

Guildhall Gainsborough  
Lincolnshire DN21 2NA  
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**AGENDA**

**This meeting will be held via MS Teams and streamed live to our website  
(address below)**

**Prosperous Communities Committee**  
**Tuesday, 2nd June, 2020 at 6.30 pm**  
**<https://west-lindsey.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>**

**Members:**

- Councillor Owen Bierley (Chairman)
- Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor John McNeill (Vice-Chairman)
  
- Councillor Stephen Bunney
- Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson
- Councillor Christopher Darcel
- Councillor Michael Devine
- Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne
- Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth
- Councillor Tom Regis
- Councillor Jim Snee
- Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
- Councillor Robert Waller
- Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn
- Councillor Trevor Young

1. **Register of Attendance**
  
2. **Public Participation**  
Up to 15 minutes are allowed for public participation.  
Participants are restricted to 3 minutes each.
  
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (PAGES 3 - 10)  
To confirm and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the  
Prosperous Communities Committee held on 17 March 2020.

4. **Matters Arising Schedule** (PAGES 11 - 13)  
Setting out current position of previously agreed actions as at 22 May 2020.
5. **Members' Declarations of Interest**  
Members may make any declarations at this point but may also make them at any time during the course of the meeting.
6. **Public Reports**
- i) Housing Assistance Policy Update (PAGES 14 - 22)
  - ii) Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2019/20 (PAGES 23 - 56)
  - iii) West Lindsey Parish Charter (PAGES 57 - 71)
  - iv) Workplan (PAGES 72 - 74)

Ian Knowles  
Head of Paid Service  
The Guildhall  
Gainsborough

Friday, 22 May 2020

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 17 March 2020 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Owen Bierley (Chairman)  
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Vice-Chairman) and  
Councillor John McNeill (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson  
Councillor Michael Devine  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne  
Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth  
Councillor Tom Regis  
Councillor Jim Snee  
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee  
Councillor Robert Waller  
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn  
Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**  
Ian Knowles Chief Executive  
Ady Selby Assistant Director Operations  
James O'Shaughnessy Corporate Policy Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Diane Krochmal Housing Strategy & Supply Manager  
Grant White Enterprising Communities Manager  
Steve Leary Commercial Waste Manager  
Katie Storr Senior Democratic & Civic Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Christopher Darcel

**Membership:** No substitutes appointed for the meeting

### **61 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND COVID-19 UPDATE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting, making reference to the revised seating arrangements, in light of the Government guidelines around social distancing. He took the opportunity to hand over to the Chief Executive who updated Members in respect of the latest COVID-19 advice and the actions the Council were taking at present.

- The Management Team would be holding a daily meeting at 9.00am to understand the implications of each Government announcement as they were made and briefings would be passed to staff.
- The majority of staff, where they could, had been requested to work from home
- Face to face contact was being minimised wherever possible.
- Vulnerable staff groups had been identified and were being encouraged to isolate
- The Council was currently trying to maintain business as usual where possible and a decision regarding future committee meetings would be made at Council on 6 April, which at present was scheduled to go ahead, albeit on a skeleton arrangement
- Unfortunately the decision had been taken to close the Trinity Arts Centre for an initial period of 4 weeks, this would be kept under review.
- The Local Resilience Forum had established a number of Groups to assess the impact of the emerging situation and the Council was active attendees of these.
- Members and the Public would be kept informed as the situation developed and further Government announcements were planned each day.

## 62 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

## 63 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- (a) Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 28 January 2020.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 28 January 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## 64 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 9 March 2019.

It was noted that all outstanding actions were either marked as completed, or were not yet due for completion.

The Committee had at their last meeting, expressed concern that the action “feeding birds in the market place” had been closed yet the signs had not been erected as indicated. The action had therefore been re-opened and up to date commentary included. The Chief Executive added further verbal commentary, advising that 20 signs had now been received and would be erected over the coming days and weeks.

**RESOLVED** that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule, as set out in the report be received and noted.

## 65 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Trevor Young declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 i) – Viable Housing Solution, as he had previously worked with the provider mentioned within the report.

## 66 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Members gave consideration to a report which presented an initial scoping document, which allowed for an “interim” update to be provided in respect of work undertaken in progressing the Council resolution to consider environmental and other implications associated with climate change. The report presented set out a strategy development plan, as requested by Council.

Councillor Coulson, as Chairman of the Working Group, presented the report to Committee and highlighted several key points including, the work undertaken to date (Section 3 of the report); the Interim findings (Section 4 of the report) and arising from this, the proposed way in which the Strategy would be developed: namely by adopting the Asden toolkit, which would provide a robust framework around which the strategy could be built.

Debate ensued and the Committee as a whole welcomed the report and the approach, placing on record their thanks to the Working Group.

It was suggested that officers should be encouraged to complete the Climate Related Risks and Opportunities box on all committee reports as this work progressed. The need to ensure linkages to the Council’s Corporate Plan was also raised.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (a) the work to date the Council has undertaken in this subject matter, be supported and endorsed; and
- (b) the approach suggested to develop the Strategy be approved and this course of action be **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council.

## 67 BRIEFING NOTE ON PENDING CHANGES TO RECYCLING IN WEST LINDSEY

The Committee were presented with a briefing paper, which advised of likely pending changes to the waste collection system across the District.

The briefing paper outlined the reasons for these changes and the likely initial impact on residents.

It was noted there would be no additional cost to collection authorities, as the waste disposal authority (LCC) was proposing to purchase the bins required.

The briefing paper served as an early indication to the Committee, with the plan being to bring a full report to the Committee in May for a decision. Implementation would ideally be expected between August and October, subject to approval.

It was also noted, due to the nature of the announcements being made by Government relating to the Corona virus, the timescales may need to be amended.

**RESOLVED** that briefing note be received.

## **68 CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Members gave consideration to a report which presented an updated Consultation and Engagement Strategy, together with an updated Equality Strategy.

The strategies set out the Council's aim to support strong, active and inclusive communities who could influence and shape the district of West Lindsey and both strategies would help create a more transparent and accountable council and promote the Council's vision of:

“West Lindsey is a great place to be where people, businesses and communities can thrive and reach their potential.”

The new Consultation and Engagement strategy outlined the priorities for consultation, how the Council might involve its communities and some of the different pieces of legislation, which involved consultation for the Council, including the Community Rights, which were part of the Localism Act 2011.

The new Equality Strategy outlined West Lindsey District Council's work in meeting its equality and diversity commitments with regard to its equality duty.

Both new strategies helped position the Council to ensure its services, projects and programmes met the corporate plan objectives. In particular any changes to what we do as a council could be guided by the principles and methods set out in both strategies.

Both strategies looked at the national and local context and how they linked to supporting the council's corporate plan. Furthermore, both strategies included an action plan, which had specific actions to help achieve effective delivery of the strategies.

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the Consultation and Engagement Strategy (2020-2024) be approved; and
- (b) the Equality Strategy (2020 – 2024) be approved.

## **69 REVIEW OF WEST LINDSEY HOME CHOICE LETTINGS POLICY**

Members gave consideration to report which presented the revised West Lindsey Home Choice Lettings Policy.

The Housing Act 1996 stated that every local housing authority must have adopted a local scheme for allocation of social housing. The West Lindsey Home Choice Policy was created following the separation from the Central Lincolnshire Partnership with City of Lincoln and

North Kesteven District Council known as Lincs Homefinder.

The policy had been reviewed to take into account changes in practice and duties imposed by The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and the Localism Act 2011.

A detailed breakdown of changes were listed at Appendix 1 of the report, with those changes considered larger also summarised in Section 2 of the report.

In response to questions, Officer confirmed the words missing from paragraph 1.11 on page 71 were “rough sleepers”

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the changes to the West Lindsey HomeChoice Lettings Policy be approved; and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee, to make minor housekeeping amendments to the Policy in the future.

## **70 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROGRAMME**

Members gave consideration to a report which sought to provide the Committee with an update on the Council’s transport programme. The report further sought approval of continued funding for CallConnect services in West Lindsey.

Debate ensued and Members were supportive of continued funding for CallConnect services. The service was well used, in fact relied upon, and acted as much needed plug in service provision across the District.

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the Council continue to fund CallConnect with a 2 year grant; and
- (b) the decision be **RECOMMENDED** to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for financial approval.

## **71 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY REPORT - PERIOD 3 2019/20**

Members gave consideration to the Progress and Delivery report for period three (October – December) 2019 – 20.

It was noted that a total of 87.6% of the Council’s key performance indicators were either meeting or exceeding target, compared to 77.5% at the same point last year, representing an improvement of 10.1%. In addition, 12.4% of the Council’s key performance measures were below target compared to 21.5% at the same point last year.

Debate ensued and Members made a number of comments in respect of the Leisure Centre,

Markets, and Heritage.

A member also expressed frustration at the content of the report, particularly in respect of those actions that were not hitting their targets and the lack of supporting commentary. It was considered that details around the causes and impacts, how it was intended to get the target back on track and timescales involved would all be of assistance and were required if the Committee were able to effectively monitor performance.

In responding Officers indicated, they agreed with the sentiment expressed by Members with regard to the lack of supporting commentary against struggling targets. Officers went as far to suggest, that from a Management Team point of view, it would be useful to have that sort of detail even for targets exceeding performance in order that performance as a whole could be better managed. It was hoped the change in reporting style planned for 20/21 would facilitate this. Officers committed to the period four report being better expressed.

With regard to the Leisure Centre, it was acknowledged that cleanliness continued to be a concern. As a result mystery shopper style visits were being undertaken. The contract manager was in regular discussion with the contract provider and was undertaking independent assessments. The Council had also requested data from assessments undertaken by the contract provider. Assurance was offered that this matter was being monitored.

Members suggested that feedback should also be sought from the clubs and schools which used the facilities.

With regard to Markets, Officers reminded Members that they had agreed to a 2 year contract with Dransfield properties in a bid to raise the profile of the market, hold events and attract visitors. This was still considered the right course of action and with the development of the new cinema it was hoped this would encourage and change the footfall in that area. Again assurance was offered that Officers were doing all they could to encourage use of and the longevity of the Market Place.

It was noted there had been difficulty in recruiting to the Heritage posts, however successful appointments had now been made and therefore it was hoped that progress would be seen relatively quickly.

Finally, Members placed on record their congratulations to Trinity Arts Centre and hoped their previous performance would be borne in mind when the performance for period 4 was recorded, bearing in mind the closure that had been enforced earlier in the day.

**RESOLVED** that having assessed the performance of the Council's services through agreed performance measures and having had regard to the remedial measures suggested in the report, and the information provided in response to Member questions, no further remedial actions be requested at this stage.

## 72 WORKPLAN

Members gave consideration to the Committee Work Plan. The Chairman advised that it had been anticipated the Regulation 18 Consultation on the Local Plan Review would commence



in July 2020, however this was now likely to be delayed. The Committee, however, would get an opportunity to submit a consultation response, as and when the consultation commenced.

**RESOLVED** that the workplan as set out in the report be received and noted.

### **73 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Act.

### **74 VIABLE HOUSING SOLUTION**

Members gave consideration to a report which updated them on progress made in developing a viable housing solution for the South West Ward of Gainsborough. The report summarised the findings of the option appraisal work undertaken since October 2019, to achieve the objectives the Committee had agreed should govern the preferred solution.

The report outlined the fundamental principles of the preferred solution aligned to the committee's objectives and set out the Heads of Terms of the funding agreement between WLDC and the proposed partner. These would contractualise the delivery and governance arrangements in an open and transparent manner.

In doing so, Members were asked to approve the proposed funding agreement as the preferred option and in turn seek approval from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for the financial implications of the decision.

The funding principles were outlined in detail, with Officers advising what resources the Council would put into the deal and what resources the partner would provide. The long term outcomes it was hoped would be realised were also shared with the Committee, along with the income which would be lost as a result of asset transfer.

Debate ensued and whilst the Local Ward Member welcomed the investment, and considered the partner a credible one, who was forward thinking and active although he did have concerns as to whether the initial funding would be enough to deliver what was being envisaged. There were also a number of questions as to and how and where such properties would be bought, the costs involved in renovating was questioned, and all were in agreement the scheme needed to deliver as large a number of properties as possible if it was to have the desired outcome.

The Committee were of the view that the report did not have enough detail around these factors and therefore any decision they made would be in principle only at this stage. On that basis the following amendment was moved and seconded: -

That Members approve *in principle* the proposed funding agreement (including the transfer of 12 Council owned houses)..... **subject to receiving a detailed business plan.**

On being put to the vote the amendment was accepted. As the decision would now be an in principle one, it was noted the recommendation to forward this matter to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee would be deferred at this time.

Further debate ensued and Members questioned the level of income generated from the current assets, with Officers accepting these were not value for money investments in their current form, hence recommending they form part of any new partnership arrangement approved.

Members again questioned whether pressure could be put on the relevant body to amend the rate of housing benefit payments for the Gainsborough area, which was a market driving force in the area.

In responding to Members questions, Officers confirmed there would be little financial return from the proposal, the returns would be social and economic regeneration. Any arrangement would see the council retain a proportion of any overage. The preferred provider would not be permitted to sell the properties and was a not for profit organisation. It was envisaged, ultimately the properties would be part of a community trust arrangement. It was stressed the Council would not be assisting a private company to make money using Council funds.

