

Guildhall Gainsborough
Lincolnshire DN21 2NA
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AGENDA

This meeting will be webcast live and the video archive published on our website

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Tuesday, 15th April, 2025 at 6.30 pm
Council Chamber - The Guildhall

Members:

- Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)
- Councillor Jacob Flear (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Moira Westley (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Emma Bailey
- Councillor Eve Bennett
- Councillor John Barrett
- Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
- Councillor Liz Clews
- Councillor Adam Duguid
- Councillor Paul Key
- Councillor Paul Lee
- Councillor Lynda Mullally
- Councillor Maureen Palmer
- Councillor Roger Pilgrim

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting** (PAGES 3 – 7)
To confirm and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 14 January 2025.
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 Schedule** (PAGES 8 - 9)
Matters arising schedule setting out current position of previously agreed actions as at Monday 7 April 2025.

Agendas, Reports and Minutes will be provided upon request in the following formats:

Large Clear Print: Braille: Audio: Native Language

5. **Presentation Item - Lead Local Flood Authority**

Presentation by Matthew Harrison regarding an overview of the responsibilities of the Lead Local Flood Authority and how those responsibilities are applied during West Lindsey District flooding events.

6. **Public Reports**

- i) Flood Working Group Update (PAGES 10 - 20)
- ii) DRAFT Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25 (PAGES 21 - 30)

7. **General Work Items**

- i) Forward Plan (PAGES 31 - 34)
- ii) Committee Workplan (PAGE 35)

Ian Knowles
Head of Paid Service
The Guildhall
Gainsborough

Monday, 7 April 2025

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 14 January 2025 commencing at 6.30 pm.

- Present:** Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)
Councillor Jacob Flear (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Moira Westley (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Stephen Bunney
- In Attendance:**
Nova Roberts Director of Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services
Andy Gray Housing & Environmental Enforcement Manager
Ele Snow Senior Democratic and Civic Officer
Molly Spencer Democratic & Civic Officer
- Apologies:** Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Roger Pilgrim
- Membership:** Councillor Stephen Bunney was appointed substitute for Councillor Bennett

31 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

On being put to vote it was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 November 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

32 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

33 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The Democratic and Civic Officer noted that the matter relating to the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership invitation had been completed but would be revisited following the Committee Meeting, subject to any questions raised by Members during the discussions.

With no further comments, or requirement for a vote, the Matters Arising Schedule was **DULY NOTED**.

34 PRESENTATION ITEM - SAFER LINCOLNSHIRE PARTNERSHIP

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager, Andy Gray, provided an overview of the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership (SLP) Annual Report, which was submitted to the Committee by Martyn Parker from Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and circulated to Members on 13 January 2025. Due to his absence, the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager outlined the role of West Lindsey District Council within the partnership and addressed key highlights from the report.

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that the SLP was the statutory community safety body for Lincolnshire and administered by LCC's community safety function. The governance structure of the SLP included representatives from all district councils and other key agencies, such as the police, probation services, health authorities, and the reoffending team. It was noted that the SLP was usually chaired by a seconded police representative on a rotational basis, with Cllr Mrs Patricia Bradwell OBE serving as the Lead Member, who had been allocated by LCC.

The Committee were also informed that the SLP operated with core priority groups: anti-social behaviour (ASB), crime and disorder, drug and alcohol abuse, reducing reoffending, and serious violence. Each priority area had dedicated workstreams, with individual districts contributing based on their expertise and resource. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager emphasised that while all districts were actively involved in the ASB workstream, their participation in other priority areas was more selective to ensure efficient resource allocation.

West Lindsey District Council's contributions to the SLP were highlighted, which included financial support for the ASB coordinator, data analysis resource, and a shared case management system (ESINs). West Lindsey District Council also contributed to the statutory Domestic Abuse Reviews (DARs), formerly referred to as Domestic Homicide Reviews, which were required for every domestic homicide incident.

The Committee was informed of several key initiatives undertaken through the SLP. These included the development of a noxious odour policy to address cannabis-related complaints and a county-wide protocol for handling youth-related ASB, managed via the ESINs system. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager reported that the partnership had implemented a standardised procedure for ASB case reviews, also known as Community Triggers, under which shared arrangements allowed Officers from one district to conduct reviews for another.

A Women and Girls Strategy developed under the serious violence priority area was noted, aimed at addressing safety and prevention issues. The Committee was also updated on the Gainsborough Community Links Programme, which provided support for young individuals aged 11–21 involved in violent crime and aimed to reduce their risk of reoffending. This programme, alongside other initiatives addressing knife crime and youth weapon awareness, was funded through Home Office grants allocated to the SLP.

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager stressed the value of West Lindsey District Council's membership in the partnership, and mentioned benefits such as resource sharing, consistent policy implementation, and access to specialised expertise. It was also noted that while participation required a significant time commitment from Officers, arrangements were in place to ensure feedback from meetings was shared effectively across districts.

