WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 21 April 2026 commencing at 2.00 pm.

Present:	Councillor Stephen Bunney (Chairman)
	Councillor John Barrett
	Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
	Councillor Paul Key
	Councillor Paul Swift
	Alison Adams
	Andrew Morriss

In Attendance:

Peter Davy	Director Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer)
Lisa Langdon	Assistant Chief Executive - Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Debra Chamberlain	Director - KPMG
Aaron Macdonald	Client Manager RSM
Katy Allen	Corporate Governance Officer
Caroline Capon	Corporate Finance Team Leader
Katie Storr	Head of Democratic Services and Elections (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Apologies:	Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
	Councillor Eve Bennett
	Councillor Christopher Darcel
Membership:	Councillor Paul Key attended as substitute for Councillor Christopher Darcel

68 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

69 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meetings held on 10 and 24 March 2026 were approved as a correct record.

70 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

71 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The committee received a report outlining the Matters Arising identified at previous meetings.

With no further comments or questions, the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the position of previously agreed actions was **NOTED**.

72 EXTERNAL AUDIT INDICATIVE PLAN 2025-2026

The committee considered a report presenting the 2026/2027 External Audit Strategy from the Councils External Auditors, KPMG.

It was explained that it was an indicative plan and was still going through the planning and risk assessment activities with a view to publishing the full audit plan, which would come to the next committee.

The content of the strategy was outlined including the planned materiality which had been raised and the proposed audit strategy. It was considered that there were no significant issues to be aware of but any concerns arising during the year would be reported to the committee. Any significant risks had been identified in the report and these were the same as previous years. A specific report on the value for money risk assessment would be presented at the next meeting.

A member referred to the possibility of the district council coming to an end as part of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and asked if this was a potential future risk. In addition the issue of pensions and investments was raised.

It was clarified that LGR did not impact on the current financial statements but would be considered as part of the value for money risk assessment. The issue would then be part of reports in future years and by then further guidance would be available.

In terms of pensions it was agreed that the issue would be taken away to get further information for members. It was noted that pensions were the responsibility of the County Council but any additional information would be useful.

A member asked if there were any areas where management should consider strengthening or providing more evidence ahead of the autumn report to help speed up the process. Confirmation was given that there had been liaison with the Management Team and any information needed was being provided quickly and there were no concerns.

RESOLVED:

That the External Audit Strategy Memorandum (Plan) for 2026/2027 be approved.

73 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report presenting the Governance and Audit Committee with the Progress report for April 2026 from Internal Audit.

It was reported that all work for 2025/2026 was completed as planned. There was one final and two draft reports for consideration by members. All audits would be summarised in the Annual Report that would be presented at the next meeting. The programme for 2026/2027 was in place and preparations were underway for those audits.

The report of the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Planning audit was outlined to members. Overall it was a positive outcome with a reasonable assurance opinion being provided. There were three medium and three low priority management actions agreed for areas of improvement or enhancement.

A member highlighted that training was a recurring issue in audits and asked if there was any record of training provided and how this could be reported. It was agreed that this could be added to the Matters Arising schedule and whilst it would not be able to give individual details a synopsis of training could be provided.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be agreed.

74 ACCOUNTS CLOSEDOWN 2025/26 ACCOUNTING MATTERS

The Committee considered a report seeking the review and approval of the accounting policies, actuary assumptions and materiality levels to be used for the preparation of the 2025 - 2026 accounts.

It was explained that the report set out the accounting policies to be used when preparing the 2025 -2026 accounts. The actual assumptions had been supplied by the pension actuary at Barnet Waddingham and then an outline of the materiality levels applied when compiling the accounts as discussed earlier with KPMG.

It was noted that authorities were required to publish their draft accounts by 30th June 2026 and audited accounts by the backstop date of 31st January 2027. It was hoped however that the audit of the accounts would be completed in the autumn and the timetable had been set to meet the deadlines.

A member referred to pensions and the fluctuation in the market and asked if there was any indication of the impact on the accounts. Initial indications were that liabilities had reduced but this would be clarified later in the process.

It was asked by a member about the costs of the audit and accounting process and staff overtime and use of consultants. In response it was confirmed that the team was fully staffed but there may be the need for some overtime at key pressure points in the financial year. It was clarified that deadlines had always been met and that would be the case this year.

In response to a query, it was explained that group accounts related to companies under the umbrella of the council and they would need separate group accounts if they reached a certain materiality. It was not anticipated that this would be required this year.

A member sought further clarification regarding company accounts and how these were audited and in response confirmation was given that they fell below the threshold for external audit. Discussion ensued regarding the governance of council owned companies and it was confirmed each one had its own board and Council directors were on those boards to represent the Councils interests. The business plans of each were presented to the relevant Council Policy Committee to ensure oversight of their operations.

It was explained that the Governance and Audit Committee received information as part of the statement of accounts and was shown in the related parties section where high level income expenditure tables for each of the companies was provided. In the event of group accounts being needed there would be more detailed information provided. Confirmation was given that due to the size of the companies there were no other significant risks to be aware of.

It was suggested that it may be beneficial for members to receive more details of the company accounts as well as the business plans. A member further asked about potential LGR changes and the impact on council owned bodies in the future. The concern was acknowledged and was an issue that would need consideration and a report could be bought to members in due course.

A member asked about the merits of using external agencies and whether it would be cheaper to bring this ‘in house’. In response the process was explained and it was suggested that a session on the operation and governance of the companies would be beneficial.

RESOLVED:

1) To approve the proposed Accounting Policies, included at Appendix 1 to the report;
2) To note the pension assumptions, as included at Appendix 2 to the report;
3) To note the risk assessment, attached at Appendix 3 to the report;
4) To approve the proposed materiality levels as included at section 5 of the report;
5) To note the key closedown dates as shown at Section 7 of the report; and
6) To accept the main accounting changes for 2025/26 and onwards as shown at section 2 of the report

75 REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES

Consideration was given to a report presenting the draft revised Financial Procedure Rules for approval.

It was noted that as part of the review of the Council's constitution it was an opportunity to review the financial procedure rules. Most of the proposed changes related to job title changes and other administrative matters. Changes in legislation and government guidance had been reflected in the changes.

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RESOLVED:

1) That the revised Financial Procedure rules be approved and to note that they will be presented to Council for noting on 11th May 2026; and

2) To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 to make any changes required to other parts of the Constitution to effect the

changes set out in this report.

76 REVIEW OF CONTRACT AND PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE RULES

A report presenting the draft revised Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules for approval was received.

The report formed part of the wider review of the council's constitution and related to the council's contract and procedure procurement rules.

Members noted that many of the changes were for job titles, the name of boards and plans and other administrative items. There were also changes for updates in legislation from the Government.

RESOLVED

1) That the revised Contract and Procurement Procedure rules be approved and to note that they will presented to Council for noting on the 11th May 2026; and

2) To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 to make any changes required to other parts of the Constitution to effect the changes set out in this report.

77 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Committee considered a report outlining the contents of the Annual Review of the Constitution – Position Update and Ongoing Work report, attached at Appendix A to the report, prior to its submission to Annual Council.

The report updated on work that had already been undertaken and was ongoing. The appendix to the report advised members of the information that would be taken to full council regarding this issue. The council was required to have a constitution explaining procedures how decisions were made. Ongoing work included revisions to the officer scheme of delegations, potential changes to the planning committee delegations,

RESOLVED

That the Annual Review of the Constitution – Position Update and Ongoing Work Report, attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted and recommended to Council for approval.

The meeting concluded at 2.46 pm.

Chairman