The Committee wanted further assurance that they would have a role in owning the policy and monitoring its impact and success. Any business plan submitted needed to cover all of the points raised at 5.13 of the report.

The Chief Executive gave assurance that the business plan would address all of those concerns expressed by the Committee. Due to the far reaching implications of entering into any such partnership, the Chief Executive further suggested that once in receipt of the Business Plan, a workshop would be held with Members in order that they could scrutinise the detail and be confident in any decision. Furthermore it was suggested the decision be made using the concurrent committee arrangements.

On that basis it was

**RESOLVED** that the proposed funding agreement with the provider named within the report be approved **in principle** (including the transfer of 12 Council owned properties) as the preferred option to deliver a viable housing solution for Gainsborough South West Ward, to meet the objectives agreed by the Committee on 17 October 2019, **subject to receiving a detailed Business Plan.**

The meeting concluded at 7.58 pm.

Chairman

## Prosperous Communities Matters Arising Schedule

### Purpose:

To consider progress on the matters arising from previous Prosperous Communities Committee meetings.

**Recommendation:** That members note progress on the matters arising and request corrective action if necessary.

### Matters arising Schedule

Meeting	Prosperous Communities Committee				
Status	Title	Action Required	Comments	Due Date	Allocated To
Black	<b>enforcement Training for Parish Councils</b>	<p>Extract from mins 22/10/19</p> <p>in the past Officers from within the enforcement team had provided training to local residents in order that they could be certified to issue fixed penalties. The number of tickets issued by such persons however was very limited because although they had received training catching the culprit in the act still remained a challenge. This was something Officers were prepared to take away and see if further training could be offered as it had been previously and if there was desire and need in the community</p>	<p><b>this is something the council have offered previously and can continue to offer should Parish Wardens wish to issue FPNs for matters such as dog fouling or litter. Any individual has to be authorised and receive specific training. Information on this provision can be outlined within the Parish Charter.</b></p> <p><b>The Parish Charter is due for sign off in June 2020 and does include reference to this matter - TBC</b></p> <p><b>therefore revised target date for circulation of July 2020</b></p>	01/07/20	Grant White
Black	<b>Parish Charter - Final Version</b>	<p>Extract from mins of mtg 3/12/19</p> <p>a report detailing the outcome of the consultation and the proposed final parish charter for approval, be submitted to the Committee in May 2020.</p>	<p><b>please add this report to the report management system - item still awaiting entry onto the workplan.</b></p> <p><b>This matter is due to be considered by Committee on 2 June</b></p>	31/01/20	Grant White
Black	<b>Employment &amp; Skills Partnership Update for Member Bulletin</b>	<p>Extract from Prosperous Communities 28 Jan 2020:</p> <p>Resolved that ... regular updates be provided by the Senior Project &amp; Growth Officer for Employment &amp; Skills via the Members' Bulletin.</p> <p>Update to be provided for next available edition.</p>	<p><b>An update was due to be provided in the bulletin on 7 May</b></p>	31/05/20	Amanda Bouttell

Green	<b>information pack for parish councils re reporting issues</b>	<p>Extract from mins of mtg 22/10/19</p> <p>Officers undertook to prepare a guidance and information pack for Parish Councils covering some of the top issues affecting a number of parishes, explaining how to report certain issues and the options available to them. This was welcomed.</p>	<p><b>We will complete a draft during December/January however won't send out until after the Parish Charter consultation has been completed. This will allow us to add in any other bits of information that parishes may find useful as identified during the consultation.</b></p> <p><b>therefore revised target date for circulation of June 2020</b></p>	15/06/20	Grant White
Green	<b>Bird Feeding in the Market Place</b>	<p>Members stated that signs had not yet been placed in the Market Place and so this issue persisted. Previously it had been stated that: Our Comms Team have produced a design for a sign. This has been checked with Environmental Enforcement Officers and due to get a number of signs produced. Signs expected to be completed and put up during December/January.</p> <p>Enforcement Officers can monitor the situation and use a littering FPN if needed subject to the individuals being identified.</p> <p>Further update to be provided at the next meeting.</p>	<p><b>The signs have been designed and ordered and we are now waiting on the supplier to provide them. This was chased on 3/3/20. As soon as signs are available they will be installed. It is likely that this will be during March 2020.</b></p> <p><b>At cttee on 17 March 2020</b></p> <p><b>The action had been re-opened and up to date commentary included. The Chief Executive added further verbal commentary, advising that 20 signs had now been received and would be erected over the coming days and weeks.</b></p> <p><b>COVID-19 has seen some delays however . All the banding kit has now arrived so the signs should hopefully be erected within next two week</b></p>	02/06/20	Andy Gray

Green	<b>viable housing solution - decision in principle only pending receipt of BP and need for member workshop</b>	<p>extract from mins of mtg 17/3/20</p> <p>The Chief Executive gave assurance that the business plan would address all of those concerns expressed by the Committee. Due to the far reaching implications of entering into any such partnership, the Chief Executive further suggested that once in receipt of the Business Plan, a workshop would be held with Members in order that they could scrutinise the detail and be confident in any decision. Furthermore it was suggested the decision be made using the concurrent committee arrangements.</p>	<p><b>once BP is received. Officers will need to work together to: -</b></p> <p><b>arrange a workshop for all members</b></p> <p><b>agree a date for a concurrent cttee meeting.</b></p> <p><b>timeline and approach to be kept under review due to current SD measures</b></p>	30/09/20	Ian Knowles
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# Agenda Item 6a



**Prosperous Communities  
Committee**

**Tuesday 2 June 2020**

**Subject: Housing Assistance Policy Update**

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

Andy Gray  
Housing and Enforcement Manager

[andy.gray@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:andy.gray@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

Purpose / Summary:

To provide Elected Members with an update on the Housing Assistance Policy and its delivery.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**Elected Members are asked to:**

- a) Note the update in regards to delivery and budget spend.**
- b) Support the proposal that the remaining Private Sector Renewal Grants are completed in line with the current policy, after which this part of the Policy will no longer be available.**
- c) Support the proposal that no further applications for the grant are accepted until the existing applications are finalised.**

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 provides the framework for the Council to provide a wider range of discretionary assistance. The Council has a statutory duty to provide mandatory DFGs and there is no intention to amend this duty.

The aspects of the policy that relate to private sector renewal are entirely discretionary. Additional procurement advice will be sought in regards to the specific aspects of this policy to ensure that the legal risk is minimal. Given that the offers being made are positive it is not expected that any legal issues will be identified.

### **Financial : FIN/11/21/SL**

Section 4 details the spend to date in relation to the Private Sector Renewal aspect of the Policy.

The main financial implication is that the budget remaining is £198k, which is spread across 20/21 and 20/22 (£100k for 20/21 and £98k for 21/22).

It is proposed that this budget continues to be utilised in line with the Policy in its current form.

### **Staffing :**

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

*NB: Please explain how you have considered the policy's impact on different groups (for example: young people, elderly, ethnic minorities, LGBT community, rural residents, disabled, others).*

### **Data Protection Implications :**

### **Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :**

### **Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :**

**Health Implications:**

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

West Lindsey Housing Assistance Policy and supporting documents  
<https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/my-services/housing-and-home-choices/housing-strategies-and-policies/west-lindsey-housing-assistance-policy-2018-2022/>

**Risk Assessment :**

Delivery of Mandatory DFGs – the current Covid 19 pandemic has resulted in work relating to mandatory DFGs ceasing. It is not clear how and when this work will be resumed at this stage. When it is resumed, there will be a backlog of cases that will need to be delivered. There will also be a smaller timeframe in which to spend the allocated grant.

Mitigation – Non-discretionary grants will not be prioritised during this period and any additional resources required to deliver the mandatory DFGs will be taken from the budget provision made via the Better Care Fund at the level agreed with Lincolnshire County Council previously.

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

*i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)*

**Yes**

**No**

**Key Decision:**

*A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications*

**Yes**

**No**



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Housing Assistance Policy was introduced in August 2018, it includes discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and Private Sector Renewal grants to assist in reduction of empty homes and improve housing conditions. It is thought the Lincolnshire Housing Assistance Policy will replace the Discretionary DFG'S element in the future.
- 1.2. Prosperous Communities Committee have requested that a review of the grants be undertaken and reported back to them. This paper provides information and updates in regards to the grants offered.
- 1.3. It should be noted that due to the current Covid-19 pandemic the delivery of all grants have been temporarily suspended, unless there is an immediate high risk of harm that requires the works to be completed. Two DFGs have been completed during this period to enable individuals to be discharged from hospital and enable them to be cared for in the community.

## **2. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants**

- 2.1. The Council continues to deliver its mandatory obligations in relation to DFGs and has worked across the County with colleagues to provide a more consistent approach to delivery. The funding to delivery DFGs comes via the Better Care Fund and in 19/20 £708k was spent across 106 grants. Annually the Council continues to spend all of the allocation it is given and seeks to work with customers and healthcare professionals to ensure that the right grants are provided.
- 2.2. In terms of performance, the work area received its highest number of DFG referrals over the course of 19/20, 158 and continues to deliver this with a high level of customer satisfaction. In 19/20 an agreed countywide procurement framework was put in place and is now embedded. Collectively work is ongoing towards a shared Countywide policy for DFGs, which is expected during 20/21. The District Council is only responsible for certain aspects of the process in relation to DFGS and we have no control over any initial referral waiting times that may occur.
- 2.3. The average days between receipt of referral and completion of the grant has increased on average during the year, however during the last quarter this has reduced. The annual average for this was 162 days. It is expected that this will decrease again during 20/21 as the contractors and processes become more streamlined under the new procurement framework. It should be noted that there are currently 86 applications in the system that are at a standstill due to the Covid-19 pandemic and performance figures will be impacted by this.

## **3. Discretionary DFGs**

3.1. During 19/20 £65k has been spent on discretionary DFGs. These are where decisions are made to provide assistance to persons that fail the means test but demonstrate an inability to meet the contribution required. 12 grants were delivered in this way.

#### 4. Private Sector Renewal Grants

4.1. All of the grants provided within this part of the policy are discretionary and have been funded via the Council's own capital programme. A summary of the grants provided to date are below:

Grant	No. Delivered 19/20	Spend 19/20	Total Spend to Date
Empty Property	15 (17 in pipeline)	£134k	£170k
Owner Occupier	4 (12 in pipeline)	£19k	£19k
Empty Property Purchase	6 apps received	£0	£0
Landlord Grant	0	£0	£0
EP Owner Occ Grant	0 apps received	£0	£0

4.2. The Empty Property Grant has proved to be the most popular of the discretionary grants offered. There has been a steady flow of applications since the scheme was introduced. There are currently 17 grants in progress. The maximum grant that can be paid is £10k. The number of long term empty properties in the South West Ward is at its lowest level (since we have records for). During this quarter 4 of 19/20 there has been a general increase in long term empties across the District, which will be noted in progress and delivery.

4.3. The owner occupier grant has mainly dealt with boiler breakdowns and has been a useful tool to address issues where Housing Act enforcement is not necessary or justifiable. 4 of these grants have been completed and 12 are in the pipeline. Various agencies have referred into this grant.

4.4. Some of the benefits associated with the completion of these grants are as follows: reduced number of empty properties within the SWW; improvement of stock condition; reduced complaints in relation to the problem empty properties returned to use; improved living conditions for owner occupiers; improved health outcomes; improved energy efficiency and reduction in fuel poverty.

4.5. Empty property purchase has not been successful to date, mainly due to the number of persons that have wished to access the empty property grant. Given the scheme now being developed with P3, there will be little justification for utilising this aspect of the policy moving forward, unless where a Compulsory Purchase Order is pursued.

4.6. No applications have been received for the landlord grant. There have been some procurement complications, which have impacted upon the Council's ability to deliver this. These relate to the procuring of one supplier as opposed to the purchase of a number of units of the item,

without having a clear understanding of the volumes required for delivery.

4.7. The owner occupier empty property grant is effectively providing a deposit for any persons wishing to buy a long term empty property in the South West Ward. This has not been accessed and feedback locally is that there is not a demand for a scheme such as this within this area.

4.8. In summary, there has been mixed success to date. The empty property grant has proved very popular and as a result, this was the focus of officers in terms of engagement. The number delivered and the number in progress demonstrate this. Owner occupier grants, whilst not as popular, have served to assist some of the districts more vulnerable owner occupiers. The remaining grants, as proposed within the policy have not been accessed to date.

## **5. Moving Forward**

5.1. Initially, it was intended to review this policy and amend some of the options provided within it. However, due to the development of the Viable Housing Solutions Project, the budget available for the discretionary aspects of the policy has been reduced.

5.2. £300k of the original budget has been transferred over to the Viable Housing Solutions (VHS) Project. After the spend outlined above there is a budget of £100k for 20/21 and £98k for 21/22 available.

5.3. The transferring of this budget has been agreed on the basis that the VHS project will be a more effective tool for ensuring a greater impact across the wider area of the South West Ward. The VHS also brings with it property management tools, which the current grant scheme does not. There is also a saturation point that will be reached in relation to the empty property grants due to it offering a specific resolution, that may not suit all empty property owners.

