

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 2 July 2018 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Pat Mewis (Chairman)
Councillor Steve England (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mrs Gillian Bardsley	Councillor Mrs Sheila Bibb
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor David Bond	Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor David Cotton	Councillor Christopher Darcel
Councillor Michael Devine	Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Stuart Kinch	Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne	Councillor Giles McNeill
Councillor John McNeill	Councillor Richard Oaks
Councillor Malcolm Parish	Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers	Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Reg Shore	Councillor Thomas Smith
Councillor Lewis Strange	Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Robert Waller	Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn
Councillor Trevor Young	

In Attendance:

Mark Sturgess	Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service
Ian Knowles	Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer
Alan Robinson	Strategic Lead Governance and People/Monitoring Officer
Katie Coughlan	Senior Democratic & Civic Officer

Also Present

Reverend David Swannack
2 Representatives from Osgodby Neighbourhood Planning Group
1 Representative from Great Limber Neighbourhood Planning Group
1 Member of the Press
4 Members of the Public

Apologies

Councillor Bruce Allison
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Angela White

16 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

This being the first ordinary meeting of Full Council for the 2018/19 Civic Year, the Chairman welcomed all Members and Officers present.

Representatives from both Great Limber and Osgodby Neighbourhood Planning Groups, who would later in the meeting present their successful Plans to Council, were also welcomed to meeting.

17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 14 May 2018

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 14 May 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

18 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made.

19 MATTERS ARISING

The Monitoring Officer presented the report and Members noted its content.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising be duly noted.

20 ANNOUNCEMENTS

i) Chairman

The Chairman addressed Council and advised that on 17 June she had attended Doncaster Minster for a special service to mark the start of the term of office of their new Civic Mayor. It was particularly pleasing to see how many different faiths could work together in their community; many leaders of faith groups spoke at the Minster including those from the Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist communities.

The Chairman had also attended the Lincolnshire Show on the 20 and 21 June along with many other Councillors. She thanked all those involved in supporting the Show, over the two days. Whilst there, the Chairman had taken the opportunity to visit the trade stands of a number of local businesses they all seemed very appreciative that we had taken the trouble to do so

On Monday 25 June the Chairman had hosted the Armed Forces Day flag raising event alongside other Councillors and Officers. She thanked those who attended and supported the event.

On Saturday, the Chairman along with Councillor England and Councillor Palmer attended the Armed Forces Community Celebration Day at Marshalls Sports Field. A remembrance service had been held in the afternoon and the day had been well attended by the public.

Later that day, the Chairman had enjoyed a lovely evening at the Gainsborough Methodist Church to celebrate 50 years since the Church's dedication. There had been lovely music and the congregation had provided superb refreshments. What had been most enjoyable was the positive attitude of the event organisers who had spoken of their pleasure at the way in which Gainsborough was moving forward and they could see a bright and positive future for the Town.

ii) Leader of Council

The Leader addressed Council and advised that early in the month he attended a meeting of the South West Ward residents group. It had been interesting to hear residents' views about the community they live in. Many comments related to concerns and incidents which occur in the ten-footed areas. The Leader took the opportunity to congratulate the street force team for all the work they undertook in the area.

The Leader had also had the pleasure of attending the Skills Fair and had been very impressed by the number of visitors, trade stands and the amount of information and contacts available at the event.

The Leader advised that Councillor Giles McNeill had been appointed Regional Northern Delegate on the National Council of APSE, giving the Authority a seat at the table of management.

The Leader thanked all staff and Members who had been involved in the organisation of the Lincolnshire Show, another very successful event.

The previous week, the Leader had had a very successful meeting with Richard Wills, Deputy Chief Executive at Lincolnshire County Council regarding the junction of Corringham Road and Thorndyke Way. Mr Wills had offered his support to realise the much needed improvements.

The Leader had also spent time in Hemswell Cliff, with the Ward Councillor, identifying issues in need of remedy. The Authority had strong and close working relationships with all local bodies in the area and the Leader looked forward to progressing work in this community.

