

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held in the Virtual - MS Teams on 14 January 2021 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn (Chairman)  
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley  
Councillor Matthew Boles  
Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor David Cotton  
Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson  
Councillor Michael Devine  
Councillor Ian Fleetwood  
Councillor Giles McNeill  
Councillor John McNeill  
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee  
Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**

Tracey Bircumshaw	Assistant Director of Finance and Property Services and Section 151 Officer
Ellen King	Senior Performance Officer
Ady Selby	Assistant Director of Commercial and Operational Services
Cara Markham	Commercial Development Manager
Katie Storr	Senior Democratic & Civic Officer
James Welbourn	Democratic and Civic Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Robert Waller

**Membership:** Councillor Tracey Coulson substituted for Councillor Robert Waller

### 62 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

### 63 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December were approved as a correct record.

### 64 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor David Cotton declared a personal interest in minute items 66 and 67 as due to his

role with the church, he spends a lot of time at the Crematorium.

## **65 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The matter relating to numbers of users of the Market Rasen Leisure Centre was discussed, as Members again queried the catchment number for the centre.

After the committee were informed that the cost of including agency staff in the 'Staff Recognition – Extra Discretionary Day's Holiday' report would be in the region of £3,600, assurance was requested from the Chief executive for the next meeting that all staff would now receive this benefit

The remaining matters arising were noted.

## **66 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS 2021/22**

Members considered a report on the Council's proposed Progress and Delivery measures and corresponding financial targets for 2021/2022.

There had been a thorough review undertaken between September 2019 and January 2020 of all of the Progress and Delivery targets and measures with key stakeholders; these stakeholders included Members of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, the Progress and Delivery Working Group, the Chief Executive and senior members of staff.

To give the findings of this thorough review time to bed in, the Authority's Management Team carried out a light-touch review for 2021-2022, consulting with Team Managers and the Chairmen of several committees. This light-touch review saw each team in the Authority spoken to in isolation and where there was a strong business case to change a measure it had been included in this report.

Everything contained within the report was split into the portfolios of Directors and Assistant Directors, with the exception of the Assistant Director for Change Management and Regulatory Services, as she was not in post when the review was taking place.

The Senior Performance Officer outlined all of the changes to measures contained within the report, and invited comment from Members. The following information was highlighted:

- It was proposed to remove the measure related to 'IT helpdesk requests received', as it only provided data and not a measure of performance. However, the information on this measure would still be contained within the narrative of future Progress and Delivery reports;
- The 'number of change management requests received' measure was proposed to be removed as again, it only provided data and not performance figures;
- The 'average time taken to action an IT helpdesk request' was a new measure proposed to have its data tracked throughout the coming year. At the end of the financial year the performance data would be used as a baseline for future years. This action would be mirrored for 'number of change management requests

completed’;

- The ‘time taken to progress a search’ measure under the umbrella of Local Land Charges was set at 10 days; the 10 day target was an industry standard, and a government expectation. Currently, the Authority was not meeting this target, and was taking around 30 days to progress a search, but there were issues around staffing and the volume of requests coming into the service.

Additional resources had been put into this area of the Authority. During the first Covid-19 lockdown, private companies that would usually undertake personal searches were unable to enter the Guildhall, meaning that West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) staff were having to perform 100% of the searches. This situation had now changed, and some of the pressure on WLDC staff had been relieved; in addition manual records were being digitised to enable online access which would also result in efficiencies from time spent retrieving records manually;

- The ‘percentage of all planned maintenance’ figure under the portfolio of Finance and Property was currently reported quarterly; however the majority of planned maintenance tended to take place during quarters 2 and 3, so it was proposed to report on this measure annually;
- Under the portfolio of Homes and Communities – Home Choices, the measure ‘number of households placed in temporary accommodation’ currently had a target of 6 households, but it was proposed to change this target to 5 households, as it would then match the number of units available to the public;
- With regards to the measure ‘the number of people housed from the housing register’, the performance fluctuated throughout the year, so the acting manager proposed that this measure be reflected on a quarterly basis;
- There was a proposed new measure for the number of households using bed and breakfast accommodation, designed to provide additional context to the existing measure of ‘number of nights in bed and breakfast accommodation’. This approach matched other measures around temporary accommodation. As it was a new measure, the data would be baselined for 12 months before using that performance to set a target for the following year;
- The target for ‘number of households prevented from becoming homeless through action taken by the Council’ was proposed to be reduced from 90 households, as this target was unrealistic. The average over last year’s quarterly reports was 48 households;
- ‘Homeless prevention cases as a percentage of total approaches’ was a new measure introduced for 2020-2021, and the performance was still being baselined. The government’s recommended target for this measure was 65%, and it was proposed that this target was adopted for 2021/2022;
- The figures gathered from customer satisfaction surveys were proposed to be absorbed into the Council’s overall satisfaction measure. If there were any particular issues with customer satisfaction then they would still be highlighted within Progress

and Delivery reports;