5.4. There are 17 empty property grant applications and 12 owner occupier grants currently in progress, therefore it is proposed that these be completed under the current policy. As a result, once the above grants are completed there is unlikely to be any significant budget remaining to complete any further works.

5.5. Subject to the above grants being completed, this will mean that the allocated capital budget for Private Sector Renewal will be spent and there are currently no further plans to extend this scheme. Within the South West Ward the scheme will be replaced by the Viable Housing Solutions Project.

5.6. An added resource implication for this area of work is that there is likely to be a large backlog of mandatory DFGs to complete during 20/21 and 21/22 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Limiting the Private

Sector Renewal Grants available will enable the officers to focus on delivering the mandatory grants.

## **6. Recommendations**

Elected Members are asked to:

- 6.1. Note the update in regards to delivery and budget spend.
- 6.2. Support the proposal that the remaining Private Sector Renewal Grants are completed in line with the current policy, after which this part of the Policy will no longer be available.
- 6.3. Support the proposal that no further applications for the Private Sector Renewal Grant are accepted until the existing applications are finalised.

## **Appendix 1 – Case Studies for Empty Property and Owner Occupier Grants**

Prior to COVID19 Empty Properties were at the lowest they had been in 4 years, throughout the district, in particular the SWW. Empty properties attract ASB but the number of complaints received regarding properties being insecure, waste in gardens have reduced during this period. The EP grant incentive has encouraged investors in the area and increased access to safe sustainable tenancies. Below are some examples of the positive impact the initiative has had.

### **Case 1 – Empty Property Grant**

Property purchased on Waterworks Street by an investor in May 2018 with the intention to lease the property to a well-known Housing Provider in the area. Full renovation was completed which involved taking the property right back to brick, full rewire of electrical installation, new central heating, damp proofing, new kitchen and bathroom. The property was plastered throughout and completed to a high standard. The Front yard was completely block paved and a new high boundary wall built to the rear with gated access. The total cost exceeded the maximum grant amount, however the £10,000 contribution was able to make it viable for the owner. The property was brought back in to use in January 2019 and now accommodates vulnerable customers providing a safe home with ongoing support.

This particular street has a high concentration of empty properties and applications in the SWW generally are encouraged by WLDC.

### **Case 2 – Empty Property Grant**

Customer was living in a private rented property but also owned a property in SWW. The property he owned required renovation when he purchased it, so he took a tenancy while works were ongoing. Unfortunately the property was subject to vandalism while the property was vacant, this resulted in even more work being required and the customer did not have sufficient funds. The issue was ongoing for almost two years, the customer had council tax liability for both properties and was accruing a huge council tax debt. Referral from CT received, contact made with customer and assistance provided in making an application for EP Grant. Grant approved, new central heating, full rewire of property, bay roof repairs and other remedial work carried out within the grant limit. Customer was able to move back in to his own home and relieve him from dual council tax liability.

### **Owner Occupier Grants**

The owner occupier grants we're introduced to eliminate serious hazards within the property, it enable occupiers to remain in their home and prevent them from being at risk of harm.

#### **Case 1 – Owner Occupier Grant**

Customer has owned and occupied the property since 2002 in Gainsborough. Customer was mortgage free but elderly and in receipt of guaranteed pension credit. Roof was in disrepair and causing damp internally. The roof had been repaired many times over the years which was not cost effective. Customer had been advised each time that a new roof was required. Local builder employed to erect scaffolding, strip and re-lay slate roof, install new fascia's and guttering. Without assistance from the Council the customer may have had to consider selling her home. The grant assistance has removed the hazard and enabled her to remain at home with peace of mind.

#### **Case 2 – Owner Occupier Grant**

Customer purchased the property in 1977 and continued to live in the Bardney address. Mortgage free, elderly and with various health issues. Applicant in receipt of guaranteed pension credit. Roof was in serious disrepair causing damp internally and the ceiling to collapse. The solid fuel fire had also been condemned leaving her without heating and hot water, plus drafts from the disrepair to the roof. There was no gas to the property so enquiries were made with Cadent to see if pipework could be installed within the grant budget. Thankfully we were able to get the property connected to mains gas for the cost of £600. Customer's daughter sourced a heating company offering other government initiatives, Full Gas central heating was able to be installed at a very reasonable cost. Builder employed to re new the roof covering and carry out repairs to chimney stacks and valleys. Under HHSRS this customer falls under the vulnerable group for excess cold. It is likely without assistance from the council she may have become very unwell.

Cases like the above are examples of how we have almost certainly prevented admissions to hospital, and without having the need for referrals from health professionals.



**Prosperous Communities  
Committee**

**Tuesday 2 June 2020**

**Subject: Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2019/20**

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

Ellen King  
Senior Performance Officer

[ellen.king@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:ellen.king@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

Purpose / Summary:

To consider the Progress and Delivery report for period four (January-March) 2019-20.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. To assess the performance of the Council's services through agreed performance measures and indicate areas where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial measures set out in the report.
2. To note the updates provided for each of the Council's service areas which details how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting Council operations; and the likely effect on performance over the next 12 months.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:**

There are no legal implications as a result of this report

**Financial : FIN/12/21/B/SL**

The financial performance indicators contained within this report are reflected through the budget monitoring reporting to Corporate Policy and Resources committee for the same period.

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**Staffing :**

There are no staffing implications as a result of this report

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

N/A

**Risk Assessment :**

N/A

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :**

N/A

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s  
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

X

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

X





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## Executive Summary

### 1.0 Overall Summary of Performance

Table one shows a summary of service performance for period four 2019/20 (Jan-Mar) which also includes the preceding three periods for comparison. [Table 2](#) (and the associated tables in [Appendix A](#)) identifies measures where performance is outside agreed tolerance (red or green) for two consecutive periods or more. Where remedial action has been identified to ensure underperformance is rectified, this has been included in the 'commentary' column.

In addition to the usual Progress and Delivery updates, this report contains a series of Service Updates for each of the Council's service areas in order to highlight the inevitable impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have on business as usual and performance over the coming months.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the UK government announced a series of social restrictions as part of a package of measures designed to tackle the global COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of writing, these measures are set to remain in place until at least 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020; with varying forms of social distancing likely to remain until a vaccine has been developed for mass immunisation. [Appendix B](#) includes update reports from each service area highlighting how business as usual and performance are likely to be affected over the coming year (2020/2021). Rolling updates will continue to be provided in each P&D report as the situation develops. Whilst it is not possible to provide exact figures for how the Council is likely to be affected at this stage, these Service Updates are designed to provide Members with as much analysis as possible to aid decision making at this time.

RAG	2019/20			
	Period One	Period Two	Period Three	Period Four
Exceeding target	48%	35%	46.4%	35.1%
Meeting target	40.6%	56%	41.2%	43.3%
Below target	11.4%	7%	12.4%	11.3%
Missing information	0%	2%	0%	10.3%

*Table 1: Overall summary of performance*

## Measures where performance is outside agreed tolerance levels for at least two consecutive periods

Service	Measure	Preceding three periods			Current period		
		P1 (2019/20)	P2 (2019/20)	P3 (2019/20)	Current Target	P4 (2019/20)	Commentary
<a href="#">Asset and Facilities Management</a>	Rental income – car parks	£120,588	£180,984	£233,104	£190,700	£286,761	This represents the highest level of income since data began to be collected in 2013.
	Rental portfolio voids	7%	5%	3%	12%	10%	The acquisition of the Saxilby units has affected void rates whilst new tenants are sought, however, performance remains better than the national and regional average.
<a href="#">Benefits</a>	End to end processing times	3.9 days	4.3 days	4.4 days	5 days	3.1 days	No performance issues noted.
	Number of claims older than 30 days	15.5	10	15	20	12	No performance issues noted.
<a href="#">Council Tax and NNDR</a>	Cost of service delivery per property tax base	£10.15	£5.38	£10.08	£9.10	£9.90	Court costs and legal fees requiring virement have affected costs in this period. Costs will adjust in the next reporting period and performance is likely to be back on track.
<a href="#">Democratic Services</a>	Member satisfaction with training & development events	100%	92%	100%	87%	100%	No issues noted. All member training and development events are on hold while social restriction measures are in place.
	% of Freedom of Information requests (Fols) turned around in the statutory time limit	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	223 Fol requests were received during the period.
	Number of Fol challenges that are subsequently upheld	0	0	0	5	0	No issues noted.

Service	Measure	Preceding three periods			Current period		
		P1 (2019/20)	P2 (2019/20)	P3 (2019/20)	Current Target	P4 (2019/20)	Commentary
<a href="#">Development Management</a>	% of major planning applications determined on time	100%	100%	100%	90%	100%	13 major applications were received during the period.
	% of non-major planning applications determined on time	99%	99%	99%	80%	100%	50 non-major applications were received during the period
	Planning appeals allowed as a % of all appeals	2%	1%	2%	9%	1%	Of the 11 appeals considered during the period, 9 of these were dismissed.
	Income received	£104,310	£388,172	£781,370	£1,019,200	£1,019,418	Whilst January saw the lowest planning app fee income of the year (£35.4k), March saw the 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest (£128.2k)
<a href="#">Enforcement and Community Safety</a>	% of housing enforcement cases closed within 6 months	81%	78%	82%	75%	96%	No performance issues noted.
	Average number of days before a Community Safety case is closed	8	6.5	6	15	5	No performance issues noted.
<a href="#">Home Choices</a>	Number of households in temporary accommodation	20	19	8	18	12	No issues noted.
	Number of cases prevented from becoming homeless within the statutory target	22	57	65	90	48	A significant increase in homeless relief cases in March has resulted in a decline in homeless prevention cases. Please see the <a href="#">Home Choices service update</a> for a detailed explanation

Service	Measure	Preceding three periods			Current period		
		P1 (2019/20)	P2 (2019/20)	P3 (2019/20)	Current Target	P4 (2019/20)	Commentary
	Number of nights spent in B&B accommodation	59	58	52	0	28	Whilst performance remains below the statutory target, there has been a significant improvement of 81% compared to the same period last year. Partnership working with Market Rasen has been undertaken to provide cold weather provision for rough sleepers. This was funded by MHCLG and led to a significant reduction in B&B usage (0 nights in January and 4 nights in February).
<a href="#">Housing</a>	Average cost of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	£3,859	£5,172	£5,179	£7,500	£5,273	It is likely that the effects of COVID-19 will have a number of impacts in this work area. Officers in this work area have been redeployed and all existing cases will need to be reviewed. See the <a href="#">Housing service update</a> for a more detailed explanation.
	Customer satisfaction with DFGs	100%	100%	100%	92%	100%	No issues noted.
<a href="#">Leisure Centre Contract</a>	Customer satisfaction with West Lindsey leisure facilities	94%	96%	95%	80%	96%	This figure does not include March due to the closure of the Centre.
	Volume of people using the West Lindsey leisure centre	57,131	107,324	69,976	78,750	78,272	Only partial figures for March have been included due to the closure of the centre. Had the centre not been impacted by COVID-19, it is likely that usage figures would have exceeded the target.
<a href="#">Licensing</a>	% of licensing applications processed in the target time	99%	100%	100%	96%	100%	No performance issues noted.
	Number of licensing applications received	178	338	268	195	198	No issues noted during the period though it is likely that the number of applications for licensed premises will go down, potentially to zero, as a result of COVID-19.
<a href="#">Street Cleansing</a>	Volunteer litter picks	30	24	19	18	27	No issues noted for the period though it is likely that future volunteer litter picks will be affected by social distancing measures.

Service	Measure	Preceding three periods			Current period		Commentary
		P1 (2019/20)	P2 (2019/20)	P3 (2019/20)	Current Target	P4 (2019/20)	
<a href="#">Town Centre Management</a>	Average number of paid for market stalls - Saturday	95	7	7	14	7	There has been a decline in market stall take up, coupled with a cancelled market on 11 <sup>th</sup> February due to high wind and cancelled markets in March due to the effects of COVID-19.
	Income received	£4,785	£15,667	£22,318	£36,300	£28,247	The issues noted above have impacted on income received. This will continue to be the case while social restriction measures are in place.
<a href="#">Trinity Arts Centre</a>	Audience figures	3,136	7,023	5,965	3,600	4,245	Audience figures were exceptionally high during the period but will be significantly affected throughout 2020/2021 by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please see <a href="#">Trinity Arts Centre service update</a> for a detailed explanation.
<a href="#">Waste Collection</a>	Missed black and blue bin collections	211	310	233	285	230	No issues noted.

Table 2: Measures performing outside agreed tolerance levels for at least two consecutive periods

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Time taken to pay invoices	9.5 days	14 days	11 days		No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
Average Customer satisfaction rating out of 5 stars	N/A	3.5 stars	4 stars	N/A	In percentage terms, satisfaction for the period stands at 82.4%. A total of 198 compliments were received, an increase on the same period last year, with a particular increase in March. The Council is now able to capture compliments received through sites such as Trip Advisor, social media and Google Review. Officers are also being more proactive in logging all types of customer feedback.	Continue to monitor and communicate with staff to ensure that all feedback continues to be recorded.

