

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 29 July 2021 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Owen Bierley (Chairman)
Councillor John McNeill (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Christopher Darcel
Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Trevor Young
Councillor Mrs Angela White
Councillor Jeff Summers

In Attendance:
Sally Grindrod-Smith Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration
Rachael Hughes Development Contributions Officer
Ele Snow Democratic and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson
Councillor Steve England

Membership: Councillor Jeff Summers was substitute for Councillor Tracey Coulson

18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman welcomed Councillor John Evans, Chairman of Nettleham Parish Council, to the Committee and invited him to address the Committee. Councillor Evans made the following statement.

“Thank you for the opportunity to address you on the matter of the draft CLLP revised plan.

Nettleham Parish Council is currently undertaking a review of their Nettleham Neighbourhood Plan, to tie in with the CLLP revision. So we have been gathering evidence as to the strength of feeling on this issue. I don't have sufficient time to comment on many of the matters of concern regarding the draft plan so will focus here on a key area of major interest to our residents: new housing. I can't speak on behalf of the other Lincoln Fringe villages but strongly suspect my sentiments are shared by them.

The introduction and strategy plan quite rightly says new housing should be focused in urban areas for environmental reasons. We are therefore at a loss to understand the

proposals for new development shown in S79, increasing housing allocations in large villages. We notice that that the total number of houses to now be delivered by 2040 has been reduced by 17% overall and by 21% in the Lincoln Strategy area to 18,656. However under the latest plan for large villages the number of new homes on new sites proposed for Nettleham village has increased by 175 or 10% of the current housing stock in the village. And will almost double the number of new homes proposed only 4 years ago.

This is despite the fact that under current development plans including completed building and homes with planning permission we will already produce an over delivery of some 40 homes ie 16.8% by 2040, with an additional 30 under discussion.

A plea from the Lincoln fringe villages, please give us a break!!

There should not be an expectation of more growth in villages when the targets set in 2017 from a higher central lincs target of growth will be met or even exceeded with existing plans. To push more and more development into the large villages will just turn them in to large housing estates dotted around the county. The villages will lose their identity and individual character. Without adequate infrastructure and employment opportunities they will then add to the increase in car use to travel into Lincoln as they become dormitory towns.

I would also like to mention some, what I would perceive as, potential reputational damage to West Lindsey if this draft plan is adopted in the current form. West Lindsey District Council has been at the forefront of encouraging Neighbourhood Plans, and many local groups have spent many hours producing neighbourhood development plans on the understanding that they would make a difference. It's supposed to be about empowering local people to make decisions about the shape of future development in their community. The lack of consultation in the preparation of the draft plan, and the refusal by West Lindsey District Council to send staff to attend local events, to attend public meetings to explain the plan, seriously damages that reputation. Nettleham was the first in West Lindsey to produce a Neighbourhood Plan with site allocations, which had been systematically evaluated and incorporated into the 2017 Central Lincs Local Plan. There's been no subsequent discussion on the sites or evidence of rigorous site evaluations in the draft plan. In fact, one of the sites that's mentioned in the plan, a proposal for 75 homes has actually been turned down by the planning inspectorate on four different occasions. So we put it in the draft plan! It appears to me that under this draft plan, the role of the neighbourhood planning has been reduced to producing some design codes and designating a few small infill areas. That is not what I would call shaping the future of the community. I'm sure many groups across the district are going to feel let down by this. Thank you very much for your attention."

The Chairman thanked Councillor Evans for his contribution and noted that his comments in relation to Nettleham would also apply to other villages in the district. It was highlighted that the Prosperous Communities Committee meeting was to agree the District Council's formal response to the CLLP consultation. The decision in relation to the Local Plan contents and approach, including allocations was made by the CLJSPC. This was, however, a consultation draft and as such members of the community, stakeholders, Parish Councils and other community groups were able to provide a consultation response on the proposed sites. It was added that If new planning matters were brought to the attention of the Local Plan Team, including those relating to site allocations, then these would be looked at as part of the wider assessment of consultation responses and presented back to the CLJSPC in October. Following this a further, final draft would be produced and consulted on again in

Early Spring 2022 before an Examination in Public in summer/autumn 2022. With regard to Councillor Evans' comments regarding the potential for reputational damage, the Chairman assured him that a response would be provided to him in due course.

19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Vice Chairman J. McNeill noted a slight amendment required to item 14 of the minutes, for the addition of the word 'Committee'. On accepting this amendment it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 13 July 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

20 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The Chairman introduced the report advising Members that the report would be taken "as read" unless Members had any questions. Vice Chairman J. McNeill sought assurance that the remaining seats on the working group for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations had been filled and work would continue apace. The Democratic and Civic Officer confirmed that the first meeting had been scheduled and this work was underway.

