

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 December 2015 at 6.30pm.

Present:

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| 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 Hugo Marfleet |
| Councillor Jessie Milne |
| Councillor Di Rodgers |

In Attendance:

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| Mark Sturgess | Chief Operating Officer |
| Penny Sharp | Commercial Director |
| Sarah Troman | Strategic Lead for Regeneration and Housing |
| Tracey Bircumshaw | Financial Services Team Manager |
| Andy Gray | Housing and Communities Team Manager |
| Karen Whitfield | Leisure and Cultural Services Team Manager |
| Luke Brown | Neighbourhood Planning Officer |
| Katie Coughlan | Governance and Civic Officer |

Also in Attendance: Lisa Loy, Lincolnshire County Council

Apologies: Chief Executive

Membership: There were no substitutes appointed for the meeting.

57 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

58 MINUTES

- (a) Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 29 October 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 29 October 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

59 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT THE CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2015 (PRCC.31 15/16)

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 30 November 2015.

Members' attention was drawn to the additional information, attached to the report, which related to the action entitled SWW Contact Point / Co-Location.

RESOLVED that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule, as set out in report PRCC.31 15/16 be received and noted.

60 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan declared a non-pecuniary interest in report PRCC.33 15/16 (Car Parking Strategy 2015-2020) and indicated that he would not vote on this item, in light of his position as Chairman of the Challenge and Improvement Committee, the previous involvement he had in contributing to the report's preparation and his wish to remain impartial should his Committee wish to call-in the matter.

61 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman advised that he intended to take an additional item of business, this being a position update statement on the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme and Asylum Dispersal further to the Committee's resolution made in September 2015. This update would be provided to Members following consideration of Paper B (Future Leisure Options Review) on the published agenda.

62 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.

63 PRESENTATION: - PARTNER CONSULTATION ON THE JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT (JSNA).

The Chairman welcomed Lisa Loy from the County Council to the meeting and invited her to make her presentation to the Committee.

In opening, Members were advised that the presentation would cover: -

- An Understanding of the JSNA – Its Background and Context;
- The Review process and scope; and
- Engagement & communication.

The role and responsibilities of the Health and Well-Being Board (HWBB) were set out, these included

- Undertaking a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and agreeing shared priorities
- Producing a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS), using the evidence in the JSNA
- Promoting integrated working between NHS and local government (including ensuring CCG plans align to JSNA and JHWS)
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It was noted that the Board had agreed to review the JSNA process with a new JHWS being published from April 2018. The Committee were reminded of the purpose and aim of the JSNA, this being, a systematic review of the health and wellbeing needs of the population, leading to agreed priorities across organisations that would improve the health and wellbeing of the community at the same time as reducing health inequalities.

The JSNA and the JHWS Strategy Review timetable was shared with the Committee together with the ways in which partners could engage in the process.

In responding to Members questions, Ms Loy clarified the membership of the HWBB. Committee considered it important that the previous document's impact was assessed together with the benefits it had realised. Ms Loy advised that these were the types of suggestions the consultation was seeking to tease out.

Officers undertook to circulate the frequently asked questions sheet and details of how to participate in the ongoing consultation to all Members of the Committee. It was also noted that the presentation slides would be made available on the Members Portal for future reference.

The Chairman thanked Ms Loy for her useful and informative presentation and encouraged Committee Members to complete the online survey.

64 RE-ADMISSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting and the remainder of the meeting be held in open session.

65 FUTURE LEISURE OPTIONS REVIEW (PRCC.32 15/16)

Consideration was given to a report which updated Members regarding progress of the Council's review into future leisure provision and the current work being undertaken.

The report set out a summary of Winckworth Sherwood's findings with regard to: -

- (a) retaining the leisure provision in-house;
- (b) operating under a trust model; and
- (c) re-letting the contract.

Concluding with a preferred way forward, this being to re-let the contract on the most financially advantageous basis possible. As a minimum, this would be on a zero cost basis but preferably with a profit sharing arrangement.

Discussion ensued and in response to Members' questions, Officers confirmed that that the option to enter into a trust arrangement with another local authority had been explored but in light of differing contract expiry dates and a lack of appetite, this option was considered not feasible.

Furthermore it was not being proposed to include the Trinity Arts Centre within the Leisure Provision Contract. Officers confirmed this option had also been considered but in light of significant improvements having been achieved it was considered more appropriate that the centre remain as it was at present.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the recommended option of re-procurement of the leisure contract, at a minimum of zero cost but ideally on a profit share basis as set out in section 3.1 (c) and 3.2 of the report be supported; and
- (b) the ongoing work to develop a leisure specification in order for the Council to commence a procurement exercise be supported.

66 BRIEFING NOTE – VERBAL UPDATE ON SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RELOCATION SCHEME AND ASYLUM DISPERSAL.

In September 2015 the Committee had received an urgent item of business in relation to the Syrian refugee crisis when they had resolved that: -

- a) Having considered the recent request to participate in the Home Office Asylum Dispersal Scheme and the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme it be agreed to participate in the schemes and collaborate with other Lincolnshire Councils to ensure that the people relocated under this scheme are placed where adequate support networks exist or have the potential to exist; and
- b) Officers engage with the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership and existing asylum dispersal areas to understand the requirements and implications of the scheme further and feedback to members.