At a meeting with Sir Edward Leigh, he had been very complimentary of the work the Council was undertaking across the District and had offered his support in terms of lobbying efforts where required.

Last week, the Crematorium Project had received planning permission and it was hoped work would commence on construction before the end of the year.

A number of supplementary planning documents to the Local Plan had recently been

approved by the Central Lincs Committee, one year on from the Local Plan been adopted.

And finally, there had been a county wide agreement to pursue a growth deal across the whole of Lincolnshire, this was instead of pursuing a devolution deal. All Lincolnshire Districts, together with the County, City and surrounding Unitary Authorities would be working together to present proposals to the Government in the future.

The Leader concluded his announcements indicating he believed the Council was in a positive position and a positive phase, thanking everyone for their hard work.

iii) Head of Paid Service

The Head of Paid Service addressed Council on behalf of the Management Team during which the following points were made: -

- The organisation was in the process of updating its Corporate Plan. As part of this process both Members and Officers had been engaged with a view to refreshing the Council's vision, mission and aims. All organisations needed a vision by which they could unite and it had become apparent that the Council's current vision was not well understood by either Members or Officers.
- The Crematorium Project, as previously mentioned by the Leader, had the previous week received planning permission, construction would commence in October.
- The "wraps" were starting to come off the new hotel in Gainsborough, which was due to be open to guests in the Autumn.
- It was important that the Council maintained the momentum it had generated over the last 12 months and therefore the Council had been pleased to announce that it had been successful in its £1.8m funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, for a Townscape Heritage initiative project which would assist in improving the historical built environment in Gainsborough. The Scheme would last until 2024 and would bring some of the much needed resources to regenerate these historic buildings.

21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Monitoring Officer confirmed to the meeting that no questions had been received from members of the public.

22 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

Councillor Trevor Young submitted the following question to the meeting: -

1) *Question to Cllr Sheila Bibb, Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee, from Councillor Trevor Young*

"Could the Chairman of Prosperous Communities Committee please explain why after nearly two years since the implementation of the Selective Licensing Scheme for the Gainsborough SW Ward there are still over 70 private rented properties unlicensed and nearly 100 licences still be processed?"

Does the Chairman agree that the scheme has also failed in its objective to reduce anti-social behaviour?

You will recall I have also raised the issues of drugs in the Ward in the past and I believe that this continues to be an issue which the Scheme has failed to address.”

The Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee, Councillor Mrs Sheila Bibb, responded as follows: -

“I would like to thank Cllr Young for this question and assure him that a full report on Selective Licensing is scheduled to be presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee in October at which time members will have an opportunity to discuss the progress made by the scheme. Council should note that nearly 500 properties are licensed and alongside this a number of successful prosecutions have taken place to address landlords who have found to be failing in their responsibilities. Officers continue to focus their efforts on resolving the outstanding issues in this area particularly with regard to those properties which are still not compliant. We should not lose sight of the fact that the scheme is in place for 5 years.

With regard to the comments concerning the availability of drugs in these properties, I share this concern and in order to combat it the key is for specific intelligence – the precise address, dates and times as well as names if possible. It is only with such information and actual evidence that successful action can be taken. I therefore urge that anyone who has definite knowledge about such activities report it to the police as a matter of urgency. All reports which come to West Lindsey are handed over to be dealt with by the proper authority.”

Having heard the response, Councillor Young requested and received permission to pose a supplementary question. He stated the scheme was nothing but a bureaucratic scheme, which had failed in a number of ways. He was of the view that the scheme had lost all credibility, Anti-social behaviour (ASB) had increased and properties were being used as drug farms despite being reported. He questioned when this ASB would be dealt.

The Chairman was of the view the information was a statement as opposed to a question and therefore the meeting proceeded to the next question which had been submitted.

