

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in The Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 21 January 2019 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 Mrs Jackie Brockway	Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Christopher Darcel	Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence	Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne
Councillor Giles McNeill	Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Richard Oaks	Councillor Mrs Maureen Palmer
Councillor Malcolm Parish	Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth	Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Reg Shore	Councillor Thomas Smith
Councillor Lewis Strange	Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Robert Waller	Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn
Councillor Mrs Angela White	

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 in Attendance: Mr David Lomas, Chairman of the Remuneration Panel

Also Present: 2 Members of the public
1 Member of the Press

Apologies

Councillor Bruce Allison
Councillor David Bond
Councillor Stuart Kinch
Councillor Hugo Marfleet
Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Trevor Young

40 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all Members, Officers, Members of the Public and Press to the meeting.

A warm welcome was also extended to Mr David Lomas, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel, who was also in attendance.

41 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) Minutes of Meeting held on 22 November 2018

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 November 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

42 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman of the Council advised that for the avoidance of doubt Members did not need to make a declaration in respect of the Members' Allowance Report, as this was an area in which all Councillors were granted an exemption by the relevant legislation.

No further declarations were made.

43 MATTERS ARISING

The Monitoring Officer noted that all items due for completion were showing black, as having been completed.

The two remaining green items, were not yet due for completion but were on track to be completed within their respective due dates.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising be noted.

44 ANNOUNCEMENTS

i) **Chairman**

The Chairman addressed Council advising Christmas, and the lead up to it, had been a very busy, but enjoyable period.

She had had the pleasure of attending a number of Events, and Ceremonies, as well as holding her own events, making particular note of the following: -

- local people, who had reached 70 years old or more, had been invited to afternoon tea and a natter at the Guildhall. to help celebrate the 70th birthday of Prince Charles, it had been a most enjoyable afternoon.

- A reception had been held in the Guildhall, hosted by the Chairman, to thank volunteers for all their work making parks and woodlands around Gainsborough a cleaner and tidier place to visit.
- Involvement in two lantern processions in Gainsborough – the Illuminate Parade. The Parade and proceeding service celebrates Gainsborough’s role in the Pilgrim’s story – next year marked the 400th anniversary with events already in the planning; and the ‘Light up a Life’ procession for St Barnabas’s Hospice, a very moving Parade.
- It had been a pleasure to be presented to HRH The Princess Royal at the Official Opening of the Market Rasen Station Community Project – restoring the building into heritage rooms, offices and a café.
- The run up to Christmas saw the Chairman visiting local care homes to spend time with the staff and residents plus receptions for West Lindsey staff at the Trinity Arts Centre, Guildhall and depots. As well as presenting several long service certificates and a retirement certificates.
- The Gainsborough Musical Theatre Group staged a marvellous panto at the Trinity Arts Centre of “Sleeping Beauty” and it had been lovely to see so many families and groups of children enjoy themselves.
- Also at the Trinity Arts Centre, the Chairman had had the pleasure of attending a very moving performance of ‘It’s a Mad World’ from the very talented mental health group, Stepping Stone.
- The highlight of Christmas had been seeing over 60 children from the Parish School sing beautifully at the Civic Carol Service at All Saints Parish Church and thanks were expressed to all those who attended and supported the event.
- Finally Carol singing had been in full flow, again at All Saints Parish Church, with yet another wonderful performance from the Gainsborough Choral Society together with the Choir and Orchestra from the Queen Elizabeth’s High School Gainsborough, both the group and solo performances were fantastic!

ii) **Leader of Council**

The Leader addressed Council and in opening, having offered thoughts in prayers prior to the meeting, offered his heartfelt sympathies to Mark Dransfield and his two daughters, on the recent loss of his wife Deborah.

He spoke of his admiration for Mr Dransfield, helping to deliver an agenda for Gainsborough, whilst all the time dealing with some very difficult personal circumstances.

The Leader went on to outline the work he had undertaken in recent weeks with the Gainsborough & Scunthorpe and the Ancholme Internal Drainage Boards, outlining his real concerns in respect of the Environment Agency’s approach, particularly to issues being

caused by the erosion of the East Coast of Yorkshire. This was having a severe detrimental impact on outlets which the Ancholme Drainage Board relied upon and the Leader of the Council was of the view that the root cause was not being addressed. He vowed to continue to voice his opinions strongly.

