

## **WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 3 December 2024 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings (Chairman)  
Councillor Emma Bailey (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Trevor Young (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley  
Councillor Frazer Brown  
Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor Karen Carless  
Councillor Christopher Darcel  
Councillor Paul Lee  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor John Barrett

**In Attendance:**  
Sally Grindrod-Smith Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities  
Grant White Communities Manager  
Robert Gilliot Operational Services Manager  
Ele Snow Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Jacob Flear  
Councillor Peter Morris

**Membership:** Councillor J. Barrett was appointed substitute for Councillor P. Morris

### **41 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

### **42 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 12 November 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **43 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor C. Darcel declared a personal interest in agenda item 6a, the Wellbeing Lincs Service, and noted he would not vote on the item.

#### **44 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

With no comments, questions or requirement for a vote, the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions as at 25 November 2024, was **DULY NOTED**.

#### **45 WELLBEING LINCS SERVICE**

The Committee heard from the Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities seeking to inform Members of the revised delivery arrangements for the new Wellbeing Lincs Service and gain approval for signing of the new Collaboration Agreement. It was noted that a decision was made by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 11 April 2024 to submit a partnership bid for the new Wellbeing Service contract with East Lindsey as host organisation and North Kesteven and City of Lincoln also making up the partnership. A bid was submitted to Lincolnshire County Council for the new contracted Wellbeing Service on 15 July 2024, and, after a number of delays through the system, a decision was received on 24 August 2024 that the partnership had been successful in obtaining the new Wellbeing Service contract. The contract was due to start on 13 January 2025 and would run for a period of five years with potential extensions thereafter of up to a further five years.

Members were provided with a summary of the new contract arrangements, including the transfer of staff members to West Lindsey District Council, the updated collaboration agreement and the budgetary implications. It was highlighted that a report was also being presented to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee at the 12 December meeting, in order to approve the establishment of the revenue budget.

In response to financial queries raised by Members of the Committee, it was explained that, if the council had not been involved in the provision of the service, there would have been a budget deficit. Based on the proposals, there was instead a small net gain. Representation on the board of management was allocated within the council according to who was best placed to understand the requirements of the role, that being the Homes, Health and Wellbeing Team Manager as opposed to a Director.

Members expressed their support for the service, highlighting the benefits which had been seen over the years the service had been in place, and commending the ongoing involvement of the council. It was recognised that ongoing financial concerns would have an impact on the structure and provision of the service, with support given for the new proposals. It was noted that it would be useful for Members to be provided with the most recent annual review of the service, and for there to be an information session for all Councillors in order to explain the amended delivery of the service and highlight the purpose of it, especially for those who may not be aware of the full scope. It was agreed for these actions to be noted and arranged.

In response to concerns raised regarding the commitment of TUPE'ing across the staff members to West Lindsey District Council and the potential risks involved, it was highlighted that, in the event of redundancies, those costs would be covered by the service and not fall on West Lindsey District Council. Members were offered a breakdown of the budget, and it was noted this would also be of assistance to Members of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

A Member of the Committee enquired as to what would happen in the event of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee not approving the establishment of the revenue budget, if the Committee was not content with the financial implications. It was noted that the Committee would be advised of any risks arising from their decision, if that situation came to pass.

The Chairman thanked Members for their comments, and, having been moved, seconded, and voted upon, with one abstention it was

**RESOLVED** that the revised delivery arrangements under the new contract be noted, and authority for signing of the final Collaboration Agreement be delegated to the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities in consultation with the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee.

#### **46 VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR FUNDING**

Members gave consideration to a report from the Communities Manager seeking to provide an update on the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) funding review, and present recommendations on future funding awards. Members heard that the Community Grants Panel, with support from the Communities Team, had conducted a review of Voluntary and Community Sector core funding, as requested by the Prosperous Communities Committee on 19 March 2024. It was noted that West Lindsey District Council was currently one of the most active core funders of voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in comparison with other surrounding local authorities. Based on the rationalisation of the purpose and principles of core funding and the evidence gathered, future eligibility of grantees for core funding had been discussed by the Panel, particularly in the context of potential financial pressures in future years for the council.

It was explained that the Community Grants Panel recommended supporting core funding for all current grantees until March 2026. This was deemed important to ensure sufficient time for planning, fundraising, beneficiary support and effective communication by grantees, partners and the council. It was highlighted that some grantees may benefit from support from, and partnership with, other possible partners including local authorities such as town, parish or county council. At the time of doing the review work, there was continued uncertainty around future finances from Central Government for Local Authorities. This had an impact on the ability to make decisions about future financial commitments to VCS core funding. Discussions with Councillors had highlighted the need for additional engagement with organisations core funded by the council as part of the VCS Core funding review work. This would include additional meetings, interviews and site visits for Councillors to fully understand the role and impact of core funded organisations. A report with future core funding recommendations would be presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee by September 2025.