The Chairman thanked the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager for his briefing and invited Members to comment, it was clarified that any specific queries or areas requiring additional detail could be directed to Martyn Parker, either via email or at a future meeting.

Councillor Bunney noted that he was present when Councillor Mrs Bradwell (LCC) announced the £1 million funding set to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). He went on to state that at that time, concerns were raised regarding how this funding would be distributed and its impact on smaller, rural areas. While urban areas may benefit from standard models of intervention, there were questions about the relevance and effectiveness of these measures in smaller communities, where issues such as ASB may manifest differently. A specific example was provided where a minor incident, like someone knocking on an elderly person's door and running away, could cause distress but might not be categorised as ASB in the same way as urban incidents.

Further concerns were raised about systems used by the police, which only recorded incidents when they were reported. In areas with limited neighbourhood policing resources, there were concerns that incidents may not be reported in a timely manner, leading to a lack of data related to ASB. It was questioned whether the £1 million allocation would lead to visible improvements in local areas, particularly those with less frequent police presence. Councillor Bunney acknowledged the work being done by the police but sought clarification on how more rural areas could benefit.

The Committee discussed the challenges of resourcing community safety, noting that the Police often mirrored policing models based on recorded data and incident locations. They emphasised the rural versus urban challenge, highlighting the differences between areas like West Lindsey and Lincolnshire compared to Central London. Members addressed the issue of underreporting, recognising it as an ongoing challenge for all agencies. It was stated by the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager that Inspector Head had previously discussed the levels of reporting, and the Committee acknowledged the perception and challenge of unreported incidents.

Further concerns were also raised regarding the issue of obnoxious odours in rural areas. It was enquired about actions taken to address odours from fertilisers, both natural and synthetic, which affected local villages as well as odours that would come from illegal substances. It was suggested that incorporating responses to those issues into policy would demonstrate responsiveness to the concerns of outlying parishes.

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager clarified that the current procedures primarily addressed the use of illicit substances, such as cannabis, within residential premises. These procedures did not cover agricultural odours, which were considered more of a nuisance and environmental issue rather than a community safety concern. However, normal powers under the Environmental Protection Act were still available to address those

issues when reported.

The distribution of important information, such as anti-fraud measures and community welfare updates, was highlighted, with Members commenting that while there were valuable resources available, they would often go unnoticed unless stumbled upon by chance. It was questioned how the council could improve the reach of said messages, and potential channels such as Parish Councils, libraries, and community hubs were suggested.

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager mentioned a communications plan for events such as ASB Week or Scams Week but noted the lack of a specific regime for local issues. He suggested discussing this within the SLP to better engage communities. He added that Parish Councils, which were proactive in situations such as managing flooding, would also help prevent crime and increase safety during other times.

It was enquired as to whether prominent messages could be included on the West Lindsey District Council's website front page to highlight important information, such as fraud alerts or public broadcasts. The need to use multiple communication methods was highlighted, recognising that not everyone was familiar with modern digital tools. A further suggestion was to make use of Parish and village magazines, which were more likely to reach those residents who did not use online services.

The Chairman thanked Members for their comments, and the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager for his briefing in Martyn Parker's absence and the work completed related to previous flooding work, noting his involvement in circa. 15 incidents. The Chairman also extended his gratitude to the SLP, acknowledging the vital nature of their work.

35 FORWARD PLAN

The Democratic and Civic Officer reminded the Committee that they could use the forward plan to identify items for pre-decision scrutiny. She noted that a proposer, a seconder, and a majority vote would be required to include an item in the Committee Work Plan. Otherwise, the item would be for noting only.

Councillor Bunney acknowledged the contributions of Inspector Head in previous Committee Meetings but noted that Lincolnshire Police had entered an extended consultation phase. He suggested inviting a more senior officer, possibly from the Chief Constable's office or the Police and Crime Commissioner's office, to provide insights into the strategic decision-making processes of the police.

Councillor Bunney referred to the 2023 PEEL report, which highlighted areas where the police had made insufficient progress. He stressed the importance of understanding strategic decisions at the constabulary level, beyond the neighbourhood planning of West Lindsey District. Members agreed unanimously. Councillor Bunney suggested that if an invitation were extended, it should focus on understanding the actions being taken within limited resources to address strategic problems, rather than exclusively financial constraints. He highlighted the need to explore this aspect in the wording of the invitation.

Upon being proposed, seconded and voted upon it was

RESOLVED that an invitation be extended to a senior police officer and/or the PCC's Office.

36 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Democratic and Civic Officer informed the committee that she had contacted the Lead Local Flood Authority, inviting them to the February Committee Meeting and she would inform Member of progress that had been made.

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

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.01 pm.