He further advised that due to the lack of grant funding for necessary capital expenditure, drainage rates would have to increase in the future, potentially similar to council tax.

The Pensions Committee continued to work well.

There was little to report in respect of Scampton Air base. Further talks were expected with Councillor Hill of LCC and The Right Honourable Sir Edward Leigh MP, and the Leader would keep the Council abreast of developments as they arose.

A discussion had taken place at the Lincolnshire Leaders and Chief Executives' meeting the previous week when the Group had been advised that Lincolnshire were behind in the housing of refugees. It was anticipated five families would be housed in the County by March.

The Group had also discussed possible direct investment into the housing market, as there were real concerns about the lack of developer action, and the Government's desire for LEP'S to merge with neighbours to create larger organisations with greater objectivity.

The Chairman thanked the Leader for his updates and invited announcements from the Head of Paid Service on behalf of the Management Team

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: -

- Officers were working closely with Partners to ensure the Council were prepared for any eventualities arising from Brexit. At this stage it was difficult to predict the exact impact this may have on the County or District. All partners were and would continue to consider the possible outcomes and scenarios and how they could make the transition as smooth as possible.
- The Local Government Finance Settlement was due out in early February. It was expected that the final figure would be in line with the draft settlement published in December 2018
- The Head of Paid Service, accompanied by a group of Members, had visited North Kesteven District Council's new depot facilities. This was part of preparation work into reviewing the Council's own depot provision across the District.

45 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions had been received, for the Meeting, from Members of the Public on this occasion.

46 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

Councillor Chris Darcel posed the following question, under Council Procedure Rule No. 9 to the meeting: -

1) *Question to Councillor Jeff Summers, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Chris Darcel*

Leader,

“The Fiskerton Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2018.

First, I would like to congratulate the District Council for its excellent record in supporting neighbourhood plans.

Fiskerton residents have studied a number of these plans and it seems they have followed formula laid down in the Neighbourhood Plan Documentation to the letter.

ie. Residents can :

- 1) choose where within their parish boundaries development can go,
- 2) specify the number of future houses to come to the community
- 3) choose where necessary future infrastructure should be located,
- 4) define the character of the new development and
- 5) must ensure the community is more “sustainable” after development than it was before.

Unfortunately, in Fiskerton this has not happened.

The Fiskerton plan is not a “Neighbourhood Plan” the residents have been ignored. and the plan grossly exceeds the sustainable growth level of between 10 to 15% for small to medium villages. The 50% growth suggested has no demonstrable local support.

Sometime in 2014, several group members asked officers what size a sustainable village should be? A population of 2000 was suggested!

Consequently, the NPG’s first plan in October 2014, was overwhelmingly rejected.

An alternative, smaller plan, locating the fewer houses north of the village hall, was supported by residents in December 2014. The Chairman thanked residents for their support and the plan was forwarded to WLDC as first draft. It progressed no further and now the village has changed.

The May 2016 plan was jointly drawn by the Church Commissioners and two members of the NPG, It was for 224 homes north of Ferry Rd. It was overwhelmingly rejected by of show of hands at the May meeting.

In June/July 2016 an alternative plan building to the west of the village was suggested by a resident and has considerable support.

Yet it was the unwanted May plan that was re submitted to WLDC in December 2016. It was later taken down from the Council website for technical reasons.

It is this same unwanted May plan that is again being proposed for the village.

With other development in the village, the approximately 200 new homes north of Ferry Rd could easily bring 250+ properties to the village. With the 10 HA site proposed, at 24 h/p ha, the total could easily exceed 300.

Residents have never been asked the questions and grossly incorrect information has been repeatedly given out by the Group. Residents surveys and petitions have been ignored.

The 2018 Plan document is not a true reflection of events past nor an unbiased analysis of responses collected in 2016. The results have been gerrymandered and residents do not wish to see this happen again.

The situation is so bad that a large banner has been sited at the east of the village saying "No to 250 houses: vote no to the Neighbourhood plan."

The 10 residents who asked me to raise this question wish to ensure that proper consultation and dialogue is conducted and that any documentation and statements made by the Neighbourhood Plan Group are factually correct and analysed openly without bias.

Leader, residents need the assurance that the plan will conform to the criteria laid down in NP legislation and is a result of proper two way consultation with residents, and results will be analysed fairly and openly and checked with residents, before the District Council publishes the information or forwards the plan to the Inspector.

