

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Thursday 11 February 2016 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Ian Fleetwood (Vice Chairman in the Chair)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Reg Shore
Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Anne Welburn

In Attendance:

Mark Sturgess	Chief Operating Officer
Penny Sharp	Commercial Director
Alan Robinson	Strategic Lead Democratic and Business Support
Eve Fawcett Moralee	Strategic Lead Neighbourhoods & Economic Development
James O'Shaughnessy	Strategic Lead Organisation Transformation
Ady Selby	Waste Services Manager
Tracey Bircumshaw	Financial Services Manager
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Alex Bridgwood

Councillors Summers and Cotton had apologised in advance for possibly arriving late.

Membership: Cllr Giles McNeill substituted for Cllr Bridgwood

71 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

72 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held on 14 January 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

73 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

Note Councillor Cotton arrived at 6.33pm

74 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 3 FEBRUARY 2016 (CPR.49 15/16).

There were no Matters Arising to report.

RESOLVED that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule as set out in report CPR.49 15/16 be noted.

Note Councillor Summers arrived at 6.35pm

75 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY - SERVICES - PERIOD 3 (CPR.50 15/16)

The Chief Operating Officer presented the report which highlighted those services performing above the required level or below the target set for them. The report also updated members on those areas which were included in the first quarter report and had subsequently improved and therefore not included in the report.

Complaints were still more than double the target. Over a quarter of complaints continued to be around the planning services which stood at 34 of the 120 complaints received as at the end of December 2015. The intervention over the last three months was expected to reduce the number of complaints received as reputation in this area improved.

The performance of the Gainsborough markets continued to be a concern. A strategic paper was in the pipeline and would consider the positioning of markets as part of the Gainsborough Growth plans.

Local Land Charges was one of the lowest resilient areas. Additional resource had been introduced into this area and should enable achievement of the target of under ten days turn around for the remainder of the year.

The Development Management action plan continued to be implemented. The target for major applications of 50% within time was currently being exceed by achieving 82%, however minor and other applications continued to underperform against target.

Members posed a number of questions relevant to the report, such as the level of confidence that all complaints were being recorded. It was agreed that it was

possible that some complaints could be dealt with immediately and not recorded, however the importance of recording was emphasised to staff.

RESOLVED that the Committee be assured that the arrangements in place to oversee Services across the Council are effective

76 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY - PROJECTS - PERIOD 3 (CPR.51 15/16)

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the second of the Progress and Delivery Reports for Quarter 3, Projects. The report listed only those projects in delivery stage, by exception.

The following projects were considered to be at risk of delivery within agreed timescales and/or costs, or the intended outcomes were at risk of being realised. Recommendations and/or rectifications had been offered by the relevant project managers and had been considered by both the respective Board and the Entrepreneurial Board.

The Gainsborough South West Ward Programme remained as amber, as did the Fraud Investigation Service. All other projects were currently on track.

Councillor Shore noted that it would be useful to also see a summary of those projects defined as green and on track. The Chief Operating Officer stated that this could be considered, and it might be possible for updates to be included on the Members' Extranet. The Strategic Lead Democratic and Business Support informed the meeting that a Challenge and Improvement Progress and Delivery working group was in progress and would feed back in due course.

RESOLVED that the Committee be assured that the arrangements in place to oversee Programme and Project development across the Council are effective.

77 BUDGET AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT - PERIOD 3 (CPR.52 15/16)

The Financial Services Manager informed the Committee of the current status of the Council's budget and Treasury Management.

The revenue forecast out-turn position for 2015/16 was estimated to be a surplus of £797k at 31 December 2015. Of this balance £121k had been identified as carry forward requests which would be subject to future approval. Work would continue throughout the year to monitor the situation and to identify ongoing impacts on the Medium Term Financial Plan as part of the Budget Process.

The Capital forecast out-turn position for 2015/16 was estimated to be £2,495k and reflected a surplus variance of £2,101k against the revised budget. Of this balance £1,337k had been requested as carry forwards into next year. A review

of further carry forwards would be undertaken throughout the year prior to financing the final out-turn position.