With no further questions, and with no requirement for a vote, the Matters Arising were **DULY NOTED**.

21 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

22 DRAFT LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The Committee heard from the Planning Policy Manager regarding the draft Local Plan consultation response. She explained that, since the Issues and Options consultation in June and July 2019, to which West Lindsey District Council submitted formal comments for consideration, the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Team and officers at the Central Lincolnshire Districts had been developing the evidence base for the new Local Plan.

West Lindsey District Council, in the role of consultee, had an opportunity to provide comments on the Consultation Draft Local Plan which consisted of a number of questions endorsing or not draft policies, and provided opportunities for comment and additional evidence as necessary.

As this was only a review, many of the policies remained largely unchanged since the Local Plan was adopted in 2017, however there had been some changes of note, specifically the change in layout and policy numbering to aid in navigation. Other areas of note were:

- Reduction on the housing requirement figure from 1540 to a range between 1060 and 1325

- Approach to housing growth in medium and small villages due to the ability to allocate sites for 10 or more dwellings
- Expansion of the retail hierarchy to include important local and rural centres
- Addition of a suite of policies focussed specifically on mitigating the impact of Climate Change and moving Central Lincolnshire towards carbon neutrality for all new development subject to planning permission.

Members heard this was the second of three consultations on the Local Plan review which gave West Lindsey District Council an opportunity to comment, shape and inform the final draft to be submitted for examination.

The Prosperous Communities Committee, as West Lindsey District Council's Policy Committee, were requested to consider the Consultation Draft Local Plan paper and provide, where appropriate, responses to the issues raised.

The Chairman and Vice Chairs of Prosperous Communities Committee were invited to a briefing on 2 July 2021. During the briefing, an overview of the Consultation Draft Local Plan was provided and key policy areas considered. Along with the briefing and with the support of Officers, an initial consultation response had been drafted on behalf of West Lindsey District Council which was being presented to the Committee to consider, agree and endorse for submission.

The Chairman thanked the Planning Policy Manager and invited comments from the Committee.

There was support amongst Committee Members for the comments from Councillor Evans during the public participation item regarding the allocation of new builds in rural locations. Members felt it was important to protect Lincolnshire villages and avoid a creeping effect of over-development that would be likely to lead to the loss of character across the district. It was suggested that quality of development should be prioritised over quantity, and that villages should have a greater say. It was also felt that the impact of Neighbourhood Plans was in jeopardy and it was important for communities to maintain influence over their localities. Members welcomed the emphasis on hedgerows and verges, supporting the need for re-diversification, as well as the classification of Market Rasen and Caistor as market towns. It was acknowledged that it was as important to protect the character of these market towns as it was the villages. As a specific concern, Vice-Chairman J. McNeill noted a lack of clarity regarding the allocations across Market Rasen town and Middle Rasen parish. He suggested the allocations needed to be clearer for all parties to understand.

There was discussion regarding the site map in relation to potential locations for the placement of wind turbines. It was explained that the purpose was to broadly identify areas where sustainable energy options, such as wind turbines, could be located, however, there would still remain the need to apply for planning permission and each application would be considered on its own merits, as was currently the case. Members were keen for energy efficiency to be championed, both for new developments and retro-fitting of existing buildings. The importance of reducing the carbon footprint across the district was emphasised, with Members highlighting that transport options and ease of accessibility needed to be considered with all proposed development allocations.

Members of the Committee voiced their concerns regarding the development of the

Scampton airfield and the significance of maintaining links within West Lindsey. It was highlighted this was ongoing work and council officers were working closely with the RAF regarding the future of the site.

Members sought clarification regarding the next steps in the consultation. It was confirmed that the draft response would be submitted, incorporating comments from the meeting. The Chairman thanked everyone for the work involved and, having been proposed and seconded, he took the vote. It was therefore

RESOLVED that

- a) the content of the consultation response, as drafted, be fully considered and further observations and commentary from within the Prosperous Communities Committee meeting be contributed as appropriate; and
- b) the proposed consultation submission in relation to the Reg.18 Public Participation stage as identified within the indicative timetable contained with the Local Development scheme (September 2020) be agreed and endorsed; and
- c) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning and Regeneration (in consultation with the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee) to submit the final version of West Lindsey District Council's formal response to the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Reg. 18 Draft Local Plan Consultation incorporating any additional comments expressed and agreed throughout the debate.

23 WORKPLAN

Members gave consideration to the Committee Workplan as at 21 July 2021.

With no comments or questions, and with no requirement for a vote, the Work Plan was **DULY NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 7.43 pm.

Chairman