Thank you"

Note: The question, as detailed above, is as summarised to the meeting. The written version that was submitted and accepted was substantially longer and is available on-line.

The Leader of the Council responded as follows: -

"Firstly I feel that I need to clarify the situation; the group are responsible for their communications, they are not compiled or controlled by WLDC. If any person does raise errors with the Council they will always be referred to the relevant group to respond to. Officers have always advised you of this. The Council has

no role in controlling or monitoring the communications between any of the 35+ groups currently operating across the district and their local communities.

Likewise, matters such as the volume and location of growth are for neighbourhood plan groups to identify and can be taken forward or rejected as their plans evolve. Inevitably this will lead to differing views amongst the community because development affects people in different ways. This is not failure. In fact, this principle is accepted and is why neighbourhood plans do not require unanimous support but a simple majority. Such occurrences should not create the serious cause for alarm you imply in your question to Council. It is expected in any democratic process, and that process must be followed.

In terms of the assurances that have been requested; The correct procedure for adopting a neighbourhood plan is always followed. A consultation is not flawed simply because it has not led to every individual's view being taken forward. Residents have been consulted at the relevant statutory stages and now the scope of those consultations - plus any further comments that are made at the Reg 16 submission stage - will be matters for an Independent Examiner (not WLDC) to consider in due course.

Contrary to your view there is no requirement for the group to repeat consultations, nor to consult on other options identified by individuals outside of the neighbourhood plan group simply because they don't agree with the approach the group has taken. Likewise, there is no requirement for a group to repeat stages or keep revisiting alternative options simply out of fear that some may not agree.

There is a formal process all neighbourhood plans in the Country will, and have, followed. WLDC will ensure the same applies in Fiskerton as you have been frequently and comprehensively advised throughout the last 4 years."

Having heard the response, Councillor Darcel requested and was permitted the opportunity to pose a supplementary question, as follows: -

"Thank you Leader.

What can be done then if the documentation put out by the Neighbourhood Plan Group is neither factual, accurate or unbiased. Thank you"

The Leader responded and advised he was of the belief the Inspection would deal with such matters however he would request the Neighbourhood Planning Officer to respond to the additional point in writing to Councillor Darcel, within 14 days.

Councillor Ian Fleetwood had submitted the following question, under Council Procedure Rule No. 9 to the meeting: -

2) Question to Cllr Jeff Summers, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Ian Fleetwood

"Litter and dog mess continue to be challenging issues across the District.

Gainsborough is fortunate to have a mechanical sweeper to aid the removal of debris that some people can't be bothered to dispose of correctly, but the rest of the District can only rely on the occasional kerb-side sweep by a larger machine that can't combat the pathways and other areas. Litter is particularly bad on the Lincoln fringe area where takeaway containers and tins are ejected from vehicles as they leave the city, but also within villages such as Bardney and Cherry Willingham where some individuals have used the recent dark evenings to cloak their activity. Dog mess is bad enough, but it seems some owners insist on collecting the mess and then hanging the bags in the hedgerows or throwing it into nearby fields.

I have been made aware by a resident of a campaign in Australia called "Don't be a Tosser" which aims to deter people from tossing their rubbish from their vehicles. It seems that a similar scheme could be adopted in the UK, and it would combat both litter and dog mess.

There is a real need to get the message across to all people within the District that the District Council will prosecute and fine if evidence is brought forward. Furthermore I would welcome an increase in resources from all organisations to combat these on-going activities, so that we can all make the area a more desirable place to be.

I would therefore ask the Leader if he agrees with my view on this matter?

Thank you"

The Leader of the Council responded as follows: -

"Yes, I do agree with your comments.

Street Cleansing in West Lindsey is challenging with varying demands including clearing fly-tipping. Recently, at 3-30 pm I came across 20 tonne lorry load of office equipment / packaging, tipped and blocking one carriageway on a road in West Lindsey. After reporting the incident to our waste officers, the load was removed by 6-00 pm. One example of how we react to such disgraceful behaviour.

Servicing 600 dog bins and over 900 litter bins, as well as dealing with litter and dog fouling on roads, paths and verges is a normal day for us. Currently 15.6 full time equivalents undertake this work and cover almost 1,500 kms of highway.

The service performs well when benchmarked against others and the Team Manager involves the team and volunteers in local and national campaigns such as Clean for the Queen.