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Complaints received	40	NTS	42	↓	A total of 187 complaints were received for the year as a whole compared to 146 for the previous year. Promotion of the Customer First Programme has led to officers becoming more proactive in recording complaints with the Customer Experience Officer.	Customer Services, Waste Services and Planning received the highest number of complaints. Improvements to service delivery continue to be made through implementation of the Customer First Programme.
% of complaints where the Council is at fault	23%	45%	29%	↓	There has been a 9% decrease in upheld complaints for the year as a whole, down to 37% compared to 46% for the previous year. This is despite an increase in the overall number of complaints.	Learning and improvement actions have been implemented where necessary; including changes to policies and procedures, improving the customer's experience of the Council's website and improvements in the way that information is provided to the customer.
Average number of days to resolve a complaint	6.7 days	21 days	7 days	↓	Improved engagement with officers through the Customer First Programme has led to efficiencies in resolving complaints. Response times have improved by one whole day for the year as a whole compared to the previous year. Performance for period 4 is down compared to last year due to initial disruption caused by changes to working practice as a result of social distancing measures.	Continue to monitor. The target for 2020/21 has been amended to account for high performance levels.
Digital demand	40%	NTS	47%	↑	The ongoing programme of service re-designs is placing greater emphasis on digital services which has led to an increase in demand.	Customers will continue to be offered a choice in how they access Council services.
% of calls answered within 21 seconds	86%	80%	85%	↓	Performance remains comparable with last year. This is despite an increase of 15,000 phone calls received by the Council during 2019/20.	Telephone demand continues to be analysed to understand if and where this can be reduced. For example, by placing more information on the Council's website.
Average number of staff sickness absence days per FTE	0.77 days	0.6 days	0.57 days	↑	No issues noted	Continue to monitor, particularly the impact of COVID-19 on staff sickness absence.



Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Server and system availability	100%	98%	100%	→	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
Number of data breaches resulting in action by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)	N/A	0	0	N/A	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.

Table 3: Corporate Health performance

## Appendix A: Service Performance Exceptions

### Asset and Facilities Management

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Rental income – car parks	£231,340	£190,700	£286,761	↑	This represents the highest level of income since data began to be collected in 2013.	Continue to monitor.
Rental portfolio voids	8%	12%	10%	↓	The acquisition of the Saxilby units has affected void rates whilst new tenants are sought, however, performance remains better than the national and regional average.	Continue to seek new tenants for the vacant Saxilby units.
Planned and responsive maintenance	64%	70%	77%	↑	Proactive maintenance has resulted in a reduction in maintenance costs for Council property of £100k over the last three years. Responsive maintenance for the period stands at 23%	Continue to monitor.

Table 4: Asset and Facilities Management performance exceptions

### Benefits

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
End to end processing times	3.7 days	5 days	3.1 days	↑	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
Number of claims older than 30 days	9	20	12	↓	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.

Table 5: Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support performance exceptions

## Building Control

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Income received	£220,253	£235,700	£241,877	↑	No issues noted	Continue to monitor

Table 6: Building Control performance exceptions

## Contracts Management and Procurement

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
% of contracts awarded to local suppliers	20%	20%	56%	↑	Five out of a possible nine contracts were awarded to local suppliers. The lifetime value of these contracts is in excess of £100k.	Continue to monitor.

Table 7: Contracts Management and Procurement performance exceptions

## Council Tax and NNDR

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Cost of service per property tax base	£5.58	£9.10	£9.90	↓	Court costs and legal fees requiring virement have affected costs in this period.	Court costs were finalised and legal fees vired at the end of March Costs will therefore adjust in the next reporting period.
NNDR in year collection rate	98.6%	98.6%	98.9%	↑	A total of £948,602 was collected during the period, an increase of £61,214 on the same period last year.	Continue to monitor.
Number of properties on the Council Tax base per FTE	5,737	5,000	5,493	↓	A staff retirement has affected performance in this area, though it remains above target.	Another member of staff is receiving training to assist in this area.

Table 8: Council Tax and NNDR performance exceptions

## Democratic Services

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Member satisfaction with training and development events	100%	87%	100%	→	No issues noted.	All member training and development events are currently suspended until further notice.
% of Freedom of Information requests (Fol) turned around in the statutory time limit	100%	99%	100%	→	A total of 223 Fol requests were received during the period, down by 12 on the same period as last year.	Continue to monitor
Number of FOI challenges that are subsequently upheld	0	5	0	→	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.

Table 9: Democratic Services performance exceptions

## Development Management

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Received planning applications	372	345	410	↑	During the period, 410 new applications (a 10% increase on the same period last year). March alone saw 177 applications, the highest monthly total in more than two years.	The overall number of applications received for the year is 1,526, only 3 applications fewer than the previous year. This varies from the rest of England which has been reporting a 4% decline in the number of applications by the end of 2019, compared to the previous year.
% of major planning applications determined on time	100%	90%	100%	→	A total of 13 major planning applications were received during the period.	Continue to monitor.
% of non-major applications determined on time	99%	80%	100%	↑	A total of 50 non-major planning applications were received during the period.	Continue to monitor.
Appeals allowed as a % of all decisions	1%	9%	1%	→	Of the 11 appeals considered during the period, 9 of these were dismissed.	

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Received income	<b>£955,102</b>	£1,019,200	<b>£1,019,418</b>	↑	Income is reported on a cumulative basis. Whilst January saw the lowest planning app fee income of the year (£35.4k), March saw the 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest (£128.2k)	Continue to monitor.

Table 10: Development Management performance exceptions

## Enforcement and Community Safety

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
% of planning enforcement cases given an initial response within 20 working days	N/A	90%	<b>97%</b>	N/A	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
Average time before a community safety case is closed	<b>7.6 days</b>	15 days	<b>5 days</b>	↑	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
% of housing enforcement cases closed within 6 months	N/A	75%	<b>96%</b>	↑	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
Number of private sector properties where conditions have been improved	N/A	21	<b>58</b>	N/A	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.

Table 11: Enforcement performance exceptions

## Garden Waste Collection

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Subscription take up	48.4%	58%	48.2%	↓	Subscription take-up is down by 0.2% compared to the same period last year. This equates to 30 fewer subscriptions. The usual third reminder and communication campaign were suspended as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic.	Continue to monitor subscription rates as the current situation progresses.

Table 12: Garden Waste performance exceptions

## Home Choices

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
The number of cases prevented from becoming homeless within the statutory target (56 days)	58	90	48	↓	A significant increase in homeless relief cases in March has resulted in a decline in homeless prevention cases.	See Home Choices service update above for a more detailed explanation.
Number of nights spent in B&B accommodation	148	0	28	↑	24 of these nights occurred in March as a result of a complex case involving domestic abuse for which temporary accommodation was not deemed suitable. The target set is a statutory one.	There has been an improvement of 81% compared to the same period last year. Partnership working funded by MHCLG to provide cold weather provision for rough sleepers led to a significant reduction in B&B usage (0 nights in Jan and 4 nights in Feb).
The average number of days spent in temporary accommodation	20	56	49	↓	The increase in temporary accommodation usage compared to the same period last year is a result of two complex cases where it was difficult to move tenants from the accommodation; requiring police and hospital involvement.	Procedures have been amended to prevent a repeat of this in a similar situation.
Number of households using temporary accommodation	34	18	12	↑	As above	As above

Table 13: Home Choices performance exceptions

## Housing

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Average cost of DFGs	<b>£6,214</b>	£7,500	<b>£5,273</b>	↑	It is likely that the effects of COVID-19 will have a number of impacts in this work area. Officers in this work area have been redeployed and all existing cases will need to be reviewed.	The Council is liaising with Lincolnshire County Council. See 'Disabled Facilities Grants' above for more information.
The total number of long-term empty homes in the District	<b>571</b>	540	<b>673</b>	↓	This represents an increase of 102 empty homes compared to the same period last year.	Further work is being undertaken to understand why the numbers have risen in this way. However, performance for the year as a whole is within agreed parameters.

Table 14: Housing performance exceptions

## ICT

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Number of helpdesk requests received	N/A	N/A	<b>361</b>	N/A	Despite the numbers of Officers working from home, there hasn't been a noticeable increase in calls to the helpdesk.	Continue to monitor
Average time taken to action helpdesk requests	N/A	N/A	<b>2 hrs, 26 mins</b>	N/A	The nature of some of the helpdesk calls have been more complex which take longer to action.	Continue to monitor
Number of change management requests received during the period	N/A	N/A	<b>335</b>	N/A	There was a noticeable increase in the number of change requests due to the increase in staff working from home.	Continue to monitor
Number of change requests completed during the period	N/A	N/A	<b>325</b>	N/A	As above	Continue to monitor

Table 15: ICT performance exceptions

## Leisure Contract

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Customer satisfaction with West Lindsey leisure facilities	95%	75%	96%	↑	This figure does not include March due to the closure of the Centre.	This will continue to be monitored once the centre re-opens.
Volume of people using the West Lindsey leisure centre	92,303	78,750	78,272	↓	Only partial figures for March have been included due to the closure of the centre. Had the centre not been impacted by COVID-19, it is likely that usage figures would have exceeded the target.	As above.

Table 16: Leisure Contract performance exceptions

## Licensing

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Income received	£10,426	N/A	£6,788	↓	Income is down by £3,638 (or 34.9%) compared to the same period last year.	It is likely that income will continue to be affected as a result of COVID-19 though the extent of this is unclear at this stage.
Number of applications received	232	195	198	↓	No issues noted during the period though it is likely that the number of applications for licensed premises will go down, potentially to zero, as a result of COVID-19.	Continue to monitor.
% of applications processed within the target time	86%	96%	100%	↑	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.

Table 17: Licensing performance exceptions

## Local Land Charges

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Income received	£103,439	N/A	£92,973	↓	Awaiting commentary	Awaiting commentary



Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Market Share	62%	65%	60%	↓	Awaiting commentary	Awaiting commentary
Average number of days to process a search	7.55 days	10 days	6.7 days	↑	Complex cases and staff absence led to an increased turnaround time in January	This issue was quickly resolved with February and March returning an average turnaround time of 5 days.

Table 18: Local Land Charges performance exceptions

### Regulatory Services

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
% of food premises rated at 3* or above	97%	95%	97%	→	No issues noted	Continue to monitor
Number of Environmental Protection requests received	N/A	125	185	N/A	Requests of this nature have increased due to the social restriction measures in place. Typical requests relate to noise nuisance and burning of bonfires.	The approach during this period has been to educate rather than enforce and this will be kept under regular review.
% of Environmental Protection cases closed within 6 months	N/A	75%	100%	N/A	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor

Table 19: Regulatory Services performance exceptions

### Street Cleansing

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
The number of volunteer litter picks	21	18	27	↑	It is likely that litter picks will reduce whilst social distancing measure remain in place.	Continue to monitor

Table 22: Street cleansing performance exceptions

## Systems Development

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Website availability	100%	98%	100%	→	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.
LLPG Standard	Gold	National Standard	Gold	→	West Lindsey is the only Council in Lincolnshire to be awarded 'gold' status for data accuracy	Continue to monitor.

Table 20: Systems Development performance exceptions

## Town Centre Management

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
Average number of paid for market stalls – Tuesday	34	37	23	↓	There has been a decline in market stall take up, coupled with a cancelled market on 11 <sup>th</sup> February due to high wind and cancelled markets in March due to the effects of COVID-19. Overall, stall take-up is down 34.5% compared to the same period last year.	The ongoing effects of COVID-19 are likely to have a significant impact on the market's performance (including the Farmer's Market) whilst social restrictions remain in place.
Average number of paid for market stalls – Saturday	13	14	7	↓	There has been a decline in market stall take up as well as cancelled markets in March due to the effects of COVID-19.	As above
Income received	£35,086	£36,300	£28,247	↓	As above	As above

Table 21: Town Centre Management performance exceptions

## Waste Collection

Measure	Baseline Perf (P4 2018/19)	Target	Current Perf (P4 2019/20)	DOT	What is affecting performance?	What do we need to do to improve and by when?
% of household waste sent for recycling	<b>30%</b>	50%	<b>30%</b>	→	High contamination rates (45%) have led to a decline in recycling	WLDC is working with the Lincs Waste Partnership and Lincolnshire County Council to reduce the amount of contamination in the recycling stream. A new county wide mixed dry recycling mix has been agreed with all of the district council websites having been updated to show the same message.
Number of missed black and blue bin collections	<b>198</b>	285	<b>230</b>	↓	Performance continues to exceed target.	Continue to monitor.
% of missed bins collected within the Service Level Agreement	<b>100%</b>	95%	<b>100%</b>	→	No issues noted.	Continue to monitor.