Chairman

Overview and Scrutiny Matters Arising Schedule

Purpose:

To consider progress on the matters arising from previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

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

Matters Arising Schedule

Status	Title	Action Required	Comments	Due Date	Allocated To
Green	Update from the Health Scrutiny Committee	Include updates from the Health Scrutiny Committee representative on future O&S agendas.	<p>O&S 20.02.24: The Chairman requested for updates to be received by the Committee.</p> <p>Update 22/07/24: To be discussed with the Health Scrutiny representative for future updates to be shared accordingly, dependent on meeting dates. Due date extended in order for dates to be confirmed.</p> <p>Update 03/01/2024: LCC Health Scrutiny moved to 29 January 2025. Cllr Westley has confirmed plans to attend and will provide an update at O&S Committee 25 February 2025.</p>	31/12/24	Molly Spencer
Green	Battery Storage Legislation	Item to be included on Overview & Scrutiny Workplan	<p>O&S 30.07.24: requested for a presentation item to the Committee regarding legislation and policy around battery storage sites, with potential lobbying of Government arising from that.</p> <p>Update 26.11.2024: Due date removed for item to remain open. Excerpt from minutes 'Members of the Committee were content that the actions undertaken following the meeting of Full Council had resolved the matter originally raised through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, however it was requested that the matter remain with the Committee, to receive a future</p>	(blank)	Molly Spencer

update as upcoming legislation passed through Parliament.'

Green

Invitation to Police & Crime Commissioner

Extend and invitation to the PCC to attend and present to the O&S Committee.

O&S 14.01.2025 - Excerpt of minutes 'Councillor Bunney referred to the 2023 PEEL report, which highlighted areas where the police had made insufficient progress ... Councillor Bunney suggested that if an invitation were extended, it should focus on understanding the actions being taken within limited resources to address strategic problems, rather than exclusively financial constraints ... RESOLVED that an invitation be extended to a senior police officer and/or the PCC's Office.'

30/04/25

Molly Spencer

Update: 02.04.2025 - Invitation extended, response received. To be discussed with Cttee.

Agenda Item 6a



**Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Tuesday 15th April 2025

Subject: Flood Working Group Update

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

Andy Gray
Housing & Environmental Enforcement Manager

andy.gray@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To provide committee with an update on the work undertaken by the flood working group.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Committee are asked to:

- a) Note the report
- b) Request that a further update is brought to overview and scrutiny committee in 24 months' time, around April 2027.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The report acknowledges the Council is fulfilling its statutory duties. The reported work should enable improvement in the identification and discharging of these duties, in collaboration with partners.

The district council are defined by Section 6 (13) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2024 as a “flood risk management authority”. Along with the districts, the following are also flood risk management authorities; the Environment Agency; Anglian Water and Internal Drainage Boards.

Lincolnshire County Council are the lead local flood authority.

Non- statutory guidance also provides that district councils; manage flood risk from ordinary watercourses and operate and maintain existing sea defences and carry out other work to manage flood risk from the sea (with the consent of the Environment Agency). West Lindsey does not have a sea boundary, but other districts in Lincolnshire do and there may be asked to assist from a mutual aid perspective.

Financial :

There are no financial implications as a result of this report. No fin ref needed as it is an O & S report.

Staffing :

The work undertaken on flooding and flood related issues is largely delivered as an additional duty or an add on to existing officers roles. This matter is referred to within the report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

The work undertaken via the flood group is believed to be providing a positive impact for the Council’s communities and the groups within it.

Data Protection Implications :

None noted.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Flooding and its impacts are intrinsically linked to climate change and the risks that this presents to our residents and the Council.

The working group and associated work, along with the links to key partners and projects helps to ensure that the Council is proactively seeking to address and respond to the issues that flooding presents.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None noted.

Health Implications:

There is strong evidence that stress levels and mental health are impacted by flooding issues and the perception of flooding issues. Ongoing work with partners to resolve flooding issues and risk could have a positive impact on resident's mental wellbeing.

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee report, Tuesday 7th November 2023

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=386&MId=3489&Ver=4>

Risk Assessment :

Failure to co-ordinate work in this area, both internally and with external partners, could result in increased impact from future flooding events. There is also a risk to the Council's reputation if it fails to demonstrate a pro-active approach in this work area.

Call in and Urgency:

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

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

Yes

No

Key Decision:

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

Yes

No

1. Introduction

1.1. In 2022, Prosperous Communities Committee approved the creation of an officer flooding and drainage working party; a member flood and drainage working group; and that oversight of this group be delegated to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.2. This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the progress made by both the officer and member working groups and sets out some of the key issues that the groups are seeking to address on behalf of West Lindsey.

2. Officer and Member Working Groups

2.1. The member working group is made up of the following members.

- Councillor Paul Howitt – Cowan (Chairman)
- Councillor Ian Fleetwood
- Councillor Peter Morris
- Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
- Councillor John Barrett
- Councillor Stephen Bunney

2.2. The officer working group is made up of the following members

- Chief Executive (Chair)
- Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager (Vice Chair and enforcement lead)
- Director – Planning, Regeneration and Communities
- Communications Manager
- Development Management Team Leader (Planning lead)
- Head of Policy and Strategy
- Street Cleansing and Markets Team Manager
- Enterprising Communities Manager
- Policy and Strategy Officer – Climate and Sustainable Environment

2.3. Both groups meet on a quarterly basis and have an approved terms of reference. Democratic services support the group through agenda creation and minute taking. The Officer group usually meets after the member group to review actions from the member meeting and to plan for the agenda for the next meeting.

