

**Guildhall Gainsborough
Lincolnshire DN21 2NA
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This meeting will be webcast live and published on the Council's website

AGENDA

Prayers will be conducted prior to the start of the meeting.
Members are welcome to attend.

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, , on **Monday, 3rd March, 2025 at 7.00 pm**, and your attendance at such meeting is hereby requested to transact the following business.

To: Members of West Lindsey District Council

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
To confirm and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 27 January 2025.

(PAGES 2 - 29)

Ian Knowles
Head of Paid Service
The Guildhall
Gainsborough

Monday 3 March 2025

Agenda Item 2

West Lindsey District Council - 27 January 2025

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 27 January 2025 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Stephen Bunney (Chairman)
Councillor Matthew Boles (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Emma Bailey	Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett	Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood	Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor Liz Clews	Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Karen Carless	Councillor Christopher Darcel
Councillor David Dobbie	Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor Jacob Flear	Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Sabastian Hague	Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Lee	Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Lynda Mullally	Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Patterson	Councillor Roger Pilgrim
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers	Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Tom Smith	Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee	Councillor Paul Swift
Councillor Baptiste Velan	Councillor Moira Westley
Councillor Trevor Young	

In Attendance:

Ian Knowles	Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Lisa Langdon	Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
Katie Storr	Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager

Also in Attendance: Mr Richard Quirk, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Apologies

Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Jeanette McGhee

47 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.

A warm welcome was also extended to Mr Richard Quirk Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel, who would later present his Panel's recommendations in respect of Members Allowances for the next Civic Year.

Before Moving on to the first agenda item the Chairman advised Members that he had agreed to take an urgent item of business

The Urgent item was an update to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which stood recommended from the Governance and Audit Committee, with the reason for urgency being the Procurement Act 2023 would come into force on the 28 February 2025. The updated procedure rules enabled compliance with the new Act and with Council not due to meet again until 3 March (which falls after the date by which the Council must comply).

The urgent item would be the last agenda item of the evening and had been published by way of supplement.

48 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 4 November 2024 be confirmed, approved and signed as a correct record.

49 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this point in the meeting.

50 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman introduced the report advising Members that it would be taken "as read" unless Members had any questions that they wished to raise.

With no comments or questions and with no requirement to vote, the matters arising were **DULY NOTED**.

51 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman

The Chairman addressed the Council, referencing briefly some of the events in which he had been involved and attended since Council last met, in what had been a busy period.

These had included attending a variety of different Christmas, New Year's events, carol services, concerts, craft fairs and general fundraisers. The outstanding events being the Trinity Arts pantomime, Snow White, Seven Dwarfs and Basil Brush, the Market Rasen community event at the Festival Hall where the opening of the new banking hub amongst

other things had been celebrated and Christmas lunch at the Blues Club at Gainsborough on Christmas Day.

In mid -December the Chairman had been privileged to deliver a gift of chocolates or fruit to various departments at West Lindsey, providing opportunity to thank all the staff for their work during the year. It had also given the Chairman an opportunity to congratulate the crematorium and street cleaning teams on their successes in various national awards.

On 9 December along with the Crematorium Manager a cheque for £11,600 was presented to the Lincolnshire Air Ambulance at their Bracebridge Heath depot. The money raised was contributions from being part of a national metal recycling scheme run by crematoriums, since January 2020, the Chairman was pleased to advise that Lea Fields had contributed nearly £85,000 to local charities, something he considered a tremendous effort over four years.

Members were reminded of the forthcoming open day at the Crematorium which would also mark the fifth anniversary of the crematorium and invited to attend.

On Thursday 16 January along with some other Members and stakeholders, the Chairman had attended a meeting of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority's STEP nuclear fusion programme, centred on the West Burton power station. It had been both a fascinating and illuminating evening and had learnt a lot about the potential growth opportunities for Gainsborough and the Greater West Lindsey which would arise from project. Thanks were expressed to Councillor Rollings and Officers for staging that event.

And finally, the Chairman concluded his announcements by congratulating Emma Foy, Section 151 Officer, who was attending her last Council meeting before starting new employment. Members joined the Chairman in wishing Emma all the best in the new chapter of her life.

Leader

The Leader made the following address to Council: -

“Welcome to tonight's meeting

The Local Government Financial Settlement 25/26 - After years of this Labour government telling us that more financial support was desperately needed to support public services, it was extremely disappointing that in the first settlement announcement for West Lindsey we received no increase in the core spending, adding yet more pressure on our ability to deliver services.

In real terms with the cost increasing, this creates a significant shortfall for the authority. The promise of protection to public sector employers regarding the increase of national insurance was also not put in place, and we received only 50% of what was promised.

Providing services in a very large geographical area like West Lindsey is very challenging, and it was extremely disappointing that the Labour government

took away the £644,000 Rural Services Development Delivery Grant. The message is clear, Chairman, this Government simply doesn't care about people living in rural areas, nor do they understand the challenges of our farming communities.

Devolution - Despite most people's view that they don't agree to having a Mayor for Greater Lincolnshire, the Government has forced this upon us. We constantly hear of the propaganda of the benefits of devolution, but seldom are we informed about the huge cost involved, such as the millions of pounds to hold the mayoral election.

Other areas employing over 100 staff to support the mayoral office. An additional mayoral precept which will be added to everybody's council tax bills.

Collaborative working is a driver in the newly agreed constitution for the MCCA and I recently attended a meeting with the seven Lincolnshire district councils where they agreed the four seats on the Combined Authority Committee. It was disappointing that in the attempt to keep some power, the Conservative-led district councils chose to play politics in picking the four seats instead of working collectively together with us to ensure that the districts were well presented on the board. There's been much speculation how the four district seats on the MCCA would be agreed and it was hoped in the spirit of joint working the Conservatives would work more collaboratively. Sadly, this was not a good start for the Mayoral County Combined Authority when one party is clearly desperately trying to hold power, and I'll provide further updates on that Chairman in the next coming meetings.

