

Guildhall Gainsborough  
Lincolnshire DN21 2NA  
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**This meeting will be webcast live and published on the Council's website**

## AGENDA

Prayers will be conducted prior to the start of the meeting.  
Members are welcome to attend.

**Notice** is hereby given that a meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA, , on **Monday, 22nd January, 2024 at 7.00 pm**, and your attendance at such meeting is hereby requested to transact the following business.

**To: Members of West Lindsey District Council**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
  
2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 6 NOVEMBER 2023  
To confirm and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 6 November 2023.  
  
**(PAGES 6 - 24)**
  
3. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST  
Members may make any declarations of interest at this point and may also make them at any point during the meeting.
  
4. MATTERS ARISING  
Setting out current position of previously agreed actions as at 12 January 2024.  
  
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Agendas, Reports and Minutes will be provided upon request in the following formats:

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5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i) Chairman of Council
- ii) Leader of the Council
- iii) Head of Paid Service

**(VERBAL REPORT)**

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Questions, if received, under this Scheme will be published by way of supplement following closure of the deadline.

**(TO FOLLOW)**

7. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

Questions submitted by Members under Procedure Rule No.9 will be published by way of supplement following closure of the deadline.

**(TO FOLLOW)**

8. MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

**Motion 1**

Leader, Council Members, in my capacity as Local Ward Member for Lea I have been in correspondence with Severn Trent, in light of recent news about their profits and commitment to investing billions of pounds to support its networks..

In 2017, Lea Parish Council, highlighted issues in the area to Severn Trent and this Local Planning Authority has applied conditions to planning applications in light of the Pick Everard Report (DE-1709-989 Nov 2017) which was commissioned by Severn Trent.

That report defined and quantified a specific deficiency in the system, and further indicated that an upgrade was required before any additional load was to be added to the network.

Residents have experienced firsthand the lack of upgrade, when their homes and gardens have been flooded year after year. Now as we head into the autumn/winter months, they are rightly concerned it will happen again. Residents of West Lindsey deserve a better service from Severn Trent.

This report was commissioned in 2017. I believe, Severn Trent has failed the residents of West Lindsey, as well as the environment All this time by not upgrading a system which they have identified as having a specific deficiency, and in my opinion knowingly.

In recent weeks, I have been able to ascertain from Severn Trent that they will do some temporary work by the end of the financial year (March 2024) but they have not given a timeframe for when they will upgrade or do the necessary works to the pumping station to allow for extra capacity.

Whilst a temporary measure is all very well it does not solve the issue and residents

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should not have to wait another 6 years until its properly resolved. Surely we have a duty as the District Authority to ensure these much needed (by evidence of report by Severn Trent) improvements are made to systems which supply services to our residents

We need answers and the residents need to know how long will it take to rectify this problem and who is going to bring forward a timely solution?

I've sought assistance from OFWAT, the Environment Agency and Sir Edward as Local MP none of whom have provided assistance to resolve this

I therefore move that Members support me in requesting the Leader, in his formal capacity, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council, urgently writes to Severn Trent Water Agency requesting answers as to when a more permanent solution will be in place, and the needs of local residents met.

I so move

Councillor Emma Bailey

District Councillor for Lea Ward – Lea, Knaith Upton & Kexby.

## **Motion 2**

Members, Climate Change has brought about not only record levels of high rainfall but also an increase in the frequency of high intensity rainfall episodes. The result has been an increase in surface runoff, groundwater, pluvial and fluvial flooding – causing serious problems for effected householders, road/rail users, farmers etc. throughout the district, county and country. All predictions, and indications, are that the trends will continue increasing the risk of serious flooding problems – meaning that ever-increasing numbers of people and businesses will suffer social, health, wellbeing and economic issues from water flooding incidents.

In West Lindsey agencies, voluntary/community and council groups all worked on the flooding incidents and did their very best to keep damage to a minimum and keep our communities safe. It is important that we pay tribute and thank these groups for their sterling work. However, as Storm Babet on August 20<sup>th</sup> indicates all these positive efforts were hampered by a lack of resources and co-ordinated working between the agencies. It is essential that this is addressed if the consequences of weather-related incidents are to be reduced in the future.

It is also important that resilient measures are planned and delivered to cope with the ever-increasing quantities of water from higher rainfall levels and thereby prevent the flooding from occurring in the first place. As several different agencies are responsible for the flood water – Anglian Water, Environmental Agency, Lincolnshire Highways, Lincolnshire County Council Flood Management, District Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and Landowners, under Riparian Responsibilities it is essential that they all work together on this task and that they are properly and adequately funded to do the job.

This Council asks the Chief Executive, Chairman and Leader of The Council to write to the Chief Executive, Leader of Lincolnshire County Council, Chairman of Lincolnshire County Council's Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Group and DEFRA endorsing the decision\* (attached) by LCC at their December 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 Meeting to set up an enhanced water management partnership to strengthen the County's flood resilience, adaptations and management of the water management system and also to lobby for extra funding from Central Government to ensure this partnership and member agencies have sufficient resources to carry out this essential mitigating work.

I so move.

Councillor Stephen Bunney on behalf of the West Lindsey Flood Working Group.

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9. REPORTS FOR DETERMINATION

- a. Recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel - Members Allowance Scheme 2024/25

**(PAGES 28 - 38)**

- b. Devolution in Lincolnshire - To make a formal response to the consultation

**(PAGES 39 - 58)**

- c. Collection Fund - Council Tax Surplus 2023/24 & Council Tax Base 2024/25

**(PAGES 59 - 66)**

- d. Recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee - Council Tax Empty Homes Premiums 2024/25

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- e. Recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee - Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25

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- f. Recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee - Mid-Year Treasury Update 2023/24

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- g. Recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee - New Fees relative to Crematorium for 2023/24

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10. PROCEDURAL REPORTS FOR DETERMINATION

- a. Amendments to Committee Memberships

**(PAGES 119 - 122)**

- b. Amendments to existing outside body Appointments

**(PAGES 123 - 128)**

Ian Knowles  
Head of Paid Service  
The Guildhall  
Gainsborough

Friday, 12 January 2024

# Agenda Item 2 Public Document Pack

West Lindsey District Council - 6 November 2023

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 6 November 2023 at 7.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Stephen Bunney (Chairman)  
Councillor Matthew Boles (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Emma Bailey	Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway	Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Karen Carless	Councillor Liz Clews
Councillor Christopher Darcel	Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Adam Duguid	Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan	Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Paul Lee	Councillor Jeanette McGhee
Councillor Peter Morris	Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Maureen Palmer	Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Roger Pilgrim	Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings	Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Paul Swift	Councillor Baptiste Velan
Councillor Moira Westley	Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**

Ian Knowles	Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Director of Corporate Services and Section 151
Lisa Langdon	Assistant Director for People and Democratic and Monitoring Officer
Katie Storr	Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

**Also Present:** 3 x Representatives from Keelby Parish Council / Neighbourhood Planning Group  
2 x Representatives from Hemswell Cliff / Neighbourhood Planning Group

**Apologies** Councillor Eve Bennett  
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence

### 32 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND TRIBUTES POST STORM BABEL

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.

A warm welcome was also extended to representatives from both Keelby Parish Council and

Hemswell Cliff Parish Council, who would later in the meeting present their approved Neighbourhood Plans to Full Council.

Before commencement of the formal business, the Chairman took the opportunity to reference the recent flooding across the District and the fantastic response by the District Council's staff when people were in need. He considered this had been of great comfort to those effected, knowing they were being supported. Whilst thanking those on the front-line, he also paid tribute to those other Council Officers working to keep the councils normal functions running, whilst resources were diverted, noting he had written to all staff to such effect.

On hearing the Chairman's comments, Members across the Chamber, sought and were granted, the opportunity to express their gratitude too.

A Cherry Willingham Ward Member commented on having been very impressed with the co-ordination efforts between West Lindsey Officers and staff at other agencies involved, referencing how useful and beneficial the single point of contact approach had been. There had been no "information vacuum" and with over 80 families effected in the Ward, being able to provide up to date and accurate information had been much appreciated by all. Personal tribute was paid to the Director of Commercial and Operational Services.

The Ward Councillor for Bardney, expressed thanks for how staff and all agencies had acted in his Ward, speaking of his reassurance at seeing sandbags arriving throughout the night and well into the early hours. He too spoke of co-ordinated efforts, agencies working together, commenting that residents did not want to be pushed between agencies, they simply wished to be helped, and this is what he had seen happening. Concern was expressed that this was only the start of the storm season and with ground saturated, and water to flow off the land, further problems could be experienced over the coming days and longer winter period.

Councillors from across the Chamber were encouraged to feed through their individual experiences, thoughts and suggestions for improvements to the County Flood Management Group and West Lindsey's own flooding working Group. The Chairman further indicated he was minded to bring a motion to a future meeting in order that Members could debate the matters at greater length.

Ward Members for Welton, Scotter and Cherry Willingham shared similar experiences, thanked a number of officers personally for their work over the entire weekend and into the nights and of how quickly residents needs were addressed.

Bringing comments to an end, Members commented on how community spirit had shone through in effected areas and considered residents should be thanked too for the support and understanding they had shown one another.

A lessons learnt exercise would be undertaken and Members were again encouraged to feed into the relevant agencies.

### **33 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 26 JUNE 2023**

Having been proposed and seconded, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 26 June 2023 be confirmed, approved and signed as a correct record.

### **34 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 12 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Having been proposed and seconded, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Full Council held on 12 September, 2023 be confirmed, approved and signed as a correct record.

**Note:** The Officer named within the following item of business left Chamber at this point in the meeting.

### **35 APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER**

The Chairman presented the report which sought to appoint to the Statutory post of Monitoring Officer for West Lindsey District Council, following the successful recruitment to the permanent post of Assistant Director of People and Democratic.

The report included brief detail of the recruitment process, the statutory functions of the MO and Ms Langdon's previous experience. Members involved in the recruitment process spoke of the candidate's excellent nature, demonstrated in interview.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded. On being put to the vote, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that

- (a) in accordance with the terms of Part I, 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended) and all subsequent related legislation, Ms Lisa Langdon be appointed and designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer, with immediate effect; and
- (b) the Constitution be amended, as necessary, to reflect the revised appointment.

Following the decision, the appointed Officer returned to the Chamber.

The Chairman congratulated Ms Langdon on her appointment and Members associated themselves with the Chairman's comments, concluding with a round of applause.



### **36 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this point in the meeting. The Chairman reminded Members that they could make a declaration at any point in the meeting should they feel it necessary to do so.

### **37 MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman introduced the report advising Members that it would be taken "as read" unless any Members had any questions that they wished to raise.

With no comments or questions, and with no requirement to vote, the matters arising were **DULY NOTED**.

### **38 PRESENTATION ITEM - TO FORMALLY RECEIVE THE KEELBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Council was reminded that the Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Keelby, had been adopted at the last meeting. Unfortunately, it had not been feasible for a Keelby Parish Council representative to be present, to take part in the "tradition" of formally handing over adopted plans, to celebrate the Parish's success.

Representatives from Keelby Parish Council and its' Neighbourhood Planning Group were in attendance, this evening. Councillor Sue Knight, Chairman of Keelby Parish Council (KPC), Councillor Trevor Wright (KPC) and Adrian Mitchell, lead volunteer on the Neighbourhood Planning Group were formally welcomed to the meeting. The Chairman also advised the chamber that he had visited the Parish to see the sites referenced within the Plan.

The Local Ward Member was invited to address the Chamber and spoke of his delight at seeing this document reach its final stages and of the dedication needed to complete such Plans.

Following which, Councillor Trevor Wright of KPC made the following statement: -

"Thank you for the invitation this evening, and opportunity for us to present the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Keelby. My name is Councillor Trevor Wright, and with me today I have Councillor Sue Knight, Chair of Keelby Parish Council and Adrian Mitchell, a resident who had a large part in the development of our plan.

Keelby village is classed as a large village, is part of the Caistor and Yarborough Ward, it is located on the most northerly boarder of the West Lindsey District, neighbouring both North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire Districts. We often feel very isolated, but I'm delighted to say that we have 2 very proactive and capable District Councillors living in or very close to our Parish, and we are very grateful to Councillor Lawrence and Councillor Bierley for their continuous support and guidance.

With a current population of a little over 2,100, there are approximately 970 dwellings, 10 or so businesses and 2 pubs; but as is the case everywhere, local businesses are dealing with challenging times at the moment.

We pride ourselves on Keelby being a nice place to live, and we as a Parish Council are keen for the village to retain its charm and community spirit, which is important to our residents. It was for this reason that we wanted to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, to give us some control of how the village might develop in the future.

Our neighbourhood Plan (presented to you today) focusses on 7 Planning Objectives that support our vision which reads:

“Our Community Vision for Keelby

Keelby will continue to be a thriving large village community with provision of key services, a good selection of local businesses / shops / amenities a broad range of locally accessible employment opportunities.

It will maintain and improve its overall sustainability, retain its village character and rural atmosphere while ensuring that it’s valued historic Listed Buildings, non-designated heritage assets, local environment, Open and Green spaces are not compromised or lost.”

In support of this we have specified the following Planning Objectives:

Planning Objective 1 focusses on retaining the character of the village, which is most important to us and our residents. Feedback from the vast majority of our residents when surveyed expressed the importance of open spaces, easy access to the countryside and the retention of green and open spaces; with over 80% of responses stating this as their highest priority.

Linked to this Planning Objective 2 centres on the planning of new, large-scale, residential development, and whilst we acknowledge the need for us to support planning objective laid out in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, we are keen to limit the number of large-scale development in the village. An 80 dwelling site has been approved, and a further development for up to 100 dwellings if referenced in our plan, but other than these, we are keen to restrict further development greater than 10 dwellings as we believe that this will begin to impact on the character of the village.

Planning Objective 3 is associated with the smaller scale developments and changes to existing properties. With regards to these, we are keen to ensure that their design features and principles are both in line with current standards and requirements, but also complement the character and appearance of their surroundings and minimise any adverse impact on the Neighbourhood.

Planning Objective 4 focusses on the development of Business and Services to

support the long-term sustainability of the village and its residents. Successful and thriving local businesses form an essential and very important part in this long-term sustainability, economic viability and vibrancy of the local community. They contribute to the village in many ways providing valuable local services, employment opportunities and indeed essential social contact.

Furthermore, we are particularly proud of our Sports Ground that hosts Football, Cricket, Tennis and Bowls clubs along with a well-used Skate Park. Initiated by the Parish Council Millennium investment and opened in 2006, the site is the envy of many and offers sports and recreation to 100's of residents and local people. Additionally, with support from WLDC, we are continually improving recreational and play facilities on the village green for both our younger residents and also our more mature residents with the installation of adult gym equipment.

Planning Objective 5 deals with matter associated with the environment and countryside. An integral part of the character of Keelby continues to be that, although it is classed as a large village, its surrounding countryside remains quite rural. Although only a few miles from the important Humber Bank industrial and commercial zone, it is equally also very close to the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, part of which is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We are keen to ensure that we continue to enjoy this and develop in a way that continues to compliment. Therefore, we will continue to support the need for arable farming and the protection of local woodlands and wildlife habitats.

Planning Objective 6 deals with Roads and Transport issues raised by residents as part of the consultation survey, the main issues being associated with conditions of roads and pavements, speeding, access/parking and public transport. The lack of speed restrictions on busy roads that pass through or close to the village is a constant concern to us, and whilst the introduction of our Parish Council led Community Speed Watch initiative helps, there is still much to do and we will continue to liaise with the County Council to address these issues.

Finally, Planning Objective 7 addresses our aspirations to continually improve and develop our Walkways and Cycle routes, and all development proposals should provide links for walking routes to the central areas of Keelby where it is practicable to do so. Additionally, proposals that provide improved, safe cycle links to Immingham, Grimsby and the nearby National Cycle Route 1 will be actively supported.

Can I take this opportunity to thank the West Lindsey District Council Planning Support Team, particularly Nev Brown, who was a tremendous support to us throughout the process; and finally, I thank you for your time and for allowing us the opportunity to present our Neighbourhood Plan to you today.

The Chairman of Council then formally received the Plan from Councillor Wright to a round of applause from all Members and Officers.

Note: During the above item of business, Councillor Owen Bierley declared a personal interest as he had been a Member of the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

### **39 ADOPTION OF THE HEMSWELL CLIFF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Members gave consideration to a report to fully 'make' (adopt) the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan following a successful referendum. Once adopted the plan would become part of the development plan for the District and would have major influence on planning application decisions in the parish.

The Chairman of Council introduced the report and advised Members the Neighbourhood Plan had been prepared by a residents' steering group on behalf of the parish council; congratulating the Group for their time and effort in ensuring the Plan reached the final stage.

Members' attention was drawn to the compliments of the Examiner on the Plan and its policies, as detailed in the report.

The Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan had involved two rounds of public consultation and had been successful at both examination and referendum. The referendum, held on 19 October, had seen residents voting 95% in favour of the Plan.

The Chairman formally welcomed the Chairman of the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan Committee, Mrs Connie Hurd and Mr Mark Hurd, Committee Member to the meeting. Prior to Members debating the matter, the Chairman invited both the Ward Councillor and Mrs Hurd to address Council and present the successful Neighbourhood Plan.

The Ward Member spoke of his delight at reaching this stage, the enormous amount of work and commitment shown by the residents, and of the nuances the area experienced, given its former RAF base status.

Mrs Connie Hurd made the following statement: -

"Councillor Howitt-Cowan, Councillor Bunney, Nev Brown, Officers and Members of West Lindsey District Council and guests,

This is a day some of us in Hemswell Cliff have been waiting for since February 2016, which was 7 years and 6 months ago. Tonight is the night that West Lindsey District Council adopts the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan! (hopefully).

Little did my husband and I know that when we went along to learn about the neighbourhood plan for Hemswell Cliff, seven and a half years ago, that it would take so long to bring to completion, and a whole lot more work than we realised in the beginning.

Our Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan Committee was really pleased (and I was relieved) that when our referendum took place, the plan passed. It has been a long journey for a small group of people who knew little or nothing about planning and for some people at West Lindsey District Council as well as people from a myriad of organisations.

As most of you know, a lot of work goes into the preparation of these plans, with consulting the residents and local businesses about their thoughts and ideas, and in writing the plans to legal and acceptable standards. Then comes the scrutinizing and questioning of the plans by various agencies with resulting changes to be made. We want to thank many different people for making this happen: our parish clerk, Helen Reek; Hemswell Cliff parish council chairman, Graham Prestwood; Hemswell Cliff Primary School; Nev Brown of WLDC; the planners without whom we could not have produced this plan—Steve Kemp and his team from Open Plan and Luke Brown. We were fortunate enough to receive Grant Funding from the Neighbourhood Planning Programme, funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to support us through the process. We were also successful in obtaining Lottery Funding to undertake a whole range of community activities in 2017 and 2018. I add my thanks to all the residents and businesses that took part in events, activities, and questionnaires to make their thoughts and ideas known. A huge thank you goes to the members of the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan committee who have persevered over the long haul.

Unlike other traditional villages, you will all be aware that Hemswell Cliff is an ex-RAF base and as such has different issues. The process of planning for the future has helped many of us in Hemswell Cliff have a clearer vision for the future—one where many new jobs are offered and taken up as the Food Enterprise Zone sees food companies establish themselves at Hemswell Cliff. We are supportive of increased housing to support the FEZ which will in turn support additional facilities. It is also hoped that this will reduce the need to travel for employment so that people can live and work in Hemswell Cliff without having to commute into one of the surrounding towns or to Lincoln. The Plan is also supported by a Design Code setting out our vision for well-designed new developments. With a Neighbourhood Plan in place, the needed new housing will bring in funding so we can develop the infrastructure of our village through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

My husband and I have lived in Hemswell Cliff for 28 years and we hope to live there long enough to see some of these developments come into being.

Congratulations to Nev Brown and his team, to the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan Committee and to the residents of Hemswell Cliff!

Thank you all for listening.

Councillor Bunney, I present you with the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan”.

The Chairman of Council then formally received the Plan from Mr and Mrs Hurd to a round of applause from all Members.

The Chairman opened the matter for debate and Members across the floor congratulated the Group on their remarkable achievement with Members expressing their understanding of, and therefore their admiration of, the amount of work, engagement and involvement and determination it took to reach adopted status. Both the Leader and Deputy personally congratulated the Parish and spoke of the amazing work being undertaken at a local level.