The Treasury Management activities during the reporting period were disclosed in the body of the report. There had been no breaches of Treasury or Prudential Indicators to report and the council again out-performed its benchmark in relation to investment yields.

Officers were congratulated on an excellent report and it was noted that West Lindsey District Council consistently out-performed against other authorities.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the forecast out-turn position as at 31 December 2015 be accepted;
- b) the use of Earmarked Reserves approved by the Director of Resources using Delegated Powers be noted;
- c) the amendments to the Capital and Revenue budget, including creating budgets for projects funded by grants and not included in the original budget be approved;
- d) the Treasury Management Report and Treasury position for the nine months to 31 December 2015 be accepted.

78 CHAIRMAN'S INTENTION TO VARY THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

Councillor Fleetwood, as acting Chairman, proposed that the order of the agenda be changed to facilitate better running of business. This was seconded and voted upon.

RESOLVED that the order of the agenda be changed to take Papers I and J prior to the remainder of the reports.

79 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 Duguid arrived at 6.57pm

**80 COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY ACQUISITION OF A LOCAL COMPANY
(CPR.57 15/16)**

The Commercial Director presented a confidential report which proposed details for the acquisition of a local company which currently provided a service to the

Council and other organisations. The company was going into voluntary liquidation and various options were presented to the Committee.

Members questioned various aspects of the proposals, but generally agreed that the proposals presented an opportunity for a commercial venture which would also safeguard a current service provision.

RESOLVED that:

- a) authority be delegated to the Director of Resources (s151 Officer) in consultation with the Leader and Chair of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for the acquisition of a local company, subject to all the necessary due diligence proving satisfactory;
- b) a purchase price of up to and not exceeding £75,000, subject to satisfactory due diligence, be approved;
- c) a capital budget for the purchase of the company be approved and this be funded from the Invest to Earn Reserve;
- d) a capital budget for the provision of a commercial loan to the company of up to £100,000 to provide initial working capital and this be funded by Prudential Borrowing be approved, in principle;
- e) authority be delegated to the Director of Resources (s151 Officer) in consultation with the Leader and Chair of Corporate Policy and Resources to determine the most effective company structure based on detailed legal and tax advice;
- f) a member of the Corporate Leadership Team be designated as a Director of the company.

81 INVESTMENT PROPOSALS FOR GAINSBOROUGH (CPR.58 15/16)

The Strategic Lead Neighbourhoods and Economic Development presented a report which sought to propose a regeneration delivery programme - Gainsborough Growth with 'an in principle' capital programme allocation to support the delivery of corporate objectives for housing led economic growth to deliver:

- The draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan housing target of 4,350 new homes in Gainsborough by 2036,
- Housing Zone commitments to deliver 800 new homes on brownfield land in Gainsborough by 2026 and,
- A regenerated viable town centre.

The report and its appendices set out further details on the Regeneration Delivery Programme and the Capital Programme financial information.

As discussed at the Planning Committee the previous evening, the opportunity to create a second river crossing was proposed to be considered to alleviate traffic congestion on the existing bridge. The Strategic Lead Neighbourhoods and Economic Development affirmed that the transport study undertaken for the

housing development proposed under the LDO showed no problems with traffic numbers. It was agreed to share the results of the survey with Members.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the regeneration delivery programme outlined in the report and agreed by Prosperous Communities committee on 2 February 2016 to create a sustainable and regenerated Gainsborough be endorsed; and
- b) the delivery programme be included in the Capital Programme 2016/17 – 2020/21 as an “in principle” allocation.

82 RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

It was moved, seconded and voted upon that the meeting return to open session.

RESOLVED that the meeting be re-opened to public and press.

83 CORPORATE PLAN 2016-20 (CPR.53 15/16)

The Strategic Lead for Organisation Transformation presented a draft version of the 2016-2020 Corporate Plan for Members to consider.

The report presented the work done to date and sought views from Members on the priorities to be incorporated into the Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan set out the priorities over a four year period that the Council had identified having taken into account all the available evidence, including national and regional priorities and local views and also taking into account what residents considered to be important. It was the main business plan of the Council.