Main roads are particularly challenging for the team, especially dual carriageways and the A15 and A46. Localised litter picking does take place. Sadly a couple of headline national incidents where operatives have been seriously injured by fast moving vehicles on main roads, means that work previously undertaken by single man crews would now require additional

resource to be put in place.

I can reassure Members that enforcement action is taken where evidence is available in relation to littering and fly tipping. Enforcement of littering from vehicles on main vehicle routes is not something that we have a specific resource or programme of work for, however on occasions where officers do see this type of incident it is followed up formally.

We now have a resource of portable cameras which can be deployed where a need is identified. These cameras could be used to catch fly tippers, litter louts and dog fouling.

Some communities, mine included, have adopted a local spring parish litter pick with volunteers which in our case, 2 to 3 hours for half a dozen people. The difference is noticeable.

I have tasked the Street Cleansing Manager with identifying and quantifying the resource required to undertake a thorough cleanse of main roads in the District.

I am also asking for a paper to be taken to committee for a debate on this subject as all of the offences I mention have a detrimental impact on the Council's finances and seriously impact upon the attractiveness of our district.

Thank you."

Having heard the response, Councillor Fleetwood requested and was permitted the opportunity to pose a supplementary question, as follows: -

"Thank you I am pleased to hear the Leader is looking into the resourcing and how efficiently teams work. I am also pleased to hear how they function on the A Roads of West Lindsey. However, the area I am trying to talk about is on a C Class Road, specifically the Bardney Road, coming through Fiskerton, through the bottom end of Cherry Willingham onto Lincoln, for example, where there is an abundance, including fly tipped material, objects thrown out of windows. Within the Leader's response he is talking A Classed roads, this is a C Classed road, this does not cover this area, I would like to see the situation expanded so it does, can he assure me of that please?"

The Leader responded as follows: -

"Thank you at this point I can assure Councillor Fleetwood, that any flytipping on any road, if it is on highway property and not on private land, then we are obliged to remove that. Any other type of work that may be required can I ask that Councillor Fleetwood either forwards that to myself direct or to our officer Ady Selby who will address it appropriately."

47 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

The Chairman advised the meeting that no Motions, under Council Procedure Rule No.10, had been received.

48 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2019/2020

Mr David Lomas, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel introduced the report and outlined the process that had been undertaken to produce the recommendations set out in the report. Consultation had taken place with Members and thanks were expressed to those that had responded.

It was considered that the changes to the Special Responsibility Allowances were reasonable and the Panel had been mindful of the need for caution in increasing allowances, whilst also been aware of the dangers of remuneration failing to adequately compensate for the role. Consideration had also been given to the pay rises for staff in order to avoid any feeling of inequality.

The Panel had made specific recommendations relating to Broadband Allowance, which was not universally claimed, reducing it by £10 per month. This was in light of its access now being much more widespread, than when the allowance had been introduced, some years ago, and due to its availability amongst Members being not solely for their Council work.

The Panel's full set of recommendations were as set out below: -

Allowance	Rate 2018/19	Rate 2019/20
Basic Allowance	£5,480	£5,590
SRA – Leader of Council	£12,180	£12,425
SRA – Deputy Leader/s (in the event of two or more being nominated, the payment to be shared)	£4,415	£4,505
SRA – Chair of Council	£3,900	£3,980
SRA – Vice-Chair of Council	£1,340	£1,370
Civic Allowance for the Chairman of Council	£1,575	£1,610
Civic Allowance for the Vice-Chairman of Council	£430	£440

SRA – Committee Chairs (excluding Licensing Cttee and Regulatory Cttee)	£3,045	£3,105
SRA – Regulatory Chair	£1,522.50	£1,555
SRA – Licensing Chair	£1,522.50	£1,555
SRA – Committee Vice-Chairs (excluding Licensing Cttee and Regulatory Cttee)	£1,440	£1,470
SRA – Regulatory Vice-Chair	£720	£735
SRA – Licensing Vice-Chair	£720	£735
SRA – Leader of the Opposition (in the event of the Council being a ‘hung’ Council, the Leaders of the two largest groups be paid the same special responsibility allowance as for the Leader of the Opposition)	£4,415	£4,505
SRA – Deputy Leader of the Opposition	£800	£820
SRA – Minority Group Leaders (per group member, and including the Group Leader)	£95	£100
Independent Members: Governance & Audit and Standards Committees – A payment of £60.00 for the first four hours of attendance at a meeting/event and a second payment for attendance in excess of four hours. The first four hours would commence from the start time of the meeting (To be paid when not chairing a meeting).	£60	No change
Dependent Carer’s Allowance	£10	No Change
Eye Test	£20	No Change
Broadband	£20	£10

No change to mileage allowances. The Panel noted and commented that mileage

allowances are currently in line with the tax efficient rate authorised by the Inland Revenue.