The former Chairman of Planning Committee spoke of the importance of Neighbourhood Plans, the precedent level they held in terms of decision making; outlining the hierarchy of policy documents and the ability and impact of Neighbourhood Plans in allowing local people to actually set out what development they would like to see in their own locations, in their own environments. This gave people in each settlement the ability to put a focus on where and how they would like to see the planning system moving forwards.

Hemswell Cliff were considered to be an example to those still navigating the journey to achieving a Neighbourhood Plan.

Having been moved and seconded it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan be adopted and made.

**Note:** Councillor Adam Duguid declared an Other Registrable Interest, in that he owned a large amount of land within the Parish Plan area. He did not debate or vote on the matter in light of this fact.

## 40 ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Chairman

The Chairman addressed the Council, referencing briefly some of the events with which he had been involved and attended since Council last met.

It had been a privilege to represent the Council at the Memorial Service for former District Councillor, Alf Frith, it was a sad occasion for the family, but to hear of how Mr Frith had advocated for residents through his years of service was both positive and heartwarming.

The Chairman had raised the Flag for Emergency Services Day, outside of the Guildhall, thanking those who had attended. A worthy cause to be supported given the communities reliance on emergency services.

Other events attended included, Civic Services held by both North Lincolnshire Council and Lincolnshire County Council; a tour of Grimsby Docks, the Award Evening for the Lincolnshire College, where it had been a pleasure to see the students receive their qualifications and awards.

It had been an honour to attend the Destination Lincolnshire Awards Ceremony in October at the University of Lincoln. A handful of businesses from across the District were nominated for awards, with the Chairman delighted to advise that three businesses from West Lindsey had won an award and had now progressed to the National finals. Prior to the event the Chairman had spent time visiting all of those nominated and indicated his visits had been informative,

The Chairman had also commenced a round of industry visits, with the Leader and Deputy

Leader, also taking part, and Ward Members. Again the visits had provided a lot of learning.

The Chairman had also offered his support to a number of Community and Family Days including, horse racing at the Market Rasen Community Day, a performance of Wind in the Willows at the Market Rasen Leisure Centre and a number of performances at the Trinity Arts Centre in Gainsborough.

Bringing his announcements to an end, the Chairman spoke of visiting the depot to mark the retirement of a Council employee, who had worked for the Council for 44 years. It had been a privilege to mark the occasion and the Chairman wished to formally acknowledge and recognise the service and dedication of the employee, Mr Tony Stocks', in Full Council.

Finally, the Chairman invited fellow Councillors to attend his Civic Community Christmas Carol Concert, at the Methodist Church in Market Rasen, on 8 December. The Claxby Community Choir would be performing and there would be light refreshments following the Service – all were welcome.

## **Leader**

The Leader made the following address to Council: -

“Chairman, welcome to tonight's meeting, it's been several months since the last full Council meeting with lots to report, I will try and keep my announcements brief, I have the following items to report: -

The Scampton Asylum Centre proposal: -

Over the course of the last week, the High Court heard the substantive case of Judicial Review, this Council's challenge of the Home Office decision, to use RAF Scampton as a site for asylum accommodation. Our case, presented by our appointed legal team, supported by Officers, set out that the Home Office have failed to evidence a true emergency, in the terms required by planning legislation, known as the class Q, that they have not adequately assessed the environmental impacts of the proposal, and the impact of the community have simply been disregarded. Clearly, this Conservative Government have shown no respect for many of the servicemen who have lost their lives, to save our nation through the cold resurgence. We heard that the Home Office intended to secure a long term planning permission for the use of RAF Scampton through an unusual tool available to the Government, known as a Special Development Order. I have been clear as the Leader of the Council that the Home Office must not yet again seek to find a way round the public process by using an inappropriate planning tool. As is seen by our enforcement actions, we are committed to holding the Home Office to account and we will continue to use these powers to the best public interest. We will now await for Lady Justice Thorntons' judgment, and this will inform us of our next steps. Members will continue to receive updates in a timely manner and once we understand the outcome of these proceedings, I'll be able to set out more details of what this involvement will look like. Finally, on behalf of the Council, a very special thanks to Sally Grindrod-Smith, Rachel Hughes and their teams for the hard work they have done on behalf of this Authority, their efforts have been widely appreciated.

The awareness of the fight for Scampton has been achieved through the hard work of our communications team and a big thanks to Julie Heath and Steve Cawthorne who have led on this work. Finally, I'd like to thank our neighbouring authorities for their kind comments and messages of support in the plight to Save RAF Scampton.

LIVES First Responders: -

The LIVES First Responders Service is a highly valued service and West Lindsey, have been pleased to support them in the development of a new headquarters building on the A15 Showground site. This partnership has demonstrated creativity and imagination in delivering this development, which will serve our District for many years to come.

Liaison with Town/Parish Councils: -

At the last full Council meeting I talked about working closely with our Town and Parish Councils and I'm pleased to report that regular meetings have commenced with our main towns and parishes. We aim to establish improved joint working between the Councils and a better engagement with local residents, the feedback has been extremely positive.

Savoy Cinema: -

Finally, Chairman, the Gainsborough Town Centre for the past 50 years has been in decline and lacked investment. Last Friday, myself and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Rollings, met Savoy Cinemas, to sign a landmark agreement, to deliver a £9m cinema and leisure development.

This agreement is part of a larger spending plan of £15m of investment for the town centre, and this financial investment, is the biggest, I think, ever made by this Authority, and it's a priority for the new Administration Group. Further updates will be provided regarding the Town Centre development over the coming months.

Thank you.”

## **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive addressed Council and was pleased to announce that West Lindsey had been shortlisted for two awards at the LGC Workforce Awards. Representatives of the Council would be attending a national event to present the Council's submissions for:

- Best Next Generation Employer (six Councils shortlisted)
- Best Innovation in Smart Working – Jointly with the Council's partner Technology One.(six Councils Shortlisted)

The Chief Executive briefly summarised to the Chamber the basis of each submission.

Both the Chief Executive and Leader had attended the LGA National Conference held in July. As always this had proven to be a useful networking event, linking with colleagues



across the sector and providing opportunity to explore potential new initiatives.

Referencing the Scampton Judicial Review Hearing, thanks were expressed to Sally Grindrod Smith and Rachael Hughes for their work on the legal process and for ensuring West Lindsey were in the best possible position. Thanks were also paid to Management Team colleagues and Team Managers who continued to accommodate a range of additional meetings relating to Scampton, continuing to act as a “critical friend” to the Home Office.

Picking up on earlier comments, the Chief Executive paid his own tribute to staff for their work during Storm Babet. Special thanks were paid to Ady Selby, Emma Foy, Sarah Elvin and Veronica Edwards for covering the Fiskerton Information Centre over the weekend, supporting those residents who were evacuated. It was noted there remained a risk of flooding at Fiskerton, but this was reducing as the water levels subsided. Members noted a Lincolnshire Resilience Forum response plan was in place should there be any further issues in the area.

Finally, August had seen the successful recruitment to the role of Assistant Director of People and Democratic and Monitoring Officer. Ms Langdon was again formally welcomed to the organisation.

This brought announcements to a conclusion.

#### **41 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chairman advised the meeting that no public questions had been received.

#### **42 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9**

The Chairman advised the meeting that two questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.9 had been submitted to the meeting. These had been circulated to all Members, separately to the agenda, and published on the website.

The Chairman invited, Councillor Chris Darcel Local Ward Member for Cherry Willingham, to put his question to the Leader as follows:-

“A Cherry Willingham resident has requested I ask the Council to join and support the “Planning for the Planet” organisation, [www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/councillors](http://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/councillors) . I know the Council is rightly concerned about our environment and that the District Council has limited power to influence matters, but in supporting Planning for the Planet, I believe the Council will be making one further step to help preserve a viable planet for our grandchildren.

Personally, I believe this action should have been taken as a result of the Kyoto Agreement 32 years ago, but better late than never.

Will the Leader of the Council commit to asking the Environment and Sustainability Member Working Group to explore the feasibility of joining

Planning for the Planet, if we do not already belong, as a matter of urgency, and can he confirm that our Environmental Protection Officers are currently enforcing the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone legislation and the General Binding Rules for small sewage discharge to the ground that were brought in a few years ago?

Thank you.”

The Leader of the Council responded as follows : -

Thank you, Councillor Darcel and please pass on my thanks to the Cherry Willingham resident for their important enquiry into what this Council is doing to play its part in tackling climate change.

Through its ambitious Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, this Council has made tackling climate change a key priority and we are committed to our target of becoming a carbon net zero Council and district by 2050.

Planning for the Planet is a network of places using local planning policy to support good food and farming, and to save rivers.

57 local authorities are currently signed up to Planning for the Planet. Currently, West Lindsey, nor any other Lincolnshire Council with the exception of City of Lincoln, is signed up to Planning for the Planet.

However, through our Corporate Plan, the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, and our Environment and Sustainability Action Plan, the Council is already delivering, or planning to deliver many of the actions that Planning for the Planet encourages. On that basis, I will write to the Chair of the Council's Environment and Sustainability Member Working Group to ask that the group investigates the feasibility of this Council formally signing up to Planning for the Planet, including any financial implications, and that an update on the group's findings are reported back to their Parent Committee – Prosperous Communities Cttee

In the meantime, the meeting of Prosperous Communities Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> October received the Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change annual progress report, which set out in detail the actions this Council has taken over the last 12 months to tackle climate change; and the actions planned over the next 12 months and beyond in pursuit of meeting our 2050 target.

NVZs are enforced by the Environment Agency, as are the General Binding Rules for small sewage discharge. The Rural Payments Agency also carries out inspections to check farmers and landowners are complying with the NVZ rules as part of cross compliance.

The Local Authority where its aware of such matters works with it partners to ensure that they discharge any powers available to them. Enforcement Officers here, have highlighted to me two Government websites where Members of the public can find more information about these matters including how to report concerns to relevant agencies. I shall ensure these are circulated to you

Councillor Darcel and all Members following the meeting.

Councillor Darcel, thanked the Leader for his response.

The Chairman then invited, Councillor Paul Swift Local Ward Member for Dunholme and Welton, to put his question to the Leader as follows:-

“Leader of the Council,

It has been mentioned in media reports including by the BBC[1] and My Local Lincolnshire[2] as well as included in the Home Office’s Scampton Factsheet[3] that West Lindsey District Council will receive £3,500 for each new and occupied bedspace at the Scampton asylum centre once it is up and running.

What is unclear is exactly when and under what conditions this money will be received when costs to the council and other local bodies are already being incurred, over what time span it is intended to cover expenditure for, how the money will be spent or divided with other authorities, and most importantly for taxpayers, if it is enough to cover the actual costs.

There is an intimation in some quarters including by a former Chief Immigration Officer at Border Force[4] that West Lindsey District Council is being “paid off” by the Home Office and will turn a profit from Scampton being used as an asylum centre, which as Members being privy to draft financial plans, we know this to be wholly not the case and that we are in fact likely to have our finances negatively impacted by the Government’s disastrous and unwelcome plan. The tax burden of which the Government appears intent for our residents to unfairly pay for.

Can the Leader of the Council please give a breakdown of:

- a) how and when the money will be received;
- b) over what time frame it is intended to cover (and beyond that if it is a recurringly granted sum);
- c) what the split with other local bodies will be;
- d) what it will be spent on;
- e) whether the council stands to gain or lose financially and if so by how much, and;
- f) how might the Home Office’s sparse funding impact our residents’ tax bill compared with other Lincolnshire districts that don’t have this intrusive and ill thought out plan forced upon them?

Thank you.”

References:

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-67145553>
2. <https://mylocal.co.uk/lincolnshire/feed/118078>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodationfactsheets/factsheet-raf-scampton-asylum-accommodation-accessible>
4. [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/kevin-saunders-8370a5199\\_raf-scampton-i-](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/kevin-saunders-8370a5199_raf-scampton-i-)

[hadto-smile-when-listening-activity-7047537392131395584-d9B0](#)

The Leader of the Council responded as follows : -

“Officers at West Lindsey District Council are in negotiations with the Home Office regarding a funding agreement for the extra services that will need to be delivered by the Council arising from the Home Office’s decision to locate an asylum accommodation centre at RAF Scampton. We continue to act in the best interests of the Council Tax-payer by protecting them from costs to the Council directly attributable to the centre. The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee have been provided with estimations of additional required costs based on current evidence and it was confirmed that actual income and expenditure would be reported back to committee as it arises.

The Home Office has confirmed that any funding from them will now be ringfenced and we can only claim what has been spent up to a maximum of £3,500 for each bed made available. West Lindsey cannot keep the full £3,500 per bed as the funding is to cover West Lindsey costs, City of Lincoln costs and County Council Costs.

As negotiations are ongoing we are unable to provide answers to questions a – f. However these answers will be reported to the relevant committee when they are known”

Councillor Swift thanked the Leader for his response.

#### **43 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10**

The Chairman advised the meeting that three Motions had been submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No. 10 and these were set out on the agenda.

Councillor Fleetwood was invited to put his Motion to the meeting as follows:-

“Many members of this Council will have in recent weeks been walking round their local communities. Some will have met other people walking for health benefits or exercising their dogs, which many people have added to their households in the last couple of years.

During April, it was brought to my attention that some litter and dog bins were filling up very rapidly and that some were very full. While it might appear very easy to request that any particular bin is emptied, this can become a lot more cumbersome and complicated when trying to explain the location of that bin to the District Council who own and look after so many across the District. After a little research I discovered that some other Councils put an asset number onto each bin and this seems a good idea to me, if for no other reason than trying to manage any particular bin that might need a repair or replacement.

But with a little more thought, if a bin had an asset number on it, say DB1 or LB1, then a further two stickers could be added. The first would be to put a simple

notice on saying 'if this bin is full or in need of repair, please ring the District Council with the phone number for the right department' to enable it to be actioned quickly, and the second would be to put a QR code (quick response digital image) on the relevant bin so in these times of digital technology the entire process could become automated and offer a 24/7 service to the residents.

Environmentally this would help to keep the area more beautiful, from a health perspective it would keep the area cleaner and from a management angle the entire system would become easier to maintain.

As Opposition Group Leader, I therefore call on this Council to support me in requesting that the Prosperous Communities Committee explores the feasibility and financial implications of introducing asset numbers on all District Council litter bins; plus an information sticker detailing how to report a full or damaged bin to the Council for collection, and a QR code on each bin as an automated alternative for contacting the Council to report a full or damaged bin.

I so move  
Councillor Ian Fleetwood"

The Chairman thanked Councillor Fleetwood and drew Members attention to Council Procedure Rule 10.4 "*if the subject of a motion comes within the remit of any committee(s), it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee(s) for consideration and determination.*

The Chairman indicated, whilst he had some discretion, he would on this occasion be applying Rule 10.4. As such a seconder for the motion was sought and received and on that basis the Chairman advised the matter would stand referred for determination, with no requirement for a vote.

The motion submitter was advised he would be invited to Prosperous Communities Committee, when the motion was considered and determined, and the Chairman indicated he trusted Officers would bring this forward in as timely manner as feasible. Council would be advised at their next meeting when this was anticipated to be.

Councillor Key was invited to put his Motion to the meeting as follows:-

"Leader, the current side waste (Refuse) Policy adopted, I believe, in 2009, should be reviewed because it does not, in my view, comply with the Council's commitment to becoming carbon net zero.

As it stands under the current policy, (refuse) side waste is not collected. After about 2 days, this refuse becomes fly-tipping and is collected by a caged van, then tipped at the waste transfer station, the weight then being recorded as street cleansing.

Leaving the side waste next to the bin to me is very counterproductive as collecting at source, means another team does not have to duplicate the task using more fuel and carbon emissions.

I urge members to support me in requesting that the Prosperous Communities Committee commits to formally reviewing the side waste policy within the 2023/24 financial year to ensure that the policy is in line with the Council's commitment to reduce carbon emissions from its fleet of vehicles.

I so move.  
Councillor Paul Key”

The Chairman thanked Councillor Key and again drew Members' attention to Council Procedure Rule 10.4. which he would again be applying on this occasion.

As such a seconder for the motion was sought and received and on that basis the Chairman advised the matter would stand referred for determination, with no requirement for a vote.

The motion submitter was advised he would be invited to Prosperous Communities Committee, when the motion was considered and determined, and Council would be advised, at their next meeting, when this was anticipated to be.

Councillor Smith was invited to put his Motion to the meeting as follows:-

“I, Councillor Thomas Jacob Neil Smith, propose the following motion:-

Chairman, as some of you may know, LNER recently undertook a validation run for a daily direct run from Cleethorpes through Market Rasen to London. This is a most welcome step in the right direction and something that many have been campaigning for over a considerable period of time. I request that we lobby LNER to assess the viability of Barnetby being included into the direct run from Cleethorpes, passing through Market Rasen, to London, to enable our residents to be truly connected to our nation's capital. This will open up more opportunities for work and leisure for our residents and this should be something we work with all our statutory partners to achieve.

I so move  
Councillor Thomas Smith”

With the motion duly seconded, debate ensued.

Members from across the Chamber indicated their support for the motion. Many spoke of how Barnetby station was a lynch pin to opening and connecting the northern corner of the District and would much improve connectivity for settlements such as Caistor and Keelby. Furthermore, it would support and improve connectivity to Humberside International Airport. Members spoke of the excellent service running from Lincoln to London direct and considered other parts of the District should have access to such services.

On being put to the vote, the **MOTION AS SUBMITTED** was declared **CARRIED** and as a result it was

**RESOLVED unanimously** that the District Council lobby LNER, seeking support

from all statutory partners, to assess the viability of Barnetby being included in the direct run from Cleethorpes, passing through Market Rasen, to London.

#### **44 AMENDMENTS TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Chairman introduced the report which sought to make amendments to Committee Memberships following a request from the Opposition Group.

Having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- (a) Councillor John Barrett be appointed to the Licensing Committee and Regulatory Committee, for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Roger Pilgrim: and
- (b) Councillor Roger Pilgrim be appointed to Governance and Audit Committee, for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor John Barrett.

#### **45 NEW OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENT AND AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING OUTSIDE BODY AND WORKING GROUP APPOINTMENTS**

The Chairman introduced the report which sought to appoint a Member to the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board, a new Outside Body. The report also dealt with making and amending appointments, previously made, to Outside Bodies, Internal Working Groups, Boards and Panels, having received requests from Members to do so.

Whilst nominations were included in the published report, for the majority of the positions being appointed to, nominations for the seat on the Environment and Sustainability Working Group were sought, with Councillor Swift being proposed and seconded.

With no further nominations made for any of the positions available the recommendations were put to the vote en-bloc. With no votes against it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- (a) Councillor David Dobbie be appointed to the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board until Annual Council 2027 and the Body be added to the list of approved duties in the Members Allowances Scheme;
- (b) Councillor Stephen Bunney be appointed to the Funding Consultative Panel until Annual Council May 2027, replacing Councillor Paul Key;
- (c) Councillor Lynda Mullally be appointed to the Community Grants Panel, until Annual Council 2027 replacing Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers;
- (d) Councillor Paul Swift be appointed to the Environment and Sustainability Working Group until Annual Council May 2027, replacing Councillor Eve

Bennett; and

- (e) Councillor Paul Key be appointed to the Lincolnshire Pensions Committee, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council, until Annual Council May 2027, replacing Councillor Trevor Young.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

Chairman



**Purpose:**

To consider progress on the matters arising from previous Council meetings.