2.4. The agendas for the meeting contain standing items, as well as one off matters that need consideration. The standing agenda is usually as follows;

- Update on recent flood incidents
- Humber 2100 Strategy Update
- Fen 2100 Project
- LRF Resilient Communities Programme
- Update from Meetings with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)
- Update from Officer Working Group
- Member Updates

2.5. The original lead officer for the working group was the Director – Commercial and Operational Services. This officer left the Council in the Autumn of 2024 and since their departure interim arrangements have been in place to ensure that the working of both the officer and member working groups can continue.

3. Flooding Incidents

3.1. Since the inception of the working group there have been three major flooding incidents that have impacted upon West Lindsey.

- Storm Babet (October 2023)
- Storm Henk (January 2024)
- 6th January 2025 (no storm was named during this incident)

**There have also been a number of minor surface water flooding issues, which generally occur during periods of isolated heavy rainfall.*

3.2. The impact of these incidents was varied in terms of the number of properties and persons affected, however during all of the incident's homes were flooded internally within the district.

3.3. The Council, as a partner within the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF) responded to these incidents and provided support to residents and businesses. This support came as part of the operational response, but also as part of the operational recovery.

3.4. Where a property is internally flooded the County Council (as the LLFA) carry out a section 19 report to look at the incident and consider any ways in which the situation can be improved in the future.

3.5. Community meetings have also been attended by the Council, with partners, in areas where flooding has occurred.

4. Boards and Other Flood and Drainage Forums

4.1. A variety of elected Members attend internal drainage board meetings that fall within their ward area. There are also members of the Council's working group who are members of the County Council's Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee.

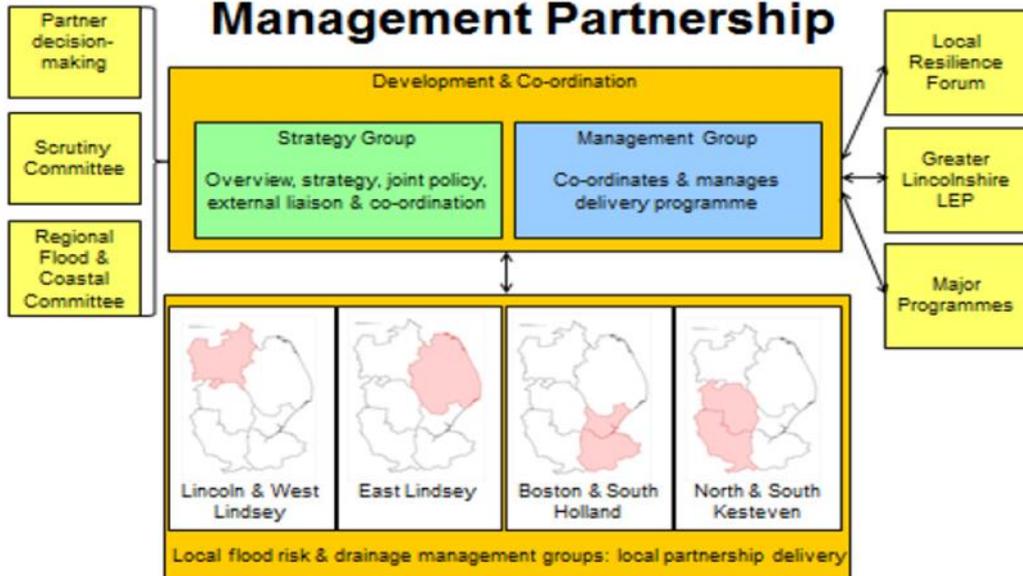
4.2. The working groups ensure that information discussed within the local flood and drainage meetings and forums is fed back and understood.

4.3. Officers also engage within the structure shown below, which makes up the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership

Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership

Governance and Functions April 2018

Lincolnshire Flood Risk & Water Management Partnership



4.4. Councillors also engage in the work that relates to the Humber 2100 Strategy (see section 5).

5. Humber 2100

5.1. This is a partnership consisting of 11 local authorities from around the Humber and the Environment Agency looking at how flood risk is managed in the Humber over the long term. The work is seeking to develop a new adaptive strategy to manage tidal flood risk and increase resilience the next 100 years.

5.2. A report on this matter was determined by the Councils Prosperous Communities Committee in March 2025 and sought agreement for the Council to engage in the next phase of work and support the preferred approaches to flood management.

6. Update on Flood and Drainage Work

6.1. Officers of the working group meet on a six-weekly basis with colleagues from the LFA to review the current situation regarding active flooding issues where properties have been flooded or flooding has caused concerns.