The Chief Operating Officer provided Members with a further update to Home Office correspondence received and an overview of the current position.

Further information relating to the two Schemes, these being the “Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme” (SVPR) and the “Asylum Dispersal Scheme” was provided to the Committee.

In respect of the former, the current local position was outlined to Members, who were provided with the Lincolnshire collaborative response submitted to the Home Office.

It was noted that 55 Local Authorities across the country (including within the East Midlands) had started to receive and accommodate people under the SVPR scheme.

Correspondence from the Home Office and LGA and regionally from the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership had been focused on the funding issue, which had been a concern for a number of Local Authorities across the country, including within Lincolnshire.

There had been a delay in obtaining the clarity requested from the Home Office, pending the outcome of the spending review. However communication had now been received and the contents of this were shared with the Committee and set out in full within the briefing note.

The next intended steps were shared with the Committee, which included attendance at the forthcoming conference arrange by the County Council early in the New Year.

Officers undertook to circulate the briefing note to all Members of the Committee, and gave their assurance that they would continue to work in collaboration with Lincolnshire authorities, ensuring that this Council was not put at a disadvantage.

RESOLVED that the update be received, noted and circulated.

67 CAR PARKING STRATEGY 2015-2020 (PRCC.33 15/16)

Consideration was given to a report which presented a proposed new Car Parking Strategy for adoption.

Members were provided with background information demonstrating the need for a Strategy. The challenging financial climate of recent years had resulted in the need to radically re-align local public services and finances. Maximising the use and effective management of assets had become even more central to the way local authorities were seeking to deliver services and provide value for money.

The Council had recognised that the effective and prudent management of its car parking played a vital role in supporting the delivery of wider corporate objectives through supporting local businesses and the visitor economy.

In mid-2015, Car Parking Matters had reviewed the Council's approach to parking and had identified a number of issues to be addressed in order to get the best use from WLDC parking provisions. These had been incorporated into the proposed Car Parking Strategy 2015-20 that would act as a specific document to guide implementing change.

This Strategy aimed to set out a comprehensive approach to car parking in order to improve transparency of decisions and to ensure that the provision in the district was operated equitably and to best effect.

The plan was structured in two parts – the first part set out an overview of the offer and provided the high-level policy framework to guide the Council's approach to car parking. The second part of the plan included an Implementation Plan and proposed a number of specific Key Performance Indicators.

The key performance indicators would be used to monitor and inform the effective management of car parks going forward and capital funds were in place to upgrade the current parking meters in order to provide more meaningful and useful to data to assist in setting baselines and reviewing fees and charges in future years.

In summary, the Strategy recommended that the Council adopt a more uniform approach across the district, ensuring consistency in the implementation of charges. This would mean that all WLDC car parking provision would be chargeable, with the aim of supporting local retailers by freeing up space for

shorter term parking to be used by shoppers and visitors to encourage footfall and spend in the local economy.

Discussion ensued with Members expressing differing views particularly around the proposal to commence charging in Market Rasen. Some were of the view that charges, if introduced, should be at the same level as those levied in Gainsborough, whilst others were of the view that they needed to reflect the offer at Market Rasen, which was less and thus lower charges should be levied as proposed.

There were also differing views expressed regarding the proposal to offer free parking across all Council owned car parks after 3.00pm as some did not believe this would achieve its intended aim.

Members made a number suggestions regarding the specification for the parking meters which were to be upgraded, including giving consideration to procuring machines which gave change as this would assist residents and also that the machines be collaborated to require users to take a ticket during free periods in order to assist with assessing usage and impact.

Officers gave assurance that all such matters would be taken into consideration in preparing the specification.

RESOLVED that the WLDC Car Parking Strategy 2015-2020 and the delivery of the actions identified therein be approved.

Note: Councillor Jessie Milne voted against the above the decision. Councillors Paul Howitt-Cowan and Di Rodgers abstained. All requested that this fact be recorded in the minutes.

Note: Councillor Gillian Bardsley declared a pecuniary interest in the following item of business as a landlord and left the Chamber during its consideration.

68 HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY REVIEW (PRCC.34 15/16)

Consideration was given to a report which presented to Members a reviewed and up to date Housing Enforcement Policy that included relevant legislative amendments for approval.

It was noted that three additional key pieces of legislation were now reflected within the Policy, namely: -

- The Mobile Homes Act 2013

- Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc.) (England) Order 2014
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015

The statutory requirements placed on landlords, letting agents and the Authority as a result of these pieces of legislation were outlined in detail to the Committee.

Debate ensued with Councillors seeking assurance that the Housing Team had the capacity to undertake these additional duties. In responding Officers outlined the informal, educating stance they were currently taking with landlords and agents to make them aware of their responsibilities. It was hoped that this would lead to the need for less enforcement work in the future. Demands on the service would be closely monitored to ensure the necessary capacity was in place. Should additional capacity be required, re-deployment would be considered in the first instance. However, it was stressed the Authority had to comply with statute. A number of other non-housing Officers, who through their roles may be visiting properties, had received training regarding these requirements so that they could make reports of non-compliance too.