Table 22: Waste Collection performance exceptions

## Appendix B: COVID-19 Service Updates

### Asset and Facilities Management

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Since social restriction measures came in to effect, the Property and Assets Team have maintained a skeleton staff presence in the Guildhall on a rota basis as there are still some staff and tenants occupying and working in the building. In addition, there is still a requirement to maintain compliance at our operational buildings (for example, fire alarm testing, legionella monitoring and checking critical plant) along with observing the security of Council properties. There was an initial increase in communications between our tenants and the service but as the lockdown has progressed and Government support has been provided, this has reduced. The requirement for the management of day to day maintenance has eased a little with some of our properties being closed and contractors furloughing staff. Servicing of premises was initially steady but has slowly increased as contractors determine means of working whilst observing social distancing. Some of the facilities management work, such as managing meeting rooms, has completely stopped however, the officer who manages this is instead involved in service plan project work such as implementation of the compliance and asset management policies; as well as assisting the team with other tasks. The following additional work streams have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **Car Parking** - The decision to temporarily suspend public car parking charges for three months has meant no income from day tickets as well as cancellations or parking permits. While income should recover once social restriction measures are eased, it is anticipated that the car parking income target will not be met for 2020/2021.
- **Rent** - Following the wavering of some low value rent, Management Team instructed that WLDC would only offer temporary reviewable deferred rent to tenants requesting assistance on the understanding that it would be fully repaid by financial year end. Providing there is no increase in property voids, the loss of income in this area should be minimal.
- **Capital Works Project** - The lockdown has coincided with what would be the busiest period of the Market Rasen Leisure Centre works. Although the main contractor has endeavoured there have been difficulties as a result of sub-contractors, utilities contractors and material suppliers being furloughed. This has resulted in unforeseeable delay which will ultimately result in additional costs to the Council. Other proposed works that have, or may be, delayed include Caenby Corner Operational Service Depot, 5-7 Market Place and the Guildhall Reception. At present, it is not known what impact the current situation will have on these projects but it is anticipated that managing social distancing may extend project delivery times and subsequently increase costs.
- **Revenue Budget Lines** – Some budget lines will experience pressure such as cleaning, cleaning materials and maintenance but this may be countered by three months of low activity that may create surplus in other budget lines such as utilities.

The team has been able to press on with implementing some policy action plans, mainly around compliance and asset management which has led to greater control and transparency on a number of compliance matters. Furthermore the service normally struggles around financial closedown with placing annual servicing and utility orders for our property assets. These along with preparing the Actual Service Charge report have been completed a little earlier this year.

### Benefits

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The last two weeks of March saw an erratic change in the number of live claims being handled. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in applications for Universal Credit, followed by Council Tax Support and the effects of this will show in performance figures for the first quarter of the new financial year. The Team have also processed over 2,000 changes to Housing Benefit claims in order to grant additional Housing Benefit as a result of the pandemic.

Prior to this the year-end procedure had been completed smoothly generating little contact from customers. Another Benefits Assessment Officer post became vacant on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 which has created resourcing issues within the Team with the loss of resource totalling 25% since April 2019.

## **Building Control**

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Application rates have dropped as expected during winter, however, income has remained above target. Of the applications received during the period, 108 were building notices, 47 were full plan applications, one was a partnership applications and 23 were partnership applications from other authorities. The Team is still carrying a vacancy for a Surveyor and the temporary staffing costs are impacting the Team's costs.

## **Contracts Management and Procurement**

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Procurement exercises continue to be run well and in accordance with all required protocols. Staff training scheduled for March has had to be postponed and will be rearranged once social restriction measures have been eased. In the last period five of nine contracts (56%) were awarded to local suppliers. The life-time value of these contracts is in excess of £100k. The procurement of the ERP software system has been paused due to the implications of COVID-19 and this decision is due to be reviewed within six months.

## **Council Tax and NNDR**

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Almost all of the Revenues team are new to home working. The Council wide systems issues experienced during the first week led to a number of the Team coming in to the Guildhall; demonstrating dedication to each other as the Council Tax annual bills had just been issued and the team were inundated with phone calls. The resolution of systems issues helped to ease the anxiety some of the Team felt about working from home.

The cessation of face to face enquiries has impacted on the volume of calls received by the Revenues Service, particularly during the first three weeks of restrictions which coincided with the issuing of annual Council Tax bills. The Team has attempted to provide a full service via telephone to all customers with 2,282 telephone enquiries being dealt with during the first three weeks of the restriction period alone. The majority of customer contact relates to concerns about payments during the current period of financial uncertainty. In response, the Council has allowed payments to be deferred until either 1<sup>st</sup> June or 1<sup>st</sup> July.

The recovery of Council Tax has been severely impacted by COVID-19 with Magistrates Liability Court Hearings scheduled in May and June having been cancelled. It is currently uncertain whether court hearings scheduled for July 2020 will proceed as planned. These cancellations may impact cash-flow as court costs incurred by the debtor usually exceed £70k for these dates alone. These impacts will be mitigated once business resumes as normal. Normal reminder notices and summonses have been suspended for April and May although a reminder will be issued on 24<sup>th</sup> April to encourage customers who owe arrears for the last financial year to contact the Council to discuss their personal circumstances and to come to an arrangement regarding resumption of payments.

Demand for the service continues to be received via the Council's website, email or via post. The current external mail house has been exemplary in providing the amended reminder notice and providing other bulk mail at very short notice. Some other letters issued by the team are now being considered for mailing by the mail house which will help officers attending the office twice per week to deal with incoming post; and to print and envelope external post that needs to be mailed. The Council Tax collection rate is being closely monitored on a daily basis and, at the time of writing, looks set to be on target with a similar collection percentage to that of April 2019. The number of customers paying by direct debit has increased, as has the number of people requesting to pay over 12 monthly instalments. Efforts are being made to encourage more customers to switch to electronic billing rather than paper bills.

The government has introduced a hardship relief fund for working age Council Tax payers in receipt of Council Tax support which will pay up to £150 to each claimant and see a reduction in a claimant's Council Tax bill for 2020/21 by £150 or less to reduce their bill to nil. Software to enable this scheme is due to be tested imminently with a view to implementing as soon as it is deemed to be accurate. This will assist at least 3,700 claimants who currently match the criteria and will result in another bulk mailing of new Council Tax bills for those affected. Finally, despite initial challenges, the Team are now getting used to using Microsoft Teams which has now become part of business as usual. Everybody is working hard and working well as a team to ensure the continued delivery of the best service possible during this uncertain time.

## **Customer Services**

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As the government social restriction measures came into effect, the Customer Services Team worked exceptionally hard to adapt to the new and constantly changing work environment that followed. This included meeting the demands of a large number of, often distressed, customers who were contacting the Council for assistance or information; undertaking regular and thorough cleaning of the reception area to limit the risk of infection and managing expectations of customers, staff and Guildhall tenants about the realities of working in a socially restricted environment. In March alone, the Customer Services Team dealt with 1,367 face to face customers and the reception area has been restructured to ensure that social distancing can be enforced once the Guildhall reception area is re-opened. This includes two metre distancing tape placed on the floor of the reception area; the installation of an intercom system to the main entrance of the Guildhall so that visitors can be screened and the main door remaining locked to ensure only a safe number of customers can enter the reception at any one time. For March and April, a total of 82 customers presented to the Guildhall, of which only 10 needed to physically enter the building for assistance.

In the back office; alterations have been made to ensure post can be handled in a safe manner; and to accommodate changes made by Royal Mail themselves. Scanning and emailing of post for other services; as well as providing a printing service for teams that do not have staff located in the office has placed a strain on the Customer Service team's resources

Arrangements have been made for Customer Services staff to work from home, including issuing appropriate IT equipment and software applications and receiving training on how to use Microsoft Teams. There continues to be issues with IT and the telephones that impact on the quality of the service we are able to offer, however, these are managed as and when they arise. One of the biggest pieces of work undertaken during the lockdown so far is to contact all customers of Trinity Arts Centre to rearrange or cancel bookings.

Whilst none of the Customer Services staff have been redeployed, one member of the team has received training for the CCTV office to support in the case of staff absence. There will be pressure on team resources when annual leave is taken into account due to a long-term absence within the team and temporary recruitment may be needed in order to cover this.

While telephone demand has decreased; there has been an increase in email demand (an average of 40 additional emails per day) which typically take longer to resolve; turning a 1 FTE all day job into a 2 FTE all day job meaning more resource is required at the start of the week to deal with demand received over the weekend. Consideration has been given to allowing staff to work weekends to pick up demand but has been discounted at this stage. It is currently unclear whether telephone demand will increase as lockdown continues and this will continue to be monitored.

Once the current restriction measures are lifted or eased, this may impact on resources if the Council is required to operate a restricted, face to face operation. A comprehensive plan will be drawn up that considers the full implications of re-opening the reception area to the public whilst adhering to social distancing measures in a way that does not risk the health and safety of our staff or customers. This plan will include intelligence from other teams on what their requirements

will be in terms of service delivery. Expected challenges are maintaining social distancing; implementing a cleaning regime after each customer leaves; and potentially turning customers away for non-essential services that can be accessed by phone or digitally. These challenges will all need to be met in a framework of a reduced number of staff in the reception area with the remainder of the team based at home. It will also require full consultation with our tenants such as Job Centre Plus.

In terms of handling payments, it is expected that there will be an increase in credit/debit card transactions and the Customer Services Manager has already paid an additional £3k to Civica to increase the Council's limit from 50k transactions per year to 75k transactions. Increased card payments will also incur additional bank charges which may lead to a budget overspend. This is being monitored regularly.

With regards to the impact on performance; the team is exceeding its target of answering phone calls, up to 98% on average compared to 92% in the previous year; although fewer calls were received in April which may account for this. The number of complaints decreased in March / April whilst the number of compliments increased significantly in comparison to last year. This is particularly true for Waste Services where compliments increased by 36.5% in April compared to the same month last year. Customer satisfaction surveys have currently been put on hold and will resume once services get back to normal.

The refurbishment of the Guildhall reception area has been put on hold and will be revisited once restriction measures have been lifted.

## **Democratic Services**

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Business as usual has been suspended as a result of the effects of COVID-19. During the initial period of lockdown (and in the absence of required regulations), many of the Council's decisions were taken under urgent delegation, a process that was previously rarely used. The team's focus was ensuring the organisation and members were clear on this process, and that decisions were been published in a transparent and timely manner. As of 4th April 2020, temporary regulation was introduced permitting virtual meetings, subject to certain criteria. Since then, the majority of the team's resources have been committed to investigating, testing and implementing an IT solution to meet the new regulations which included training Councillors' to use the new, virtual platform, developing meeting procedures and rewriting Standing Orders. The first virtual meeting (Planning Committee) was held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and was very successful. There is one virtual meeting planned for May with additional meetings scheduled throughout June and July with the exception of Annual Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This is subject to government guidance on social restriction measures and will be kept under review. To ensure these meetings are a success, all Members of Council will need to undertake a training and practice programme in the coming weeks. All other Member training has been suspended.

The Civic Office has seen all events suspended; both those being hosted by the Council and those that the Council are invited to. Annual Council is currently delayed until September and this will impact on the timetable of the Civic Office for the remainder of 2020/2021. The 2019/2020 Community Awards are currently re-scheduled for October 2020. Work has been undertaken to review significant protocols of national impact in light of the pandemic. The Civic Officer has been re-deployed to assist at the Crematorium. The Team's dedicated Support Officer is also ready to be re-deployed if required. The remaining team members can perform their job functions from home. Hosting virtual meetings has proven resource intensive both in the run up to, and during a meeting. It may be feasible to streamline this as confidence grows.

## **Development Management**

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In accordance with the advice issued by the Government's Chief Planner in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, local authority planning services are expected to continue to determine and process planning applications using innovative approaches and seeking extensions of time where required.



## Planning Applications and Fee Income

The department received its highest number of applications over a two year period in March 2020 and is working at full capacity with all Officers working with full caseloads and some members of Management Team taking a small caseload to ease the pressure on the service. This is being closely monitored with a view to bringing in additional resource if new planning applications continue to come in at the same rate (currently 20 per week on average). As of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020, there are 267 live planning applications under consideration, however, as lockdown continues, it is anticipated that the number of new applications may reduce (along with the resultant planning fee income). Safeguarding measures are in place with case officers using virtual tools and only undertaking site visits if necessary.

## Planning Applications Determined

It is expected that some delay in the time taken to determine planning applications will occur and all applicants are being warned of this in advance. At present, the service is still determining between 20-30 applications per week; a similar rate to pre-lockdown figures. The service appears to be moving to a more balanced position between issuing decisions and the number of new applications received.

Week commencing	No. of planning decisions	No. of planning applications
20/04/2020	23	20
13/04/2020	26	23
06/04/2020	19	18
30/03/2020	23	26
23/03/2020	26	35
16/03/2020	23	45
09/03/2020	28	50
02/03/2020	24	39

## Planning Applications Determined

The first virtual planning committee was successfully held on 29<sup>th</sup> April and now sets the template to be able to continue committees to the usual monthly timetable.

## Planning Appeals

The Government's Planning Inspectorate (PINS) has currently suspended all planning inquiries, hearings and site visits. We are therefore likely to see a reduction in the number of appeal decision received with two Public Hearings currently postponed. PINS are piloting a digital hearing on 11<sup>th</sup> May with "a view to scaling up digital events further over June/July." The Council may therefore need to adapt to host a Public Hearing in a virtual environment.



## Neighbourhood Planning

The Coronavirus Act has postponed all neighbourhood planning referenda until 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Planning Practice Guidance has been amended to now give 'significant weight' to draft Neighbourhood Plans in decision making, where a decision statement has been issued to send a Neighbourhood Plan to referendum. Further guidance on this can be found [here](#)

## Enforcement and Community Safety

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Across all enforcement and regulatory work areas the formal enforcement process is impacted by the court's ability to progress cases and the Council's ability to effectively investigate (carrying out face to face interviews under caution, for example). This will reduce legal costs, however negatively impacts upon our ability to ensure regulations are adhered to.

**Selective Licensing Scheme** - The Selective Licensing scheme remains consistent in terms of performance and the main focus within this work area is on unlicensed properties.