Local Government Reorganisation - So just days before Christmas this Labour Government announced that the two-tier councils will be forced down the route of reorganisation to form large unitary councils. A decision based on savings yet no consultation with the authorities was involved prior to the decision being announced and any financial analysis on the likely savings. We constantly hear the failed concept of not achieving savings from neighbouring authorities, no savings being materialised and if anything costs increasing. I believe residents value services being delivered locally and we will fight to protect that for our district council. Having services delivered and decisions made from a large mega-council based 60 miles away is totally unsatisfactory. The issue of West Lindsey District Council tax monies being used to plug the huge financial gaps in other authorities' social care costs is simply not good enough. And more information will be shared over the next few weeks on how this progresses.

The Peer Challenge Review - Last week we had a peer challenge review and despite the threat of LGR we decided to continue the exercise.

A big thank you, Chairman, to everybody involved during the week.

The peer team carried out 80 interviews with groups and various stakeholders and I was particularly pleased with the initial feedback. It demonstrated the excellent work being delivered by this Council and the Council was in a good

position moving forward. Over the next few weeks Officers will be working on a number of key tasks as a result of the review. And finally, Chairman,

RAF Scampton - Our local communities are keen to know what's happening regarding the future of RAF Scampton and myself, the Chief Executive and the Deputy Leader recently met with the MP and he has agreed to try and arrange an urgent meeting with the Secretary of Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds to progress the matter and we will keep Members updated when we know more.”

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive addressed Council and opened with congratulations to the Operational Services team for the hat-trick win as they had won the award again for the Best Performer Award for Refuse Collection at the APSE Performance Network Awards in 2024 in December.

To win this award once was considered amazing, but to win three years in a row was an incredible achievement and recognition for a consistently excellent service over three years. The Chief Executive spoke of being proud of the whole team.

Congratulations were also paid to the street cleansing team who had also been shortlisted for the best performer in their category too.

The Chief Executive echoed the Leader’s comments around the LGA peer challenge, expressing thanks to all Members and Officers for their involvement during what had been quite an intense week. He looked forward to dealing with the recommendations that had arisen.

Opportunity was taken to remind Members of the open day at the Crematorium on Saturday, marking the fifth anniversary of its opening, with invitations to attend extended.

Particular thanks were expressed to Officers, Andy Gray, Grant White, Rob Gilliot, Julie Heath and Nova Roberts for supporting the recent flood response.

Sympathies were expressed go to those areas where people were having to be evacuated.

And again, echoing earlier comments made by the Chairman, the Chief Executive expressed his thanks to Emma Foy for her contributions with West Lindsey since May 2022 and wished her all the best for the future.

52 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman advised the meeting that no public questions had been received.

53 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

The Chairman advised the meeting that two questions had been received pursuant to Procedure Rule No.9, both from Councillor Lesley Rollings, Ward Member for Scotter and Blyton. The questions had been circulated to all Members, separately to the agenda, and published on the website.

The Chairman invited, Councillor Lesley Rollings to put her first question to the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor Matthew Boles, as follows:-

“The unfinished housing development at Hemswell Cliff (Wellington Way,) raises significant concerns regarding urban planning and residents' welfare. As the demand for housing continues to grow, it is imperative that West Lindsey District Council prioritises the completion of these projects and ensures they are delivered in a safe and proper manner.

The developer on this site went into administration, leaving footpaths and roads unfinished. This has caused severe damage to several vehicles and left some residents injured through contact with dangerous extruding drain covers and kerbing, which causes particular problems in darkness. Also, thousands of tonnes of building material has been dumped adjacent to nearby residents properties which can only be described as an environmental disaster.

Despite efforts in recent months by the WLDC enforcement team, the developer now trading under a different business name has failed to keep to their promise of finishing the site and removing the tonnes of building material. The large mound has become overgrown, with building debris dangerously jutting out, causing a particular danger to anyone who might climb on it - particularly children.

Unfinished developments often become eyesores that negatively impact local aesthetics and property values. The implications extend beyond mere economics - they affect community morale and cohesion. Residents deserve a vibrant living environment that reflects their aspirations for growth and stability. Therefore, it is crucial for West Lindsey District Council to provide transparency regarding the reasons behind these delays and outline a concrete plan for moving forward. Addressing the unfinished housing development at Hemswell Cliff is not just an administrative duty but a moral obligation towards fostering sustainable communities.

The council must take decisive action to resume construction efforts and effectively communicate with stakeholders about progress and challenges.

Could the Chairman of Planning please explain why the WLDC enforcement team have not taken firmer action against the developer and outline what legal action can be taken to protect the interests of the local community and restore this site to a safe condition.

Thank you”

Concluding the question Councillor Rollings advised that since its submission, work appeared to have started on the actual road and pavement, with good

progress being made. However, other areas still posed a danger and were somewhat of eyesore in her opinion.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Rollings for her question, and invited Councillor Matthew Boles, in his capacity as Chairman of the Planning Committee, to respond, with the response being as follows: -

Firstly, I am very sorry to hear of the issues that the residents of Wellington Way are experiencing and would like to thank Cllr Rollings for bringing this matter to my attention.

As Councillor Rollings will be aware, in her role as Chair of the Prosperous Communities Committee a revised Local Enforcement Plan was approved in September 2023, which sets out how the Council deals with planning enforcement complaints such as this. At this site, the Council have been seeking to bring the matter to a resolution, within the constraints of the powers that they have.

There is no power available to the Council to expedite the completion of a development, however we do recognise the impact that this can have and the frustration it can cause if progress is not made and timescale commitments not met. Officers have been in communications with the developers on this matter and are working to try to bring the matter to a resolution. These efforts are being made outside of our usual planning enforcement remit as we recognise that it is a matter that the community wishes to see resolved. On that basis we will continue to work to bring this to a resolution and are already in the process of organising a site visit for residents and the developer to seek to establish a timescale for completion.