Councillor Chris Darcel submitted the following question to the meeting: -

2) Question to Cllr Jeff Summers, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Chris Darcel

Re Letter from a business rates payer.

“I believe all councillors received a copy of the letter concerning business rate changes from a rate payer, and it came as quite a surprise to me.

Can the Leader please inform Councillors just what is the law on business rates for charities and any recent changes in the Law that may have happened?

It is a concern to me that I now find out those negotiations with this particular rate payer have been ongoing for a year. I would have thought any changes to the rate regulations should first be discussed by the Prosperous Communities Committee and the Full Council before businesses are approached.

For all I know the charges may be valid although the rate payer would seem to think otherwise. But we should know.

Can the Leader please give me the assurance that any changes will receive full council scrutiny before they are introduced?

Thank you”

The Leader responded as follows: -

“Thank you for your question.

The law relating to Mandatory Charitable Rate Relief requires a premise to be solely or mainly occupied for charitable purposes. There have been no recent changes in legislation but there is a requirement to review awards on a regular basis.

The regulations on Business Rates are a matter for central government and as a district we act as the billing authority and must follow the regulations.

Tax payers are also able to appeal any decisions made regarding business rates through the Valuation Tribunal.

I, along with officers, will be meeting with the ratepayers you refer to later this month.

It is my intention to bring this issue to a speedy equitable and legal close as soon as possible.”

Having heard the response, Councillor Darcel requested and received permission to pose a supplementary question.

The following supplementary question was asked: -

“Councillor Summers have you read the information on West Lindsey’s website as the way I have interpreted it is, is that West Lindsey are obliged to give 80% discretion to any Charity and there is a further discretionary element of 20%. I therefore feel we have got this slightly wrong as the Council is obliged to give 80% discount to all charities.

The Leader responded and re-iterated his intention to bring the matter to speedy, equitable and legal resolution. A sensible approach would be adopted, rate payers had the right of appeal and he was fully aware of the guidelines and regulations.

23 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

Councillor Trevor Young submitted the following Motion: -

“In almost half of the Gainsborough South West Ward, waste is collected through an authorised weekly black bag system.

This Council notes that this system results in poor environmental health issues and poor living conditions for many residents, it also recognises that it negatively impacts on the appearance of the town.

There is an urgent need for this Council to consider the welfare of the residents, I therefore request this Council:

1. Reviews its current operational delivery of waste services in the Gainsborough South West Ward and provide an in-depth options analysis for alternative collection methods.
2. Consults with local residents regarding solutions for local waste collection.

I so move”

Councillor Jeff Summers, as Leader of the Council, responded as follows: -

“Thank you for your motion which I am happy to second. But I would like to take this opportunity to explain the current position.

Approximately 2,000 properties mainly in the South West Ward of Gainsborough currently receive an enhanced weekly sack based waste collection system. This method of collection continued when the rest of the District moved to fortnightly wheeled bin collections in 2009, residual waste is collected on Thursdays and recycling picked up on Fridays, sacks are provided to residents.

Street Cleansing teams do a final clean after waste collections have taken place and also visit all ten foot on a regular basis throughout the working week to clear away any waste presented early or fly-tipped material.

This collection regime has been in place for many years and has been viewed as most appropriate for the area as the Councils’ collection vehicles cannot access the ten foots if wheeled bins are presented there.

The Council has received no formal complaints about the collection methodology in the last two years, nor has it received any formal complaints about rats in that area which are present due to the collection methodology.

I have spent time on three separate visits to the South West ward during the last two weeks. The most recent was last Thursday which is collection day. I personally witnessed the presentation style of the sacks, many were sensibly placed to the side of the ten foot in neat piles to allow orderly passage of residents. Many others had simply been tossed over the walls and laid randomly across the ten foot impeding passage. Some burst open making it more difficult to clear for our crews.

It was apparent to me after revisiting some ten-foots post collection what a great job our crews are doing, almost spotless after the mini sweeper had been through. Mechanical sweepers cannot access all the nooks and cranny's.