6.2. The Section 19 investigations carried out within the district can be found here <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/flood-risk-management/flood-investigations>

6.3. Since October 2023 (Storm Babet) there have been 35 investigations have been completed and 11 investigations are ongoing. The 11 ongoing investigations all relate to the January 2025 incident.

6.4. 20 other flooding matters have been closed where partners have worked to find a resolution.

6.5. Locally, a number of planning and enforcement issues relating to drainage and flooding have been considered and discussed within the group. Whilst the group does not determine the outcome for any specific enforcement or planning decisions, it has been able to look at opportunities where it can lobby certain agencies or bodies to act on specific issues to seek a resolution.

7. Resilient Communities

7.1. The work undertaken within the group and with the LRF is working towards a programme to make our communities more resilient when faced with major incidents such as flooding. Officers from the Council are working with the LRF and with a number of our Parish Councils to support them to introduce their own initial responses to emergencies to assist in the respond to incidents such as flooding. This work is initially being focussed on the communities that have been impacted by major incidents in the last few years.

7.2. The LRF are in the process of appointing a community resilience officer on a two year fixed term contract to accelerate and support some of this work and this post has been funded by the LLFA. A number of communities in West Lindsey will benefit from this work.

7.3. As part of this work the working group commissioned and delivered a flooding leaflet to all West Lindsey residents which is shown in appendix 1. This leaflet was aimed at informing residents on what to do if they are faced with a potential flooding issue or a flood itself. The feedback on this has been that the leaflet was well received, and it appears to have had an immediate impact in the January 2025 incident. Most phone calls during this incident went directly to the County Council flood line, which is the appropriate number.

8. Summary

8.1. It is believed that the member and officer working groups continue to add value to the Council regarding its role on flooding. There is good engagement across all of the relevant partnerships and governance groups/

8.2. Both the member and officer groups are scheduled to continue to meet during the remainder of 2025 and beyond. The key matters that the group will seek to address are as follows:

- Ensuring that officer roles and responsibilities in regards to flooding and the flood working groups are agreed as part of the broader management structure.
- Review the effectiveness of the flood leaflet distributed and consider whether the activity needs to recur again at the end of 2025.
- Continue to deliver the resilient communities programme in partnership with the LRF.
- Respond accordingly and report back on any flooding incidents that occur.
- Continue to engage in and influence groups attended by Councillors such as the Internal Drainage Boards and the Humber 2100.

END

Who can you contact about flooding?

- To report surface water or groundwater flooding, contact:
Lincolnshire County Council **01522 782082**
<https://fixmystreet.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>
- Report flooding (rivers and sea)
Environment Agency 24/7 incident hotline **0800 807060**
- Advice, before, during and after a flood
Floodline 24/7 **0345 9881188** www.gov.uk/flood

If you think a life is in danger call 999

What to do in a flood

PREPARE



FLOOD
ALERT

ACT



FLOOD
WARNING

SURVIVE



SEVERE
FLOOD
WARNING

Page 19

Useful items for your emergency bag



Scan the QR code or visit
www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/flooding
for important flooding advice
and information

For more tips on how to prepare for flooding and protect yourself,
your family, and your property, visit:
www.lincolnshireresilienceforum.org/risks

Step 1 Check if you are at risk from flooding



Check your long term risk of flooding
www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

Step 2 Sign up for free river/sea flood warnings



0345 988 1188



www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

Step 3 Make a plan

PREPARE



FLOOD
ALERT



- ✓ Prepare a bag that includes medicines and insurance documents
- ✓ Visit www.gov.uk/check-flooding

ACT



FLOOD
WARNING



- ✓ Turn off gas, water and electricity
- ✓ Move things upstairs or to safety
- ✓ Move family, pets and car to safety

SURVIVE



SEVERE
FLOOD
WARNING



- ✓ Call 999 if in immediate danger
- ✓ Follow advice from emergency services
- ✓ Keep yourself and your family safe

Receive flood warnings by phone, email or text



Where can I go for updates on flooding?



Listen for updates on local TV and radio stations



@EnvAgencyMids

@LincolnshireLRF



www.gov.uk/check-flooding



[lincolnshireresilienceforum](https://www.facebook.com/lincolnshireresilienceforum)

FAQ'S

Q: Why is it important to prepare for a flood?

A: West Lindsey District Council works with Lincolnshire County Council and other local partners to help residents prepare before flooding occurs. We want to ensure our residents know exactly who to contact and what to do in advance of any incident so you are ready if there is flooding in your local area.

Q: How else can I better prepare for and prevent flooding?

- A: • Keep your own supplies of sandbags and polythene sheeting
- Install flood protection products like door barriers and air brick covers
- Store valuable items upstairs or on high shelves.
- Visit www.bluepages.org.uk to find flood protection products and more preparation advice or www.lincolnshireresilienceforum.org for more tips on making a personal flood plan.