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

**Matters arising Schedule**

Meeting	Full Council				
Status	Title	Action Required	Comments	Due Date	Allocated To
Black	<b>Nitrate Vulnerable Zones and General Binding Rules for small sewage discharge. - websites</b>	Circulation of Government Websites as detailed below Information circulated by E-mail - November 2023. Websites also included here NVZs are enforced by the Environment Agency, <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nitrate-vulnerable-zones">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nitrate-vulnerable-zones</a> as are the General Binding Rules for small sewage discharge <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/general-binding-rules-small-sewage-discharge-to-the-ground#enforcement">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/general-binding-rules-small-sewage-discharge-to-the-ground#enforcement</a>	<b>arising from a Question to Council - the leader in his response undertook to circulate details of government websites to all detailing where Members of the public could find more information about these matters including how to report concerns to relevant agencies.</b>	30/11/23	Katie Storr
Black	<b>Amendments to Committee Memberships and Outside Bodies</b>	All Relevant Lists to be updated and Outside Body Co-ordinators advised.  Completed Nov 23	<b>6 Nov 2023 - Council considered two reports making and approving amendments to several committees and outside bodies.</b>	11/11/23	Katie Storr
Green	<b>Public Participation Schemes - Review of</b>	AGM Mtg 23/5/23 When considering the Annual Review of Constitution, the Leader advised the Administration would wish to undertake a fundamental review of the participation schemes in year  Scope and time line of this work to be discussed with Administration	<b>Initial conversation to be held at Chairs Brief as to how the Group would like to proceed</b>	(blank)	Katie Storr

Green	<b>Motion to Council - Referred to PC Cttee - Asset Numbers /QR Codes on public bins</b>	<p>Council to be advised when the motion is being considered and outcome of : -</p> <p>Motion is on the PC Agenda for 30 January.</p> <p>Motion submitter to be invited to the meeting.</p> <p>Outcome will be reported through Council matters arising for information only.</p>	<p><b>Cllr Fleetwoods Motion -</b></p> <p><b>I call on this Council to support me in requesting that the Prosperous Communities Committee explores the feasibility and financial implications of introducing asset numbers on all District Council litter bins; plus an information sticker detailing how to report a full or damaged bin to the Council for collection, and a QR code on each bin as an automated alternative for contacting the Council to report a full or damaged bin. was referred to PC without debate with Council to be advised when the matter would be considered.</b></p>	31/01/23	Ele Snow
Green	<b>Motion to Council - referred to PC - Review of Side Waste Policy</b>	<p>Council to be advised of when Motion is to be considered and outcome.</p> <p>Motion submitter to be invited to the meeting.</p> <p>Motion is on the PC Cttee Agenda for 19 March 2024.</p> <p>The outcome will be reported through Council Matters arising for information only.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Key's Motion from Council on 6 November : -</b></p> <p><b>I urge members to support me in requesting that the Prosperous Communities Committee commits to formally reviewing the side waste policy within the 2023/24 financial year to ensure that the policy is in line with the Council's commitment to reduce carbon emissions from its fleet of vehicles. was deferred to PC Cttee without debate with Council to be advised on when it would be considered and the outcome.</b></p>	21/03/24	Ele Snow
Green	<b>Motion - Lobbying of LNER</b>	<p>Please undertake action to fulfil Council resolution below.</p> <p>Please outline what action has been taken.</p>	<p><b>Extract from Mins of Mtg 6 /11/23 - RESOLVED unanimously that the District Council lobby LNER, seeking support from all statutory partners, to assess the viability of Barnetby being included in the direct run from Cleethorpes, passing through Market Rasen, to London.</b></p>	31/01/24	Grant White

\* LCC Motion adopted by LCC on Friday December 1<sup>st</sup> 2023

Across Lincolnshire we have recently seen the highest level of rainfall ever recorded in many areas. I want to pay tribute to all of those who were involved in dealing with floods, both agencies and community groups who all did their very best to keep our communities safe.

However, given the impact of climate change, the frequency and level of impact of weather-related incidents is increasing, we must ensure that the statutory response meets the increased level of threat.

It is vital that going forward sufficient funding is allocated by government to mitigate the impact of weather-related incidents, that a fully co-ordinated response is provided by all agencies, and that local residents have a single point of contact to turn to in order to promote support to keep them safe. Local response networks must be given the resources and leadership to ensure that our communities feel confident that occurrences such as we recently witnessed will be better prevented and mitigated.

Accordingly, this council:

1. Pays tributes to all those who were involved in dealing with the floods, both agencies and community voluntary groups, who all did their very best to keep our communities safe.
2. Welcomes the proposals of Greater Lincolnshire Development Devolution to strengthen local arrangements through a new enhanced water partnership for flood resilience, adaptations and management of the water system; and
3. Call on the leader of the Council to write to the Government requesting:
  - a) Further funding to local agencies to ensure an effective, properly co-ordinated and accountable response to weather-related emergencies;
  - b) Further funding to local agencies for maintenance of flood and water management assets;
  - c) Recognition of the recent National Audit Office evidence, which highlights that the cost benefit of maintenance stands at 11:1;
  - d) That they address the unfair impact on District Councils within Lincolnshire of the increased drainage levies within the Spring Budget Process 2024; and
  - e) The nationally led, and mostly nationally funded, Environment Agency has the resources it requires to maintain its river system and make improvements where necessary to ensure systems remain climate resilient.

# Agenda Item 9a



Council

22 January 2024

## MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR CIVIC YEAR 2024/2025

Report by:

Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer:

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Monitoring Officer  
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Purpose / Summary:

To review and consider the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel with regard to Members' allowances for 2024/2025 civic year.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Recommendation 1

- (a) That Vice Chairs of Governance & Audit Committee, and Overview & Scrutiny Committee each receive the full Special Responsibility Allowance for the role.

#### Recommendation 2

##### That Members approve one of the following options

Option (a) A proposed increase of 5% on the basic allowance – new rates which would be applicable are shown in Appendix 1

**OR**

Option (b) A proposed increase of 4% across the board (ie) on the basic allowance and also on all Special Responsibility Allowances. – new rates are shown in Appendix 2

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal: None**

### Financial : FIN/136/24/SL

Pending approval from Full Council in January 2024, the proposed changes will have the following impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP):

	Current 2024/25 Budget £	Recommendation				
		1a only	2a only	2b only	1a and 2a	1a and 2b
Basic Allowances	236,200	231,400	243,000	240,700	243,000	240,700
Special Responsibility Allowances	66,400	69,200	66,100	68,800	69,200	71,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>302,600</b>	<b>300,600</b>	<b>309,100</b>	<b>309,500</b>	<b>312,200</b>	<b>312,600</b>
Pressure / (Saving)		(2,000)	6,500	6,900	9,600	10,000

The 2023/2024 MTFP included a 2% increase pa from 2024/2025 across all allowances, therefore Recommendation 1a would result in a saving on the MTFP as basic allowances would not be increased under this option alone.

**Staffing : None**

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : None**

**Risk Assessment : None**

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities**

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

None

**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. Background**

- 1.1 West Lindsey District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), has carried out its annual review of the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- 1.2 To inform the review, the Panel has considered a number of factors. These include the financial and budgeting situation the Council faces, including a pay award increase of £1925 for staff; a comparison of allowance rates payable at comparable Councils; and the role allowances play in attracting prospective Councillors and upholding democratic processes.
- 1.3 The Panel consulted with all Members, providing the opportunity to make comments via email and also offered the option for meeting individually with the Panel remotely via MS Teams. On 23 August 2023, two Members met independently with the Panel to give their views. No written views were received from Members.
- 1.4 The comments received by the Panel from Members have been taken into account when arriving at the final Recommendations within this report.
- 1.5 The Panel would like to record its thanks to those Members and Officers who made themselves available to speak with them.

## **2. Members' Allowances**

- 2.1 In May 2023 the new Administration in the run up to the Annual General Meeting, indicated they wished to introduce to new Vice Chairmen positions, namely and additional Vice Chair for the Governance and Audit Committee and an additional Vice Chairman for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. With Council approval this is constitutionally acceptable, however given there had been no prior indication of this intention, now budget for such had been set. It was therefore agreed with the Leader that until such time as the Remuneration Panel considered allowances again, the allowance would be split so as to remain in budget.
- 2.2 The Prosperous Communities Committee has two Voce-Chairmen appointed and this has been a long-standing arrangement, as such this has been budgeted for year on year and both are currently receive the full allowance for the role.
- 2.3 The Panel have recommended that Vice Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny and Governance & Audit also receive the full allowance in order to bring parity to the roles.
- 2.4 The Panel have also Recommended an increase of either: -

Option (a) 5% to Members' basic allowance,

**OR,**

Option(b) 4% across the board to Members' basic allowance and all SRAs.

**Members should note that they may elect to forego their allowance, if they so wished.**

- 2.5 **OPTION A:** A 5% increase to the Members' basic allowance would mean an increase from £6,429 to £6,750. (equating to £6.17 per week per Member).
- 2.6 **OPTION B:** A 4% increase to the Members' basic allowance would mean an increase from £6,429 to £6,686. (equating to £4.94 per week per Member).

### 3. Mileage and Subsistence Allowances

- 3.1 The Panel noted and commented that mileage allowances were currently in line with the tax efficient rate authorised by the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).
- 3.2 No change to subsistence allowances as set out below. Receipts must be provided for subsistence claimed and attached to the claim form.
- a. Absence of more than four hours but no more than eight hours – only the cost of one meal can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £15.
  - b. Absence of more than eight hours but no more than 12 hours – only the cost of two meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £25.
  - c. Absence of more than 12 hours but no more than 16 hours – only the cost of three meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £33.
  - d. Absence of more than 16 hours but not including an overnight stay – only the cost of four meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £40.
  - e. Overnight – No Change - £83
  - f. Overnight (London or LGA) – No Change - £208

### 4. Carer's Allowance

- 4.1 The Carer's Allowance was currently paid tied to the National Living Wage plus £1. This means that it should always keep pace ahead of the NLW.

### 5. Bicycle Purchase Scheme

- 5.1 There is currently no scheme in existence at WLDC for Members to purchase a bicycle for use when travelling around their Wards. Officers were tasked with researching other authorities schemes. It was found that other authorities operated schemes for employees only, as payments were taken at source from employee salaries. They do not operate a scheme for Elected Members as this would not be possible, (not being employees).

### 6. Financial Impact

- 6.1 The financial impact of accepting **recommendation 1 (a) only** - Vice Chairs of Governance & Audit and also Overview & Scrutiny to each receive the full allowance for the role, with no increase to basic allowances, would be a £2,000 saving to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The 2023/2024 MTFP included a 2% increase pa from 2024/2025 across all allowances, therefore Recommendation 1a would result in a saving on the MTFP as basic allowances would not be increased under this option alone.

- 6.2 The financial impact of accepting **recommendation 2 (a) only** - a 5% increase to basic allowance amounts, with no change to SRA's, would be a £6,500 pressure to the MTFP.
- 6.3 The financial impact of accepting **recommendation 2 (b) only** – a 4% increaser to basic allowances and all SRAs amounts (not including the amendments at recommendation 1 (a)) would be a £6,900 pressure to the MTFP.
- 6.4 The financial impact of accepting **Recommendation 1 (a) and 2(a)** - including the amendments at recommendation 1(a) plus a 5% increase to basic allowance amounts to £9,600 pressure to the MTFP.
- 6.5 The financial impact of accepting **Recommendation 1 (a) and Option 2 (b)** – including the amendments at recommendation 1(a) plus a 4% increase to basic allowances and all SRAs amounts to a £10,000 pressure to the MTFP.
- 6.6 The revised schedule of proposed allowances is set out in Appendix One and Two for each respective option .

## 7. Recommendations

- 7.1 The Panel firstly recommends that both Vice Chairs for Governance & Audit, and Overview & Scrutiny, receive the full allowance for their roles - **recommendation 1(a)**.

Secondly the Panel recommends either:

**Option 2 (a)** an increase of 5% on the basic allowance for 2024/2025.

**OR**

**Option 2 (b)** an increase of 4% on the basic allowance and all Special Responsibility Allowances for 2024/2025.



## **Appendix One: Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA): Recommended Rates**

<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Current Rate 2023/2024</b>	<b>Proposed Rate 2024/2025</b>
<b>Basic Allowance - proposed 5% inc</b>	£6,429	<b>£6,750</b>
SRA – Leader of Council	£12,989	£12,989
SRA – Deputy Leader/s (in the event of two or more being nominated, the payment to be shared)	£4,710	£4,710
SRA – Chair of Council	£4,161	£4,161
SRA – Vice-Chair of Council	£1,433	£1,433
Civic allowance for the Chairman of Council	£1,683	£1,683
Civic allowance for the Vice Chairman Of Council	£460	£460
SRA – Committee Chairs (excluding Licensing Cttee and Regulatory Cttee)	£3,247	£3,247
SRA – Regulatory Chair	£1,625	£1,625
SRA – Licensing Chair	£1,625	£1,625
SRA – Committee Vice-Chairs (excluding Licensing Cttee and Regulatory Cttee)	£1,537	£1,537
SRA – Regulatory Vice-Chair	£768	£768
SRA – Licensing Vice-Chair	£768	£768
SRA – Leader of the Opposition (in the event of the Council being a ‘hung’ Council, the Leaders of the two largest groups be paid the same special responsibility allowance as for the Leader of the Opposition)	£4,710	£4,710

SRA – Deputy Leader of the Opposition	£857	£857
SRA – Minority Group Leaders (per group member, and including the Group Leader)	£105	£105
Independent Members: Governance & Audit and Standards Committees – A payment of £60.00 for the first four hours of attendance at a meeting/event and a second payment for attendance in excess of four hours. The first four hours would commence from the start time of the meeting (To be paid when not chairing a meeting).	£60	No change
Dependent Carer's Allowance	NLW + £1	No change
Car Allowance (per mile) (the mileage rate to be increased or decreased in accordance with any changes to the tax efficient rate authorised by the HMRC).	0.45p	No change
Passenger supplement – each passenger	£0.05	No change
Motorcycle allowance per mile	£0.25	No change
Bicycle allowance per mile	£0.21	No change
Subsistence		
Absence of more than four hours but no more than eight hours – only the cost of one meal can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £15		
Absence of more than eight hours but no more than 12 hours – only the cost of two meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £25		
Absence of more than 12 hours but no more than 16 hours- only the cost of three meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £33		
Absence of more than 16 hours but not including an overnight stay – only the cost of four meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £40		
Overnight	£83	No change

Overnight (London or LGA)

£208

No change

## **Appendix Two: Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA): Recommended Rates**

<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Current Rate 2023/2024</b>	<b>Proposed Rate 2024/2025</b>
<b>Basic Allowance - proposed 4% inc</b>	£6,429	£6,686
<b>4% on SRA's:</b>		
SRA – Leader of Council	£12,989	£13,509
SRA – Deputy Leader/s (in the event of two or more being nominated, the payment to be shared)	£4,710	£4,898
SRA – Chair of Council	£4,161	£4,327
SRA – Vice-Chair of Council	£1,433	£1,490
Civic allowance for the Chairman of Council	£1,683	£1,750
Civic allowance for the Vice Chairman Of Council	£460	£478
SRA – Committee Chairs (excluding Licensing Cttee and Regulatory Cttee)	£3,247	£3,377
SRA – Regulatory Chair	£1,625	£1,690
SRA – Licensing Chair	£1,625	£1,690
SRA – Committee Vice-Chairs (excluding Licensing Cttee and Regulatory Cttee)	£1,537	£1,598
SRA – Regulatory Vice-Chair	£768	£799
SRA – Licensing Vice-Chair	£768	£799
SRA – Leader of the Opposition (in the event of the Council being a 'hung' Council, the Leaders of the two largest groups	£4,710	£4,898

be paid the same special responsibility allowance as for the Leader of the Opposition)

SRA – Deputy Leader of the Opposition	£857	£891
SRA – Minority Group Leaders (per group member, and including the Group Leader)	£105	£109
Independent Members: Governance & Audit and Standards Committees – A payment of £60.00 for the first four hours of attendance at a meeting/event and a second payment for attendance in excess of four hours. The first four hours would commence from the start time of the meeting (To be paid when not chairing a meeting).	£60	No change
Dependent Carer’s Allowance	NLW + £1	No change
Car Allowance (per mile) (the mileage rate to be increased or decreased in accordance with any changes to the tax efficient rate authorised by the HMRC).	0.45p	No change
Passenger supplement – each passenger	£0.05	No change
Motorcycle allowance per mile	£0.25	No change
Bicycle allowance per mile	£0.21	No change

#### Subsistence

Absence of more than four hours but no more than eight hours – only the cost of one meal can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £15

Absence of more than eight hours but no more than 12 hours – only the cost of two meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £25

Absence of more than 12 hours but no more than 16 hours- only the cost of three meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £33

Absence of more than 16 hours but not including an overnight stay – only the cost of four meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £40

Overnight	£83	No change
Overnight (London or LGA)	£208	No change



**Council**

**Date 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**

**Subject: Devolution for Greater Lincolnshire**

Report by:

The Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

Ian Knowles  
[ian.knowles@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:ian.knowles@west-lindsey.gov.uk)  
07776 163765

Purpose / Summary:

To provide members with a briefing and the opportunity to debate the Devolution proposals agreed by Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and the North East Lincolnshire Council.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That Council:

- 1 Note the progress on the proposed Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal
- 2 Continues to engage with the implementation of devolution arrangements,
- 3 Delegates the submission of a Council response to the consultation to the Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader in line with paragraph 3.5 and comments expressed during
- 4 Receives a further report on completion of the consultation process.
- 5 Request officers prepare a report and recommendations on the establishment of a Joint Committee for district councils, for presentation to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in March 2024 with a final report to an appropriate Full Council Meeting.

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

The devolution proposal will create a Mayoral County Combined Authority (MCCA) as included in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. MCCAs are a new model of devolution introduced through this Act to reflect specific governance arrangements of areas with two-tier government.

District and Borough Councils do not sign off the MCCA as that is the responsibility of the three Constituent Councils (LCC, NL, NEL). A level three devolution deal does not change the current structure of local government in Lincolnshire.

It is proposed that District Councils will create a Joint Committee, to appoint four district leaders to the MCCA, and to act as a forum for district councils to consider matters connected to the functional competence of the MCCA. There will be opportunities for district councils to appoint members to serve on the MCCA itself, a scrutiny panel, and several advisory boards establish to further partnership governance in areas linked to the functional competence of the MCCA.

### **Financial : - FIN/133/24/SL**

There are no financial implications arising from this report. Devolution will bring the opportunity to make the case for additional funding for projects within West Lindsey, to accelerate delivery of the council's vision and priorities for the district.

The devolution agreement does not commit the Council to financial liabilities, and the agreement requires the Mayoral Combined Authority to secure Council approval before it implements projects in the district which could create ongoing financial commitments.

### **Staffing :**

The devolution proposal has no human resource implications for WLDC. Officers linked to priorities for economic development, development management, housing strategy, and services linked to environment, climate action, health and wellbeing may be involved in partnership groups and project collaboration, as they are currently.

The infrastructure required to manage the District contribution to the MCCA may require additional resources of a central nature to coordinate activity but this has not currently been determined. If any such requirement cannot be contained within existing budget members will be advised.



**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

There are no implications for Equality and Diversity arising from this paper.

**Data Protection Implications :**

There are no data protection implications arising from this paper

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:**

Whilst the MCCA will engage on projects across the County, it is not possible to assess the climate change impact at this time.

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this paper however it is worth noting that in some devolved arrangements, the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner has been abolished and the powers and duties of the PCC transferred to the Mayor. This is not the case for Greater Lincolnshire and, under the proposals, the role of the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner will remain unaffected by a devolution deal.

**Health Implications:**

There are no health implications arising from this report.

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

LCC report on devolution

[Report Reference: \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](http://modern.gov.co.uk)



Devolution  
Overview.pptx

LCC Slide Deck :

Devolution Agreement for Greater Lincolnshire

<https://lincolnshire.modern.gov.co.uk/documents/s59997/Appendix%20A%20-%20Greater%20Lincolnshire%20devolution%20deal.pdf>

Devolution proposal – Final

<https://lincolnshire.modern.gov.co.uk/documents/s59998/Appendix%20B%20-%20Greater%20Lincolnshire%20Combined%20Authority%20Proposal%20final.pdf>

Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Proposal Consultation

<https://lincolnshire.modern.gov.co.uk/documents/s59999/Appendix%20C%20-%20Devolution%20Questionnaire.pdf>

Levelling Up White Paper 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

**Risk Assessment :**

The devolution proposal does not introduce risk to delivery of WLDC services or priorities, nor does it introduce legislative, regulatory or reporting requirements that impact delivery of council services.