However, as we continually strive to provide the best services possible and as the Council has not formally reviewed collection methods in the area since 2009 it does make sense to consider advances in the waste management sector and understand the views of residents.

I support the motion and will commission our Officers to

1. Review its current operational delivery of waste services in the Gainsborough South West Ward and provide an in-depth options analysis for alternative collection methods.
2. Consult with local residents regarding solutions for local waste collection.”

Debate ensued and a number of Members across the Chamber commented on the fantastic work the crews carried out in the area. All were in agreement that this was not disputed, however, it was accepted that the current collection method did come with its issues and exploration of alternative options did have merit.

Residents also needed to work with the Council and present their waste in an appropriate manner, to aide collection and post clean-up.

Having been moved and seconded, on being put to the vote the Motion, as submitted was declared **CARRIED**.

24 ADOPTION OF GREAT LIMBER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were asked to give consideration to a report to fully 'make' (adopt) the Great Limber Neighbourhood Plan following a successful referendum.

Councillor England, Member Champion for Neighbourhood Planning, introduced the report, noting that the two plans on tonight's agenda, would see the number of adopted plans across the District reach a total of 12, with more currently at some stage within the process. He expressed thanks, both to the Groups for their hard work, and to the Officers for the support they had offered.

Representatives from Great Limber Parish Council were in attendance and prior to Members debating the matter the Chairman invited them to make a short address to Council and present their successful Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Neil Hunton, Deputy Chairman, addressed the meeting and made the following short address: -

“Chairman, Councillors, ladies and gentlemen may I on behalf of Great Limber Parish council, the northern outpost within the West Lindsey district, offer our Neighbourhood

Plan for your considerations and acceptance.

The Plan is somewhat unique as the vast majority of the land and properties within the parish are owned by the Brockelsby estate, however we are confident that we have with due involvement and discussions managed to address the issues and produce a plan for the future of the parish.

We are most grateful for the support from West Lindsey Council in particular the Neighbourhood planning team along with Angela and Owen our District councillors.”

Councillor Hunton then formally presented the Plan to the Chairman.

Members across the floor congratulated the Group on their remarkable achievement particularly considering their size and the timescales they had worked to.

It was moved, seconded and duly

RESOLVED that the Great Limber Neighbourhood Plan be adopted and made.

25 ADOPTION OF OSGODBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillor England, Member Champion for Neighbourhood Planning, again introduced the report, and paid personal tribute to all those involved in Neighbourhood Planning, acknowledging the significant level of work and commitment required to deliver a Plan to this stage.

Representatives from Osgodby Neighbourhood Planning Group were in attendance and prior to Members debating the matter the Chairman invited them to make a short address to Council and present their successful Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Chester, Vice-Chairman of Osgodby Parish Council made the following address: -

“Chairman,

Thank you for this opportunity to present the Osgodby Neighbourhood Development Plan for adoption by West Lindsey District Council.

The production of this plan stemmed directly from the Osgodby Parish Plan which was published in 2010. That plan first gave voice to the concerns and hopes of the community and has been, and continues to be, a valuable road map for the Parish Council to refer to in addressing such concerns as housing, employment, protection of the environment, and safeguarding and enhancing parish amenities. There was, however, frustration amongst residents that the Parish Plan was awarded little weight outside the parish. This Neighbourhood Plan was therefore commissioned to enhance and facilitate key aspirations which emerged from the Parish Plan, and to help ensure that local context would receive appropriate consideration in planning policy and decision making.

The Parish Council believed that it was essential that the project should be community-led rather than driven by the council, and the group was therefore always open for any

resident to attend and take part and has always been under the chairmanship of a non-councillor. We are grateful to all the members of the public and councillors who gave their time and energy not just to help to produce this plan but also to engage in and maintain interest in the project throughout the consultation process.