**Overview & Scrutiny
Committee
Annual Council**

**Tuesday, 15 April 2025
Monday, 12 May 2025**

**Subject: DRAFT Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25 and Review
of Operating Methodology**

Report by:

Councillor P. Howitt-Cowan
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

Contact Officer:

Ele Snow
Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

Ele.Snow@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

FOR O&S:

To present the draft annual report for Members' comment and agreement prior to submission to Annual Council

FOR ANNUAL COUNCIL:

To present the Annual Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDATION(S):

FOR O&S CTTEE:

- 1) That Members give consideration to, and offer comment on, the content of the draft annual report, and the Operating Methodology, with comments for the latter to be shared through the Constitution Review;
- 2) That Members support the annual report being submitted to Annual Council;
- 3) That any comments made through the course of debate be further considered by the Director – Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services and Chairman of the Committee prior to the finalised report being submitted to Annual Council in May 2025.

[For Annual Council]

That Members receive the Annual Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The Chairman of the Committee is required constitutionally (Part II, Article 7, paragraph 7.6) to submit an annual report to Council on the work the Committee has undertaken.

Financial: *to be completed prior to Annual Council*

There are no financial implications arising from this report

Staffing: The Committee is supported from existing resources and there are no other implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

Data Protection Implications:

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

Health Implications:

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

Agenda and minutes arising from the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held during the 2024/2025 civic year, all of which are located on the West Lindsey District Council website and can be found [here](#)

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=386>

Risk Assessment:

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

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

Yes

No

Key Decision:

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

Yes

No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Chairman of the Committee is required constitutionally (Part II, Article 7, paragraph 7.6) to submit an annual report to council, in which he details the work his committee has undertaken through the previous civic year and summarise the proposals for the work plan over the coming year. In line with the terms of reference for the committee, the Chairman should also update Annual Council with any amendments to the committee's operating methodology.
- 1.2 The Chairman's Annual Report is set out below.

2 Chairman's Annual Report

- 2.1 This year, as is customary, we have been involved in the Progress and Delivery work programme, with scrutiny of the policy committees' debate of the six-monthly reports and the working group assisting with the review of the P&D measure set. We have welcomed visitors and guest speakers, with some already set to return next civic year, and we have continued with work streams which had commenced in previous years.
- 2.2 At the start of the year, we undertook a review of the Operating Methodology, with this again due to take place at the start of the 2025/26 Civic Year. The Operating Methodology is attached at Appendix 1, with further details of the review provided in Section 4 of this report.
- 2.3 As I write this report looking back over the year, it is hard to believe that we are already at the halfway point through our current term of office. We have strong expectations for the coming year, with the biennial review of the Members' Handbook and options for a refresh of our training, and I look forward to welcoming new invited guests and focusing on the work of the Directorates within the Council.

3 Progress and Delivery

- 3.1 We are well accustomed now to the scrutiny of the Progress and Delivery (P&D) reporting through the two policy committees, with plenty of debate welcomed. As I do every year, I would like to extend my thanks to Darren Mellors and Claire Bailey of the Change, Programmes and Performance Management team, they really do a wonderful job with their reports.
- 3.2 Members of the Committee also formed a working group in order to review the P&D Measure Sets. Whilst this is usually something which takes place very couple of years, having a new Administration in place from the 2023 elections meant it was prudent to undertake a mini-review after the first year of data collection and performance review. The amended measure set has progressed through the policy committees and been approved for use from April 2025.

- 3.3 The coming Civic Year will see a continuation of the P&D reporting through our Committee, and it will be interesting to see whether the wider national and international context starts to feed into our West Lindsey data. No doubt Darren and Claire shall keep us well informed!

4 Programme of Outside Agencies and Presentation Items

- 4.1 We have continued our programme of invited guests and presenters. We again welcomed Inspector Michael Head, from Lincolnshire Police, which although is arranged in line with statutory requirements, always proves to be an engaging and in-depth discussion piece. We shall look forward to hearing his next update around the autumn time.
- 4.2 We were also joined by Everyone Active, who show clear signs of extending the community outreach programmes the Council has been so keen to see. They have offered to return after the summer, when they hope to report further gains and successes.
- 4.3 The Committee had hoped to receive a presentation from Safer Lincolnshire Partnership, sadly unforeseen circumstances led to a change of plans, but we were very happy to hear instead from our own Andy Gray, Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager. In summarising the role of the Partnership, we also heard how Officers at West Lindsey District Council both feed into, and benefit from, the partnership working arrangements. It was very reassuring to understand the behind the scenes work which keeps our communities safe.