**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. Context

- 1.1. It is generally considered that devolution, or decentralisation, of decision making, policy development and resource allocation, brings benefits to local communities. By way of example, recent reports have indicated that empowering local government to lead on climate action would deliver more cost effectively and quicker than a centralised approach.
- 1.2. The UK is also a party to the Council of Europe Charter of Local Self Government, which advocates for legal and financial independence for local and regional government in Europe.
- 1.3. The 2022 Levelling Up White Paper established the UK Governments current approach to devolution in England, recognising that England is one of the more centralised nations in Europe. The 2023 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act provides the legislative framework for establishing devolution in England progressively through to 2030.
- 1.4. A devolution agreement for Greater Lincolnshire was announced by the UK Government on 22 November 2023. The agreement was agreed by Full Council meetings by the three constituent authorities by 4 December 2023. There is no provision in legislation for district councils, as non-constituent authorities, to approve or otherwise the devolution agreement. The devolution proposal is now subject to consultation in the form of an online survey which is open to anyone who lives, works or visits Lincolnshire. The consultation is led by Lincolnshire County Council and closes on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024. WLDC has promoted the consultation on its social media channels, and internally with staff and members.
- 1.5. The proposed funds devolved into Greater Lincolnshire, and the agreement compares favourably in comparison with similar agreements elsewhere, both in terms of the level of funding available and the increased representation envisaged for district councils compared to other areas.
- 1.6. This report summarises: the devolution agreement; governance for devolution; the next steps; recommendations.

## **2. The Devolution Agreement**

- 2.1. The devolution agreement allocates an additional £24million per year to Greater Lincolnshire for 30 years, a total of £720million.
- 2.2. Additionally, £28.4million has been allocated to Greater Lincolnshire, to be allocated prior to the MCCA being established in 2025. Possible projects in West Lindsey include; Roundabout at Nettleham, A15/A46 (£3.3m) and Flood Prevention, Market Rasen and Kirkby on Bain (£1.3m).
- 2.3. The agreement provides for the devolution of strategy and budgets related to skills, providing local partners with the opportunity to focus on skills development for key local economic sectors.

2.4. The agreement also provides for devolution of multi-year transport budgets, with flexibility to allocate funds to local priorities.

2.5 A summary slide deck provided by LCC is attached as Appendix 1

### **3. Governance for Devolution**

3.1. The agreement provides for the establishment of a Mayoral County Combined Authority, chaired by a directly elected mayor. The constituent authorities (Lincolnshire County, North and North East Lincolnshire Unitary Councils) will each have two seats on the MCCA. District Councils will be allocated 4 seats, via a joint committee of district council leaders.

3.2. District Councils will have voting rights other than in relation to transport and the mayor's administrative budget.

3.3. District councils will be allocated seats on a scrutiny panel and several advisory boards.

3.4. The devolution agreement, which is the agreement between the Secretary of State DLUHC, and the Constituent Authorities can be found via the links that follow. The devolution proposal, which sets out the detailed proposals for consultation purposes, can also be found via the links below, together with links to the White Paper and the Act.

3.5. It is envisaged that a consultation response from the Council should focus on the following:

3.5.1. To welcome the alignment of the devolution proposal;

3.5.2. To welcome the focus on employment, skills, and economic development; the environment, homes, and communities; and transport;

3.5.3 Clearly object to any additional costs falling on the residents of West Lindsey and seek for the removal of any potential levy;

3.5.4 Acknowledge that whilst a mayor is not a preferred option Council recognise that the deal would not be possible without acquiescing to the central government requirement for a Mayor.

### **4. Next Steps**

4.1. The consultation process will conclude on 29 January 2024. Links to the consultation survey and information are provided here: -. <https://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s59999/Appendix%20C%20-%20Devolution%20Questionnaire.pdf>

- 4.2. Review of the proposals based on consultation responses will be completed by the end of February 2024, leading to a submission to the UK Government in spring 2024.
- 4.3. The UK Government is due to put in place an Establishment Order for the new arrangements by summer 2024.
- 4.4. The County Combined Authority is due to be established in late 2024, with the election of a Greater Lincolnshire Mayor in May 2025.

## **5. Consultation Response**

- 5.1. To submit a response to the consultation from the Council by 29 January, in line with paragraph 3.5 of this report, with delegation to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.
- 5.2. To engage proactively in the implementation of the new arrangements and the allocation of funds specified within the devolution agreement and proposal.
- 5.3. To provide timely and positive public communication, enabling communities to engage in the devolution agenda for Greater Lincolnshire.
- 5.4. To request officers to prepare a report and recommendations on the establishment of a Joint Committee for district councils, for presentation to Corporate Policy and Resources in March 2024 with a final report to an appropriate Full Council.

## **6 Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 6.1 There are inevitably a range of options that could be envisaged for devolution. Nevertheless, devolution based on a Mayoral County Combined Authority is the preferred UK Government option and the only route available for devolution at the current time.
- 6.2 The proposed funds devolved into Greater Lincolnshire, and the agreement compares favourably in comparison with similar agreements elsewhere, both in terms of the level of funding available and the increased representation envisaged for district councils compared to other areas.
- 6.3 The agreement creates a platform for further negotiation with the UK Government leading to greater devolution of powers and resources. This has already been the case for Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and West Midlands Combined Authority who progressed to enhanced devolution deals in 2023.
- 6.4 Therefore the Council are asked to agree the following recommendations:

- 1 Note the progress on the proposed Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal
- 2 Continues to engage with the implementation of devolution arrangements,
- 3 Delegates the submission of a Council response to the consultation to the Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader in line with paragraph 3.5 and comments expressed during
- 4 Receives a further report on completion of the consultation process.
- 5 Request officers prepare a report and recommendations on the establishment of a Joint Committee for district councils, for presentation to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in March 2024 with a final report to an appropriate Full Council Meeting.





# GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE DEVOLUTION

MORE MONEY, MORE POWER, MORE SAY, BETTER RESULTS

- Debbie Barnes – Chief Executive
- Lee Sirdifield – Assistant Director of Corporate







# The policy landscape

- Lincolnshire has been seeking fairer funding for many years
- Government policy seeks to level up the UK
- Place based interventions = Towns fund and UKSPF
- Long term change = Devolution
- December 2022 – Council asked us to seek a devolution deal



# Devolution: the basics

- Devolution is set out in the levelling up white paper
- 3 levels – we've secured a level 3 deal – the maximum level
- Our deal gives commitment for:
  - Power and funding comes to Greater Lincolnshire
  - More power means more responsibility
  - More say means more flexibility
  - More flexibility mean better results



# Devolution: the basics

- To receive the powers we must set up a new body called a Combined County Authority, usually chaired by a Mayor
- Devolution is not local government reorganization
- Some transport and LEP functions move to the CCA
- The city, district and borough councils will keep doing what they do



# What we want to achieve

Invest in  
infrastructure

Boost growth and  
innovation

More high skill  
high wage jobs in  
key sectors

Provide training  
for new jobs

Housing in the  
right place

Improve transport  
links

# The Greater Lincolnshire deal:



Mayoral  
Investment  
Fund



Capital  
Projects



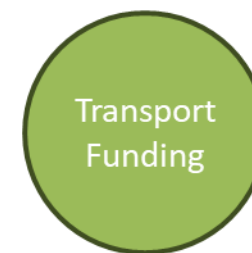
Brownfield  
Funding



Transition  
Funding



Targeted



Flexible



Voice to  
Government



Long term  
Financial  
Certainty



Less  
Bidding  
required



Deal Grows  
Over Time



# The Greater Lincolnshire proposal:

- Growth

Directs funding towards the infrastructure we need to grow and create jobs

- Investment fund to target infrastructure for 30 years
- Creates a key route network to speed up journey times
- Sees us working with government to research and innovate
- Brings forward enhanced water management arrangements and investment in flood prevention

- Skills

High quality skills and training to capitalise on local opportunities

- Local responsibility for the Adult Education Budget from 2026
- Invests in skills that are needed for local jobs
- Helps care leavers to gain apprenticeships and support
- Provides careers support



# The Greater Lincolnshire proposal:

- Housing

Brings forward investment to enable new, good quality housing provision

- Funding from Homes England to unlock stuck sites
- Regeneration through brownfield funding

- Humber to the Wash

Delivering our potential across the whole of Greater Lincolnshire

- Decarbonising the Humber
- Investment and support for the UK Food Valley
- Enhancing transport links (road and rail)
- Maximising the potential of Humber and East Midland freeports



# The Greater Lincolnshire proposal:

- Voice

Championing our needs and gaining investment from government

- Sets out the long-term ambitions for the area
- Provides local accountability for new powers and funding
- 1 of 11 rather than 1 of 317 – amplifying our voice
- The Mayor chairs a board of 10 local councillors



2023

- ✓ Preliminary discussions - now concluded
- ✓ Formal discussions and developing the deal – May through summer
- ✓ Finalising agreement - Summer
- ✓ Signing and publication – late summer / early autumn
- ✓ Proposal published – autumn / winter
- Public consultation – winter (8 weeks)

2024

- 
- Summary of responses to SoS – early 2024
  - SoS decision to lay SI – early 2024
  - Pre-legislative scrutiny – possibly early spring 2024
  - Final agreement by upper tiers – poss late spring
  - Parliamentary process – a further 8-10 weeks



# How can you help?

- Get involved by:
  - Talking to others about the benefits devolution can bring
  - Engage in the consultation exercise (4 December – 29 January)
  - Find out more at [lincolnshire.gov.uk/devolution](http://lincolnshire.gov.uk/devolution)

SCAN



ME



Council

Monday, 22 January 2024

**Subject: Collection Fund - Council Tax Surplus 2023-24 & Council Tax Base 2024-25.**

Report by:

Director of Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer)

Contact Officer:

Peter Davy  
Financial Services Manager

[Peter.Davy@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Davy@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

Purpose / Summary:

The report sets out the declaration of the estimated surplus on the Council's Collection Fund relating to Council Tax at the end of March 2024 and how it is shared amongst the constituent precepting bodies.

It also sets out the Council tax base calculation for 2024/25. The tax base is a key component in calculating both the budget requirement and the council tax charge

## RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That Members accept that the estimated surplus of £290,100 be declared as accruing in the Council's Collection Fund at 31 March 2024 relating to an estimated Council Tax surplus.
- 2) That the Council uses its element of the Collection Fund surplus/deficit in calculating the level of Council Tax in 2024/25.
- 3) Approves, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulation 1992, as amended, the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for the whole of the District area for 2024/25 shall be 32,093.99 as detailed in this report and appendices.

**Legal:** It is a requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 that the Council calculates the tax base for council tax purposes. It is also a requirement that the resolution determining the calculation be notified to the County Council between 1 December 2023 and 31 January 2024.

It is a requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 that any estimated surplus on the previous year's Collection Fund shall be shared amongst the major precepting bodies.

**Financial : FIN/127/24/PD**

The estimated surplus in Council tax totals £1,938,700 to be shared as follows:-

Lincolnshire County Council £1,381,100

Police and Crime Commissioner, Lincolnshire £267,500

West Lindsey District Council £290,100

West Lindsey District Council will include its surplus share within its budget 2024/25 and it will be taken into account for Council Tax setting. The surplus share of £290,100 represents an increase of £400 against the 2023/24 budgeted surplus of £289,700.

**Staffing :** None directly arising as a result of this report

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :** None directly arising as a result of this report

**Data Protection Implications :** None directly arising as a result of this report

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:** None directly arising as a result of this report

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:** None directly arising as a result of this report

**Health Implications:** None directly arising as a result of this report

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

**Risk Assessment :**

The Council is bound by legislation undertake the necessary work to determine the Council Tax Base and to distribute the estimated surplus on the Collection Fund. Failure to do so would mean that the Council would be acting illegally and would be prone to appropriate sanctions

**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**

## **1. Collection Fund Surplus for 2023/24**

- 1.1 The Council is required to declare an estimate of the surplus or deficit that will occur on the Collection Fund at the end of each year. The Collection Fund records the amount of income collected from Council Tax, together with precept payments to principal authorities. These elements will generate a surplus or a deficit which should be taken into account when determining the Council Tax for the following year.
- 1.2 Any surplus or deficit generated through the Collection fund in relation to Council Tax is shared between the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Lincolnshire and this Council in the same proportion as the amount of their precepts for 2023/24
- 1.3 A surplus or deficit may occur in the Collection Fund if the Council tax base is larger or smaller than originally anticipated or collection rates are higher or lower than expected.

## **2 Estimated Council Tax Surplus for 2023/24**

- 2.1 The amount calculated as available from the Collection Fund arising up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and for distribution during 2024/25 has been calculated as £1,938,700
- 2.2 This amount will be shared amongst the precepting authorities as follows:

	£
Lincolnshire County Council	1,381,100
Police and Crime Commissioner	267,500
West Lindsey District Council	290,100
	-----
	£ 1,938,700
	-----

- 2.3 This Council must take its share of the surplus, being £290,100, into account when it sets its element of the Council Tax for 2024/25.

## **3 The Council's Tax base for 2024/25**

- 3.1 The tax base is an important factor in determining the level of Council Tax for the next year. It is expressed as the equivalent of the number of dwellings in Band D.
- 3.2 The calculation takes into account the following factors:-
  - 3.2.1 The number of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band in each Parish on 30 November 2023.
  - 3.2.2 The number of discounts available to single and other eligible persons and for vacant dwellings.
  - 3.2.3 The number of premises liable at the relevant date.

- 3.2.4 The number of valuation band reductions for dwellings adapted for the disabled.
  - 3.2.5 The number of dwellings exempt from liability.
  - 3.2.6 The total amount estimated to be applied for the Council Tax Support Scheme.
  - 3.2.7 The estimated amount of Council Tax collection in the financial year.
  - 3.2.8 The proportion which dwellings in each band bear to Band D, on a full year basis.
- 3.3 The Council Tax Support scheme was introduced in April 2013 enabling actual information to be used as a basis for the estimation in calculating the impact of the reductions on the tax base. These are detailed within the calculation of the tax base at Appendix 1.
  - 3.4 The number of chargeable dwellings in each valuation band has been taken from the valuation list supplied by the Valuation Office on 31 October 2023 and updated by the Council Tax department on 30 November 2023. A summary of the calculation and adjustments taken into account is shown at Appendix 1. The overall tax base for 2024/25 is estimated to be 32,093.99 (31,696.76 2023/24) Band D equivalent properties (increase of 1.25%)
  - 3.5 The number of properties exempt from Council Tax, including Ministry of Defence buildings, has been deducted from the initial tax base. Direct payments in lieu are received from the Ministry of Defence and these are included later in the tax base calculation.
  - 3.6 A loss on collection results in a collection rate from Council Tax of 98.3% (2023/24 98.3%) (The National Average collection rate for Shire Districts 2022-23 was 97.2%, which was the same as 2021-22) which has been taken into account, reflecting current levels of collection.
  - 3.7 The Council levies additional amounts for the precepts of Local Councils, and separate tax bases are required for those areas. These are shown at Appendix 2.

## Appendix 1

### COUNCIL TAX BASE 2024-25

Band	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Number of dwellings	0.00	17,082.00	8,543.00	8,085.00	6,203.00	3,887.00	1,657.00	544.00	66.00	46,067.00
Exempt properties	0.00	(425.00)	(175.00)	(160.00)	(66.00)	(34.00)	(13.00)	(6.00)	(2.00)	(881.00)
<b>No of Chargeable dwellings</b>	0.00	16,657.00	8,368.00	7,925.00	6,137.00	3,853.00	1,644.00	538.00	64.00	45,186.00
Disablement relief	41.00	(8.00)	38.00	(10.00)	(23.00)	(24.00)	(6.00)	(1.00)	(7.00)	0.00
<b>Adjusted Chargeable dwellings</b>	41.00	16,649.00	8,406.00	7,915.00	6,114.00	3,829.00	1,638.00	537.00	57.00	45,186.00
Discounts on relevant day	(2.25)	(2,093.80)	(777.60)	(584.65)	(330.35)	(163.10)	(66.95)	(28.05)	(5.85)	(4,052.60)
Premiums	0.00	128.00	29.00	19.00	11.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	6.00	202.00
<b>Total Discounts</b>	(2.25)	(1,965.80)	(748.60)	(565.65)	(319.35)	(159.10)	(65.95)	(24.05)	0.15	(3,850.60)
<b>Adjusted Total Dwellings</b>	38.75	14,683.20	7,657.40	7,349.35	5,794.65	3,669.90	1,572.05	512.95	57.15	41,335.40
<b>Reduction in tax base due to CTS</b>	12.23	3,544.47	590.99	283.72	114.71	41.23	8.18	3.74	0.00	<b>4,599.27</b>
<b>Equivalent after reduction due to CTS</b>	<b>26.52</b>	<b>11,138.73</b>	<b>7,066.41</b>	<b>7,065.63</b>	<b>5,679.94</b>	<b>3,628.67</b>	<b>1,563.87</b>	<b>509.21</b>	<b>57.15</b>	<b>36,736.13</b>
<b>Ratio to band D</b>	<b>5/9</b>	<b>6/9</b>	<b>7/9</b>	<b>8/9</b>	<b>9/9</b>	<b>11/9</b>	<b>13/9</b>	<b>15/9</b>	<b>18/9</b>	
	<b>5.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>9.00</b>	<b>11.00</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>18.00</b>	
<b>Total No of Band D equivalents</b>	<b>14.73</b>	<b>7,425.82</b>	<b>5,496.10</b>	<b>6,280.56</b>	<b>5,679.94</b>	<b>4,435.04</b>	<b>2,258.92</b>	<b>848.68</b>	<b>114.30</b>	<b>32,554.09</b>
<b>Band D contributions in lieu (MOD)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>31.34</b>	<b>28.76</b>	<b>25.78</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1.44</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>93.32</b>
	<b>14.73</b>	<b>7,457.16</b>	<b>5,524.86</b>	<b>6,306.34</b>	<b>5,683.94</b>	<b>4,435.04</b>	<b>2,260.36</b>	<b>848.68</b>	<b>116.30</b>	<b>32,647.41</b>
<b>Adjusted for Collection rate 98.3%**</b>	<b>14.48</b>	<b>7,330.92</b>	<b>5,431.43</b>	<b>6,199.57</b>	<b>5,587.38</b>	<b>4,359.64</b>	<b>2,221.96</b>	<b>834.25</b>	<b>114.36</b>	<b>32,093.99</b>

\*The Total Number of Band D equivalents has been calculated at a Parish Level

\*\*Total No. of Band D equivalent x Collection Rate + Band D Contributions in Lieu



## Appendix 2 Parish Tax Base

Parish	2024/25 Tax Base	Parish	2024/25 Tax Base
Aisthorpe	40.33	Hemswell Cliff	184.72
Bardney - Apley - Stainfield	734.14	Holton Beckering	44.81
Bigby	174.68	Holton le Moor	64.59
Bishop Norton	139.17	Ingham	357.40
Blyborough	32.85	Keelby	699.37
Blyton	391.56	Kettlethorpe	167.57
Brampton	33.37	Kexby	115.33
Brattleby	50.76	Kirmond le Mire	15.87
Broadholme	38.88	Knaith	128.64
Brocklesby	35.17	Langworth - Barlings - Newball	246.19
Brookenby	173.79	Laughton	153.66
Broxholme	30.21	Lea	403.69
Bullington	11.49	Legsby	78.49
Burton	433.19	Linwood	38.50
Buslingthorpe	21.13	Lissington	52.83
Cabourne	29.51	Market Rasen	1,291.50
Caenby	28.82	Marton - Gate Burton	242.30
Caistor	1,036.75	Middle Rasen	753.22
Cammeringham	53.15	Morton	434.77
Cherry Willingham	1,393.41	Nettleham	1,639.77
Claxby	68.52	Nettleton	242.37
Corringham	178.48	Newton-On-Trent	141.47
Dunholme	831.47	Normanby le Wold	19.88
East Ferry	41.89	Normanby-By-Spital	141.85
East Stockwith	69.23	North Carlton	94.45
Faldingworth	183.89	North Kelsey	363.98
Fenton	165.39	North Willingham	55.38
Fillingham	94.32	Northorpe	51.13
Fiskerton	376.30	Osgodby	223.30
Friesthorpe	9.19	Owersby	107.05
Fulnetby	4.51	Owmbly-By-Spital	121.36
Gainsborough	5,000.53	Pilham	26.50
Glenthams	172.58	Rand	19.91
Glentworth	123.80	Reepham	344.18
Golto	34.01	Riby	47.56
Grange de Lings	13.04	Riseholme	125.88
Grasby	190.66	Rothwell	72.94
Grayingham	60.47	Saxby	18.91
Great Limber	81.81	Saxilby - Ingleby	1,671.39
Greetwell	412.35	Scampton	361.89
Hackthorn - Cold Hanworth	85.94	Scothern	387.76
Hardwick	18.24	Scotter	1,172.12
Harpwell	23.72	Scotton	224.39
Heapham	41.71	Searby cum Owmbly	80.66
Hemswell	129.61	Sixhills	13.78

<b>Parish</b>	<b>2024/25 Tax Base</b>
Snarford	14.09
Snelland	30.45
Snitterby	88.39
Somerby	26.13
South Carlton	38.88
South Kelsey	220.24
Spridlington	93.72
Springthorpe	59.71
Stainton le Vale	34.20
Stow	134.30
Sturton-By-Stow	526.82
Sudbrooke	752.25
Swallow	87.94
Swinhope	58.44
Tealby	283.07
Thonock	9.55
Thoresway	42.43
Thorganby	13.65
Thorpe le Fallows	6.37
Toft Newton	135.08
Torksey	283.69
Upton	169.81
Waddingham	210.51
Walesby	108.26
Walkerith	26.51
Welton	1,634.63
West Firsby	11.93
West Rasen	31.82
Wickenby	82.32
Wildsworth	28.71
Willingham	200.75
Willoughton	112.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,093.99</b>



Full Council

Monday 22 January 2024

**Subject: Council Tax Empty Homes Premiums 2024/25**

Report by:	Director of Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services
Contact Officer:	Alison McCulloch Revenues Manager  alison.mcculloch@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To consider that the Council maximises the increased premiums payable for long term empty properties.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

### **That;**

It is agreed to accept the recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee to the adoption of Option 1 of the report to increase both the second home charges from 90% to 100% and long term unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property charges from 100% premium for those empty between 5 and 10 years to 200% premium i.e. charge 300% council tax and for those empty over 10 years to 300% premium i.e. charge 400% council tax.