From the outset the steering group benefitted greatly from the advice and support provided by WLDC officers: initially Luke Brown and latterly Nev Brown and Dan Evans, to all of whom we very grateful. Progress was not as swift as had been initially hoped and it was recognised that the skill sets of the steering group members were not fully matched to the task in hand. Professional help was required and accordingly the services of consultants, Open Plan Ltd., were engaged; the production and quality of the finished plan is in a very large part due to their knowledge and expertise.

Employing consultants did not come cheaply, so we were very appreciative of funding received in grants from the Department of Communities and Local Government (Groundwork) and the Big Lottery Fund which together covered the entire cost of the project. We would strongly recommend any other community looking to produce a neighbourhood plan to consider using professional assistance and to seek the commensurate grant funding.

We would also like to thank the independent examiner, Mr Andrew Ashcroft, for his insightful and constructive recommendations and for his complimentary comments. His examination of the plan enabled it to be finished to a standard in which we felt we could take pride.

Although the production of this plan has involved hard work and more than a few headaches, we count ourselves privileged to have been entrusted with delivering something which is held as so important by our community. We are deeply gratified that the process of giving substance to the wishes of the local community has had the whole-hearted support of not just that community but also our district council, to whom we commend this plan. We would like to conclude with the Vision of this plan which we believe encapsulates its quintessence and why it should be adopted:

In 20 years' time, Osgodby will continue to be a green and pleasant parish of distinctively individual settlements in a rural environment. Additional housing will have provided a suitable range of houses to meet the needs and aspirations of the local community, at a scale and pace of change which residents can readily accommodate. New developments will respect the parish's countryside character and avoid the coalescence of individual settlements. Its green open spaces and public rights of way will have been preserved or enhanced to increase usability and the enjoyment of residents. Local services and amenities, particularly the primary school, will have been maintained and developed to attract and retain a population with a wide range of age groups and occupations, to sustain a vibrant and dynamic community."

Councillor Chester then formally presented the Plan to the Chairman.

Members across the Chamber, including Ward Members at District and County level paid tribute to the Group for their hard work and dedication. All were in agreement the Plan would ensure development in the Parish would be appropriate, address community need and safeguard communities in the future

It was moved, seconded and duly

RESOLVED that the Osgodby Neighbourhood Plan be adopted and made.

26 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2017-2018

In accordance with the requirements of the Council's reporting procedures, Members gave consideration a report which set out the treasury activity during 2017/18 and the actual Prudential Indicators for 2017/18.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and in doing so advised the report had previously been considered by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

This report was a requirement of the regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 and was in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code for Capital Financing.

It was best practice that Full Council received three reports each year and this was the final report which set out what had been actually achieved against the original budgeted position.

The executive summary contained all the relevant prudential Indicators with further detailed information contained within the body of the report.

The Leader indicated he was pleased to advise that none of the indicators had been breached during the year and whilst the market for investments continued to be challenging, the Council had achieved a return on Treasury Management of 1.21% as detailed on page 38

In concluding his introduction the Leader moved the report.

Clarification was sought and received that the investment return was 1.21%. The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee added additional information indicating that historically investment returns had been around 0.43%. The Council had a low risk profile and much effort was made to ensure investments were as safeguarded as possible and thus return rates would always reflect this.

The report was seconded and in doing so Members commented on the more approachable style in which the information was being presented and welcomed this.

In response to a Member's question regarding the figures on page 34, Officers explained the reasons as to why the figures in the original budget were significantly different to those in the actual budget. This was primarily as a result of having to plan for the highest potential level of borrowing for the period, which had subsequently not been required.

The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee made reference to the second paragraph of Section 7 of the report and wished to place on record the circumstances surrounding the breach. This had been a simple error and was reported to him within 48 hours. Steps had been taken to prevent such an error occurring again. Funds had not been

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considered at risk and had been returned including interest earned.

RESOLVED that the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2017/18 and actual Prudential and Treasury Indicators be approved.

The meeting concluded at 7.58 pm.

Chairman