- The measure 'total number of long-term empty properties' was proposed to be replaced with 'empty properties as a percentage of total housing stock in the District'. The target for this measure was 2% of total housing stock, which was based on benchmarking from other similar local authorities;
- The measure 'affordable housing starts on site' would include affordable housing completions. The target would need to be determined as the target was new; the target was likely to be measured annually;
- An additional measure had been added for the Crematorium to show how many cremations were direct funerals;
- The narrative of future Progress and Delivery reports would include other information that members had asked for in the past; examples of this would include the leisure centre, and the swimming pool within;
- There was not currently a metric on the number of individual users of the Leisure Centres, so the addition of this would give an indication of not just how many people used the sites but also an idea of different demographics, such as the age of users;
- The measure 'number of new users using the Leisure Centre three times a week' was so specific due to the recommendation for physical exercise being 150 minutes per week. It was easier to break this metric down into days a week rather than directly use the recommendation written in hours;
- There was a proposal for a new measure for the Trinity Arts Centre around the total number of performances and screenings. Audience figures were currently reported, but this new measure would provide context on additional activity at the Trinity Arts Centre.

There was also a proposed new measure on the subjects of the 'total number of engagement activities held', and a change of target for audience figures in line with restrictions placed on the Trinity Arts Centre by Covid-19;

- Currently all planning appeals were reported in the same way, but the proposal to split appeals up into 'major' and 'minor' appeals would bring reporting in line with statutory requirements;
- The reason that the target for 20% of contracts to be awarded to local suppliers was not set any higher was due to the complexity of certain contracts. Therefore it was not always possible to award contracts locally, although it would be the preferred route.

Prior to the written recommendations being considered, a third recommendation was proposed and seconded:

"the committee requests that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee look in detail at the Disabled Facilities Grants scheme that affects West Lindsey's residents and look for

appropriate ways of monitor outcomes; whilst looking at the ways in which the Council can ensure the best possible outcomes for our residents, and report back to this committee: a matter arising to be included on the Matters Arising Schedule for future meetings.”

Therefore this recommendation was added to a further two that were printed. They were all moved and seconded, and following a vote it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Approve the proposed changes to those Progress and Delivery measures and targets outlined in the report;
- (2) Approve that the remaining Progress and Delivery measures and targets listed in Appendix A are carried over unchanged to 2021/2022;
- (3) Request that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee look in detail at the Disabled Facilities Grants scheme that affects West Lindsey's residents and look for appropriate ways of monitoring outcomes, whilst looking at the ways in which the Council can ensure the best possible outcomes for our residents, and report back to this committee. A matter arising is to be included on the Matters Arising Schedule for future meetings.

## **67 CREMATORIUM GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE AND LANDSCAPING**

Members considered a report proposing a capital investment for landscaping works at Lea Fields Crematorium.

Since its opening, the Crematorium had become popular with local funeral directors. The management in place at the site had improved the business offering of the Crematorium, but one issue that had come to the fore was the need for a suitable area for loved ones to strew ashes; this was a statutory requirement. To facilitate this, officers commissioned a landscaping plan, which was attached to this report.

Following this introduction, Members asked questions of officers present and made comment on the Crematorium and the proposals. The following information was provided:

- During the pandemic staff at the Crematorium have been excellent and fully deserve the award that has come their way;
- When the site was developed officers thought that plans in place for strewing were adequate; however the Crematorium had an experienced manager in place who highlighted the need to be flexible and that people want different options for strewing ashes;
- Although there was always a planned phase 2 for this project, the proposed works would bring part of this phase forward;
- When looking at other large projects that the Authority was undertaking, such as the Depot and Market Rasen Leisure Centre, it would be important to use learning on this project to futureproof those sites;
- There would be the opportunity to have a Book of Remembrance and a tree for

relatives and friends to leave messages for the deceased;

- Because of the landscaping work and green areas there would be a climate impact from the site; however this did bring with it the opportunity to plant trees and create biodiversity.

**Note:** One Member wished to discuss the costs of the proposal, which were contained within exempt appendix 2. Therefore it was moved and seconded that the committee move to exclude the public and press whilst this appendix was discussed, and following a vote it was:

**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 12A of the Act.

The meeting therefore moved into closed session to discuss this appendix.

Once the meeting reconvened into public session, there was a proposal to amend recommendation 2 by substituting the tolerance of '+ or – 20%' with '+ or – 10%', and this was duly seconded. This amendment was unanimously agreed, and therefore become the substantive recommendation 2.

Both recommendation 1 and the new recommendation 2 were moved and seconded, and following a vote it was **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Approve a capital investment budget and subsequent expenditure in order to implement the work detailed in the Landscaping Strategy set out in section 2 of the report;
- (2) Delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources committee, in light of the estimated costs, to spend the capital budget with + or – 10% tolerance. Any additional funding required which falls outside of these parameters will be reported to the committee for further consideration.

## **68 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The workplan was noted.

## **69 CREMATORIUM GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE AND LANDSCAPING - EXEMPT APPENDIX**

The exempt appendix had earlier been discussed when committee resolved to exclude the public and press during item 67.

The meeting concluded at 8.04 pm.

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Subject to Call-in. Call-in will expire at 5pm on 28 January 2021

Chairman