It is also agreed to recommend an additional local exception and discount for any new owners of properties subject to a council tax premium providing evidence is provided of a firm commitment to bring the properties back into use within 12 months. This reduction would mean they would not be liable to pay council tax on the empty property for a maximum period of 12 months but, should the property become occupied within 12 months the new resident would become liable in accordance with council tax legislation. In the event that it is not brought back into use within this time period the appropriate premium charge will be restored and become due and payable.

These changes to be effective from 1 April 2024.

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

The council must determine the council tax empty property premiums in accordance with The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018

### **Financial:** FIN/REF/94/24/MT/SSC

The recommendation is the adoption of Option 1 of the report to increase the council tax premiums payable for long term empty properties as allowed by the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 with effect from 1 April 2024.

Based on a collection rate of 75% this change would generate an income of just over £54k to West Lindsey should both of these new charges be implemented.

£54k is the WLDC share of the income. This amendment would generate additional income for the MTFP from 2024/2025 onwards.

There may be an increase in New Homes Bonus if properties are brought back into use, however the future of the scheme is unknown as the Government have not announced any allocations beyond 2023/2024.

### **Staffing:**

The changes are minimal and therefore should not impact on staff.

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

The Equality Act 2010, section 149, outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

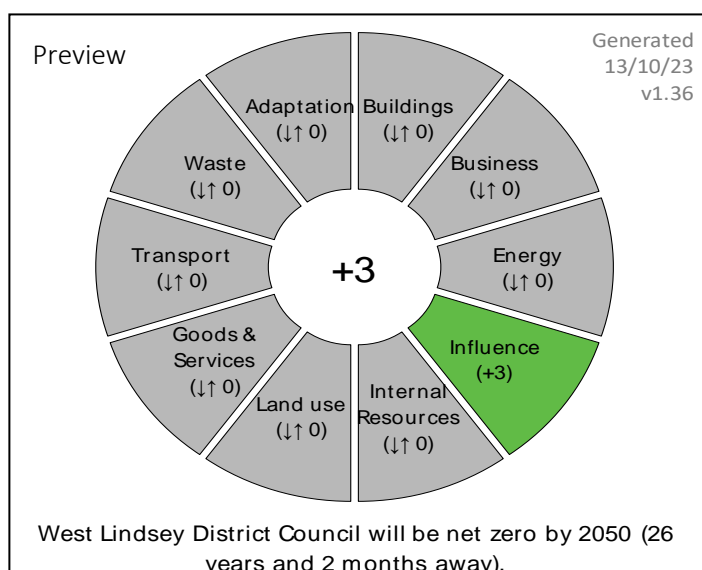
The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

It is considered unlikely that the council tax empty homes premiums referred to within this report will have an adverse impact on the protected groups under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Data Protection Implications:**

None arising from this report.

## Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:



Increasing the empty property premium will discourage owners from speculatively purchasing houses that they do not intend for immediate use. Bringing buildings back into use will reduce the need for housing demand elsewhere and reduces the need for carbon intensive construction. Mirroring the policies of the other Lincolnshire districts ensures a consistent message across Lincolnshire with regard to empty homes and shows the council's commitment to bringing them back into use.

## Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None arising from this report.

## Health Implications:

None arising from this report.

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

Local Government Finance Act 2012 -  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/17/contents/enacted>

The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/25/contents/enacted>

**Risk Assessment:**

1. There is a risk that raising additional charges on empty properties could lead to an increase in council tax avoidance. This could include the creation of fictitious tenancies, increased claims for single person discount and claims for exceptions from the premium payments. This will be monitored by the Revenues team and mitigating steps will be taken to undertake property inspections where it is required to ascertain facts.
2. The number of complaints could increase which in turn increases the pressure on the Revenues resources. To mitigate this, we would deliver publicity in advance of the increased charges.
3. The premium could be seen to increase potential income; however, it could also increase the risk of non-collection. All recovery options would be used to collect any outstanding debts whilst providing assistance to any owner in genuine financial hardship. The potential non-collectible debit has been factored into the expected in year revenue.

**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**

## **Executive Summary**

This report outlines the current arrangements for the charging of Council Tax on unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property together with new powers to increase this charge under the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018.

It details the reasoning behind a possible change to the current charges and seeks approval to allow an increase to the premium charges of properties that have been empty for over 5 years.

This report also outlines the current arrangements for the charging of Council Tax on furnished second homes and seeks approval to allow for a reduction of the 10% discount ie a 90% council tax charge on furnished second homes to no discount being awarded ie a 100% charge.



## 1 Introduction

Billing authorities have a discretion over the levels of council tax due in respect of second homes, properties undergoing major repairs and properties that are 'unoccupied and substantially unfurnished'.

A billing authority may also set an 'Empty Homes Premium' for properties that have been 'unoccupied and substantially unfurnished' for a specific period. The premium applied depends on how long the property has been empty, irrespective of the owner.

The premium does not apply to any empty property qualifying for a Council Tax exemption for example whilst awaiting probate to be granted or where the owner is now in a permanent resident in a hospital or care home.

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 amended legislation to enable a premium charge for homes that were unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for over two years to be charged an additional 50% on the council tax due. This was approved and implemented by WLDC with effect from 1 April 2013 meaning that owners of empty properties were charged 150% annual council tax.

The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 amended legislation to enable the premium for homes that were unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for over two years to be increased from 50% to 100% meaning that owners became liable for a 200% annual council tax charge. This was approved by the Council and implemented with effect from 1 April 2019. This act also enabled the premium to be increased from 1 April 2020 for properties empty over 5 years to 200% and from 1 April 2021 to increase the premium for dwellings empty over 10 years to 300%. West Lindsey has charged a 100% premium since 1 April 2019 for all properties empty and unfurnished over 2 years.

## 2 Corporate Plan Objectives and the Housing Strategy

The West Lindsey Corporate Plan 2023 and the West Lindsey Housing Strategy both detail the requirement to assist in meeting housing need and reduce the number of empty properties in the district as detailed below:

### **The West Lindsey Corporate Plan 2023**

*"Our Place" theme – Quality Housing: To facilitate quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, assist in meeting housing need and demand, and to deliver high quality housing related services that support growth.*

### **West Lindsey Housing Strategy:**

Priority theme "Improving Homes and Transforming Places".

*Improving the existing housing stock and the resulting benefits to residents, and communities is a key priority for the council. Whilst we do not own or manage any housing stock we wish to work with others to achieve a number*

*of outcomes including raising housing standards, addressing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty. Reducing the number of empty homes in the district will also be addressed under this theme.*

### **3 Current Situation**

#### **3.1 Empty properties**

Currently the council awards a 100% discount i.e. no charge, in respect of properties that are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for up to 2 months. Following this discount period, a charge of 100% becomes due and a premium, for properties that remain unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 2 years or more, then becomes due. The premium charged is 100% regardless of whether a property has been empty for 2 years or 10 years which makes for an annual charge of double the amount of the council tax.

Since 2020, local authorities have been able to increase this premium to 200% for properties empty for between 5 and 10 years (making a charge of 3 times the annual council tax) and, since 2021, 300% for those properties empty over 10 years (making a charge of 4 times the annual council tax).

#### **3.2 Furnished Second Homes**

Currently, in line with council tax legislation, a discount of 50% from the council tax is awarded when a property is left empty due to its owner being contractually bound to live in a particular property provided by an employer and where they are liable to pay the council tax as their sole or main residence.

Other properties that are furnished but unoccupied attract a discount of 10% from the council tax making them liable for a 90% council tax charge.

Since 2013 local authorities have been able to reduce the discount for furnished but unoccupied properties from 10% to zero thus enabling them to charge a 100% council tax for most furnished second homes.

### **4 Why consider a change to the Second Home Charge and Long-Term Empty Property Premium?**

The intention behind this proposal is not to increase revenue through council tax but to assert some pressure on owners of empty properties to bring them back into use and thus to address the availability of homes within the district and provide homes for people who need them. Figures indicate that there are 203 properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 2 years or more in the West Lindsey district that could be in use or brought back into use, but which are being left vacant.

Properties that remain empty for long periods of time often deteriorate and this could, in turn:

- encourage anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping, vandalism and arson increasing in a particular area
- reduce the value of the empty home and the neighbouring properties

- create additional renovation costs to the owner as the empty home deteriorates over time
- increase environmental health risks from vermin and waste plus create additional clearance costs to the owner
- increase the risk of squatters

Bringing long term empty properties back into use does result in the Council receiving a New Homes Bonus reward. The future of this scheme is not yet known however, if this continues to be awarded it could see the council receiving an additional sum for any long-term empty property being brought back into use.

## 5 Consultation

There is no requirement to consult on changes to the Empty Homes Premium or the Second Home discount however, as part of the council tax support consultation two questions were asked:

**Do you agree that the furnished second home charge of 90% of the council tax should be increased to 100%?**

Answer	Number	%
Yes	164	77%
No	35	17%
Don't know	13	6%

**Do you own a furnished second home?**

Answer	Number	%
Yes	5	2%
No	207	98%
Don't know	0	0

### 5.1 Comments from Responders

- I believe that increasing a second home charge to 100% would create more revenue for services offered across West Lindsey from customers who can afford it, as typically if the customer has a second home then i would suspect 99% of them are high income households
- Second homes should pay 45% more council tax also houses that stand empty for ten months a year should be compulsory purchased for the homeless
- Only disagree with full rate council tax on second homes furnished. Surely only 100% can be charged if occupied 100% of the time.
- It is most important that 2nd home owners pay the full rate of Council Tax

- I have previously owned a second home subject to council tax. This was not a holiday home but a rental property which became a financial burden between the departure of the tenant and its eventual sale. I am not opposed to the idea of levying tax on second properties provided that a distinction is made between inhabited or income-generating properties and empty properties that can hit the incomes of small-scale landlords
- Everything mentioned seem fair to me as a residence. If people have second homes in the area they need to pay fully for them
- I personally think second home should receive no reduction, if you can afford two homes you can afford two lots of council tax
- Second home owners bring a great deal of tourism to our area and should not be charged any more CT than any ordinary home owner. I would not want to see WLDC following some other councils that are charging double CT or more as this will spell 'death' to 2nd home owners and thereby adversely affect our much needed tourism
- Second homes should have a council tax of 5x normal council tax
- Some people are not wealthy but do have second homes. Perhaps the 100% charge should be for those that have an annual income of over £100k

## 5.2 Key Stakeholders

Colleagues in the Housing, Health and Wellbeing and Environmental Enforcement were also consulted for their opinions and feedback into these proposed changes. They were supportive to the measures being considered as positive in attempting to bring empty homes back into occupation as either rental or by being sold.

It was also commented that some second home owners were not proactive in maintaining the collection of their waste and in some cases it has resulted in residents having to make complaints to the empty homes officer to ensure the waste hazard was dealt with.

## 6. Other Lincolnshire District Charges

The table below details the current charges approved by the Lincolnshire district councils.

Local Authority	Current 2 <sup>nd</sup> home charge	Current Empty Property Charges		
		2-5 years	5-10 years	Over 10 years
Boston	100%	200%	300%	400%
City of Lincoln	100%	200%	300%	400%
East Lindsey	100%	200%	300%	400%
North Kesteven	90%	200%	300%	400%
South Holland	100%	200%	300%	400%
South Kesteven	90%	200%	300%	400%
<b>West Lindsey</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>200%</b>	<b>200%</b>	<b>200%</b>

Whilst 3 out of 7 districts currently charge 90% for furnished second homes West Lindsey is the only district not to have increased the empty property charges.

## 7 Exceptions to the Empty Homes Premium

In accordance with council tax legislation the following exemptions from the premium will apply to properties that would normally be subject to the Empty Homes Premium:

- Homes that are empty due to the occupant living in armed forces accommodation for job-related purposes
- Annexes being used as part of a main property
- Homes that are a residential pitch occupied by a caravan or a mooring occupied by a boat will not be liable for the empty homes premium and will qualify for a 50% discount.

In certain circumstances long term empty properties liable for a 100% premium charge may be eligible for an exception to this premium, reducing the charge to 100% Council Tax. This is awarded for a maximum of 12 months, but certain criteria must be fulfilled:

- Owners who are genuinely attempting to sell or let their property which has been vacant for at least 2 years
- Owners who are experiencing particular legal or technical issues preventing the sale or let of the property
- Owners who are in negotiation with the Empty Property team

## **Additional Exception/Discount**

In order to encourage the renovation and therefore enable long term empty properties to be brought back into use, it is recommended that a further exception and local discount be awarded provided the following criteria is met:

- The property must have changed hands, and the new owner must provide evidence of a firm commitment to bring the property back into use within 12 months.

In these circumstances an exception to the charge will be made alongside a local discount of 100% which will reduced the council tax charge to zero for a maximum period of 12 months. Should the property become occupied within 12 months the new resident would become liable in accordance with council tax legislation. In the event that it is not brought back into use within this time period the appropriate premium charge will become due and payable.

This exception and discount would be at the expense of West Lindsey District Council however, once the property was renovated and occupied a normal council tax charge would become due and payable and a long-term empty property would have been brought back into use thus fulfilling both the Corporate Plan Objectives and the Housing Strategy to assist in meeting housing need and demand, and to deliver high quality housing related services that support growth whilst at the same time reducing the number of empty homes in the district.

## **8 Costings**


### **8.1 Furnished Second Home Calculations**

The table below details the number of furnished second homes we currently have on our council tax database who are in receipt of a 10% discount.

It details the charge WLDC currently receives at 90% and the amount that would be returned if the charge was increased to 100%.

If 100% of the second home charges were collected WLDC would see an increase in Revenue of over £5k if a collection rate of 75% of the total sum charged was achieved.

**Current Total Furnished Second Home Properties and charges for 2023/24**

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Totals
 <b>Total No of second home properties in each band charged at 90% ie 10% discount</b>	100	49	53	24	8	8	5	1	248
<b>Current Annual Council Tax per property at 90% ie 10% discount</b>	£1,266.43	£1,477.49	£1,688.56	£1,899.64	£2,321.78	£2,743.92	£3,166.07	£3,799.28	£18,363.16
<b>Total Charge at 90%</b>	£126,642.60	£72,397.21	£89,493.79	£45,591.34	£18,574.20	£21,951.36	£15,830.33	£3,799.28	£394,280.09
<b>100% council tax charge</b>	£1,407.14	£1,641.66	£1,876.18	£2,110.71	£2,579.75	£3,048.80	£3,517.85	£4,221.42	£20,403.51
<b>Potential income generation if charged at 100%</b>	£140,714.00	£80,441.34	£99,437.54	£50,657.04	£20,638.00	£24,390.40	£17,589.25	£4,221.42	£438,088.99
<b>Potential Increase IF all 100% charge is collected</b>	£14,071.40	£8,044.13	£9,943.75	£5,065.70	£2,063.80	£2,439.04	£1,758.93	£422.14	£43,808.90
<b>Split of Funding by authorities and value of potential increase IF all collected</b>									
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Totals
Lines CC - 75%	£10,553.55	£6,033.10	£7,457.82	£3,799.28	£1,547.85	£1,829.28	£1,319.19	£316.61	£32,856.67
Lines PCC - 12.5%	£1,758.93	£1,005.52	£1,242.97	£633.21	£257.98	£304.88	£219.87	£52.77	£5,476.11
WLDC - 12.5%	£1,758.93	£1,005.52	£1,242.97	£633.21	£257.98	£304.88	£219.87	£52.77	£5,476.11

## 8.2 Long Term Empty Properties

The table below details the number of long-term empty homes we currently have on our council tax database who are in receipt of a 100% premium on the council tax charge.

It details the charge WLDC currently receives and what could be achieved if the premiums were increased to 300% for homes empty between 5 years and 10 years and 400% for homes empty over 10 years.

If these charges were implemented and collected in full WLDC would see an increase in Revenue of just over £65k.

It is unlikely the full liability would be collected and therefore it is estimated that a 75% collection rate would be achievable which would generate additional Revenue of just under £49k.

In contrast the Lincolnshire County Council would see an increase of £390k.

Current Total Long Term Empty Properties (empty for 2 years or more) and charges for 2023/24									
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Totals
Total No of empty properties in each band	127	27	22	14	3	1	4	5	203
Empty between 2 years and 5 years	68	16	14	10	1	1	2	3	115
Empty between 5 years and 10 years	25	3	3	2	1	0	1	1	36
Empty Over 10 years	34	8	5	2	1	0	1	1	52
Current Annual Council Tax per property at 100%	£1,407.14	£1,641.66	£1,876.18	£2,110.71	£2,579.75	£3,048.80	£3,517.85	£4,221.42	
Current Annual Charge per property at 200%	£2,814.28	£3,283.32	£3,752.36	£4,221.42	£5,159.50	£6,097.60	£7,035.70	£8,442.84	
<b>Total income generation of long term empty properties at 200% charge</b>	<b>£191,371.04</b>	<b>£52,533.12</b>	<b>£52,533.04</b>	<b>£42,214.20</b>	<b>£5,159.50</b>	<b>£6,097.60</b>	<b>£14,071.40</b>	<b>£25,328.52</b>	<b>£389,308.42</b>

Potential Charges for Total Long Term Empty Properties (empty for 5 years or more) based on charges for 2023/24									
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Totals
Total No of empty properties in each band	127	27	22	14	3	1	4	5	203
Empty Between 2 years and 5 years	68	16	14	10	1	1	2	3	115
Income generation at 200% charge	£191,371.04	£52,533.12	£52,533.04	£42,214.20	£5,159.50	£6,097.60	£14,071.40	£25,328.52	£389,308.42
Empty between 5 years and 10 years	25	3	3	2	1	0	1	1	36
Potential income generation at 300% charge	£105,535.50	£14,774.94	£16,885.62	£12,664.26	£7,739.25	£0.00	£10,553.55	£12,664.26	£180,817.38
Empty Over 10 years	34	8	5	2	1	0	1	1	52
Potential income generation at 400% charge	£191,371.04	£52,533.12	£37,523.60	£16,885.68	£10,319.00	£0.00	£14,071.40	£16,885.68	£339,589.52
<b>Total Income Generation</b>	<b>£488,277.58</b>	<b>£119,841.18</b>	<b>£106,942.26</b>	<b>£71,764.14</b>	<b>£23,217.75</b>	<b>£6,097.60</b>	<b>£38,696.35</b>	<b>£54,878.46</b>	<b>£909,715.32</b>



<b>Potential Increase IF all collected</b>	£296,906.54	£67,308.06	£54,409.22	£29,549.94	£18,058.25	£0.00	£24,624.95	£29,549.94	£520,406.90
<b>Split of Funding by authorities and value of potential increase IF all collected</b>									
Lincs CC - 75%	£222,679.91	£50,481.05	£40,806.92	£22,162.46	£13,543.69	£0.00	£18,468.71	£22,162.46	£390,305.18
Lincs PCC - 12.5%	£37,113.32	£8,413.51	£6,801.15	£3,693.74	£2,257.28	£0.00	£3,078.12	£3,693.74	£65,050.86
WLDC - 12.5%	£37,113.32	£8,413.51	£6,801.15	£3,693.74	£2,257.28	£0.00	£3,078.12	£3,693.74	£65,050.86
<b>Estimated collection rate for long term empty properties = 75%</b>									
WLDC	£27,834.99	£6,310.13	£5,100.86	£2,770.31	£1,692.96	£0.00	£2,308.59	£2,770.31	£48,788.15

## 9 New Legislation

New legislation is expected before the end of the financial year 23/24 which would enable local authorities to reduce the period classed as long-term empty from 2 years down to 1 year. This would enable a premium charge to be made once a property has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 1 year only.