No change to subsistence allowances as set out below. Receipts must be provided for subsistence claimed and attached to the claim form.

- a. Absence of more than four hours but no more than eight hours – only the cost of one meal can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £15.
- b. Absence of more than eight hours but no more than 12 hours – only the cost of two meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £25.
- c. Absence of more than 12 hours but no more than 16 hours – only the cost of three meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £33.
- d. Absence of more than 16 hours but not including an overnight stay – only the cost of four meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £40.
- e. Overnight – No Change - £83
- f. Overnight (London or LGA) – No Change - £208

Rail Travel amounting to more than £25 to be booked centrally through Committee Administration.

The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee expressed his thanks to all Members of the Remuneration panel for the work they undertook each year on behalf of the Tax Payer and congratulated them on their excellent work.

Whilst he considered the assessment to be a fair and reasonable one on the whole, concern was expressed that for those Members who did claim their broadband expenses, with the reduction proposed, the revised offer as a whole would actually see total remuneration reduced. It was important that remuneration did not fail to adequately meet the role.

For this reason Councillor McNeill indicated he would move the recommendations with the exception of recommendation (c) “The reduction of claimable broadband reimbursement payments to £10 per calendar month”, which he proposed be removed.

Councillor Cotton spoke in support of the revised proposal put forward by Councillor McNeill, indicating he was of the belief the allowance had originally been introduced to replace a previous allowance offered for phone and postage expenses. It was also suggested that whilst access to broadband was more readily available this did not necessarily mean it was cheaper. He further indicated that he would prefer the broadband allowance to remain at its current level and the 2% increase on basic allowance not be accepted.

Councillor Cotton therefore seconded the proposal to remove recommendation (c) and on being put to the vote the amendment was carried.

The Group Leader for the Labour Party indicated that he did not consider a further increase in the allowance for the position of Minority Group Leaders was warranted in future years.

The Leader of the Council addressed the meeting, and whilst he had supported the removal of recommendation (c) he spoke of the importance of ensuring Members roles were adequately remunerated for and therefore supported the 2% increase being proposed, this was in line with staff increases and in cash value terms was not a significant increase.

The Monitoring Officer reminded Members that the report had been prepared by the Independent Panel and therefore Members were in a position to either accept or reject the recommendations, individually or as a whole, but they were not permitted to amend them.

The remaining recommendations were moved and seconded and on being put to the vote, carried.

RESOLVED that that the new rates, with regard to Members' Allowances for the Civic Year 2019 – 2020, as set out above, be approved by agreeing:-

- (a) an increase of 2% for the Basic allowance
- (b) an increase of 2% across Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA's)
- (c) Rail and travel, when amounting to more than £25, to be booked centrally through Committee Administration.
- (d) all remaining allowances be retained at current rates, including broadband provision.

The Leader expressed thanks to Mr Lomas, and paid tribute to him and his work over the years. Mr Lomas had served on the Remuneration Panel for a number of years and had indicated he would not be seeking re-appointment to the position on this occasion.

Members joined the Leader in paying tribute to Mr Lomas.

Mr Lomas made a short outgoing speech, thanking the Council and wishing its Members and Officers well for future endeavours.

49 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 19/20 AND EMPTY PROPERTY CHARGES

The Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee presented the report which had been considered by the Committee and referred to Council for approval.

Council Tax Benefit had been a national scheme providing means-tested financial help to households to pay their Council Tax liability, this had been abolished on 31 March 2013 and every Local Authority had been tasked with designing a local scheme of financial support to replace Council Tax Benefit.

Re-modelling of the scheme had taken place followed by a consultation with suggestions for possible changes. The result of the consultation had supported a cap to council tax support to band E, meaning that any properties banded higher than band E would only be funded up to band E. There had also been overwhelming support for care leavers on a low income to receive full council tax support.