**Housing and Planning Enforcement** - Both Housing and Planning Enforcement have been impacted in a similar manner during the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of reports received have been minimal, which has enabled officers to progress existing cases as far as possible. Officers from both work areas have been redeployed to assist with Business Grants. It is expected that most of the planning enforcement powers are able to be exercised with social distancing applied, however, for Housing Enforcement the situation will be more difficult. The focus is solely on emergency cases to date and guidance has been issued advising Council's as to how this function should operate during this period. The ability to enforce effectively has been impacted, which in turn will impact on the Council's ability to issue notices, carry out prosecutions and issue civil penalties.

**Community Safety** - Community Safety Officers have been mainly redeployed to focus on assisting with business restrictions and associated patrols, alongside liaison with the Police in relation to anti-social behaviour. There has not been an increase in general ASB, however additional cases of fly-tipping and environmental type issues have been noted.

## Enterprising Communities

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During period four, the service has continued to deliver grant funding activity supporting a wide range of projects across all areas of the district. The grants awarded have directly contributed to securing match funding into the district and enabling funds from local groups to achieve positive results. Hemswell Cliff Managed Estate work continues and we continue to see further improvements in the housing market as a result of direct intervention and support. The Local Access bid was successful with over £2m being allocated to Gainsborough as mixed grant/loan finance. Work is now progressing on further social economy engagement to develop delivery and spending plans for this funding. Made in Gainsborough continues to support education, training and employment outcomes with a grant of £60k awarded to Lincoln College to upgrade and expand facilities at the Gainsborough College campus. Rural Community broadband work continues and more villages have been supported to access funding schemes to create better internet connections and speeds.

## **Finance and Business Support**

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Throughout the quarter, the team have been working on finalising the Medium Term Financial Plan and the 2020/21 Budget and Council Tax; all of which were approved at the March meeting of Full Council. The team has also been preparing for the closure of accounts and the interim audit of these in February went well with no issues raised. The procurement of a Finance and Performance ERP system has unfortunately been put on hold due to the implications of COVID-19, the heightened risk of resourcing the contract and the unknown financial impact on the Council. This system is, however, key to achieving efficiencies and improvements for both the Finance team and other services and so the situation will be reviewed within six months.

## **Garden Waste Collection**

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Garden waste subscriptions were opened to online customers on 6th January 2020, supported by a communications campaign in local media and on social media sites. Whilst the first two reminders were issued either on time or early, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have meant that the third reminder has not been issued and there has been no further promotion of the scheme on social media. Despite this, subscription requests are still being received on a daily basis and, at the time of writing, there are 30 fewer subscriptions than at the same time last year. Anecdotal feedback suggests that some residents do not consider garden waste subscriptions to be a priority at this time; whilst others are waiting to see how the current situation develops before committing to a subscription.

## **Home Choices**

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The effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic are expected to bring significant challenges to the Home Choices service, as follows:

### **Temporary Accommodation and B&B use**

It is anticipated that there will be a rise in the number of domestic abuse cases. In turn, this may result in increased usage of Bed and Breakfast or other temporary accommodation over the next two quarters (up to September 2020). One week before the current social restriction measures came into force, one of the Council's available temporary accommodation units was severely damaged by a tenant, however, the repairs team for the provider has been unable to attend due to restrictions with supplies of goods and the availability of the workforce. The consequence of this is a reduced unit availability of 20% until the unit can be repaired.

### **Rehousing from the Housing Register**

Since social restriction measures have been in place, there has been a decline in move-on accommodation as a result of housing providers no longer repairing empty properties and prioritising repairs for those who are already in accommodation. There has also been a reduction in people moving out which means that properties aren't becoming available as much as they previously did. As a result, the Housing Register has been suspended until 6<sup>th</sup> May (subject to review) which means that people cannot currently bid for properties. The Council has asked housing providers to focus on properties for those in most urgent need.

### **Prevention and Relief Cases**

It is anticipated that there will be an increase in homeless relief cases (those classed as having no secure accommodation) rather than prevention cases (those who are threatened with homelessness) as landlords who served a notice to evict prior to the current pandemic begin to take action as soon as they are able to. At present, landlords are unable to serve notice to evict, however, in several months' time, landlords may instead serve a Section 8 Notice which gives a tenant two weeks' notice of eviction as opposed to two months. These are enforceable by the Court and shortens the time the Council has available to prevent homelessness in these cases. It is expected that there will be a simultaneous influx of cases for those people served notice of eviction prior to the current social restriction measures which will lead to much greater demand on the Home Choices service than previously and contribute to the expected rise in homeless relief cases.

## **Other**

Some letting agents have increased their demands for renting their properties and asking in excess of three months of rent in advance where previously they have only asked for one month's rent in advance. This is a national issue and, whilst the Council is trying not to use these agents at present, this has considerably restricted the amount of move-on accommodation that is available. This will have an impact on the Council's re-housing figures for quarter one of 2020/2021.

Whilst the Council has access to funding it has been a struggle to access the basic essentials that enable people to move in to a house securely. Following enquiries, the Home Choices Team have received offers of basic furniture which are being housed in a rented storage unit. This should allow for quicker move-on times going forward.

## **Growth and Regeneration**

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The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to affect the activities of the Growth Team in the following ways:

**Gainsborough Townscape Heritage Scheme** - The take up of building grants will almost certainly be affected by Covid-19, though the long-term impact is unknown at this time. The 'activity' element of this scheme will commence once social restriction measures have been eased and recruitment for the Activity Co-ordinator post is currently on hold.

**Mayflower 400** - The event planned for May has been postponed and the Team is awaiting guidance from the Arts Council regarding alterations to the planned events programme. Planned events will be rescheduled and held in compliance with government guidance.

**Shopfront Grants / Living over the Shop** – Applications to this grant scheme have stopped until further notice. The long-term impact is unknown at this time and depends on how long social restriction measures remain in place.

**5-7 Market Place** – This is currently in the pre- construction phase and it is likely that completion of this phase will be delayed by approximately two months as a result of the current restrictions in place.

**Cinema Development** - Lincolnshire Co-op has agreed an amount to lift the restrictive covenant, however, further progress is currently on hold while the impact of COVID-19 on the leisure industry is analysed. The timescales for this project will be delayed but it is not possible to say by how long at this stage.

**Bowling Green Road** - The original timeline to start on site in April has been delayed until late May 2020 at the earliest. There will potentially be an impact on the build programme as social distancing is put into practice on site. The Council will be using this opportunity to progress the Riverside Walk section between former Lidl and Riverside Approach

**Corringham Road** – Lincolnshire County Council have advised that this is currently still in their programme and is likely to remain on track as County is committed to assisting with economic recovery through their own projects.

**Southern SUE** – While Keepmoat have closed all their sites nationally, they are still keen to ensure they have a pipeline of sites. Progress has been slow due to the furloughing of Keepmoat staff who are integral to this project.

## **Housing**

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### **Affordable Housing**

Affordable Housing has seen a high level of completions during 2019/20. This element of our strategic housing function is to increase the supply of affordable housing to meet the diverse housing needs of those who cannot access the housing market. As much of the delivery is driven by the private housing sector and the business plans of our registered provider partners, we work in an enabling capacity with developers and registered providers. Developers are required to make a percentage of their larger developments available for affordable housing so our role is through negotiation at an early stage on housing type and tenure through to liaison with development management and registered providers all the way through to occupation. The aim is to maximise delivery and to ensure those in housing need have access to appropriate housing to meet that need. This year's completions are the culmination of work over a period of four or five years. A large number of dwellings specifically for over 55's have been completed to meet the needs of our ageing population along with general needs accommodation to meet the needs of single people and families.

### **Disabled Facilities Grants**

The Countywide Framework for contractors is now embedded and over the course of the year the average timescales for delivering the grants have reduced to an average of 137 days in period four. This timescale includes elements of the process that are out of the Council's control and includes all aspects of work undertaken. A total of 125 grants were approved in year, compared to 71 in 2018/19. The Council continues to spend and commit all of its funding allocation in relation to DFGs. COVID-19 has resulted in these referrals ceasing, with the exception of works required to discharge someone from hospital. Officers in this work area have been redeployed to work on business grants initially and when available, will progress any relevant casework. The pandemic will have a number of impacts in this work area. There will be a backlog of existing cases, along with some new referrals. All existing cases will need to be reviewed (for example, many customers may be shielding or in a vulnerable group and will not want the work to be undertaken, nor will it be able to). Availability of contractors will impact upon timescales for delivery and financial profiling will need to be considered to ensure that the budget can meet the backlogged demand (some of which may be unknown). Liaison with Lincolnshire County Council is underway in relation to this.

### **Empty Homes**

During period four, the number of long-term empty properties has increased significantly, up by 17.9% compared to the same period last year. Historically, they have increased at the end of period three, then reduced down, however it is unclear this year as to why there is a significant increase. Further work will be undertaken to understand this. As a result of the pandemic, there has been limited proactive general work undertaken, other than promoting the Empty Properties grant available, which may have had some impact. The number itself is not at a level which is of concern, however understanding the increase may help to inform a future approach to providing assistance.

COVID-19 will result in only the priority cases being dealt with from this work area, however, subject to enforcement action being necessary, there should not be any barriers to undertaking this work when needed as the properties are unoccupied and in some cases access will not be required.

## ICT

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There were a number of requests in late March for Jabber Softphone set up and equipment for working from home due to COVID-19. There wasn't a noticeable change in the number of calls to the helpdesk, despite the majority of Council officers working from home.

## Leisure Contract

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As a result of government guidance on social restriction measures, the Leisure Centre closed its doors on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Therefore, only partial performance information for period 4 is available. At the time of writing, it is unclear when the Leisure Centre will be allowed to re-open and all staff have been furloughed with the exception of the Centre Manager and one Duty Manager who are currently being paid out of the SLM reserves, although the Council have agreed to provide initial financial support if needed on an Open Book Accounting basis, subject to agreement with Legal Services Lincolnshire. This will also apply to the Management Fee due to the Council. The March, April and May quarterly invoice has been put on hold at this time. Regular communication is being kept up with SLM to ensure processes are in place to enable users to return to the facility and still maintain social distancing once restrictions have been lifted. The Market Rasen Leisure Centre is also nearing completion, with an estimated handover of 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020, after which SLM will complete the internal fit out, ready for opening.

## Licensing

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The Licensing work area continues to meet its targets in relation to income and has continued to perform well during a period of staffing changes. The number of applications remains consistent, as does the level of income associated with these. The level of impact COVID-19 is likely to have on this work area is unclear at present. There is expected to be further guidance issued in relation to licensed premises, however it is unlikely that any new licensed premises will come forward, which will impact upon the level of income received. There has been a consistent demand from Licence Holders (of all forms) with queries about their related fees and this is expected to continue. It is expected that other Licensed Premises (such as Zoos) will have their inspections rescheduled accordingly. It is likely that the volume and income measures will be impacted negatively during 2020/2021, though the full extent of this is not yet clear.

## People and Organisational Development

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COVID-19 has not adversely affected this service area and we continue to complete work as planned during this time. However, there has been increased pressure for the Communications team to provide regular and updated information to support the council and wider network as part of the Warn and Inform Cell of the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum. The Health and Safety service continues to run and provide advice and guidance to staff and managers, although staff in this area have supported other services such as CCTV to provide much needed cover.

Human Resources is continuing with all business as usual work and has adapted to the virtual technology really well to support managers and staff during this time. The team are affected personally by the pandemic with the majority of staff now having to accommodate home schooling of their children into their working week but everyone has shown a real commitment to continue providing an excellent service.

## **Performance and Programmes**

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The Team have been redeployed to set up and run the West Lindsey Community Hub as part of the support being provided to West Lindsey residents who are shielding, or in self-isolation. At the time of writing, 118 referrals for support have been completed, with requests ranging from food shopping, prescription collections, dog walking, telephone befriending and help with general household tasks. In addition, the Team have been undertaking scaled back business as usual activities. Arrangements have been made to ensure ongoing monitoring and management of the Council's performance and work has been undertaken to identify which of the Council's projects can continue and which need to be paused. Some areas of the Team's work, such as the implementation of a Performance Management element of the ERP software system, may be delayed or paused as a result of COVID-19 though this is being kept under regular review. The Senior Project Support Officer has been seconded to the Growth Team to support their project work whilst a member of that team is on maternity leave. A recent audit of Programme and Project Management returned a verdict of 'substantial assurance' in the quality of the Council's delivery in this area of work with all areas showing improvement since the previous audit was conducted.

## **Regulatory Services**

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Over 90% of scheduled Food Standards Agency (FSA) inspections of food premises have been completed during the year with 426 visits undertaken compared to 315 in 2018/19. This is an excellent achievement and justifies the additional resources allocated to the team from July 2019. Full details of the performance will be included within the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan due at Regulatory Committee in June 2020. There continues to be a high percentage of premises that are broadly compliant at 3\* or above, which has remained consistent during the increased inspection regime.