The current Corporate Plan was refreshed in 2014 and covered the period 2014 to 2018. It identified five themes under which a series of priorities sat. The themes were as follows:

- Theme 1: A prosperous and enterprising District.
- Theme 2: An accessible and connected District.
- Theme 3: A green District where people want to live, work and visit.
- Theme 4: Active and healthy citizens and communities.
- Theme 5: Organisational Transformation.

To reflect changing priorities, legislation and contextual matters, an exercise was undertaken to produce a series of prioritised themes as follows:

- Open for Business
- People First
- Asset Management
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Partnerships/Devolution

- Excellent, Value for Money Services

The priorities and outcomes were set out in tables in the report and the draft Corporate Plan was attached as an appendix.

RESOLVED that having considered the priorities and objectives set out in the Draft Corporate Plan the document be recommended to Council for approval.

84 CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES BUDGET, FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (CPR.54 15/16)

The Financial Services Manager set out the details of the Committee's revenue estimates for the period 2016/17 to 2020/21.

The purpose of the Financial Strategy was to update Members on the current operating environment together with the challenges being faced, the approach to maintaining a sustainable financial position and progress to date. Detailed financial plans were set out within the MTFP.

The purpose of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was to set a robust overall framework for the Council's spending plans over the next five years in supporting the delivery of the Corporate Plan and underpinned delivery of the Financial Strategy. The report therefore outlined the Council's revised financial plans having taken into account changes in Government funding, the economic environment, local engagement and the priorities for the Council. The plan reflected the revisions to the previous estimates for the years 2016/17 to 2019/20 and the inclusion of estimates for 2020/21.

The Strategic Lead Democratic and Business Improvement explained that the MTFP was designed to deliver the Corporate Plan and be supported by the Commercial Plan in terms of providing an income stream. The document offered a sustainable budget for West Lindsey over the next four years. There was a funding gap due to changes in arrangements but this would be dealt with by commercial activity and transformation programme over the period of the plan.

The living wage of £7.20 was less than the current lowest pay scale of £7.43 at WLDC. Based on initial estimates this would present a pressure of £87k during the lifetime of the plan.

The Revenue Support Grant announced in December was significantly worse than had been anticipated with a 36% reduction. It was therefore proposed that this year's underspend support the 2016/17 budget. Every effort would be made to minimise the draw on reserves. However, notification had recently been received that additional funding of £350k was available for rural areas, following persistent consultation responses.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the Policy and Resources Committee Budget be approved;
- b) the Fees for Selective Licensing be recommended to Council
- c) the Prosperous Communities Committee Budget be accepted;
- d) the approval of the Capital Investment Programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 be recommended to Council; and
- e) the approval of the Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21 be recommended to Council.

Note Councillor Boles left the meeting at 8.07pm

85 COMMERCIAL PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE AND DELIVERY (CPR.55 15/16)

The report set out the proposed annual delivery plan to support the Council's Commercial Plan.

The Council had adopted a Commercial Plan in March 2015. The Commercial Plan was intended to support the Council's ambition to become self-financing by 2020. The plan set out a framework to help guide the Council's cost recovery and income generation activities from 2015-2020.

The Commercial Plan focused on four themes:

- Increasing income from Council services through trading and charging
- Increasing external funding to the Council and the district
- Increasing capital and revenue income from supporting housing and economic growth
- Strengthening the Council's commercial culture and capability.

At the time of agreeing the Commercial Plan, Council recommended that an annual delivery plan be developed each year and considered alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan in March each year.

The report summarised progress to date and detailed the proposed delivery plan for 2016/17 and its key performance measures.

RESOLVED that the annual Commercial Delivery Plan 2016/17 be recommended to Council for approval.

86 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN (CPR.56 15/16)

The Governance and Civic Officer introduced the Committee Work Plan noting that statutory business for the Committee for 2016/17 had now been added into the Forward Plan.

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee was not until 12 May 2016, but Members were assured that should the need arise an additional meeting could be scheduled.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted.

The meeting concluded at 8.14 pm.

Chairman