The government had also announced that local authorities could, with effect from 1 April 2019, charge an increased premium for properties that had been empty for 2 years or more.

The current charge was 150% of the council tax and this could be increased to 200%. Again an overwhelming majority of responders to the consultation had favoured this option.

For the reasons outlined above the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 13 December 2018 had therefore **RECOMMENDED** that option 1, of those set out in the report relating to the local council tax support scheme, be the adopted scheme and option 2, of those out in the report relating to increasing empty property charges, be the adopted scheme.

The recommendations were moved and seconded and on being voted upon it was:-

RESOLVED that:

- (a) Option 1 be agreed as the preference for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for West Lindsey District Council for 2019/20, namely: -
- * to cap council tax support to Band E
 - * to award 100% council tax support to care leavers on a low income until they reach the age of 25 years; and
 - * to apply any new legislative requirements and the uprating of the non-dependent charges (these are detailed at 3.4 option 4), 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 up-ratings; and
- (b) Option 2 be agreed as the preference for the Empty Property Charges for Council Tax for West Lindsey District Council for 2019/20, namely: -
- * In accordance with the new government legislation increase the amount charged in respect of properties that have been empty for 2 years or more from 150% to the maximum amount determined by Government (currently 200%).

as recommended by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 13 December 2018.

Following the vote it was clarified that the two month exemption would still be applied in respect of Empty Property Charges for Council Tax, in light of the changed Policy.

50 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND COUNCIL TAX SURPLUS

Members gave consideration to a report which sought approval of the Council Tax Base for the District and determination of the Surplus or Deficit to be distributed for the purposes of 2019/20 budget setting.

The Council was required to declare an estimate of the surplus or deficit that would occur on the Collection Fund at the end of each year. The Collection Fund recorded the amount of income collected from Council Tax, together with precept payments made to principal authorities. These elements would generate a surplus or a deficit which should be taken into account when determining the Council Tax for the following year.

Any surplus or deficit generated through the Collection fund in relation to Council Tax was shared between the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner and this Authority in the same proportion as the amount of their precepts for 2018/19.

A surplus or deficit could occur in the Collection Fund if the Council tax base was larger or smaller than originally anticipated or collection rates were higher or lower than expected.

Section 2 of the report set out the estimated surplus for 19/20 and how this would be shared amongst precepting authorities.

Section 3 of the report set out the Council Tax Base for 2019/20 together with the factors which had been taken into consideration in making the calculation.

A summary of the calculation and adjustments taken into account was shown in Appendix A.

The Council also levied additional amounts for the precepts of Local Councils, and separate tax bases were required for those areas. These were shown at Appendix B.

The recommendations as set out in the report were moved, seconded and voted upon.

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) the Council Tax Base 2019/2020 of 29,532.83 calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulation 20102, be approved; and
- (b) the amount of Council Tax surplus to be distributed be approved as £1,391,000.

Note: Prior to consideration of the next item of business, which related to Election Fees, the Monitoring Officer left the meeting as he was also the Council's appointed Returning Officer, and as such had a conflict of interest due to being a recipient of such fees.

51 ELECTION FEES FOR COUNTY, DISTRICT, PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND LOCAL REFERENDA

The Executive Director of Resources presented the report and advised that on 14th December 2018 the Chief Executives group for Lincolnshire had considered a report from the Lincolnshire Elections Officers' group regarding election fees.

The report was attached as appendix A, with further appendices showing the full list of proposed fees for elections and a financial summary of the impact on each District.

The Chief Executive group were able to agree under their delegations the election fees with the exception of the Returning Officer fee, due to 6 of the 8 representatives at the meeting being Returning Officers for their authority areas.

Therefore the fees for Returning Officers would need to be agreed by each authority in accordance with their individual schemes of delegation. For West Lindsey this was a matter for full council.

As detailed in the report the changes were designed to deal with an anomaly which meant that fees for County Council elections had in the past been disproportionately low.

For West Lindsey the report recommended a reduction of £170 for District Council elections and an increase of £534 for County Council elections.

The recommendations were moved and seconded, Members paid tribute to the work undertaken by Returning Officers, and on being put to the vote it was: -

RESOLVED that the fees for the Retuning Officer, as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.

Note: The Monitoring Officer returned to the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8.03 pm.

Chairman