The Chairman thanked the Communities Manager and extended thanks to the Members of the Community Grants Panel. She noted that the ongoing review would involve invites to meet with different organisations and encouraged Members to be a part of those conversations.

The Committee voiced their collective thanks for the work undertaken, and that of the organisations who provided much needed support and facilities in the communities around the district. The approach for ongoing review was welcomed, with a request that thanks to the Communities Team be put on record. It was also recognised that much of the work funded through the council had wider, immeasurable benefits, for example the tourism pull of the Churches Festival, which saw visitors come to the district from all round the country.

The financial challenges facing these organisations were acknowledged, with Members advocating for additional support to identify savings, efficiencies and alternative funding streams, especially in light of increased budget restrictions within Local Authorities.

Having been moved and seconded, the Chairman took the vote, and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that

- a) the Voluntary & Community Sector funding grants for 2025/26 be approved as follows:
  - Call Connect - £30,000
  - Citizens Advice Lincoln & Lindsey - £60,200
  - Gainsborough Adventure Playground Association - £15,000
  - Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride - £13,000
  - Live & Local - £3,500
  - The Conservation Volunteers - £30,000
  - Voluntary Centre Services - £25,000
  - West Lindsey Churches Festival - £8,000
- b) the work of the VCS Funding Review be continued as set out in Section 6 of the report and a report be presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee by September 2025.

## **47 RESPONSE TO MOTION - INCREASED STREET SWEEPING CAPACITY**

The Committee heard from Operational Services Manager setting out information in response to a Motion presented to Full Council on 4 March 2024 regarding exploring the financial implications and feasibility of increasing road sweeping capability. The report detailed potential options, allowing the Committee to consider what may be possible, and determine whether a change to the Road Sweeping Policy should be applied. It was noted that options with financial implications would require a recommendation from the Prosperous Communities Committee to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for approval of the appropriate funding.

It was explained that the current arrangements included one HGV road sweeper on a hire maintenance contract at the cost of £36,000 (plus £8.3k fuel) per annum. The road sweeper was required to be operated by a Class 2 HGV driver at the cost of £37,200 per annum. The road sweeper covered every village in the district at least once a year, while towns were visited more frequently. The sweeper was operated Monday to Friday, with Thursday as a day off, and was in Gainsborough town centre most Sundays as overtime. The HGV sweeper had a schedule of works but may also be required to attend to ad hoc requests or

private work at any time, such as occasional building site sweeps. During the months of November and December the Council hired another HGV sweeper and driver to undertake seasonal sweeping for leaf fall at a cost of £14,500 for the 2 months.

Three options were included in the report, however it was explained that these were indicative of how the service may be changed, with Members invited to consider their own alternatives if wished. The first option was to carry on with the current arrangements, which, whilst not having any financial impact, would not increase road sweeping capacity. The second option was to hire another sweeper vehicle and driver. This would increase the capacity, remove the need to hire in a second vehicle in November and December, however there was an additional cost of £53,000 for 2025/26. The third option contained within the report was to employ an additional HGV driver to work on rotation with the existing driver on the one HGV road sweeper. This would increase capacity and also lead to a reduction in annual costs of £1600 for 2025/26 due to the reduction in overtime hours.

Councillor F. Brown, as the author of the original Motion, thanked the Operational Services Manager for the report. He noted that, following a run of storms, there had been a significant amount of cleaning up required and it was that which had prompted him to request a review of the Council's approach to road sweeping. He sought additional information regarding the frequency of road sweeping in Nettleham, amongst other villages in his area. It was confirmed that whilst there was a rota for the road sweeper visiting named towns and villages, this was often impacted by ad hoc requests and demand in other areas of the district. It was requested whether the indicative rota could be shared with town and parish councils, it was explained this would be possible, however there would remain the need for flexibility.

Members of the Committee voiced their thanks for the report and support for option three to be implemented. A Member of the Committee took the opportunity to highlight that, for the third year in a row, the West Lindsey refuse collection service and street cleansing service had been shortlisted for the APSE Performance Network Awards, with the winners to be announced shortly.

With a proposal to instigate option three within the report having been moved and seconded, the Chairman called the vote and it was

**RESOLVED** that

- a) having considered the information provided in response to the Motion to Council, the Motion be supported and road sweeping capacity be increased and;
- b) option three, to employ an additional HGV Driver to work a four day on, four day off rota with the current sweeper driver, be recommended to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

**48 WORKPLAN**

With no questions or comments, the work plan was **DULY NOTED**.

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Subject to Call-in. Call-in will expire at 5pm on 6 January 2025

The meeting concluded at 7.38 pm.

Chairman