The above efforts, where Officers are going above and beyond to try and bring the matter to a resolution, suggests to me that there is a very clear recognition that this is an issue that requires resolving and an understanding that it will benefit the community. The fact remains though, that the obligation to complete the development remains with the developer and there is no ability for the Council to formally require them to complete the road surfaces.

The Council has also sought to address the debris left on site and has been very clear with the developer that failure to clear this may result in a breach of condition notice being served. Whilst the Council retains the right to take this formal action, we are very conscious that the focus here needs to be on resolving the issue and clearing the debris, which to date has only been partly done. Should a breach of condition notice be served, it would not necessarily mean that the matter would be resolved and could result in the Council becoming engaged in legal proceedings at a cost to both the developer and the council tax payer. We are however considering the serving of such a notice in the coming weeks if our discussions on completion are not satisfactory.

I recognise that there has been delays to the timescales committed to on the above issues, however I am hopeful that we can bring the matter to a

resolution in good time through the continuation of our dialogue with the developers. Where delays have occurred, reasons have been cited by the developer and we are continuing to seek to work with them to resolve the matter.

The Council receives around 250 reports of planning enforcement issues annually and we have an obligation in all of those cases to investigate them in line with our agreed policy. Where we consider taking formal action, we also have to consider the expediency of doing so, the associated public interest and the cost to the council tax payer. Alongside this, the resources that the Council have available to investigate planning enforcement issues are not infinite and we have to ensure that these resources are focussed on the planning enforcement breaches that are the most serious.

I have asked Officers to ensure that Councillor Rollings is kept up to date on the matter and made aware as to the arrangements for any future site meeting.”

Councillor Rollings thanked Councillor Boles for the response and with permission of the Chairman made further supplementary comments during which it was noted that she considered the enforcement breach to be serious in nature but recognised that Officers had worked very hard to demand that developers completed the development to a safe and satisfactory standard. She was pleased to see that that works was now underway on the road resurfacing. However, reputationally she considered it essential that West Lindsey was not seen to tolerate developer behaviour that caused such a high level of stress and upset amongst residents, as was the case at this site. She considered it essential that the Council were seen to be doing everything in its power to secure positive outcomes, referencing significant snagging issues concerns over the development that needed to be addressed.

Acknowledging the Council had a policy that related to enforcement, Councillor Rollings was of the view that the public did not always believe that it was applied consistently. In respect of this case, even if costs were involved, the community, the parish council and individuals affected should be supported to the best of the Council’s ability.

In responding Councillor Boles offered further reassurance and his agreement to the issues raised, recognising that many Councillors would have similar sites in their wards. The commitment to hold a site meeting was reaffirmed, with the developer and interested parties such as residents and the local parish council to be included, with Councillor Boles keen to see the site for himself. A commitment to arrange the meeting was again stated.

Councillor Rollings thanked Councillor Boles for the response.

The Chairman invited, Councillor Lesley Rollings to put her second question to the Chairman of the Council as follows:-

“In recent weeks the residents of Scotter have yet again been subject to a serious flood incident that involved many properties on Lindholme and

Riverside, causing considerable upset and stress. Since 2007 the maintenance of the river running through Scotter and downstream of the village and the maintenance and the operation of the penstock gates at the outlet onto the River Trent has quite frankly been a disgrace.

Members of the Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Management board, managed to secure an agreement with the EA that enabled them to carry out maintenance – de-silting and de-weeding, which residents and indeed the Parish Council hoped would improve flow through the village and allow water to get out into the River Trent at low tide, keeping levels as low as possible in preparation for intense rain events.

When the Water Management board contractors arrived to begin work, the EA (with astounding promptness) arrived and threatened the contractors with legal action, should they clear more than the centre metre of the river.

The river as it runs into Scotter is a mess – decades of overgrown trees, reeds, bushes etc causing the river to leave its natural course and run through the back gardens onto Lindholme BEFORE the river bursts its bank. The river running through and downstream of Scotter is a mess. It is clear where it originally ran and it is clear where the EA's re-wilding is slowing the water flow down and decreasing the depth and width of the river.

The Parish Council had earmarked funding as a contribution to enable the work to be completed, but the EA said that they would fund the work and the Parish Council re-allocated the funding to another large community project in the village, only to be disappointed that maintenance had not improved.

The EA had said that in the winter months the gates at the Susworth outlet should *all* be open to keep water levels as low as possible to help get rid of as much water as possible, in preparation for heavy rainfall. But the weekend before the latest flood event, one of the gates was CLOSED causing water to back up in the river. We later found out that the gate was damaged and they were afraid to open it.

The EA promised to automate the opening of the gates, but this has never happened.

There is clearly an issue of conflict between the environmentalists at the EA who want to re-wild the river, protect water voles and those who want to prevent property flooding. However, the river is now so silted up that in drought conditions, the river dries up, killing fish and river creatures.

At every turn, residents who have lived alongside the river without being flooded for decades are now told that the catastrophes are caused by climate change and that we have to accept that some properties will be lost to flooding, when in the case of Scotter, poor maintenance and ridiculous working practices of maintenance teams is largely the cause of the problem.

The residents of Lindholme and Riverside have had enough. They pay council tax but now own houses that they cannot sell and that are worth a

fraction of the value of their original Council Tax valuation.

During the flood events, the County Council and the EA are nowhere to be seen, with the District Council left supplying sandbags. We need the County Council, as the lead flood authority to be more actively involved to ensure that all the small improvements and changes that can be made to the river, are made.

Chairman in your capacity and through your role on the Lincolnshire County Council Flood group are there any actions you could take to assist in bringing this matter to the attention of those lead authorities these being EA and LCC.

Thank you”

The Chairman thanked Councillor Rollings for the question and made the following response: -

Cllr Rollings, thank you for your question. As you know I hold positions pertinent to this question in my role as a County Councillor not as Chairman of this Council. However, I am happy to present the information you have provided to the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee of Lincolnshire County Council and to the appropriate County Council Officers in their capacity as Lead Flood Authority. If I require further information I will get in touch with you outside of the meeting.