It is also expected that there will be an opportunity to charge further premiums for furnished second homes.

It is not suggested, at this time, that this be considered as an option, but it may be possible to revisit this legislation once it is passed by Parliament.

## 10 Options

### Option 1 (preferred option)

Agree to increase both second home charges from 90% to 100% and long term unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property charges from 100% premium for those empty between 5 and 10 years to 200% premium ie charge 300% council tax and for those empty over 10 years to 300% premium ie charge 400% council tax. These changes to be effective from 1 April 2024.

Agree to an additional local exception and discount for any new owners of properties subject to a council tax premium providing evidence is provided of a firm commitment to bring the properties back into use within 12 months. This reduction would mean they would not be liable to pay council tax on the empty property for a maximum period of 12 months but, should the property become occupied within 12 months the new resident would become liable in accordance with council tax legislation. In the event that it is not brought back into use within this time period the appropriate premium charge will be restored and become due and payable.

## **Option 2**

Agree to increase second home charges from 90% to 100% with effect from 1 April 2024 but make no change to long term unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property charges.

## **Option 3**

Agree to increase long term unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property charges from 100% premium for those empty between 5 and 10 years to 200% ie charge 300% council tax and for those empty over 10 years to 300% ie charge 400% council tax but to make no change to the second home charges. This change to be effective from 1 April 2024.

## **Option 4**

Agree to make no change to either second home charges or long term unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property charges

## **Option 5**

Agree to increase both second home charges from 90% to 100% and long term unoccupied and substantially unfurnished property charges from 100% premium for those empty between 5 and 10 years to 200% premium ie charge 300% council tax and for those empty over 10 years to 300% premium ie charge 400% council tax. These changes to be effective from 1 April 2024.

No additional exceptions or discounts to be awarded.

## **11 Conclusion**

A collection rate of 75% would generate an income of just over £54k to West Lindsey should both of these new charges be implemented.

As of October 2023, the total liability for the 10% second home discount since 1 April 2004 is £4.8m and of that £193k remains outstanding making a total collection rate of 96.13%

The total liability relating to the empty homes premium raised since 1 April 2019 is £5.2m and of that £565k remains outstanding making a total collection rate of 89.15%.

Recovery action is being taken in respect of any accounts not being paid but of the 51 that have been empty for over 10 years only 3 accounts are presently in arrears.

Charging orders are the last resort for recovery of these debts which can result in an order for sale being awarded. This action usually results in payment in full either by the council taxpayer clearing their liability or by the sale of the property which clears the council's liability and enables the property to be brought back into use.

## **Communication**

If the recommended changes are approved by full council a letter will be issued to all empty property owners to advise them of the new charges due to come into effect from 1 April 2024. This information will also be made available on our website and via social media. Time permitting we will also communicate this to landlords via their forum meetings.

# Agenda Item 9e



**Full Council**

**Monday 22 January 2024**

**Subject: Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25**

Report by:	Director of Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services
Contact Officer:	Alison McCulloch Revenues Manager  alison.mcculloch@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To adopt a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

### **That;**

It is agreed to accept the recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for the adoption of Option 1 of the report for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for West Lindsey District Council for 2024/25.

That being, to make no changes to the current council tax support scheme apart from to apply any new legislative requirements and the uprating of the non-dependent charges, applicable amounts, and household allowances and deductions, used in the calculation of the reduction in accordance with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) annual 'up-ratings'.

To also apply any additional changes to government welfare benefit regulations during the year which are intended to increase the income of benefit recipients to avoid unintended consequences to customers.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Legal:

The Council has to determine a local scheme for council tax reduction by 31 January 2024.

### Financial: FIN Ref – FIN/96/24/MT/SSC

The cost of the Local Council Tax Support scheme (LCTS) is shared between Lincolnshire County Council (75%), West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) (12.5%) and Lincolnshire Police (12.5%).

Year	Total	WLDC 12.5%	LCC 75%	PCC 12.5%
2023/24	£6,907,224	£863,403	£5,180,418	£863,403
2024/25 Option 1	£7,114,440	£889,305	£5,335,830	£889,305
2024/25 Option 2	£6,907,224	£863,403	£5,180,418	£863,403

Recommendation is **Option 1**, to apply uprating.

Consultation has taken place with both the Lincolnshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire and both have submitted responses agreeing to make no change to the scheme for 2024/25 but both would agree to increasing the uprating of all allowances and premiums in line with Department for Work and Pensions allowances (option 1 of this report).

Option 2, do not apply uprating.

If we do not apply the applicable amount up-ratings to working age claimants their Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) income will exceed their applicable amount and they will be entitled to less council tax support. This in turns means their council tax bills will increase which will require more council tax to be collected.

### Staffing:

The changes are minimal and therefore should not impact on staff.

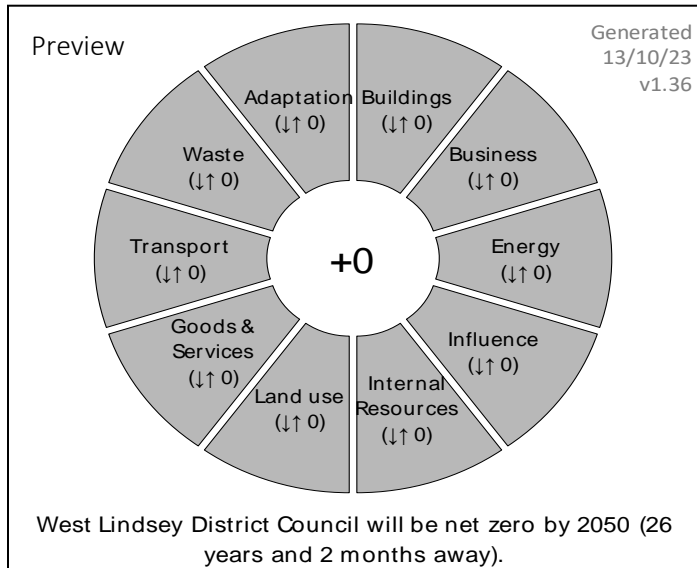
### Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

Please see appendix A – Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 Equality Impact Assessment.

### Data Protection Implications:

None arising from this report.

## Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:



There will be no impact from this report in respect of environmental terms as this is a financial reduction in the council tax liability for those on low incomes.

## Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None arising from this report.

## Health Implications:

None arising from this report.

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

Local Government Finance Act 2012 -  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/17/contents/enacted>

- a. If Council Tax Support caseloads rise or fall, then WLDC and the other major precepting authorities will have to absorb those expenditure variations through the Collection Fund. It is therefore vital that the financial implications of the scheme decisions made are realistic in terms of bridging the funding gap.
- b. If there is a downturn in the local economy or where there have been major redundancies if a major company ceases trading, Council Tax Support caseloads could rise significantly.
- c. Each Council must approve their local Council Tax Support scheme by 31<sup>st</sup> January otherwise a default scheme, similar to the current Council Tax Support default scheme applied to customers of pension age, will have to be implemented. Applying a similar scheme to all working age customers would increase the annual expenditure on Council Tax Support.
- d. The amount of council tax support awarded last year was £6.6 million; however, this is estimated to increase slightly to £6.9 million by the end of the financial year.

**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**

## **Executive Summary**

Council Tax Benefit was a national scheme providing means-tested financial help for low-income households to pay their Council Tax liability. This was abolished on 31 March 2013 by the Local Government Finance Act 2012 which placed a legal requirement on every billing authority to adopt a Localised Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme.

Since the inception of the LCTS scheme on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 relatively minor changes have been made which has enabled claimants to receive a similar level of support each year and enabled the council to maintain an annual council tax collection rate of around 98%.

In 2020, 2021 and 2022, following the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government awarded a grant to all local authorities for a payment to be paid to all working aged council tax support claimants. This was paid directly to council tax accounts and it also permitted the use of any surplus to support economically vulnerable people and households.

Following the allocation of these awards, it was also possible to introduce discretionary hardship funds for all council taxpayers to apply for if they continued to experience financial difficulties caused by the pandemic. To date we have assisted 2,102 families, already in receipt of council tax support with an award of up to £50 off their council tax account. We have also been able to assist 74 council taxpayers by the award of a council tax discretionary hardship payment in respect of their 2023/24 council tax liability.

A significant change to the LCTS scheme for 2024/25 is likely to have a negative impact on the collection rate and reduce the yield over the year.

Full Council must approve and adopt the finalised LCTS scheme by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 at the latest.



## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 replaced Council Tax Benefit with a Council Tax support scheme. Unlike Council Tax Benefit (CTB) which is set by Central Government, the new Council Tax support scheme must be defined by individual Local Authorities (albeit with much central prescription).
- 1.2 Pensioners are protected by legislation which means 'local schemes must give the same pre-2013 level of assistance to pensioners'. West Lindsey District Council also made the decision in 2013/14 to protect those in receipt of a War Pension and those claimants receiving a Disability Benefit.

## **2 Current Situation**

We currently have 6,043 council tax support claimants and of these 2,427 are pensioners and 3,616 are working age claimants. This equates to 60% of our total caseload who would be impacted by any changes to the scheme.

Our council tax collection rate for 2022/23 was 98.28% which was in the top quartile performance being 32<sup>nd</sup> position out of 181 local authority reported outturns. The national average was only 96% so this is considerably higher. Some of this success can be attributed to the Government's hardship award and to the council tax discretionary hardship relief scheme which has enabled our most financially vulnerable residents to receive some financial support from the Council.

The Council recognise that many of our residents are feeling the effects of the increased cost of energy, petrol, and food prices. We are working with our partners across the public and voluntary sectors to support our residents, and particularly those who are vulnerable and hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis. The current West Lindsey scheme is one of the most generous in Lincolnshire and if we were to look at changing the scheme, we may be impacting on those most affected by the cost-of-living increases and adding to their financial burden.

## **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 Consultation was undertaken between 24<sup>th</sup> August and 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Invitations to the consultation were sent to the Citizen Panel members who received electronic surveys, a total of 972 members. This was also published on the West Lindsey District Council website and advertised through Social Media. In total, 212 responses were received.

### 3.2 The questions and responses asked are detailed below:

1. Do you agree that the only change that should be made to the scheme is the up rating of all allowances and premiums in line with the Department for Work and Pensions allowances?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	155	73%
Don't know	17	17%
No	10	10%

2. Are you currently in receipt of Council Tax Support?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	11	5%
Don't know	1	1%
No	200	94%

### 3.3 Comments from the consultation

- Provide the maximum support to those in need and adopt whatever necessary changes are required to achieve this without causing the council financial difficulties in the longer term that would have an adverse effect on those in most need of support
- I agree that council tax support for those that need it should be increased to reflect current inflationary trends
- The council should be aware of the effects of poverty on the population, especially children and young people
- The benefit scheme covers all the local government charges, and this is taken into account as my wife and I fall above help i.e. spare cash. So I believe that we have contributed enough money towards this whilst working
- I am on a low income & in receipt of tax credit & child tax credit. The child tax credit will cease shortly. The increase where I no longer receive 25% discount will be completely unaffordable. Causing serious distress & impacting on health
- Some pensioners who have not got a works pension or any other pension or income coming in, need more help than people who haven't paid anything into the system. Should be made to do some kind of work to get their money
- It is central government's role to help the poor not local council tax payers

### 3.4 The results

These results show that the majority of respondents were not in receipt of council tax support but would agree to increasing the uprating of all allowances and premiums in line with Department for Work and Pensions allowances.

## 4. Consultation with major preceptors

Before a Council can determine to revise or replace its LCTS scheme it must consult with any major precepting authority which have the powers to issue a precept to it.

Consultation has taken place with both the Lincolnshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire and both have submitted responses agreeing to make no change to the scheme for 2024/25 but both would agree to increasing the uprating of all allowances and premiums in line with Department for Work and Pensions allowances (option 1 of this report).

## 5. Costings

The current estimates for the 2023/24 scheme are £6,907,224 being split as below:

Total	LCC – 75%	PCC – 12.5%	WLDC – 12.5%
£6,907,224	£5,180,418	£863,403	£863,403

## 6. Options

Two options have been considered for the 2024/25 scheme being to maintain or slightly reduce the level of financial support as detailed below:

### 6.1 Option 1 (Preferred)

To make no changes to the current council tax support scheme apart from to apply any new legislative requirements and the uprating of the non-dependent charges, applicable amounts, and household allowances and deductions, used in the calculation of the reduction in accordance with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) annual 'Up-ratings'.

To also apply any additional changes to government welfare benefit regulations during the year which are intended to increase the income of benefit recipients to avoid unintended consequences to customers.

## Costs/Savings

Initial estimates for 2024/25 show that there would be no direct saving to the council under this option as it would just maintain the current scheme. Any reductions in the cost of the scheme would be due to a reduction in council tax support claimants.

Based on a 3% increase in council tax this equates to an approximate cost of:

<b>Total</b>	<b>LCC – 75%</b>	<b>PCC – 12.5%</b>	<b>WLDC – 12.5%</b>
£7,114,440	£5,335,830	£889,305	£889,305

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
The financial modelling shows that West Lindsey District Council can still bridge the funding by continuing with the current scheme for a further year.	
The existing scheme works well and offers a high level of support for low-income families who may otherwise find themselves in debt.	
There has been a slight decrease this year in the number of households claiming LCTS which suggests that the situation is improving gradually as more claimants return to work or are receiving private pensions that reduces their CTR entitlement.	
Collection rates are being maintained under the current scheme.	
This option ensures the LCTS rules stay consistent with the DWP rules which avoids confusion for claimants.	
Retaining existing policy principles of keeping LCTS in line with other key welfare benefits promotes equality.	

## 6.2 Option 2

To make no changes to the current scheme for 2024/25 ie: do not apply the up-rate household allowances and deductions.

### Costs/Savings

Initial estimates for 2024/25 show that there would be a slight saving to the council under this option however, it would effectively create a reduction in income for those affected.

If we do not apply the applicable amount up-ratings to working age claimants their Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) income will exceed their applicable amount and they will be entitled to less council tax support. This in turns means their council tax bills will increase which will require more council tax to be collected.

Based on no increase in up-ratings this equates to an approximately cost of:

<b>Total</b>	<b>LCC – 75%</b>	<b>PCC – 12.5%</b>	<b>WLDC – 12.5%</b>
£6,907,224	£5,180,418	£863,403	£863,403

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Slight reduction in costs to the council	The Council would have three sets of rules to apply for families applying for financial help. This will cause confusion for the claimants, will lead to increased modification to ICT, additional training for the Benefits Team and an additional set of regulations to be prepared and implemented.
	Loss of reputation to the council in that it would show a lack of support to those in most financial hardship during the cost-of-living crisis.

## **7. Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26**

It is recognised that whatever decision is reached this would only be a scheme for 2024/25. A review of the scheme is undertaken annually when more knowledge of the impact of that year's scheme and collection rates are available. Monitoring will also take place to analyse the impact and any unintended consequences it has had on council taxpayers and benefit recipients.

**Appendix A – Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<p><b>Name, brief description and objectives of policy, procedure, function?</b></p>	<p>For Council to agree the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for West Lindsey DC for 2024/25.</p> <p>To ensure that all council tax payers are treated fairly under the local scheme.</p> <p>To ensure that council tax support is payable to the most vulnerable residents of the district.</p>
<p><b>Have you consulted on the policy, procedure, function and if so, what were the outcomes?</b></p>	<p>Consultation has taken place with Lincolnshire County Council and the Crime and Police Commissioner for Lincolnshire who have both agreed to the recommendation.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place digitally with the residents of West Lindsey and the majority of people who completed the consultation agreed with the process of applying the 2024-25 up-ratings of income and allowances.</p>
<p><b>What barriers may these individuals or groups face, and how can you promote equality (where possible)</b></p>	
<p><b>Gender</b></p>	<p>There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Working age claimants of Council Tax Support may receive a reduced level of assistance as compared with the former Council Tax Benefit Scheme. This scheme aims to redistribute support and be more generous to those applicants on the lowest incomes.</p> <p>The government has stated that council tax support for older people will not be reduced as a result of the introduction of the council tax reduction scheme reform. This is because the government wants to ensure that low-income pensioners, who would struggle to pay council tax without additional support, and whom the government does not expect to work to increase their income, will continue to receive support for their council tax.</p> <p>Pensioner protection will be achieved by keeping in place national rules which broadly replicate the former council tax benefit scheme.</p>

<b>Disability</b>	There is no evidence that this scheme would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic except in the case of War Pension and those claimants receiving a Disability Benefit who are protected by the Government.
<b>Race</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Pregnancy, maternity or paternity</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Rural Isolation</b>	There is no evidence that this policy would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic.
<b>Socio-economic factors</b>	There is no evidence that this scheme would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic. However, any person unable to complete the application form will be offered assistance from the Benefits Teams in completing the application form and also be signposted to outside agencies such as Citizens Advice and Money Advice Service
<b>Other (eg: those with dependants/caring responsibilities, asylum seeker and refugee communities, children in the care system etc)</b>	There is no evidence that this scheme would impact on people in any way because of this characteristic. However, any person unable to complete the local council tax support application form will be offered assistance from the Benefits Team in completing the form and also be signposted to outside agencies such as Citizens Advice, Stepchange and Money Advice Service
<b>Is there any evidence or research that demonstrates why some individuals or groups are, or are not, affected?</b>	There is no evidence or research available. This policy is based on nationally applicable legislation and it covers all applicants who must all meet a set of standards and criteria intended to ensure that evidence of hardship justifies a reduction in council tax liability.



<p><b>If there is a potential adverse impact, please state why and whether this is justifiable.</b></p>	<p>There is no potential adverse impact from this policy.</p>
<p><b>Outcome of EIA</b></p>	<p> <b>No major change needed</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Adverse impact but continue</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Adjust the policy /proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Stop and remove the policy/proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/> </p>
<p><b>How will you monitor your policy, procedure, function to ensure there is no adverse effect on the protected characteristics (eg: gender, age, etc) in the future?</b></p>	<p>Due to the nature of the reductions in the level of support, all working age claimants have the potential to have reductions in their support, however, they can be considered for further assistance under the exceptional hardship policy.</p>

# Agenda Item 9f



**Council**

**22 January 2024**

**Subject: Recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee – 9 November 2023 - Mid-Year Treasury Management Report 2023-24**

Report by:

Director of Corporate Services (S151 Officer)

Contact Officer:

Peter Davy  
Financial Services Manager

[peter.davy@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:peter.davy@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

Purpose / Summary:

This report provides the Mid-Year update for Treasury Management Indicators in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and stands recommended from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That Council accept the recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Committee and in doing so note the report, the treasury activity and approve the revised prudential indicators at sections 5.2, 6.1 and 6.2.**

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** This report complies with the requirement of the Local Government Act 2003

**Financial : FIN/93/24/PD**

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report

**Staffing :** None arising as a result of this report

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

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :** None arising as a result of this report

**Data Protection Implications :** None arising as a result of this report

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:** This is a monitoring report only

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:** This is a monitoring report only

**Health Implications:** This is a monitoring report only

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

CIPFA Code of Treasury Management Practice 2017

CIPFA The Prudential Code

Local Government Act 2003

Located in the Finance Department

**Risk Assessment :**

The Mid Year Treasury Management Report reviews our assessment of Treasury Risks

**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**

## **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 This mid-year report has been prepared in compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Code of Practice on Treasury Management, and covers the following:

- An economic update for the first part of the 2023/24 financial year;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Council's capital expenditure, as set out in the Capital Strategy, and prudential indicators;
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2023/24;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2023/24;
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2023/24.