Members welcomed the educating, informing stance being taken by the Team and acknowledged the raft of legislation landlords were now expected to comply with. All were in agreement that working together and education in the first instance, was the best approach to such matters.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) the Housing Enforcement Policy be approved;
- (c) the statement of principles in regards to The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 as set out in Appendix 2 (b) be approved; and
- (d) the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve and **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the fees and charges as set out in Appendix 1 and within the Policy at Appendix 2 (a) be approved.

Note: During consideration of the above item of business, Councillor Adam Duguid declared an interest as a landlord.

Note: Councillor Gillian Bardsley returned to the meeting.

69 CAISTOR AND NETTLEHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS EXAMINATION DECISION STATEMENTS AND PUBLIC REFERENDUMS (PRCC.35 15/16)

Consideration was given to a report which presented the up-to-date position in terms of the development of both a Caistor and Nettleham Neighbourhood Plan. The report recommended agreement of both decision statements, issued by the examiner and that the Plans proceed to the Public Referenda stage.

The Committee commended the work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Officer, the support he offered local communities and welcomed the submission of many more Neighbourhood Plans to come.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) both decision statements as set out in Appendix 3 and 4 of the report be approved; and
- (b) the commencement of Public Referenda in respect of both Caistor and Nettleham's Neighbourhood Plan be agreed.

70 PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 16/17 (PRCC.36 15/16)

Members gave consideration to a report which presented the proposed revised Fees and Charges, which related to services areas within the remit of the Committee, to take effect from 1 April 2016.

By way of background, introduction and context it was noted that the Council had in place a corporate Fees, Charges and Concessions Policy which aimed to provide clear guidance on a number of areas. In particular this focused on how fees and charges could assist in the achievement of corporate priorities, the setting of new and reviewing of existing charges, the Council's approach to cost recovery and income generation from fees and charges and eligibility for concessions.

It had been recognised that although full cost recovery would be the customary approach, this would not be appropriate in all circumstances and the amount charged would need to reflect many factors including Council objectives, market conditions, the cost of collection and the potential impact on customers.

Work had been undertaken to bring the fees and charges in line with this policy, through reviewing existing fees and charges and considering the introduction of new charges for Council services, to recover costs and control demand.

As a minimum, inflationary increases would normally have been applied where possible with the exception of those set by statute.

In presenting the report Officers stressed the following points: -

The review of fees and charges this year had been more comprehensive than in previous years.

As part of the review process an extensive benchmarking exercise had been undertaken to furnish officers with greater levels of strategic information than had previously been used. This level of information combined with applying a more commercial approach, where applicable, had led to the proposed fees and charges.

To understand fully the future impact of the fees and charges review analysis could be developed to calculate performance based on previous fee levels and proposed fee levels. Working with budget managers, reports could be produced quantifying variances on volume and price. It was therefore being proposed that the Council's budget monitoring process incorporate reporting on volume and price variances.

Going forward, the intention was to review fees and charges during the year to either implement changes during the year if required, or to feed into the following year's Medium Term Financial Plan. It was therefore proposed that this would become an ongoing process rather than one large exercise at budget setting time. Separate reports would be brought to committee over the next few months outside of this year's MTFP.

Finally, it was noted that if accepted across the board, an additional £94k ongoing income was estimated to be generated by the proposals.

Debate ensued and it was proposed that the car parking fee for Market Rasen should be amended to 50p as opposed to 55p as there was a view that this tariff was more "customer friendly".

This proposal was seconded but on being put to the vote was lost.

A further proposal was made that all Gainsborough Car Parks should have the following charging schedule, as this was simple and customer friendly: -

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|------------|-------|
| 1 -2 hours | 50p |
| 2-4 hours | £2.00 |
| 4-6 hours | £4.00 |

However, this was not in accordance with the charging schedule principles previously agreed as part of the Car Park Strategy and on that basis was not seconded.

It was apparent that Members were striving for equity across the District and assurance was given that with the planned upgrade to the parking meters and the increased ability to collect data going forward this would be more easily achieved in future years.

There was brief discussion around the future of the Market. Officers advised that this was a separate matter but indicated that an options paper was due early in the New Year and would include some of those suggestions expressed by Members.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) having considered the proposed fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, they be **RECOMMENDED** to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for approval; and
- (b) monitoring income reporting on volume and price variances be incorporated into budget monitoring reporting in the future.

71 WORK PLAN (PRCC.37 15/16)

Members gave consideration to the Committee work plan.

It was noted that the Committee's meeting on 3 May 2016 would need to be re-scheduled to allow for the Chamber to be used for the Police Commissioner Elections. The proposed new date was Tuesday 26 April 2016 and Members were advised to update their diaries accordingly and a further reminder would be issued nearer the time.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan as set out in report PRCC.37 15/16 be received and noted.

72 CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman wished to place on record his thanks to Officers for their clear concise and succinct reports and concluded by wishing one and all a very Merry Christmas.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm.

Chairman