I will seek to ensure LCC request the EA properly de-weed and de-silt the river upstream and downstream of Scotter, restoring the river to its former depth and width and a timescale for this.

I will ask that the EA automate the gates at Susworth as previously indicated and that one person is identified whose job it is to ensure that at crucial times, ALL the gates are open.

After the monumental events of Storm Babet and Henk the Flood and Water Management Committee set up a Working Group to look into the response of the various bodies to the damage caused by the storms and to make firm recommendations on what improvements can be made. The Group has gathered evidence from the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, the various Internal Drainage Boards,, County Highways, The Lead Flood Management team, Parish Councils, residents etc and various draft conclusions and recommendations have been written for approval – which as you can see had not occurred before recent storms on January 6th and 7th.

Included in these recommendations on river maintenance, clearing and desilting, along with recommendations on striking a sensible balance between the need for environmental protection and the need to protect assets from flooding.”

Having heard the response and with the permission of the Chairman, Councillor Rollings posed further supplementary comments, whilst expressing her pleasure that a County

Council Working Group had been set up, there was concern that often the reports that arose from such groups were not specific enough, with generalised recommendations, which were not often followed through. The costs were often cited as a barrier, or flooding was put down to climate change, which in her view was just not acceptable.

In respect of Scotter, Councillor Rollings considered it essential that Lincolnshire County Council were more rigorous around riparian owners and worked more closely with the parish council to better connect and to ensure that improvements to water courses were made.

She requested that Lincolnshire County Council have greater transparency from the Environment Agency in respect of maintenance on the river, particularly relating to the rewilding and desilting. It was suggested that the community felt that wildlife was being put before property and the public deserved to know where the Environment Agency stood on such matters.

The Chairman again responded, thanking Councillor Rollings for the points she had raised, particularly in respect of riparian rights and responsibilities.

He supported the view that detailed knowledge of ownership would certainly be a positive move in flood protection work. The Chairman undertook to raise Councillor Rollings initial concerns and her request for LCC to liaise with Parish Councils to produce a detailed knowledge base of riparian ownership. Giving his assurance that the matters would be forwarded to the correct bodies.

The Chairman also sought to ensure that any work done by agencies to date would be communicated to parishes and members of both the county and various district councils in Lincolnshire. He was in absolute agreement around the importance of two-way communication, the need for greater transparency around planned works and timescales and working towards improvement rather than looking for excuses. He concurred with the need to find a balance between environmental protection and protecting assets and suggested other agencies could have a greater role in this aspect.

54 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

The Chairman advised the meeting that three Motions had been submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No. 10 and these were set out in the agenda.

As the mover of the first motion, Councillor Barrett was invited to read aloud his motion to the meeting, as follows: -

Motion 1 - Protecting British Family Farms and Preserving Rural Communities.

“West Lindsey District Council notes with concern the proposed changes to inheritance tax announced by the Labour Government in the recent Autumn budget of 2024. These changes would scrap Agricultural Property Relief (APR), which has been instrumental in allowing British family farms to remain intact across generations, supporting food security, sustaining rural

communities, and aiding environmental stewardship.

This tax is estimated to impact over 70,000 family farms, leaving the average farming family with a tax bill of at least £240,000. It forces many to sell portions of their land or close entirely, paving the way for corporate ownership and lifestyle buyers over family ownership.

This Council believes this inheritance tax will have severe impacts on:

- 1) **Food Security:** Selling off land or closing farms will risk our national food independence when global stability is already fragile. British family farms are critical to ensuring a steady supply of homegrown food.
- 2) **Rural Community Stability:** Family farms are the foundation of West Lindsey District Council, and rural Britain, contributing to local jobs, schools, and essential services. Labour's proposed tax risks destabilising communities, eroding the rural way of life, and causing a negative ripple effect across the countryside.
- 3) **Environmental Stewardship:** Farms cover 70% of the UK's land, with family farms playing a leading role in nature recovery, biodiversity enhancement, water quality improvement, and sustainable land management. The sale and fragmentation of these lands would hinder conservation efforts and undermine efforts to combat climate change.

As such I request the Chief Executive and Leader of Council, on behalf of this Council, write to the Chancellor, setting out the District Council's view on this matter and the very negative impacts it will bring to our communities.

I so move
Cllr John Barrett"

With the motion duly seconded, debate ensued with Members from all political parties united on the subject.

There were strong views expressed regarding the current Government's lack of support or understanding of rural communities, with it suggested that if something did not change Lincolnshire as it was known would be decimated. Family farms of generations would be lost, employment would be lost. Food security, which was already a concern, would worsen. Lincolnshire's way of life would be lost.

Members spoke of the significant contributions farmers made to local communities, clearing roads and rescuing vehicles in times of snow and flooding and considered the tax a blatant attack on rural communities, and an attempt to redistribute wealth rather than rewarding those who had worked hard to earn it.

Several Members spoke of farmers in the local community, who had farmed for generations and of the impact this tax would have on them and their businesses going forward, with difficult decisions having to be made. Many farmers were asset rich but cash poor, for a number of years prices paid by supermarkets were low, worsening weather often saw a

year's crop destroyed, with it suggested this was a policy to force farmers to sell land. Farmers were finding themselves with no option and with generous offers being made to them to sell their land to support NSIPs, it was no surprise many were selling. Such projects again were controlled by the Government with the community having no say on their appropriateness.

Members spoke of the lack of support both this, and the previous Government had shown rural communities and farming particularly, with subsidies having been cut and products such as milk being imported. There was political exchange as to which political party was to blame, noting a number of promises had been made post Brexit but not delivered. The country was now free to make its own agricultural policy but had failed to do so.

With the motion whole-heartedly supported by all, and the need to safeguard the rural way of life paramount, on being put to the vote it was:-

RESOLVED unanimously that the Chief Executive and Leader of Council, on behalf of the Council, write to the Chancellor, setting out the District Council's views on the matter and the very negative impacts it would bring to our communities.