1.2 The Bank of England Base rate has increased during 2023/24, with the potential for further rises. The current rate is 5.25%.

1.3 There have been no changes to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy.

1.4 The forecast out-turn for Capital Expenditure is £18.441m against the approved original budget of £20.888m. The budget will be revised to £18.441m at Corporate Policy and Resources committee on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 with a request of £9.262m to be re-phased over future financial years.

1.5 The Council is projected to have circa £13m invested at the year end and have generated £0.732m in investment Interest. The return on investments is increasing with the increase in interest rates compared to when rates were much lower when the original budget was set combined with higher investment balances than anticipated. The Council's budgeted investment return for 2023/24 is £0.577m, and performance for the year is forecast to be £0.155m above budget at £0.732m.

1.6 When investing consideration is given to environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues to ensure the Council is an ethical investor. As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 the Council had 31% of its funds in these investments.

1.7 It is anticipated that total external borrowing will stay the same at £21.5m for the rest of the year due to underspends in the capital programme meaning the Council's cash balances remain higher than anticipated.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 Capital Strategy**

In December 2017, CIPFA issued revised Prudential and Treasury Management Codes. These require all local authorities to prepare a Capital Strategy which is to provide the following:

- a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;
- an overview of how the associated risk is managed;
- the implications for future financial sustainability.

## 2.2 Treasury Management

The Council operates a balanced budget, which broadly means cash raised during the year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering optimising investment returns.

The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its capital spending aspirations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

Accordingly, treasury management is defined as:

“The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

## 2.3 Key Changes to the Treasury and Capital Strategies

There are no changes to report to this committee.

## 3 Economics and Interest Rates (provided by Link Asset Services)

3.1 In its latest monetary policy meeting on 20 September, the Bank of England left interest rates unchanged at 5.25%. The weak August CPI inflation release, the recent loosening in the labour market and the downbeat activity surveys appear to have convinced the Bank of England that it has already raised rates far enough. The minutes show the decision was “finely balanced”. Five MPC members voted for no change and the other four voted for a 25bps hike.

3.2 Like the US Federal reserve, the Bank of England wants the markets to believe in the higher for longer narrative. The statement did not say that rates have peaked and once again said if there was evidence of more persistent inflation pressures “further tightening in policy would be required”. Governor Andrew Bailey stated, “we'll be watching closely to see if further increases are needed”. The Bank also retained the hawkish guidance that rates will stay “sufficiently restrictive for sufficiently long”.

- 3.3 This narrative makes sense as the Bank of England does not want the markets to decide that a peak in rates will be soon followed by rate cuts, which would loosen financial conditions and undermine its attempts to quash inflation. The language also gives the Bank of England the flexibility to respond to new developments. A rebound in services inflation, another surge in wage growth and/or a further leap in oil prices could conceivably force it to raise rates at the next meeting on 2nd November, or even pause in November and raise rates in December.
- 3.4 The yield on 10-year Gilts fell from a peak of 4.74% on 17th August to 4.44% on 29th September, mainly on the back of investors revising down their interest rate expectations. But even after their recent pullback, the rise in Gilt yields has exceeded the rise in most other Developed Market government yields since the start of the year. Looking forward, once inflation falls back, Gilt yields are set to reduce further. A (mild) recession over the next couple of quarters will support this outlook if it helps to loosen the labour market (higher unemployment/lower wage increases).
- 3.5 The pound weakened from its cycle high of \$1.30 in the middle of July to \$1.21 in late September. In the first half of the year, the pound bounced back strongly from government instability last autumn. That rebound was in large part driven by the substantial shift up in UK interest rate expectations. However, over the past couple of months, interest rate expectations have dropped sharply as inflation started to come down, growth faltered, and the Bank of England called an end to its hiking cycle.
- 3.6 The FTSE 100 has gained more than 2% since the end of August, from around 7,440 on 31st August to 7,608 on 29th September. The rebound has been primarily driven by higher energy prices which boosted the valuations of energy companies. The FTSE 100's relatively high concentration of energy companies helps to explain why UK equities outperformed both US and Euro-zone equities in September. Nonetheless, as recently as 21st April the FTSE 100 stood at 7,914.

#### **4. Interest Rate Forecasts**

- 4.1 The Council's treasury advisor, Link Group, have provided the following forecasts on 25th September 2023. The latest forecast sets out a view that both short and long-dated interest rates will be elevated for some little while, as the Bank of England seeks to reduce inflation in the economy.
- 4.2 The current and previous PWLB rate forecasts below are based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012.

Link Group Interest Rate View	25.09.23													
	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	
<b>BANK RATE</b>	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	
6 month ave earnings	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.60	3.10	2.90	2.90	2.90	2.90	2.90	
12 month ave earnings	5.80	5.70	5.50	5.20	4.70	4.20	3.70	3.20	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	
5 yr PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	
10 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	
25 yr PWLB	5.40	5.20	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80	
50 yr PWLB	5.20	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.20	4.10	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.60	

Additional notes by Link on this forecast table: -

- LIBOR and LIBID rates ceased at the end of 2021. In a continuation of the previous forecasts, the money market yield forecasts are based on expected average earnings by local authorities for 3 to 12 months.
- The forecasts for average earnings are averages i.e., rates offered by individual banks may differ significantly from these averages, reflecting their different needs for borrowing short-term cash at any one point in time.

#### 4.3 PWLB Rates (provided by Link Asset Services)

4.4 Gilt yields and PWLB certainty rates were on a generally rising trend throughout the first half of 2023/24. At the beginning of April, the 5-year rate was the cheapest part of the curve and touched 4.14% whilst the 25-year rate was relatively expensive at 4.58%.

4.5 July saw short-dated rates peak at their most expensive. The 1-year rate spiked to 6.36% and the 5-year rate to 5.93%. Although, in due course, short-dated rate expectations fell, the medium dates shifted higher through August and the 10-year rate pushed higher to 5.51% and the 25-year rate to 5.73%. The 50-year rate was 4.27% on 5th April but rose to 5.45% on 28th September.

4.6 Rates are forecast to fall back over the next two to three years as inflation dampens. The CPI measure of inflation is expected to fall below 2% in the second half of 2024, and we forecast 50-year rates to stand at 3.90% by the end of September 2025. However, there is considerable gilt issuance to be digested by the market over the next couple of years, as a minimum, so there is a high degree of uncertainty as to whether rates will fall that far.

### 5. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy update

5.1 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2023/24, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 6 March 2023.

5.2 The underlying TMSS approved previously requires revision in the light of economic and operational movements during the year. The proposed changes and supporting detail for the changes are set out below:



Prudential Indicator 2023/24	Original £'000	Revised Prudential Indicator £'000
Authorised Limit	43,000	43,000
Operational Boundary	38,321	37,768
External Debt	26,500	21,500
Investments	(13,000)	(13,000)
<b>Net Borrowing</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>8,500</b>
Capital Financing Requirement	38,321	37,768

## 6 The Council's Capital Position (Prudential Indicators)

This part of the report is structured to update:

- The Council's capital expenditure plans;
- How these plans are being financed;
- The impact of the changes in the capital expenditure plans on the prudential indicators and the underlying need to borrow;
- Compliance with the limits in place for borrowing activity.

### 6.1 Prudential Indicator for Capital Expenditure

This Table shows the revised estimates for capital expenditure and the changes since the capital programme was agreed in March. It draws together the main strategy elements of the capital expenditure plans, highlighting the original supported and unsupported elements of the capital programme, and the expected financing arrangements of this capital expenditure. The borrowing element of the table increases the underlying indebtedness of the Council by way of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), although this will be reduced in part by revenue charges for the repayment of debt (the Minimum Revenue Provision). This direct borrowing may also be supplemented by maturing debt and other treasury requirements.

Capital Expenditure by Cluster £'000	2023/24 Original Estimate £'000	2023/24 Revised Estimate £'000
Our People	1,302	7,277
Our Place	15,358	6,949
Our Council	1,228	1,215

Investment	3,000	3,000
<b>Total capital expenditure</b>	<b>20,888</b>	<b>18,441</b>
Financed by:		
Capital receipts	3,350	3,614
Capital grants	13,248	11,810
Earmarked Reserves	3,943	1,893
S106	204	1,694
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>20,745</b>	<b>19,011</b>
<b>Borrowing need</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>(570)</b>

## 6.2 Changes to the Prudential Indicators for the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The table below shows the CFR, which is the underlying external need to incur borrowing for a capital purpose. It also shows the expected debt position over the period, which is termed the Operational Boundary.

During the half year ended 30 September 2023, the Council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. The Director of Corporate Services (S151) reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with prudential indicators.

	<b>2023/24 Original Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2023/24 Revised Estimate £'000</b>
<b>Prudential Indicators</b>		
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	20,888	18,441
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	<b>39,091</b>	<b>37,768</b>
Of Which Commercial Property	19,837	19,837
<b>Annual Change in CFR</b>	<b>-0,770</b>	<b>-1,669</b>
<b>In year Borrowing Requirement</b>	<b>26,500</b>	<b>21,500</b>
<b>Under/(Over) Borrowing</b>	<b>11,821</b>	<b>16,268</b>
<b>Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream</b>	<b>10.04%</b>	<b>10.35%</b>
<b>Incremental impact of capital investment decisions</b>		
<b>Increase/ Reduction(-) in Council Tax (band change per annum)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>£7.26</b>

Please note the above prudential indicators assume a revenue provision will be made for the repayment of debts in 2023/24 of £0.906m.

### 6.3 Limits to Borrowing Activity

The first key control over the treasury activity is a prudential indicator to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing (borrowings less investments) will only be for a capital purpose. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2023/24 and next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years. The Council has approved a policy for borrowing in advance of need which will be adhered to if this proves prudent.

A further prudential indicator controls the overall level of borrowing. This is the Authorised Limit which represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is

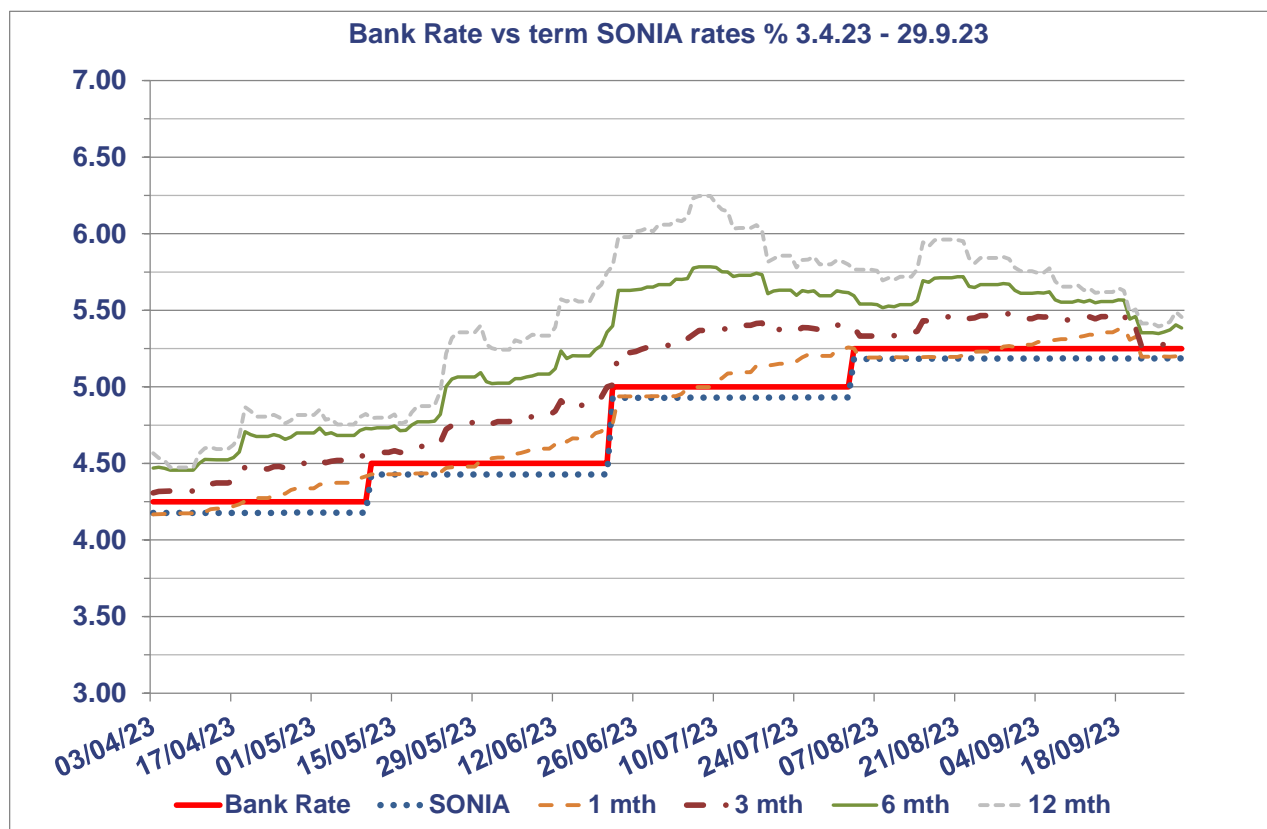
the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

## 7. Investment Portfolio 2023/24

7.1 In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, it is the Council's priority to ensure security of capital and liquidity, and to obtain an appropriate level of return which is consistent with the Council's risk appetite. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow needs.

7.2 As shown by the interest rate forecasts in section 3.2, rates are starting to return to levels not seen since before the financial crash of 2008 and the austerity measures which followed. This means investment returns are on an upward trajectory and indeed this is shown in the quarter two forecasting which shows increased investment income in 2023/24. If rates continue to remain at or near current levels then the Council's MTFS for 2024/25 onwards will benefit.

7.3 The Council held £23.9m of investments as at 30 September 2023 (£18.515m at 31 March 2023). The annualised investment rate for the first six months of the year is 4.853% against the Sterling Overnight Indexed Average (SONIA) average rate of 4.74%. The weighted average interest rate is 4.809%.



7.4 The Council's budgeted investment return for 2023/24 is £0.577m, and performance for the year is forecast to be £0.155m above budget at £0.732m, this is due to increasing interest rates and higher balances than expected.

7.5 The Director of Corporate Services (S151) confirms that the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were not breached during the first six months of 2023/24.

## **8 Investment Counterparty criteria**

8.1 The current investment counterparty criteria selection approved in the TMSS is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function.

8.2 Treasury Officers continue to mitigate investment risk in accordance with Treasury Management Practices.

## **9. Borrowing**

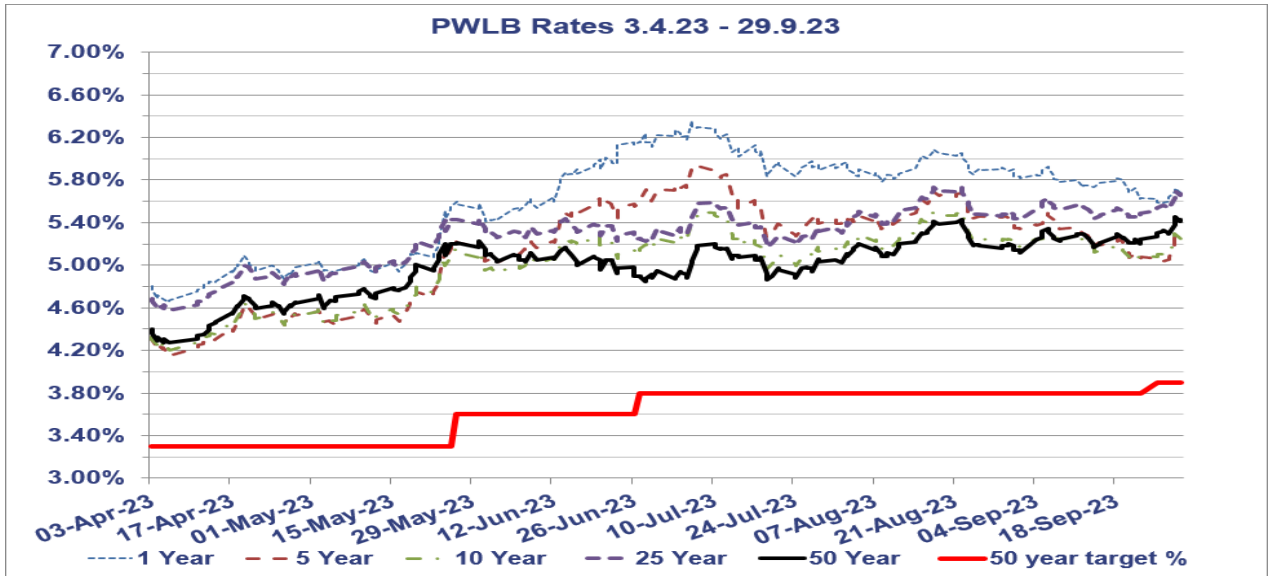
9.1 The Council's capital financing requirement (CFR) for 2023/24 was originally forecast to be £38.321m which has now changed to £37.768m after the Council closed its accounts for 2022/23. The CFR denotes the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. If the CFR is positive the Council may borrow from the PWLB or the market (external borrowing) or from internal balances on a temporary basis (internal borrowing). The balance of external and internal borrowing is generally driven by market conditions.

9.2 Due to the overall financial position and the underlying need to borrow for capital purposes (the capital financing requirement - CFR), no new external borrowing was undertaken in the first six months of the financial year. External borrowing remains at £21.5m. This is a prudent and cost effective approach in the current economic climate but will require ongoing monitoring in the event that upside risk to gilt yields prevails.

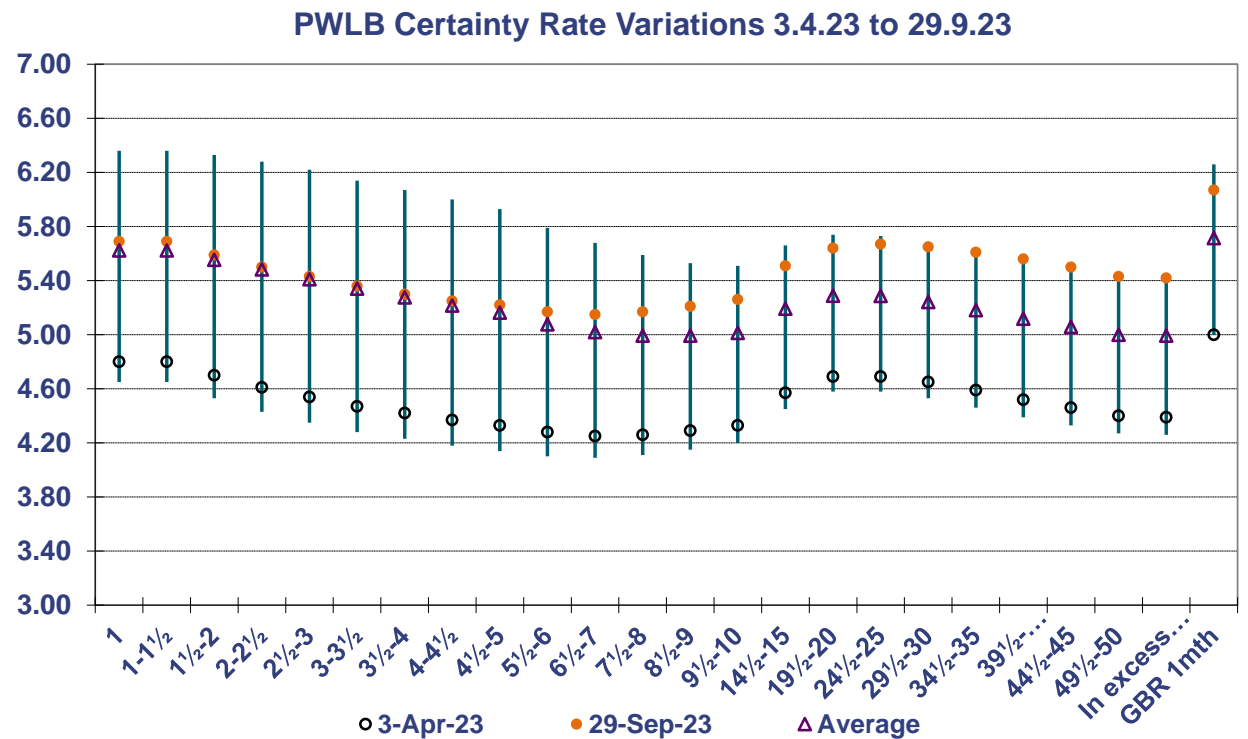
9.3 **INTERNAL BORROWING:** The Council forecasts that by the end of the financial year it will have cumulatively £16.268m of internal borrowing

9.4 It is anticipated that further short term external borrowing may be undertaken early next year to smooth peaks and troughs in cashflow.

