was given that these would be completed on a regular basis going forward

**RESOLVED** that having examined the areas where service performance was off target and having sought assurance from Officers, agreed that the rectifications proposed would deal with the issues identified.

#### **14 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY (PROJECTS) – FINAL REPORTING PERIOD 14/15 (PRCC.05 15/16)**

Members gave consideration to the third of the new style Progress and Delivery reports which dealt with the projects. The report was an exceptions report, in that it dealt with those projects which were off track and in danger of not delivering by their deadline. The report also highlighted those projects which had been delivered within the period in order that Members could determine

where progress was being made, together with those which had recently been initiated.

Making reference to the new project entitled “Gainsborough Town Centre Regeneration”, Members urged the Council to not think too big and thus deliver nothing. Members were of the view that there needed to be a short, medium and long term action plan but action needed to be seen on the ground fairly quickly. Re-occupancy of the large units in the Market Place with High Street names was seen as a priority by the Committee as this would have the potential to engender further regeneration.

Members commented that Caistor Market Place was also “struggling” and made reference to the re-location of the Co-op and the pending closure of the Nat West Bank there. It was noted that Sir Edward Leigh was in communication with the Nat West Bank at a national level and it was suggested that the Council should support him.

Members welcomed the positive outcome of the Gainsborough Young Persons Supported Accommodation project. The Committee indicated they would welcome the opportunity to look around the facility if possible and Officers undertook to arrange such.

**RESOLVED** that having examined the areas where a project was off target and having sought assurance from Officers, it was agreed that the rectifications proposed would deal with the issues identified.

## **15 WORK PLAN (PRCC.06 15/16)**

Members gave consideration to the Committee work plan.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Plan as set out in report PRCC.06 15/16 be received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 pm.

Chairman

**Note:** At the conclusion of the formal meeting an informal workshop style session ensued during which Members were asked to give consideration to their future work plan.