Councillor Mandy Snee, mover of the second motion was invited, by the Chairman, to put her motion to the meeting as follows: -

Motion 2 - Banking Hub

"Council I note the continuing trend of closing banks across the country. I further note that whilst many people are comfortable and able to bank online, some (often the older generation) still rely on banking in person.

The worrying trend of closing bank branches means people having to travel substantial distances when many are in poor health, unable to drive and therefore having to rely on disjointed public transport links or friends and relatives.

The Market Rasen area recently opened a banking hub in a centrally located building, thanks in part to the support of the Chairman of the Council Stephen Bunney. This banking hub is already proving to be an essential part of the community.

With this in mind, I ask the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council, to consider as part of the wider market place regeneration, a review of the banking facilities available in the Gainsborough and surrounding area and provide a report to CP&R by November 2025 on whether or not a banking hub, similar to that in Market Rasen is necessary and deliverable.

I so move
Cllr Mandy Snee"

With the motion duly seconded debate ensued with many members speaking in support of the motion and sharing their experiences of banking.

The role and services offered by the Post Office were raised, with some caution expressed that any new services should not undermine those currently available or put them at risk. It was noted that banking hubs were organised and run by another branch of the post office, but provided a little bit more privacy and service that you might get from a general store. All acknowledged that post offices had become essential part of the banking structure as high street banks continued to close.

It was suggested that a review of banking facilities available in Gainsborough. was to be welcomed, but any review should be wider than simply the number of banks but also the services they offered. Local businesses had reported difficulties operating as banks did not offer the facilities and services needed for business banking, resulting in them having to travel out of town. As such it was requested that the banking needs of businesses be considered in any review.

Noting the timeframe indicated in the motion, for the findings of any review to be reported back to Committee, whilst acknowledging Officers were busy, it was suggested an earlier completion date, if possible, would be more welcome.

On being put to the vote it was: -

RESOLVED unanimously that a review of the banking facilities available in the Gainsborough and surrounding area be considered as part of the wider market place regeneration, and a report be submitted to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee by November 2025 detailing whether or not a banking hub, similar to that in Market Rasen is necessary and deliverable.

Councillor Ian Fleetwood, mover of the final motion was invited, by the Chairman, to put his motion to the meeting as follows: -

Motion 3

“West Lindsey District Council transferred the Council Housing stock to West Links Housing which became the Acis Group around 25 years ago, and I’m pleased to say that I was elected and involved in this major change. This created a large capital receipt for the Council changing its outlook from being a debt-ridden authority to a Council which was able to operate ‘in the black’ and provide quality services that our Council tax payers deserved.

The District Council (over many years predominantly run by the Conservative Group) has maintained a lower than UK average Council tax payment made by residents whilst managing these balances by a process of good decision-making and strategic investment, and this has clearly been illustrated from the papers available to the recent Corporate Policy and Review Committee.

Last month the Government announced a white paper regarding Local Government Review which may mean the dissolution of District Councils and

the Conservative Group are concerned that if West Lindsey District Council was to be dissolved then the balances of the authority should be utilised within the current boundaries of West Lindsey to the tax payers who have paid into this authority.

Therefore, would the Leader and Administration Group agree with the Conservative Group, that Officers should be charged with handing over the assets in excellent condition to a new unitary council (by way of example a new Leisure Centre In Gainsborough, an indoor swimming pool in Market Rasen, new infra-structure in Caistor and Lincoln fringe areas) with some mechanism for any residual balances to be made available to Parish/Town Councils as a way to ensure that as many areas as possible are covered of the 'old Council'.

I propose we ask Officers to review the options for the Council in light of the Government's white paper and bring forward a paper to CP&R by the end of the calendar year.

I so move
Cllr Ian Fleetwood
Conservative Group Leader
Opposition Group Leader"

Having been duly seconded, the seconder addressed the Chamber, referencing the ways in which West Lindsey had always tried to support taxpayers and communities, highlighting schemes such as the Councillor Initiative Fund, Community Grants schemes and Business support Grants. This had been possible due to prudence, sound decisions and the good work of Officers and Councillors alike. Balancing budgets had become increasingly difficult over recent years and yet West Lindsey had remained "in the black". He suggested that should this Council disappear, it was not right that others may benefit from the Council's successes, and measures should be taken to ensure that it was residents and tax payers of this District that prospered.

Debate ensued with the Leader of Council being the first to address the chamber, whilst appreciating the content of the motion he indicated his Group would not be supporting the content. Following the previous week's Peer Challenge Review the Administration would be swiftly reviewing the Corporate Plan and the Executive Business Plan and this would refresh future priorities and delivery on annual basis.

The Leader referenced the millions of pounds invested outside of the district under the Conservative controlled administration at West Lindsey, questioning how these would be returned back to the people of the district without considerable cost to the Authority?

A hotel in Keighley, money he considered could have easily been used to build a swimming pool in Market Rasen, a knicker factory in Sheffield, supporting and enabling employment for the people of Yorkshire, money which could have been used to support the infrastructure of Caistor and the Lincoln and fringe village areas. A car sales room in Doncaster, money which could have been used to refurbish our leisure centres and possibly build a new indoor bowls facility in Gainsborough.

It was suggested the motion was merely electioneering, and the previous administration,

when it had had chance to invest locally on things that mattered to local people, had chosen not to.

Political exchange ensued with Opposition Members acknowledging that investments had been made outside the county and that people outside the county had not been happy to see the profits coming into West Lindsey. The investments had been healthy ones, appropriate for the market conditions at that time and the profits continued to come into West Lindsey, supporting the balanced budget position the Council had been able to maintain.

The Leader in response suggested that external audit had raised a risk in terms of the valuations for the investments out of area, any attempt to return those investments in a short timescale would result in significant losses. The Leader acknowledged that there had been some income return on those investments but returning that capital investment back to the district would be extremely difficult.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the lack of social return on out of District investments. They did not bring employment, nor that opportunistic spending footfall generated. Whilst the Investments generated an income, they also had the potential to fail.