9.5 The graph and table below show the movement in PWLB certainty rates for the first six months of the year:

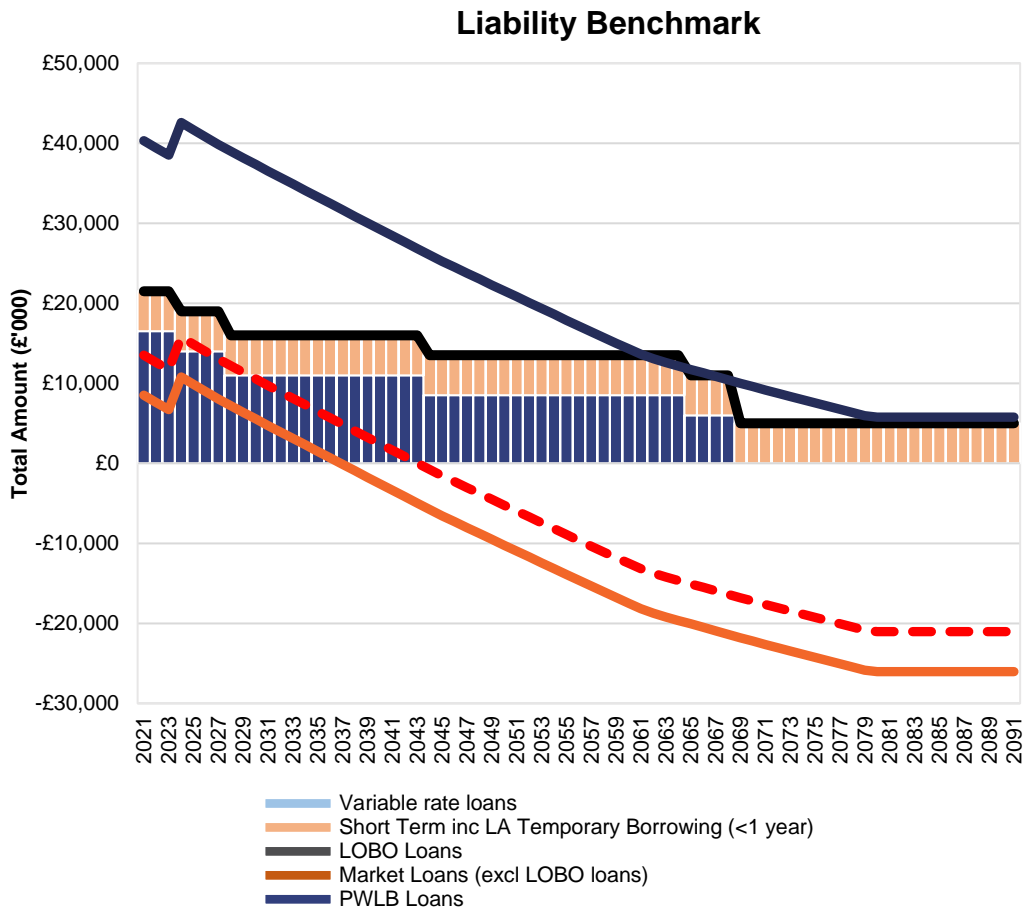


	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
<b>Low</b>	4.65%	4.14%	4.20%	4.58%	4.27%
<b>Date</b>	06/04/2023	06/04/2023	06/04/2023	06/04/2023	05/04/2023
<b>High</b>	6.36%	5.93%	5.51%	5.73%	5.45%
<b>Date</b>	06/07/2023	07/07/2023	22/08/2023	17/08/2023	28/09/2023
<b>Average</b>	5.62%	5.16%	5.01%	5.29%	5.00%
<b>Spread</b>	1.71%	1.79%	1.31%	1.15%	1.18%



10.1 To Compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a Liability Benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This prudential indicator is made up of four components:

- Existing loan debt outstanding: the Authority's existing loans that are still outstanding in future years.
- Loans CFR: this is calculated in accordance with the loans CFR definition in the Prudential Code and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing and planned MRP.
- Net loans requirement: this will show the Authority's gross loan debt less treasury management investments at the last financial year-end, projected into the future and based on its approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flows forecast.
- Liability benchmark (or gross loans requirement): this equals net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance



- The first half of 2023/24 saw:
  - Interest rates rise by a further 100bps, taking Bank Rate from 4.25% to 5.25% and, possibly, the peak in the tightening cycle.
  - Short, medium and long-dated gilts remain elevated as inflation continually surprised to the upside.
  - A 0.5% m/m decline in real GDP in July, mainly due to more strikes.
  - CPI inflation falling from 8.7% in April to 6.7% in August, its lowest rate since February 2022, but still the highest in the G7.
  - Core CPI inflation declining to 6.2% in August from 7.1% in April and May, a then 31 years high.
  - A cooling in labour market conditions, but no evidence yet that it has led to an easing in wage growth (as the 3myy growth of average earnings rose to 7.8% in August, excluding bonuses).
- The 0.5% m/m fall in GDP in July suggests that underlying growth has lost momentum since earlier in the year. Some of the weakness in July was due to there being almost twice as many working days lost to strikes in July (281,000) than in June (160,000). But with output falling in 10 out of the 17 sectors, there is an air of underlying weakness.
- The fall in the composite Purchasing Managers Index from 48.6 in August to 46.8 in September left it at its lowest level since COVID-19 lockdowns reduced activity in January 2021. At face value, it is consistent with the 0.2% q/q rise in real GDP in the period April to June, being followed by a contraction of up to 1% in the second half of 2023.
- The 0.4% m/m rebound in retail sales volumes in August is not as good as it looks as it partly reflected a pickup in sales after the unusually wet weather in July. Sales volumes in August were 0.2% below their level in May, suggesting much of the resilience in retail activity in the first half of the year has faded.
- As the growing drag from higher interest rates intensifies over the next six months, we think the economy will continue to lose momentum and soon fall into a mild recession. Strong labour demand, fast wage growth and government handouts have all supported household incomes over the past year. And with CPI inflation past its peak and expected to decline further, the economy has got through the cost-of-living crisis without recession. But even though the worst of the falls in real household disposable incomes are behind us, the phasing out of financial support packages provided by the government during the energy crisis means real incomes are unlikely to grow strongly. Higher interest rates will soon bite harder too. We expect the Bank of England to keep interest rates at the probable peak of 5.25% until the second half of 2024. Mortgage rates are likely to stay above 5.0% for around a year.
- The tightness of the labour market continued to ease, with employment in the three months to July falling by 207,000. The further decline in the number of job vacancies from 1.017m in July to 0.989m in August suggests that the labour market has loosened a bit further since July. That is the first time it has fallen below 1m since July 2021. At 3.0% in July, and likely to have fallen to 2.9% in August, the job vacancy rate is getting closer to 2.5%, which would be consistent with lower wage growth. Meanwhile, the 48,000



decline in the supply of workers in the three months to July offset some of the loosening in the tightness of the labour market. That was due to a 63,000 increase in inactivity in the three months to July as more people left the labour market due to long term sickness or to enter education. The supply of labour is still 0.3% below its pre-pandemic February 2020 level.

- But the cooling in labour market conditions still has not fed through to an easing in wage growth. While the monthly rate of earnings growth eased sharply from an upwardly revised +2.2% in June to -0.9% in July, a lot of that was due to the one-off bonus payments for NHS staff in June not being repeated in July. The headline 3myy rate rose from 8.4% (revised up from 8.2%) to 8.5%, which meant UK wage growth remains much faster than in the US and in the Euro-zone. Moreover, while the Bank of England's closely watched measure of regular private sector wage growth eased a touch in July, from 8.2% 3myy in June to 8.1% 3myy, it is still well above the Bank of England's prediction for it to fall to 6.9% in September.
- CPI inflation declined from 6.8% in July to 6.7% in August, the lowest rate since February 2022. The biggest positive surprise was the drop in core CPI inflation, which declined from 6.9% to 6.2%. That reverses all the rise since March and means the gap between the UK and elsewhere has shrunk (US core inflation is 4.4% and in the Euro-zone it is 5.3%). Core goods inflation fell from 5.9% to 5.2% and the further easing in core goods producer price inflation, from 2.2% in July to a 29-month low of 1.5% in August, suggests it will eventually fall close to zero. But the really positive development was the fall in services inflation from 7.4% to 6.8%. That also reverses most of the rise since March and takes it below the forecast of 7.2% the Bank of England published in early August.

## APPENDIX B: Approved countries for investments as at 30 September 2023

### *Based on lowest available rating*

AAA

- Australia
- Denmark
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Singapore
- Sweden
- Switzerland

AA+

- Canada
- Finland
- U.S.A.

AA

- Abu Dhabi (UAE)

AA-

- Belgium
- France (downgraded by Fitch on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023)
- Qatar
- **U.K.**



Full Council

22 January 2024

**Subject: Recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee – 9 November 2023 – New Fees relative to Crematorium for 2023/24**

Report by:

Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer

Contact Officer:

Emma Foy  
Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer  
[Emma.Foy@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:Emma.Foy@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

Purpose / Summary:

To introduce two new fees relative to the Crematorium following recommendation from Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That Council accept the recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and approve the two new fees (paragraph 1.2) for immediate implementation.**

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** None arising as a result in this report.

### **Financial : FIN/137/24/SL**

Two new fee lines are proposed to be added to the fees and charges schedule for the Crematorium **with immediate effect.**

Individual handmade ashes into glass ornaments containing a small amount of loved one's ashes and comes with a certificate of authenticity.

- Robin ornament - £115 incl. VAT
- Memorial bauble with stand - £145 incl. VAT

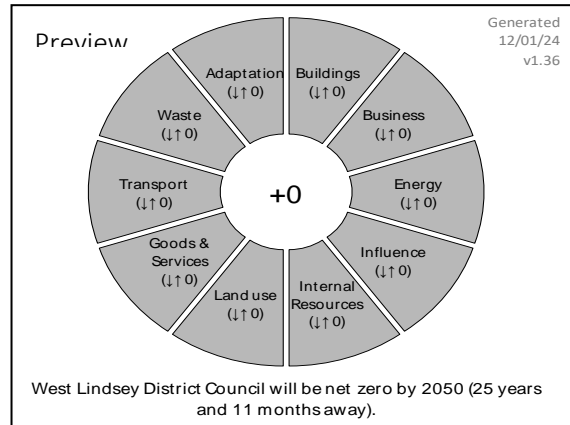
The amendments to the fees and charges schedule for the Crematorium will have a minimal impact on the income received for that service during 2023/2024.

**Staffing :** None arising as a result in this report.

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :** None arising as a result in this report.

**Data Protection Implications :** None arising as a result in this report.

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:** None arising as a result in this report.



**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:** None arising as a result in this report.

**Health Implications:** None arising as a result in this report.

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

N/A

**Risk Assessment :**

N/A

**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

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Corporate Policy and Resources Committee at their meeting on 9th November considered a report entitled Budget and Treasury Monitoring - Quarter 2 2023/2024 (1st April 2023 to 30th September 2023) <https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/documents/s38069/Budget%20and%20Treasury%20Monitoring%20-%20Quarter%202%202023204.pdf>

- 1.2 Section 2.3.2 of that report detailed proposals for the introduction of two new fees relative to the Crematorium, namely: -

### Crematorium

Two new fee lines are proposed to be added to the fees and charges schedule for the Crematorium **with immediate effect**.

Individual handmade ashes into glass ornaments containing a small amount of loved one's ashes and comes with a certificate of authenticity.

- Robin ornament - £115 incl. VAT
- Memorial bauble with stand - £145 incl. VAT

- 1.3 The Minute arising from the meeting can be viewed here (Minute 63) <https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/documents/g3387/Printed%20minutes%2009th-Nov-2023%2018.30%20Corporate%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=1>

The relevant resolution passed is set out below: -

### **RESOLVED** that:

- (d) the amendments to the fees and charges schedules for 2023/2024 (paragraph 2.3.2) be approved and recommended to Council that any new Fees and Charges be implemented.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Council are therefore asked to accept the recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and approve the two new fees (paragraph 1.2 above) for immediate implementation.



Council

22 January 2024

**Subject: Amendments requested to Committee Memberships**

Report by:

Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer:

Katie Storr  
Democratic and Elections Team Manager

Purpose / Summary:

To make amendments to Committee Memberships following requests from both the Administration and Opposition Group.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That:

- (a) Councillor Karen Carless be appointed to the Planning Committee, for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Baptiste Velan and
- (b) Councillor Baptiste Velan be appointed to Licensing and Regulatory, for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Karen Carless; and
- (c) a Member from the Opposition Group be appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers (nomination to be sought).

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:**

In accordance with the provisions of section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the wishes expressed by political groups.

**Financial : FIN/134/24/SL**

None directly arising from this report

**Staffing :**

None directly arising from this report

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

None directly arising from this report

**Data Protection Implications :**

None arising from this report.

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :**

There are no climate related risks from this report.

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :**

None arising from this report.

**Health Implications:**

None arising from this report.

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

Notification received from Group Whip

**Risk Assessment : N/A**



**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 Background**

- 1.1 In accordance with the provision of section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, it is the duty of the Council to make appointments to Committees in accordance with the wishes expressed by political groups following the determination under section 15 (the allocation of seats to political groups).
- 1.2 The allocation of seats was last determined by Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2023.
- 1.3 There have been no changes to the political balance requiring group allocations to be revisited, however both the Administration Group and Opposition Group have advised of changes they wish to make to persons appointed to those Committee seats, allocated to each respective Group.
- 1.4 Such changes can be dealt with by substitutions rules, however both Groups have indicated, given they would like the amendments to be on a permanent basis, a report has been prepared for Council, to formalise those amendments.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 In accordance with the wishes expressed by the Administration and Opposition Groups, Council are asked to approve the following changes to Committee Memberships

That:

- (a) Councillor Karen Carless be appointed to the Planning Committee, for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Baptiste Velan and
- (b) Councillor Baptiste Velan be appointed to Licensing and Regulatory, for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Karen Carless.
- (c) a Member (nomination to be sought) from the Opposition Group be appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the current civic year, replacing Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers.



Council

22 January 2024

**Subject: Revisions requested to an existing Outside Body appointments : -**

- **Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity**
- **Housing Health & Care Delivery Group.**
- **Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire**

Report by:

Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer:

Katie Storr  
Democratic and Elections Team Manager  
[Katie.storr@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.storr@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

Purpose / Summary:

The report seeks to amend appointments previously made to Outside Bodies, the reasoning for the revisions is detailed within the body of the report.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That:**

- (a) Councillor Matthew Boles be appointed to the Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity until Annual Council 2025 replacing Councillor David Dobbie;**
- (b) Councillor Jeanette McGhee be appointed to the Housing Health & Care Delivery Group, until Annual Council 2027 replacing Councillor Lesley Rollings; and**
- (c) a Member (and a nominated reserve) be appointed to serve on the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire until Annual Council 2027 replacing Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers.**

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

It is the duty of Council to appoint to outside bodies, Working Groups and Boards .

The Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire is governed by the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 - Regulation 31 requires any Member appointed to also sit on a scrutiny committee of their respective Council to qualify.

### **Financial : FIN/135/24/SL**

Members are entitled to claim allowances for attendance at bodies and groups they have been formally appointed to. This can be met from within the existing budget.

### **Staffing :**

None directly arising from this report

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

None directly arising from this report

### **Data Protection Implications :**

None arising from this report.

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

There are no climate related risks from this report.

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

None arising from this report.

### **Health Implications:**

None arising from this report.

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

Notification received from Administration

**Risk Assessment : N/A**

**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 Background**

- 1.1 Council at its Annual Meeting appoints Members to a number of Boards, Groups and Outside Bodies.
- 1.2 Since Annual Council, in May 2023, correspondence have been received from the Secretariat to the Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity, requesting that Council re-considered the appointment for logistical reasons (section 2).
- 1.3 Correspondence have also been received from the Deputy Leader of the Council requesting that her seat on the Housing Health and Care Delivery Group be transferred to another Member of her choosing (section 3).
- 1.4 Finally correspondence have been received from Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers, requesting that her seat on the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire be re-appointed to (section 4).
- 1.5 This report seeks to deal with making and amending appointments in respect of these Outside Bodies.

## **2. Re-Appointment to Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity**

- 2.1 Council at its Annual Meeting appointed Councillor David Dobbie to Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity.
- 2.2 At the same meeting Council appointed Councillor Matthew Boles to the Trustees of the Francis Barker Trust and the Trustees of the WG Rose Memorial.
- 2.3 All three Bodies are co-ordinated through the same Secretariat and the meetings of the three trusteeships fall simultaneously to one another. Having different Councillors appointed across the three Boards does therefore create some logistical issues for the Secretariat.
- 2.4 Having spoken to the two effected Councillors, Councillor Dobbie has indicated he will step down from his appointment, allowing Councillor Boles to fulfil all three trustee appointments.
- 2.5 Council are therefore asked to appoint Councillor Matthew Boles to the **Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity** until Annual Council in May 2025, replacing Councillor David Dobbie.

## **3. Re-Appointment to Housing Health and Care Delivery Group**

- 3.1 Councillor Lesley Rollings, in her capacity as Chairman of Prosperous Communities Committee was appointed to the Housing Health and Care Delivery Group.

- 3.2 The position has traditionally been aligned to the Chairman within whose remit Housing and Health services sit, in accordance with the terms of reference set by the administrating body, Lincolnshire County Council
- 3.3 The Administration have requested that the position be transferred to a Member of their choosing, namely Councillor Jeanette McGhee.
- 3.4 Council have previously agreed that such Outside Body appointments are to be made on the following basis :
- i) In the first instance any Member with a specialist interest or expertise in the particular field of the Outside Body should be appointed (the appointment should not be party political),
  - ii) Failing this, where possible, appointments should be made geographically involving a local Ward Member.
  - iii) Where neither of these criteria can be met, any other Member should be appointed.
- 3.5 Councillor McGhee's role on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, enables her to have oversight of Housing and Health matters, and Lincolnshire County Council have indicated it is a matter for the District Council to satisfy itself that they have appointed an appropriate member. Councillor McGhee also has experience of working in the sector, and has expressed an interest in picking up the duty, fulfilling criteria i) at 3.4 above.
- 3.6 Council are therefore requested to appoint Councillor Jeanette McGhee to the Housing Health and Care Delivery Group, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council, until Annual Council May 2027, replacing Councillor Lesley Rollings.

#### **4. Re-Appointment to the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire**

- 4.1 Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers was appointed to the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire, but due to personal circumstances, has requested Council re-appoint to the Outside Body.
- 4.2 The position has traditionally been aligned to a Member who sits on our Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the terms of reference set by the administrating body, Lincolnshire County Council.
- 4.3 Lincolnshire County Council have confirmed that any Member appointed must sit on a scrutiny committee of their respective Council to qualify. This is a requirement of Regulation 31 of the Health and Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
- 4.4 The Committee meets 11 times per year at County Offices. The meetings are usually half day meetings commencing at 10am, however on occasion they may stretch into the afternoon, finishing at 3.30pm.

- 4.5 Both Groups have expressed an interest in holding this Outside Body and as such nominations will be sought on the night but must be from serving Members of West Lindsey District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The District Council is also afforded the opportunity to appoint a nominated reserve to this position.