

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Challenge and Improve Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 23 May 2017 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)  
Councillor Lewis Strange (Vice-Chairman) and  
Councillor Mrs Angela White (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor David Bond  
Councillor Ian Fleetwood  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers  
Councillor Thomas Smith  
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn

**Also Present:** Councillor Mick Devine

**In Attendance:**  
Mark Sturgess Chief Operating Officer  
Alan Robinson SL - Democratic and Business Support  
Andy Gray Housing and Communities Team Manager  
Katie Coughlan Governance & Civic Officer  
Shayleen Towns Senior Community Action Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Malcolm Parish

### 7 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND MINUTE'S SILENCE

This being the first meeting of the new Civic Year, the Chairman welcomed all Members and Officers present.

In the light of the tragic events, which had taken place in Manchester the previous evening, the Chairman asked all Members and Officers to join him in a minute's silence as a mark of respect for the victims and their families.

The Committee came together for a minute's silence.

Well wishes were also extended to former member of the Committee, Councillor Curtis, and his family.

**8 TO ELECT A 2ND VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2017/18 CIVIC YEAR**

Nominations for the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice- Chairman were sought. Having been proposed by Councillor Welburn and seconded by Councillor Patterson, and in the absence of any further nominations, on being put to the vote, it was

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Angela White be duly elected as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman for the 2017/18 civic year.

**9 MEETING OF THE CHALLENGE AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 APRIL 2017**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 4 April 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**10 MEETING OF THE CHALLENGE AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 MAY 2017 (AT THE CONCLUSION OF ANNUAL COUNCIL)**

It was noted that the date of 27 April 2017, referenced in the Minutes, should in fact read 27 June 2017 and this had been corrected in the copy for signing.

On that basis it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held on 8 May 2017 (at the conclusion of Annual Council) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**11 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**12 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions, as at 15 May 2017.

There were no questions posed.

**RESOLVED** that the Matters Arising Schedule as at 15 May 2017 be received and noted.

**13 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY - FINAL PERIOD 16/17**

Members gave consideration to the fourth and final of the newly styled Progress and Delivery reports for 2016/17, which reflected the performance of the Council over the 2016/17 municipal year (April 16 – March 17).

The report dealt with the progress and delivery of projects which were aimed at the delivery of the Corporate Plan. This report highlighted those projects that had entered the delivery stage and were either off track or at risk of not delivering. The report also dealt with the progress and delivery of the services the council provided. It was an “exceptions” report and dealt with those services which were either performing above the required level or were below the target set for them. The report further provided Members with a summary of activity across services.

It was noted that the report had previously been considered by both the Prosperous Communities Committee and the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee. There had been a particular focus, at these meetings, regarding the ongoing work in respect of complaints and customer focus. Members were provided with the minute arising from each.

The Committee were asked to examine the responses given to the report by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and the Prosperous Communities Committee and assure themselves that the appropriate level of challenge was being made by those Committees to the information contained in the report.

Members commented that both Policy Committee’s had had little opportunity to consider the main body of report, this subsequently made it difficult for the Committee to undertake their role.

Officers took on board the Committee’s comment.

**RESOLVED** that having examined the responses given to the report by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and the Prosperous Communities Committee, the Committee have assurance that the appropriate level of challenge is being made by those committees to the information contained within the report.

## **14 SOUTH WEST WARD UPDATE REPORT**

The Challenge and Improvement Committee at its meeting on 1 September 2015 had resolved to establish a task and finish group of members (supported by officers) to investigate responses to incidents and anti-social behaviour and criminal activity in the South West Ward of Gainsborough. The members of the group were agreed as Cllrs Howitt-Cowan, J. McNeill and Young.

This Working Group identified, among other things, that more effective action was needed to the area. In closing the group it was agreed that the measures taken through the localism review had the potential to deal with the issues.

However it was agreed at the 28 September 2016 briefing that the report should contain a recommendation to review the effectiveness of the work in the South West Ward in six

months' time.

Members therefore gave consideration to a report which sought to update the Committee on the effectiveness of those internal changes and also provided an update on the improved focus given to the SWW Partnership Group to help address the issues.

The Senior Community Action Officer, as Lead Officer for this project, addressed the Committee, providing details of the steps which had been taken to re-focus the Partnership, as outlined in Section 2 of the report. As a result of the work, the SWW Partnership had been re-focussed to concentrate on two main areas, these being People (reducing vulnerability) and the Environment. Further details regarding the steps taken to date and planned actions within the two focus areas were shared with the Committee as outlined in Sections 3 and 4 of the report. Areas particularly highlighted to the Committee were the changes made to the Vulnerable Adults Panel, widening its term of reference and allowing referrals based on a wider set of needs, and the work of the newly appointed Community Action and Enforcement Officer. The level of day to day enforcement had increased and greater use was being made of fixed penalty notices and community protection notices. An Enviro Crime Strategy was in development and would be presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee in the Autumn.

It was also noted that the Selective Licensing Scheme, adopted in July 2016 was also beginning to have a positive impact in the area and Officers undertook to provide case studies, outside of the meeting, of where the work being undertaken had achieved real results and had improved conditions for residents.

In responding to Members' questions, Officers confirmed that a vulnerable person concern could be reported via the Council and they would ensure this was referred to the appropriate agency. Members enquired how this service was being promoted and whilst noting Community Leads were now Members of the Panel and as such were the "eyes and ears" of the community it was suggested that work should be undertaken with schools etc and via social media to promote the referral scheme.

Members welcomed the increased use of enforcement as this would help instil community pride and give others the confidence to report issues and concerns.

It was confirmed that the Early Help Team, as they were now known, were part of the Partnership, however it was acknowledged that links could be improved and Officers continued to work on building these.

Assurance was sought and received that appropriate arrangements were in place for sharing sensitive information, including the use of secure government e-mail, known as gcsx accounts; information sharing agreements and project specific agreements.

The Committee welcomed the work undertaken to date and requested a further update report be submitted in six months' time.

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the Committee have assurance that the right steps are being taken to tackle anti-social behaviour and criminal activity in the SWW; and

- (b) a further update report be submitted in six months' time.

## 15 FORWARD PLAN

The Governance and Civic Officer presented a report setting out the items of business due to be considered through the committee system and asked Members to identify any reports that they wished to be brought before the Challenge and Improvement Committee for pre-scrutiny.

No reports were identified.

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan be noted.

## 16 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Work Plan for the business of the Challenge and Improvement Committee was presented.

The Chief Operating Officer, as Lead Officer for the Committee advised that a work programme planning meeting with the Lead Members of the Committee had been arranged for Tuesday 30 May, at which Members and Officers would give further consideration to all those areas which had been suggested to date and which had been noted at the conclusion of the work plan report.

A fuller proposed work plan for the Committee would be submitted to the next meeting for further consideration and agreement.

A Member of the Committee commented that she had preferred the approach adopted in 2015/16 in respect of Public Body Scrutiny and the calling in of a raft of different agencies. She considered this is where the Committee could add real value.

It was also suggested that each Vice-Chairman should be allocated an area of responsibility, in order that both the Challenge element and the Improve element of the Committee's role were fulfilled. Simply reviewing officer reports was not favourable.

The Chairman undertook to take the comments expressed on board at the forthcoming work plan meeting, Members of the Committee were encouraged to submit any further items for consideration to the Chairman, prior to 30 May.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (a) the Work Plan be noted;
- (b) Committee Members submit any further work plan items for consideration, to the Chairman, prior to 30 May 2017.

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The meeting concluded at 7.05pm

Chairman