In summing up the motion submitter advised that every resident of West Lindsey had benefited from the investments, both those inside and outside of the district. Each project had been evaluated on its rate of return meaning that District Council had borrowed less money, become more tax efficient and therefore reduced council tax to every resident in the district. Those investments continued to produce profit in effect subsidising tax for everybody in the West Lindsey.

A request for a recorded vote had been made earlier in the debate, with a second member supporting that request, the motion was put to a recorded vote, with votes being cast as follows: -

For: Councillors Barrett, Bierley, Bridgwood, Brockway, Brown, Duguid, Fleetwood, Lawrence, Lee, Morris, Palmer, Patterson, Pilgrim, Rodgers and Smith. (15)

Against: Councillors Bailey, Bennett, Boles, Bunney, Carless, Clews, Darcel, Dobbie, Flear, Hague, Mullally, Rollings, Snee J, Snee M, Swift, Velan, Westley and Young. (18)

Abstentions: (0)

With a total of 15 votes cast for the motion and 18 votes against, the motion was declared **LOST**.

55 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL - MEMBERS ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2025/26

The Chairman again welcomed Mr Richard Quirk, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel to the meeting and invited him to introduce the report.

The process undertaken and the factors considered, in making the recommendations, were detailed in the report.

Three recommendations had arisen from the Panel's work these being:

- (1) That the Basic Allowance Payable to all Members be increased by 5.67% (£382.73) in line with the increase received by the lowest paid staff (From £6750 to £7,132.73).

This equated to £7.36 per week or £1.51 per day. Consideration had been given to the Authority's financial position but also recognised that remuneration was there to ensure no one was prevented from being a Councillor due to out-of-pocket expenses.

- (2) That Vice Chairs of Governance & Audit Committee, Overview & Scrutiny and Corporate Policy & Resources Committee to each receive the full Special Responsibility Allowance for the role (£1,537) as opposed to the current sharing arrangement.

This recommendation had been made the previous year but rejected by Council. The Panel considered all Vice-Chairman should be paid the same rate and any deviation from that was a political decision as such the recommendation had again been made.

- (3) That the wording of the Member Allowance Scheme should be updated to provide additional clarity for both Members and Officers.

The Panel had been made aware that the prefacing wording of the Allowance Scheme had not been reviewed for a considerable length of time and therefore had considered and been supportive of suggestive updates presented by the 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer which served to provide additional clarity.

Debate ensued with a Member of the Opposition indicating they could not be supportive of recommendation two. Questioning the rationale for there being two such positions, particularly given the size of the Council and the Committees in question. But in the event two Vice-Chairmen were in post, she believed the allowance should be shared, moving such as an amendment.

A Member currently appointed to one such position outlined why the decision had been made to have two vice-chairmen. It had allowed Members with family and/or work commitments to undertake roles that they might not otherwise be able to, and for this reason they currently shared the allowance.

The Monitoring Officer advised Members that no amendment was required, given it was a direct negative of the motion, Members simply needed to vote the motion down, if it was moved and seconded, or Members could simply not move the recommendation and the status quo would remain, with the allowance currently being on a shared basis.

The Leader of the Council along with other Members thanked Mr Quirk for the report, indicating the rationale on which the increase in basic allowance was one that could be accepted. General discussion ensued with Members generally being of the view that they should have no role in the setting of their allowances, speaking of the conflict it often brought, but acknowledged it was a legislative requirement. It was further acknowledged

that needing to be able to attract and retain a diverse set of Councillors was important and the Chairman of Remuneration Panel was supportive of the view that current remuneration did not reflect the level of work undertaken and effort Councillors gave.

A number of other Members spoke against recommendation 2 and the wider principle of dualled Vice-Chairmanships, for this reason the Chairman indicated the recommendations would be taken individually.

Recommendation 1 was proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote was **CARRIED** unanimously.

With there being no appetite for recommendation 2 and no one willing to propose or second the content, the recommendation fell and the status quo and sharing of the allowance would remain.

Recommendation 3 was proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote was **CARRIED** unanimously.

On that basis it was **RESOLVED** that, with effect from 1 April 2025

- (a) the Basic Allowance Payable to all Members be increased by 5.67% (£382.73) in line with the increase received by the lowest paid staff (From £6750 to £7,132.73);
- (b) the wording of the Member Allowance Scheme (Paragraphs 1-11 be updated as Shown in Appendix 1 to the report to provide additional clarity for both Members and Officers.

56 REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS ON COMMITTEES /SUB COMMITTEES

The Chairman presented the report which set out details of the political groups on the Council, the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each Committee, and the allocation of seats on each of the Committees based on political groupings.

Members were advised of the reasoning for the review, as detailed in section 1.3 of the report.

This was a matter which had been determined by the Head of Paid Service under his delegated authority, in Consultation with the Group Leaders, and as such, there was no requirement for a vote.

With no questions posed, the following was **DULY NOTED**: -

- (a) the details of the political groups, as set out in Appendix A of the report;
- (b) the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each committee, arising from the Head of Paid Service's delegated decision; and

- (c) the allocation to the different political groups of seats on committees, arising from the Head of Paid Service's delegated decision, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

57 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE COMMITTEES FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CURRENT CIVIC YEAR 2024/2025

As result of the committee allocations having been amended under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council was required to reappoint to its Committees to reflect the new allocations.

The Chairman of the Council presented the report which set out the wishes expressed by the political Groups, based on their allocations, in respect of the appointment of Members to serve on each of the Council's formal Committees for the remainder of 2024/25 Civic Year.