4.4 TO BE COMPLETED AHEAD OF ANNUAL COUNCIL – TO INCLUDE APRIL MEETING INFORMATION

5 Operating Methodology

- 5.1 Following the amendments which had been enacted after the 2023/24 review, this current year saw no changes being made to the Operating Methodology (Appendix 1).
- 5.2 In line with the established approach to review the Operating Methodology at the end of each civic year, for any proposed amendments to be considered in line with the Constitution Review and for approval by the O&S Committee at the start of the next civic year, the current Operating Methodology formed a part of the discussions at our meeting in April 2025. *There were no suggested amendments arising from those discussions and the document will now proceed for agreement at the first meeting of the O&S Committee in the new Civic Year.*

TO BE COMPLETED AFTER THE APRIL MEETING, SUBJECT TO ANY AMENDMENTS BEING SUGGESTED

6 Look Forward to Next Year

- 6.1 As we move into the third year, there will be a continuation of our P&D work, as detailed above, and we anticipate a full information session on the much-awaited legislation updates relating to Battery Energy Storage Systems. We already have a 'waiting list' of returning guests to be scheduled into the work plan, and there will be returning updates as work streams progress.
- 6.2 As is always the case, the Committee welcomes the opportunity to focus on areas as requested by the two policy committees, and I envisage a continuation of our close working relationship, whether that be the P&D work or task and finish groups.
- 6.3 The Committee will also undertake the biennial review of the Members' Handbook, particularly welcome as it was a new tool introduced in 2023 and it is always good to review such things, but it will also hopefully go hand in hand with a refresh of our training.

7 Concluding Remarks

- 7.1 To be completed by Chairman

Overview and Scrutiny Operating Methodology

Functions covered within this document:

1. Performance management (for service areas presenting performance figures below target)
2. Pre-decision scrutiny (also known as pre-scrutiny and identified from the Forward Plan)
3. Ongoing project work (for example as requested or identified by a policy committee or Council)

1. Performance Management

The Committee can request a Service Performance Review (to identify reasons for off-track performance and ways to improve) when:

- The performance has been off track for at least two consecutive reporting periods
- Recommendations from the relevant committee have been implemented and allowed time to have an impact
- At least four committee Members wish to request the review

The following restrictions apply:

- A maximum of four such reviews can be requested in any municipal year
- Any service area subject to such a review is excluded from re-examination under any process for the subsequent six month period (ie, further two reporting periods)

Process for a Service Performance Review:

- The request is to be made in writing, signed by at least four committee Members, set out the reasons for the request and be submitted to the O&S Clerk at least 21 days prior to the next committee meeting.
- The request will be considered at the next meeting and, if agreed, terms of reference for the review group should be set.
- Alternatively, where a request for a Service Performance Review is identified during a Committee meeting, and is supported by at least four Members of Committee, this will replace the request in writing.
- The Chairman (or representative) of the relevant policy committee is to be invited to the meeting where the scope of the review is considered.
- The findings of the review will be heard by the O&S Committee and presented to the relevant policy committee, where the Chairman (or representative) of O&S shall also attend.
- If the policy committee does not wish to accept the recommendations of the review group, the decision shall be referred to Council.

2. Pre-Decision Scrutiny

The Committee can identify items for pre-decision scrutiny (also known as pre-scrutiny) from those detailed on the Forward Plan. These could be items which are politically sensitive or of high public interest and where the Committee considers it would be of benefit to scrutinise the proposed decisions in advance.

These items can be selected from the Forward Plan during meetings of the Committee by a proposer, seconder and majority vote.

The following restrictions apply:

- A maximum of four 'pre-scrutiny' items can be identified per municipal year.
- The Committee cannot dictate the timeline or prevent the decision being submitted to the relevant policy committee within the pre-agreed timescales.
- Any decision considered under pre-scrutiny cannot then be called-in under the traditional process.
- Any item considered under pre-scrutiny is excluded from re-examination under any process for the subsequent six month period.
- NB: The policy committee is not strictly bound by recommendations from O&S however it is expected that they should be given due consideration.

Process for Pre-Decision Scrutiny:

- The O&S Committee will receive the exact report due to be presented at the policy committee, at least 1 cycle prior to the policy meeting.
- The O&S Committee will make recommendations to the policy committee where it feels there are areas to be further addressed in order to support the proposed decision.
- The Officer responsible for the report will work with the Chairman / representatives of O&S to revise the report accordingly (when necessary).
- The amended report, along with the minute from the O&S meeting and the original report, will be submitted to the policy committee within the original timescale.

3. Ongoing Project Work

The O&S Committee can be requested by either of the policy committees, or Council, to conduct reviews of policy, services or any aspect of a service as identified by the relevant committee.

Any such request will be made to the Chairman of the O&S Committee from the Chairman (or representative) of the requesting committee / Council. The purpose, scope and terms of reference for the review will be agreed by the requesting committee and shared with the Chairman of O&S at the time of the request.

Such reviews will form part of the work plan for the O&S Committee, report timescales will be set out in the Forward Plan and recommendations will be agreed and shared with the referring committee.

Where the Committee chooses to conduct a review of policy or services that has not been referred by a policy committee, or does not fall under items 1 or 2 as detailed above, such reviews are limited to one review per civic year.