### **Food Safety**

The implications of Covid-19 on food hygiene inspections will be significant. In line with guidance, no inspections have been undertaken during the lockdown period and this is likely to remain the case until social restriction measures have been lifted. As a result, the FSA scheduled target is unlikely to be met for 2020/2021 and the local performance measures will also demonstrate this. It is expected that the FSA will provide advice as to how local authorities should resume these inspections and at what level, with the assumption being that the programme will be rolled back for a period of months. This will in turn impact upon income targets. Officers working in this area have been redeployed to deal with the business restriction regulations and as part of this they are providing advice and guidance to businesses that are continuing to trade as well as addressing concerns relating to social distancing in businesses. It is expected that there will be a requirement for this to continue for some time. These officers will also provide support to the developing COVID-19 Tracing programme of work, however the capacity in which they will do this has not yet been agreed.

### **Environmental Protection**

Environmental Protection requests continue to be dealt with in line with the targets and there has been an increased demand for this area of work during lockdown as a result of issues such as bonfires and noise nuisance. The approach during this period has been to educate and engage rather than enforce. It is unclear whether there will be an increase in reports when normal activity resumes, however there is likely to be a return to the usual reporting levels when businesses reopen fully.

### **Street Cleansing**

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Whilst Street Cleansing has been operating as usual, it is likely that resource issues may arise if operatives are required to self-isolate. This would be resolved with the use of agency staff which would result in increased costs. The depot is being managed on a rota basis to minimise the risk of infection whilst office based staff are working from home. Fly-tipping is a concern as local Household Waste Recycling Centres are closed. Whilst current figures at the time of writing do not suggest any significant rise in fly-tipping, this will continue to be monitored. It is likely that there will be a decrease in volunteer litter picks; with a complete cessation for the time-being. The Great British Spring-Clean has been postponed and there are no volunteer or community groups litter picking at this time.

## **Systems Development**

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The Team has been able to continue with business as usual and arrangements have been made for meetings to continue in the normal way on a virtual basis. Work to support the Council with arrangements to respond to COVID-19 has amounted to 462 hours over the last six weeks, including hours that officers worked whilst on annual leave. Arrangements are being put in place to manage these extra hours whilst still undertaking business as usual. Performance is not expected to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, West Lindsey was the only Council in Lincolnshire, and one of only 61 local authorities in England to be awarded 'gold' status for the data accuracy in the Local Land and Property Gazetteer. This is the fifth year that West Lindsey has been awarded 'gold' status.

## **Town Centre Management**

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Following the government's announcement regarding social restriction measures; all markets were closed down on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. In line with subsequent government guidelines, only essential stalls selling food and pet food have been allowed to operate (whilst adhering to social distancing). To minimise the risk of infection, stall holders are required to erect and dismantle their own stalls; no Council staff are carrying out this task at this time. No market rent payments have been taken since 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 and it is unclear when payments will resume. It is likely that market operations and income will be severely impacted by the current situation and the severity of this will depend on how long the market remains closed and whether traders are in a position to return to the markets once they are re-opened.

## **Trinity Arts Centre**

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BBC Radio Lincolnshire presenter, Carla Greene recently announced on her programme that the changes at Trinity Arts Centre (TAC) had not gone unnoticed, both as a resident of Gainsborough and as a broadcaster who has been interviewing the artists appearing on TAC's stage. Audience figures for the year as a whole stand at 20,369 against a target of 14,400 with more sold-out performances during the period than has ever been achieved before. TAC studios have been busy with workshops, classes, mental health support groups and birthday parties on a weekly basis. The stage has been occupied by some of the world's most prestigious artists, such as Seth Lakeman who performed his new album as part of the Mayflower 400 anniversary year.

The impact of COVID-19 on TAC has been severe. The government's announcement about social restrictions meant that the Centre had to close with immediate effect on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. All activity at TAC has ceased and it is unlikely that the Centre will be able to open until autumn at the earliest. This will have a significant impact on income and audience figures which will remain at zero during the period of closure. Industry research suggests that post-lockdown audience figures may be as much as 30% lower than previously until public confidence has been restored and mass vaccination has been implemented. New measures will need to be implemented once TAC is allowed to re-open which will likely mean additional resources for less return. The Team are using the period of closure

to put together a comprehensive re-opening plan that considers efficient and economical ways of working whilst maintaining the high standards customers are used to experiencing when they visit TAC.

The Team have also been busy contacting customers to rearrange bookings and process refunds where requested. This has exposed significant problems with the ProVenue box office system to the extent that the ICT Programme Board have approved the procurement of a new system to resolve these issues. One member of the Team has been redeployed to assist with the Council's ongoing business support scheme.

## **Waste Collection**

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Trials of both food waste and separate paper/card have begun in several districts as a fact-finding mission (the paper and card trials have been a success in the areas that they have been trialled in). The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership Working Group are in talks with the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs regarding food waste roll out before the 2023 deadline.





**Prosperous Communities  
Committee**

**Tuesday 2 June 2020**

**Subject: West Lindsey Parish Charter**

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

Grant White  
Enterprising Communities Manager

grant.white@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To present the results from the Parish Charter consultation and recommend approval of the final version of the Parish Charter document.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1. Approve West Lindsey Parish Charter**
- 2. Approve the approach to delivering Parish Forums**

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

There are no legal implications with this report or the proposed West Lindsey Parish Charter. The charter represents agreed principles and standards of how West Lindsey District Council and parish/town councils will work together but it does not represent a legal document or agreement.

**(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO**

### **Financial : FIN/15/21/A**

There are no financial implications arising from the report.

**(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref**

### **Staffing :**

There are no staffing implications for this report.

**(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref**

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

There are no equality and diversity considerations for this report.

### **Data Protection Implications :**

There are no data protection implications for this report.

### **Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :**

There are no climate related risks or opportunities for this report.

### **Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :**

There are no Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations for this report.

### **Health Implications:**

There are no health implications for this report.

### **Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Not applicable.

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<b>Risk Assessment :</b>
Not applicable

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

**Yes**

**No**

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

**Yes**

**No**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Good communication and working relationships are essential between Local Authorities and Parish/Town Councils. A Parish Charter can help support how communication takes place and guide on how to work effectively together. They help to formalise relationships and set clear standards and expectations for everyone.
- 1.2 On 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 the Prosperous Communities Committee approved a draft Parish Charter document and requested officers conduct a consultation amongst all parish and town councils in West Lindsey.
- 1.3 The consultation has now been completed and this report presents the results, feedback and officer recommendations based on these responses.

## **2. Consultation Responses**

- 2.1 The consultation opened on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and closed on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020. A total of 12 responses were received from parish and town councils.
- 2.2 A full report detailing the consultation responses has been produced and included with this report as an appendix.

### **APPENDIX 1 – Parish Charter Consultation Report May 2020**

### **APPENDIX 2 – West Lindsey Parish Charter**

- 2.3 Officers have reviewed consultation responses and have noted a number of key areas identified:

#### **Planning**

A number of comments made about planning matters. It should be noted work is currently underway to review the Councils constitution and include a new section which aims to address such concerns. These changes are due to be presented to Full Council in September 2020.

#### **Point of Contact**

A request was made to provide Parish and Town Councils a dedicated contact number. This provision has been re-introduced into the Parish Charter document. A dedicated contact number for Parish and Town Councils to use would be made available to them and direct incoming calls to a senior customer services adviser.

Direct contact details for the Enterprising Communities Service have also been added to the Parish Charter document for enquires relating to community based activity, funding or projects.

### **Acknowledgement Times**

A comment was made about response times being reduced due to greater use of modern technology. Officers felt the stated response times are correct and suit all service areas, however they should be viewed as a minimum standard and where possible the council should seek to exceed them.

The Parish Charter document has been updated to better explain response targets are our minimum standard and where possible we shall try to exceed these.

- 2.4 Overall the consultation responses indicate the Parish Charter document is easy to read and understand. The majority of responses also indicated the document fulfils the purpose of how we will work together.
- 2.5 Overall the consultation responses indicate the Parish Charter document will make no to little difference in the relationship between parish/town councils and the district council.
- 2.6 Based on the consultation responses there is a sense of agreement in the function of the Parish Charter document but that its actual impact is dependent on actual actions and engagement between organisations.

### **3. Parish Forums**

- 3.1 Officers will develop a Parish Forum plan based on the consultation responses. The plan will include at least 1 main Parish Forum event per year supported by online events. By introducing this mix of physical and online event the aim is to open the Parish Forums up to more attendees whilst reducing cost of travel for attendees.
- 3.2 The main Parish Forum will include:
  - Key presentations on useful/important topics
  - Advice/information on parish precept
  - Details of latest support including funding
  - Question and answer session with senior officers and members
  - Networking opportunity
- 3.3 The online events will include:
  - Recording from the main Parish Forum event for playback
  - Key messages
  - Question and answer session
- 3.4 Due to the on-going Coronavirus Pandemic the physical event may not be able to take place during 2020. An event will be organised when safe to do so. Officers will seek to organise online only events for 2020.
- 3.5 Areas of interest that the Parish Forums will cover include:
  - Planning matters
  - Budgeting and precept

- Grant funding and project support
  - Local issues/challenges
  - Climate, environment and sustainability
- 3.6 Parish Forum events will be organised by officers from Democratic Services and Enterprising Communities Service. This work will form part of existing service roles.
- 3.7 Evaluation of Parish Forum events will be conducted and changes may be made to ensure they remain relevant and meet the needs of parish and town councils.
- 3.8 In addition to delivering Parish Forums, officers will seek to further develop our working relationship with Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils in order to attend or organise events jointly.

#### **4. Publicity and Promotion**

- 4.1 Officers will undertake a range of publicity and promotional work to raise the awareness and profile of the new Parish Charter. This will include but not limited to:
- Press release(s)
  - Direct promotion to parish/town councils
  - Direct promotion to all Members
  - Social media coverage
- 4.2 The new Parish Charter will be promoted amongst all Council service areas to ensure officers have an awareness and understanding of its purpose. This will be completed through team meetings and internal communications.

#### **5. Review and Reporting**

- 5.1 The Parish Charter will be reviewed every 4 years to ensure it is compliant and meets current needs of both parish/town councils and the district council.
- 5.2 An annual report will be presented to Prosperous Communities Committee detailing the impact of Parish Forum events and any other matters arising linked to the Parish Charter.

#### **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 Approve the West Lindsey Parish Charter
- 6.2 Approve the approach to delivering Parish Forums

# West Lindsey Parish Charter

## Consultation Report – May 2020

### Introduction

As part of reviewing and introducing an updated Parish Charter, a consultation was held inviting responses from all Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings in West Lindsey. This report provides the results and comments obtained during this consultation.

The consultation opened on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and closed on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

### 1. Responses Received

A total of **12** responses were received from parish or town councils

- 8 of these were from Parish Councils
- 2 of these were from Parish Meetings
- 2 of these were from Town Councils

Bardney Parish Council	Blyton Parish Council	Brampton Parish Meeting
Brattleby Parish Council	Broadholme Parish Meeting	Brookenby Parish Council
Gainsborough Town Council	Great Limber Parish Council	Greetwell Parish Council
Ingham Parish Council	Market Rasen Town Council	Nettleham Parish Council

A total of 1 response was received from an individual not associated with a local council and has been discounted.

### 2. Parish Charter

**How easy do you feel the Parish Charter is to read and understand?**

5 – Very difficult	4	3 – Neither easy nor difficult	2	1 – Very easy
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>

**Do you feel this Parish Charter fulfils the purpose of outlining how we will work together?**

Not Sure	No	Yes
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

If you feel that anything has been missed from this Parish Charter please say here:

- *The proposed Parish Charter would provide WLDC with input to the decision making of the Parish Council, which is not in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and Local Government Act 1972. In return the Parish Charter states that a Parish Council would only receive the same treatment as a member of the public. The proposal is over one sided.*
- *Greater co-operation on planning matters. Local knowledge of the village is disregarded and requests for applications to go before committee have been ignored.*
- *Issues with Neighbourhood Plans not being studied by WLDC Planning (Noted, just two lines given to this vital community tool!*
- *No reference to Planning interaction*
- *As I see it there is no specific point of contact liaison officer for Parish Council Clerks to ring in order to be assisted or sign posted to the correct department or Officer. A separate and most secret phone number to a specific Department who may act as sign posters may help or a specific email address for a specific Officer may help. This is due to any organisation of the Council size being difficult to navigate ones way around to correct Officers and perhaps being given incorrect information.*

### 3. Relationship

To what level do you feel the relationship between your council and West Lindsey works?

5 – Very bad	4	3 – Neither good nor bad	2	1 – Very good
0	2	2	4	4

Do you feel that the Parish Charter will help improve the relationships between your council and the District Council?

