

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Regulatory Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 6 June 2024 commencing at 6.31 pm.

Present: Councillor Stephen Bunney (Chairman)

Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Baptiste Velan
Councillor Karen Carless

In Attendance:

Andy Gray Housing & Environmental Enforcement Manager
Maisie McInnes Democratic & Civic Officer

Apologies:

Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Lee

25 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Members were invited to appoint a Chairman for the Regulatory Committee meeting. It was proposed by Councillor John Barrett and seconded by Councillor Maureen Palmer that Councillor Stephen Bunney be appointed Chairman.

RESOLVED that Councillor Stephen Bunney be appointed Chairman for the Regulatory Committee meeting.

26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public speakers.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

28 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the

- a) Meeting of the Regulatory Committee held on Thursday, 14 March 2024 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

- b) Meeting of the Regulatory Sub-Committee held on Tuesday, 19 March 2024 were noted.

29 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous Committee meeting.

29a FOOD, HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK PLAN 24/25

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager presented the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan 2024/25 and explained the report outlined how the service area performed and the service demand over the last 12-month period. The work plan was a statutory requirement from the Food Standards Agency and was attached at Appendix 1. In addition to food safety inspections, there were other premises that the Environmental Health team inspected such as car sales premises, garages, and leisure facilities.

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager highlighted the table in section 3 which demonstrated the number of inspections required and completed over the last 4 years. There was a routine inspection programme of 450 inspections of which 376 required a physical food hygiene inspection. The team were aiming for a minimum of 90% completion rate for 2024/25. Following the Covid-19 Pandemic, there were a significant number of premises that did not have an inspection during the lockdown period and the programme was being reworked to ensure premises that were not inspected fall part of the regime. Members heard the potential risk to the service area as the inspection programme for 2024/25 would be a challenge with the level of demand and resources available. There were plans to improve efficiencies in the team, such as the implementation of a Sugar CRM system and moving manual exercises online to help speed up administrative processes. There was a potential risk that the service area would need additional budget to meet the service demand and employ temporary workers as extra resources to undertake food, health, and safety inspections. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager would continue to monitor the rate of inspections and an update report would be brought back to the Committee in December 2024.

Members discussed the report and referred to the café culture and regeneration work in Gainsborough and asked if the forecast considered new businesses opening. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that he was aware and with new businesses the type of food business and the impact would need to be considered and this would determine the inspection period. Members asked if the team were able to employ an officer on a permanent basis. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager assured Members that all available options were being considered at present and he would continue to monitor the situation and bring an update to the December meeting. Members discussed the Food Standard Agency's proposal to increase the length between inspection periods and asked if notice was given to premises prior to inspections. It was confirmed that no notice was given prior to inspections, and it was felt that there was a risk of food standards slipping between longer inspection periods. Members questioned the resourcing required for hard to reach inspections and if these would continue. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager confirmed these would continue and there was an officer within the team who was able to fit this in their working arrangements, conducting inspections later into the evening.

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The Chairman thanked the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager for his report and highlighted the recommendations contained in the report.

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

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- a) Approved the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan as detailed at Appendix 1.
- b) Approved that an update on progress against the plan was brought to Regulatory Committee at its December 2024 meeting.

29b PAVEMENT LICENSING - REVIEW OF SUB DELEGATION

Members heard from the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager that Pavement Licensing under the Business and Planning Act 2020, also referred to as a café licence, had been revised to allow Local Authorities to charge a fee for issuing and renewing a Pavement Licence. These licences were introduced during the Covid-19 Pandemic, as a gesture of goodwill, to allow premises to extend their offer to outdoor dining. The power was delegated to District and Borough councils to administer the licences, working with County Councils as the Highways Authority. West Lindsey District Council has worked closely with Lincolnshire County Council on this, and the County Council had agreed to set fees at £500 for a new application and £350 for a renewed licence. The Pavement Licence would be valid for a 2-year period and there would be a determination period of 14 days for the licence. Members were requested to approve the recommendations to continue to sub-delegate to Lincolnshire until September 2026 and there were no changes in legislation expected for this period and any updates would be brought back to the Committee for consideration.

Members discussed the small number of premises with Pavement Licences in West Lindsey and suggested that the Council produce more publicity to make businesses aware of the offer. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that the licence only applied to businesses operating on the public highway and for private landowners it was a planning matter. The Council could provide advice to businesses interested in the scheme and if there were any premises that Members felt may require a Pavement Licence, they could contact the team who would refer these to Lincolnshire County Council.

The Chairman thanked the Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager for his report and highlighted the recommendations contained in the report.

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

RESOLVED that the Committee approved:

- a) The Districts Council's function in relation to "Pavement Licenses" under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 be delegated to Lincolnshire County Council until September 2026.
- b) The County Council, under this delegation, will look to issue licenses for a two year period, unless there is good reason to issue them for a shorter time period.
- c) A summary of the delegation relating to Pavement Licenses will be presented to Regulatory Committee bi-annually and any further delegations considered within this.

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29c COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

With no comments or questions, the Workplan was **NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 7.00 pm.

Chairman