At the time of the report's publication, 4 nominations were awaited from the Administration Group, the Chairman provided these verbally to the meeting as follows: -

Corporate Policy and Resources – Councillor Velan
Prosperous Communities Committee – Councillor Mullally
Planning Committee- Councillor Swift
Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Bailey

With no questions or comments, having been proposed and seconded it was: -

RESOLVED that in accordance with the provisions of section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the wishes expressed by political groups, Members be appointed to serve on the Council's Committees for the remainder of 2024/25 civic year as follows: -

Chief Officer Employment Committee (8 Members)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor Jeanette McGhee
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Moira Westley
Councillor Trevor Young

Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (14 Members)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Stephen Bunney

Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Paul Swift
Councillor Baptiste Velan
Councillor Trevor Young

Governance and Audit Committee (8 Members)

Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Christopher Darcel
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Baptiste Velan

Licensing Committee (11 Members)

Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Liz Clews
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Baptiste Velan

Regulatory Committee (11 Members)

Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Liz Clews
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Baptiste Velan

Planning Committee (14 Members)

Councillor Emma Bailey
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Roger Pilgrim
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Paul Swift

Prosperous Communities Committee (14 Members)

Councillor Emma Bailey
Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Chris Darcel
Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Jeanette McGhee
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Trevor Young

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (14 members)

Councillor Emma Bailey
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Liz Clews
Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Maureen Palmer

Councillor Roger Pilgrim
Councillor Moira Westley

58 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2024/25 CIVIC YEAR

Having re-appointed the Committees, the report under consideration sought to appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to each of the Committees.

A Member of the Opposition addressed the Administration over what she described as a lack of transparency and poor governance, questioned the Leader and Deputy over the number of positions they held, and the allowances connected to these positions. It was raised that the Administration had not offered any chairmanships to the Opposition Group, as a result it was suggested opportunity was not provided to share experience at a senior level nor did it allow for proper scrutiny and opposition insight.

For these reasons, she proposed two amendments as follows:

- (1) That Councillors Young and Rollings withdraw from their proposed chairman and vice-chairmanships, giving one chairmanship and vice-chairmanship to other LibDems, and the other chair and vice-chair to the Opposition group.
- (2) West Lindsey District Councillors should receive remuneration for only one SRA (Special Responsibility Allowance), regardless of however many chairmanships, vice-chairmanships, or other positions they may hold on the council, beyond that of councillor'.

The Administration expressed their strong discontent, at what was deemed to be a personal attack on two Members and the wider Administration. The Deputy Leader outlined the high level of new Councillors the Administration had from May 2023, great time had been given to try and afford new Members experience whilst they gained knowledge. Strong assurance was given that all Members of the Administration who wished to hold a position did so, with many having working commitments which made this more difficult.

Further political exchanges ensued, with the Chairman bringing Members back to the amendments. With the required number of Members requesting the amendments be dealt with by recorded vote, amendment 1: -

That Councillors Young and Rollings withdraw from their proposed chairman and vice-chairmanships, giving one chairmanship and vice-chairmanship to other Lib Dems, and the other chair and vice-chair to the Opposition group.

was put to the vote, with votes cast in the following manner: -

For: Councillors Barrett, Bierley, Bridgwood, Brockway, Brown, Fleetwood, Lee, Morris, Palmer, Patterson, Pilgrim and Smith. (12)

Against: Councillors Bailey, Bennett, Boles, Bunney, Carless, Clews, Dobbie, Flear, Hague Mullally, Rollings, Snee J, Snee M, Swift, Velan, Westley and Young (17)

Abstentions: Councillors Darcel, Duguid, Lawrence and Rodgers (4)

With a total of 12 votes cast in favour of the amendment, 17 votes against and 4 abstentions.

The amendment was declared **LOST**.

Again, with the required number of Members requesting the amendment be dealt with by recorded vote, amendment 2: -

West Lindsey District Councillors should receive remuneration for only one SRA (Special Responsibility Allowance), regardless of however many chairmanships, vice-chairmanships, or other positions they may hold on the council, beyond that of councillor'.

was put to the vote, with votes cast in the following manner: -

For: Councillors Bierley, Brockway, Brown, Fleetwood, Lawrence, Morris, Palmer, Pilgrim and Smith. (9)

Against: Councillors Bailey, Bennett, Boles, Bunney, Carless, Clews, Dobbie, Flear, Hague Mullally, Rollings, Snee J, Snee M, Swift, Velan, Westley and Young (17)

Abstentions: Councillors Barrett, Bridgwood, Darcel, Duguid, Lee, Patterson and Rodgers (7)

With a total of 9 votes cast in favour of the amendment, 17 votes against and 7 abstentions.

The amendment was declared **LOST**.

At the request of the Leader the Monitoring Officer, offered procedural advice indicating that the appointment of Chairmanships was a Council decision, and as such the amendment had been acceptable.

Further political exchange ensued during which it was suggested Members at Lincolnshire Couty received multiple allowances, resulting in a point of information being raised and permitted by the Chairman. Councillor Smith advised Council that the County Council's published allowance scheme only allowed for one SRA to be payable

At the request of the Chairman, the Monitoring Officer addressed Council noting that debate had turned to the matter of members allowances, rather than the appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen. This matter had been considered earlier in the evening and as such should Members wish to amend that Scheme and apply different allowance a report would need to be brought back to council after going through the usual governance processes.

Bringing the debate to an end, with all amendments falling and with no counter nominations made, having been proposed and seconded, it was: -

RESOLVED that the following persons be appointed as Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, for the remainder of the 2024/25 Civic Year to the following Committees:

Committee	Chairman	Vice Chairman/men
Chief Officer Employment Committee	Councillor Westley Maira	Councillor Snee Mandy
Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	Councillor Young Trevor	Councillor Rollings Lesley Councillor Swift Paul
Planning Committee	Councillor Boles Matt	Councillor Snee Jim
Governance and Audit Committee	Councillor Bunney Stephen	Councillor Dobbie David Councillor Velan Baptiste
*Licensing Committee	Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Snee Mandy
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Howitt-Cowan Paul	Councillor Flear Jacob Councillor Westley Maira
*Regulatory Committee	Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Snee Mandy
Prosperous Communities Committee	Councillor Rollings Lesley	Councillor Young Trevor Councillor Bailey Emma

59 COLLECTION FUND - COUNCIL TAX SURPLUS 2024-25 & COUNCIL TAX BASE 2025-26

The Chairman introduced the report which set out the declaration of the estimated surplus on the Council's Collection Fund relating to Council Tax at the end of March 2025 and how it was to be shared amongst the constituent precepting bodies.