5 – Make it worse	4	3 – No difference	2	1 – Big improvement
1	0	7	4	0

Any comments on how this Parish Charter could improve the relationship:

- *Some departments within WLDC are more receptive to working with our Parish Council than others. The proposed Parish Charter does not offer anything that would improve the relationship.*
- *To listen what communities are saying*



- *Yes it would improve the relationship in some eventualities but I have not had any problem with West Lindsey. If I am in any doubt as who to contact I have always been directed to an appropriate person where everyone has been most helpful. Regarding our Parish Meeting, very few people show any interest as to what's happening, .and regarding question 10 I am fully aware of those issues. Regarding a public liaison meeting we would be unable to attend. So would depend on a Parishioner, which is unlikely to happen.*
- *Putting it into practice - in the last 6 months we have only seen the district councillors once. I've not heard of a Parish Forum since being appointed in August last year.*
- *If it defined clear service agreements*
- *If there is a proper understanding by all then it may work. A lot is down to education as usual and writing in as already said a specific contact point for Parish Clerks.*

## 4. Parish Forums

**Have you attended a previous Parish Forum organised by the District Council?**

Cannot remember	No	Yes
0	8	4

**How would you rate how useful the last Parish Forum was that you attended?**

5 – Very useless	4	3 – Neither useful / useless	2	1 – Very useful
0	0	1	2	1

**Which of the following elements do you feel are important to get from a public liaison meeting?**

Updates on finance and parish precept	7
Information on support schemes for local communities	9
Information about grants and funding	10
Networking with other local councillors	6
Interaction with other parish, town and district councillors	6
Ability to ask questions	8
Ability to discuss local issues	7

**How far would you be prepared to travel in a car for this meeting?**

Up to 10 minutes	Up to 20 minutes	Up to 30 minutes	Up to 40 minutes
1	3	5	2

**How many Parish Forums would you attend per year?**

0	1	2 or more
1	5	6

## 5. Additional Comments

**Please provide any other comments about the draft Parish Charter:**

- *BGPC have no recollection of ever being invited to a Parish Forum and certainly we are not aware of their existence. LALC already offer a means for Parish Councillors and Clerks to network and discuss current issues. The proposed Charter is also dependent on a good working relationship with the district councillor, sadly this doesn't always happen and BGPC are not the only ones to encounter this problem. BGPC would very much welcome the opportunity to achieve mutually beneficial working relationship with WLDC, however sadly this document does not provide a way forward to achieve this.*
- *Being such a small community and having no precept it is hard to feel we belong to the system. There is very little enthusiasm for such matters in our village. It is hard to see what we would gain from the Charter or what we can contribute.*
- *The 'Parish Charter' is a document of 'Good intentions'. However, it only remains so where WLDC are prepared to listen to the issues Parish Councils - and ultimately the community - have in their locality.*
- *The Town Council discussed the Charter at a meeting last night and members had no specific comments to forward on.*
- *The acknowledgement time of within 5 working days of receipt is not very ambitious in the age of e-mail. Similarly a full response within 20 days is too long.*
- *A useful document to enhance the relationship between Parish, Town and District Councils.*
- *My main concern is that in the charter it makes no mention of any specific point of contact within WLDC, which would be for only for Parish/Town Clerks. A point of contact at WLDC from which assistance in the first instance may be obtained, or a WLDC Officer who can be properly sign post, to the correct Officer who deals with particular issues. This may be by phone, or email.*

# West Lindsey Parish Charter

## Setting out the working relationship between West Lindsey District Council and Parish/Town Councils

### 1. Introduction

West Lindsey District Council acknowledges that parish/town councils and parish meetings are at the grass-roots level of local government. In their role as democratically accountable bodies, they offer a means of shaping the decisions of certain services and supporting local communities.

The purpose of this charter is to set out how West Lindsey District Council and parish/town councils and parish meetings can work together to provide high quality and efficient public services for our residents and communities.

The charter is intended to be a starting point, a commitment to work together, and a statement of the principles by which the District Council, parish/town councils and parish meetings approach their work together.

### 2. Partnership Working

- We (West Lindsey District Council) will work in partnership with you (parish/town councils and parish meetings) in our area to promote sustainable social, economic and environmental development for the benefit of local communities.
- We recognise that as democratically accountable bodies, you are the grassroots level of local government.
- We ask that you recognise the strategic role of West Lindsey District Council and the need for our services to be responsive to identified need and deliver on our strategic priorities.

### 3. Local Governance

- Members of the public, including members and officers of parish/town councils and parish meetings, can ask a question or make a statement at the start of ordinary meetings of the District Council and our committee meetings. We provide a range of participation schemes which apply to different meetings of the council and its committees which can be viewed online at: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/democracy)

You can contact our Democratic Services Team for further advice and guidance during office hours on one of the following: 01427 676594 / 01427 676595 / 01427 676606

- We will publish the agendas and papers for our meetings online at: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/democracy)

- We will organise the administration of parish/town council and parish meeting elections.
- We ask that you publish the agendas and papers for your meeting on your website if you have one and send copies via e-mail to District Councillors representing your area.
- We ask that you invite District Councillors representing your area to your meetings.  
Contact details for our District Councillors are available online:  
[www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/councillors)
- We ask that our officers and members be invited to your meetings on matters of mutual interest.

#### **4. Consultation**

- We will organise parish liaison meetings to enable liaison between parish/town councils, parish meetings and ourselves on matters of mutual interest as required.
- We will use plain English and keep our information jargon free when we consult with you.
- We will offer our information in different formats where that is appropriate.
- We will follow the principles of consultation (The Gunning Principles):
  1. Consultation will occur when proposals are at a formative stage
  2. Consultation will give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration
  3. Consultation will allow adequate time for consideration and response
  4. Consultation will be conscientiously taken into account
- We will feed back to you what has been said and what we are going to do as a result.
- We ask that wherever possible and relevant you will respond to consultations when approached by us and by the agreed deadlines.  
(For example: by delegating the task to a committee or having an extra parish/town council meeting to meet the deadline.)

#### **5. Information and Complaints**

- We will acknowledge communications sent to us within 5 working days of receipt and we will provide a full response (if required) within 20 working days. These are our minimum customer service standards and where possible we will always seek to respond quicker than this. If this is not possible we will contact you to explain why and give you an indication of when you can expect a full reply.
- We will notify you of any programmed maintenance and improvement schemes due to be undertaken in your parish delivered by West Lindsey District Council. This notification will be via e-mail to the parish/town clerk.

- We ask that you notify our Democratic Services Team of any changes to the names/contact details of your parish/town clerk and parish/town chairman so that we can ensure our parish contacts database is up to date.

E-mail changes to: [committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

- We ask wherever possible to use our website to find information about our services and news updates.

Visit our website: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk)

- We ask that you use the following to make a report or request for something that we have responsibility for:

### **1. Online self-service**

Visit our website to use our self-service for reporting and requesting. This is the easiest way for you to report or request and ensures you get the quickest response.

Visit our self-service page: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/selfservice](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/selfservice)

### **2. E-mail our Customer Services**

E-mail us with as much detail as possible relating to your report or request. You can include attachments such as photos.

E-mail us: [customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

### **3. Telephone Number for Parish/Town Councils**

We provide a dedicated telephone number for parish and town councils. Calls are routed to a senior member of our customer services team. This number is shared directly with parish and town clerks.

- We ask that when we contact you, you send a substantive reply within 28 working days (not including responses to consultation documents). This is unless there are exceptional reasons why this cannot happen.

- If you are dissatisfied with our actions, the response to a request for information, or a failure to consult, you may make a formal complaint through our complaints procedure.

For information about complaints visit: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/complaint](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/complaint) or you can e-mail any comments/complaints to: [experience@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:experience@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

## **6. Standards and Governance Support**

- We will abide by Codes of Conduct based on the 7 Nolan Principles.
- We will provide training on standards and ethics for parish/town councillors and clerks.
- We will offer support to parish/town councils and parish meetings if they become inquorate and are unable to conduct statutory business.
- We ask that parish/town councils and parish meetings work with our Overview and Scrutiny Committee to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

## 7. Neighbourhood Planning

- We will provide advice and support to parishes seeking to develop and adopt a neighbourhood plan. For more information about neighbourhood planning visit: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan)
- We will organise the administration of referendums to adopt a neighbourhood plan.
- We will use adopted neighbourhood plan's to help determine planning applications.

## 8. Delegating Responsibility for Service Provision

(applies to parish/town councils only)

- If you wish to carry out functions on our behalf we will consider delegation where it provides best value (taking into account cost, quality, local preferences and practicability).

This will exclude a range of services which we are not able to delegate because of their particular statutory nature.

To discuss delegation of a service please contact our Democratic Services Team at: [committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

## 9. Finance and Budgets

- We will hold budget consultation events allowing residents along with parish/town councils and parish meetings to have a say and contribute towards our budget decisions.
- We will provide a parish precept tool and advice to help parish/town councils and parish meetings set budgets.
- We ask that parish/town councils and parish meetings submit their precept requests by agreed deadlines.

## 10. Community Support

- We will provide support to local communities through a range of schemes. These schemes may be available to parish/town councils and parish meetings along with other organisations including community groups, charities and community businesses.

We maintain a directory of community support schemes on our website:

[www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/communitysupport](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/communitysupport)

- We will provide a single point of contact for parish/town councils and parish meetings needing support with community projects.

E-mail: [community@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:community@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

- We will provide signposting to useful information and other forms of support to help you deliver community projects and improvements.

- We will produce a regular parish newsletter that will provide a range of news and updates from across West Lindsey. You can register to receive the parish newsletter online: [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/parishnews](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/parishnews)
- We will organise Parish Forum events each year to enable effective sharing of information, engagement and discussion and facilitate question and answer sessions.
- We will administer community rights as part of the Localism Act 2011 including:
  - Community Right to Bid
  - Community Right to Build
  - Community Right to Challenge
- We ask that you use information in our regular parish newsletters to help further promote news and updates to local residents including adding information into local parish newsletters and magazines.
- We ask that you help promote any community support schemes currently available and actively engage with us on community initiatives in your area.

## 11. Practical Support

- We will provide advice, support and training to parish/town council councillors and staff to ensure they can meet the needs of their role.
- We will provide training to parish/town council councillors and staff on enforcement including the ability to issue fixed penalty notices.
- We will provide opportunities for parish/town councils to join our street lighting energy and maintenance contracts at a mutually agreed price.
- We will provide opportunities for parish/town councils to join our grounds maintenance contract at a mutually agreed price.
- We will provide translation services for your documents and literature at a mutually agreed price.

To find out more about these practical support services please contact our Democratic Services Team at: [committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

## 12. Charter Review

- We will review the West Lindsey Parish Charter every 4 years to ensure it continues to meet the needs and aspirations of West Lindsey District Council, parish/town councils and parish meetings.



**Prosperous Communities Committee Workplan - as at 22 May 2020**

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**Purpose:**

The table below provides a summary of reports that are due on the Forward Plan for the remainder of the Year.

**Recommendation:**

1. That members note the contents of this document.

Title	Lead Officer	Purpose of the report
<b>2 JUNE 2020</b>		
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2019/20	Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations	To present performance for the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.
Housing Assistance Policy Update	Andy Gray, Housing and Enforcement Manager	To provide elected Members with an update on the performance related to the HAP.
West Lindsey Parish Charter	Grant White, Enterprising Communities Manager	To agree draft West Lindsey Parish Charter and begin consultation on the new version with parish/town councils and parish meetings.
<b>14 JULY 2020</b>		
Community Wi-Fi Hotspot Programme	Grant White, Enterprising Communities Manager	To re-launch the Councils village hall Wi-Fi scheme as a new programme to meet current and future needs.
Housing Act Civil Penalties Policy Review	Andy Gray, Housing and Enforcement Manager	To provide an update on and seek approval for a revised Civil Penalties Policy
Housing Enforcement Policy Review	Andy Gray, Housing and Enforcement Manager	To seek approval for an updated Housing Enforcement Policy including legislation updates
Modern Slavery Charter	Rachel Parkin, Home	Safer Lincolnshire Partnership have created a Charter



	Choices Team Manager	against Modern Slavery to ensure all organisations signed up to it have a standard set of requirements for their service
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Safer Streets Fund	Grant White, Enterprising Communities Manager	To approve a future CCTV upgrade should a Safer Street Fund application by the PCC for Lincolnshire Police be approved.
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**8 SEPTEMBER 2020**

Progress of health related work	Diane Krochmal, Housing Strategy & Supply Manager	To provide an annual update report on progress of health related work
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Strategic Visitor Economy Strategy	Wendy Osgodby, Senior Growth Strategy & Projects Officer	<p>Support for the Visitor Economy is embedded within West Lindsey District Council's Corporate Plan, under the theme 'A prosperous and enterprising district' as follows:</p> <p>Vision: 'Creating local wealth through the visitor economy'</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Increasing number of visitors / length of stay</li> <li>-Increasing expenditure by visitors</li> <li>-Developing leisure, culture and recreational offer</li> <li>-Increasing the quality and number of businesses / jobs in the sector</li> </ul> <p>Therefore, it is clear that support for developing our Visitor Economy sits at the centre of our strategy for the future of the district.</p>
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**20 OCTOBER 2020**

Progress and Delivery Report; April - September 2020/21	Ellen King, Senior Performance Officer	This report presents progress against the delivery of the Council's key performance measures for the period April - September 2020/2021.
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Proposed Fees and Charges 2020/21 - Prosperous Communities	Sue Leversedge,	Propose fees and charges to take effect from 1 April
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Business Support Team  
Leader 2021.

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**1 DECEMBER 2020**

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Separate Paper & Card Collection

Robert Gilliot, Waste and  
Recycling Team Manager

To introduce a separate paper and card collection to improve the quality and quantity of materials collected. Residents receive an additional bin for paper which is collected on a monthly basis.

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Prosperous Communities Revenue Base Budgets 2021/22 to  
2025/26

Sue Leversedge,  
Business Support Team  
Leader

the report sets out details of the Committees draft revenue budget for the period 2021/22 and estimates to 2025/26.

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