Updated Versions / Amendments to Operating Methodology*:

June 2019

May 2022

June 2023

*the Operating Methodology is reviewed annually by the Committee, however the above dates refer to amendments made.

Full Forward Plan for all Committees (as at 7 April 2025)

Purpose:

This report provides a summary of all items of business due at upcoming committee meetings.

Recommendation:

1. That members note the contents of this report.

Date	Title	Lead Officer	Purpose of the report	Date First Published
CORPORATE POLICY & RESOURCES				
12 JUNE 2025				
12 Jun 2025	Lea Fields Business Plan Review	Cara Markham, Commercial, Cultural and Leisure Development Manager	Review and update on the Lea Fields Plan	06 January 2025
12 Jun 2025	LGA Corporate Peer Challenge 2025: Recommendations and Action Plan	Ellen King, Policy & Strategy Officer – Corporate Strategy & Business Planning	This report presents the findings of the Council's recent Corporate Peer Challenge and the Council's Action Plan in response to the recommendations made.	
12 Jun 2025	WLDC UKSPF 2025/26 Programme	James Makinson-Sanders, Economic Growth Team Manager, Grant White, Communities Manager	WLDC UKSPF 2025/26 Programme - Identification of Programme elements and background.	
12 Jun 2025	Progress and Delivery Quarter Four Report and Summary of Year End Performance 2024/25	Claire Bailey, Change, Projects and Performance Officer, Darren Mellors, Performance & Programme Manager	Progress and Delivery Quarter Four Report and Summary of Year End Performance 2024/25	
COUNCIL				

12 MAY 2025 - ANNUAL COUNCIL

12 May 2025	Update on Constitution Review	Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)	To receive the Annual Review of Constitution and Monitoring Officer's Annual Report
12 May 2025	Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25	Ele Snow, Senior Democratic and Civic Officer	To present the Annual Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT

22 APRIL 2025

22 Apr 2025	Draft Risk Management Strategy 2025-2029	Katy Allen, Corporate Governance Officer	To review and draft Risk Management Strategy for 2025-29	
22 Apr 2025	Year End Strategic Risk Report	Katy Allen, Corporate Governance Officer	Report to G&A on the Strategic Risks facing WLDC at the end of March 2025	
22 Apr 2025	Internal Audit Progress Report	Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)	Internal Audit Progress Report	18 November 2024
22 Apr 2025	Internal Audit Draft Annual Plan	Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)	Internal Audit Draft Annual Plan	18 November 2024
22 Apr 2025	Accounts Closedown 2024/25 Accounting Matters	Comie Campbell, Interim Financial Services Manager (Deputy S151)	Accounts Closedown 2024/25 dates and Accounting Matters	
22 Apr 2025	Year End Review of Strategic Risks	Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)	Year End Review of Strategic Risks	18 November 2024

Update on Constitution Review

10 JUNE 2025

10 June 2025	External Audit Strategy Memorandum	Peter Davy, Financial Services Manager (Deputy Section 151 Officer)	External Audit Strategy Memorandum	18 November 2024
10 June 2025	Review of RAF Scampton	Sally Grindrod-Smith		
10 June 2025	Combined Assurance	Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)	Combined Assurance	18 November 2024
29 JULY 2025				
29 July 2025	Review of Local Code of Corporate Governance	Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)	To review the local code of corporate governance	18 November 2024
JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE				
29 MAY 2025				
29 May 2025	Gender Pay Gap Report 2024	Lynne Thomsett, People Services Manager	Report on the Council's Gender Pay Gap at 31 March 2024	
LICENSING				
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY				
PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES				
3 JUNE 2025				
3 Jun 2025	Food, Health and Safety Work Plan 2025/2026	Andy Gray, Housing & Environmental Enforcement Manager	To seek approval for the 2025/2026 work plan	
15 JULY 2025				
15 Jul 2025	Economic Growth Strategy 2025 - 2030	Claire Hill, Economic Growth Officer, James Makinson-Sanders, Economic Growth Team	Revised economic growth strategy to supersede that adopted in 2014 which was for a 20 yr period to 2034.	

Manager

15 Jul 2025

Economic Growth Strategy 2025 - 2030

James Makinson-
Sanders, Economic
Growth Team Manager

A refreshed strategy that will supersede
the previous iteration which covered the
period 2014 to 2034 - adopted in 2014

REGULATORY

Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan

NB: Please note this is an indicative work plan, pending confirmation of attending presenters.

Dates of Meetings:

15 April 2025

Managing Flood Risk – twice yearly
Lead Local Flood Authority (presentation item)
Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25

24 June 2025

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024 – Professor Derek Ward and Councillor Woolley.

29 July 2025

Progress and Delivery Quarter Four Report and Summary of Year End Performance 2024/25.

2 September 2025

Pending Items

- Markets Working Group – twice yearly
- Portfolio Overview – per Director
- Information / Update re: Battery Storage
- Police Crime Commissioner Update