The report also set out the Council Tax base calculation for 2025/26. The tax base was a key component in the calculating of both the budget requirement and the Council Tax charge.

Both of these matters were a legal requirement as set out in the Local Government Finance Act.

The estimated surplus on the Collection Fund relating to Council Tax was stated at

£1,868,700 of which £275,600 was related to West Lindsey. This amount would be included in the Council's base budget for 2025/26.

For context, the Chairman advised the surplus for West Lindsey for 2023/24 had been £290,100.

The taxbase had increased from 2024/25 by 2.07% which was as a result of a number of factors including new build properties, discounts available, exempt dwellings, the amount of Council Tax support offered and the estimated collection rate.

The collection rate had been set at 98.3% for 2025/26 which would be closely monitored during the year for the impact of the cost of living on households.

Appendix 1 set out the Council Tax base calculation and the taxbase per parish area.

With the recommendations moved and seconded on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the estimated surplus of £275,600 be accepted and declared as accruing in the Council's Collection Fund at 31 March 2025 relating to an estimated Council Tax surplus;
- (b) the Council uses its element of the Collection Fund surplus/deficit in calculating the level of Council Tax in 2025/26; and
- (c) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulation 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Council, as its Council Tax Base for the whole of the District area for 2025/26 be set at 32,756.75 as detailed in this report and appendices.

60 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

The Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee presented the report to Council, which sought approval of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025/26, on recommendation from the Corporate Policy Resources Committee.

Members noted that the scheme had not been amended significantly since 2019/20 due to the implementation of Universal Credit, the Covid pandemic and cost of living crisis.

Data available showed that the Scheme had been an effective one and that the collection rate for last year had been 97.8% which was top quartile performance.

Given the ongoing cost of living crisis, if any significant changes were to be made to the scheme for 2025/26 it was probable that it would have a negative impact on the collection rate as residents struggled to make payments.

As such the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee had considered the report and had

recommended to Full Council that Option 1 be implemented.

The recommendation was duly moved and seconded and on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that the Recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and Option 1 of the report, be adopted as the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for West Lindsey District Council for 2025/26. That being: -

To make no changes to the current council tax support scheme apart from to apply any new legislative requirements and the uprating of the non-dependant charges, applicable amounts and household allowances and deductions used in the calculation of the reduction in accordance with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) annual upratings.

To also apply any additional changes to government welfare benefit regulations during the year which are intended to increase the income of benefit recipients to avoid unintended consequences to customers.

To accept a Full Universal Credit claim received via the Department for Work and Pensions as a claim for Council Tax Support.

61 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - MID-YEAR TREASURY UPDATE 2024/25

The Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee presented the report, which sought approval of the Mid-Year Treasury Report 2024/25 and changes to prudential indicators.

The report had been presented to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, where it had been fully considered and debated and stood referred to Council for approval.

Members were advised that the report was required to comply with the CIPFA code of practise on treasury management and also served to keep Members updated with the current situation.

Members noted that since the report was written the UK base rate had reduced to 4.75% from 5%

The report also showed the movements in the Council's prudential indicators which had changed as a result of two things. The first being the Council had closed its accounts for 2023/24 after the original strategy had been written. The second being as a result of a revised capital programme for 2024/25.

There had been no breaches of the Council's prudential indicators in the first half of the year.

Appendix B set out the latest list of approved countries for investment as at 30th September but typically the Council only invested within the UK.

With the recommendation duly proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that the recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and as such the Mid-Year Treasury Management Report and treasury activity be noted and the changes to Prudential Indicators as detailed at Sections 5.2, 6.1 and 6.2 of the report be approved.

62 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERIM SECTION 151 OFFICER

The Chairman of the Chief Officer Employment Committee presented the report which sought approval for the interim appointment to one of the Council's Statutory Roles, the Section 151 Officer, following the resignation of the current Post Holder and until such time as a permanent Officer was recruited.

Members were advised of the statutory requirement placed on local authorities to have a Section S151 Officer in place at all times, in order to ensure that their necessary roles and functions were delivered effectively, furthermore the appointment must be made Full Council.

The Chief Officer Employment Committee, at their meeting on 7 January considered and approved recruitment to a permanent but slightly revised role, and the process had begun on 20 January.

The Committee had also considered interim arrangements, whilst recruitment to the role was undertaken, and as a result had made the recommendation to Council.

With recommendations proposed and duly seconded, on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that the recommendation from the Chief Officer Employment Committee be accepted and in doing so

- (a). Council formally appoint Peter Davy as interim Section 151 Officer with effect from 18 February until a permanent Officer is recruited and approved by Council on recommendation from the Chief Officer Employment Committee; and
- (b) the Constitution be amended, as necessary, to reflect this revised appointment.

63 URGENT ITEM: RECOMMENDATION FROM GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - UPDATE TO CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES FOR PROCUREMENT ACT 2023

Members considered the Urgent Item, with the reasons for urgency having been stated at the outset of the meeting.

The Chairman in his capacity of Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee

introduced the report which stood recommended from his Committee on 21 January.

The Contract Procedure Rules had been amended to ensure the Council were compliant with the new Procurement Act which would come into force on the 28 February 2025. Key changes to the procedure rules were set out in Section 3.1 of the covering report.

With the recommendation having been proposed and duly seconded, on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that the recommendation from Governance and Audit Committee be accepted and the revised Contract Procedure Rules as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved for adoption and implementation.

The meeting concluded at 9.19 pm.

Chairman