

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 12 June 2025 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Paul Swift (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Baptiste Velan

In Attendance:

Ian Knowles	Chief Executive
Peter Davy	Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer)
Sally Grindrod-Smith	Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Lisa Langdon	Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
Angela Matthews	Benefits Manager
Sarah Elvin	Homes, Health & Wellbeing Team Manager
Claire Bailey	Change, Projects and Performance Officer
James Makinson-Sanders	Economic Growth Team Manager
Grant White	Communities Manager
Sue Leversedge	Business Support Team Leader
Comie Campbell	Interim Financial Services Manager (Deputy S151)
Cara Markham	Commercial, Cultural and Leisure Development Manager
Ele Snow	Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

Apologies:

Councillor Trevor Young
Councillor Moira Westley

Membership:

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

Councillor P. Swift, Vice-Chairman in the Chair, gave apologies for the Chairman, Councillor T. Young, Vice-Chairman Councillor M. Westley, and sought agreement from the Committee to appoint a Vice-Chairman for this meeting of the Committee. He duly sought nominations and a Member of the Committee nominated Councillor M. Boles. This nomination was seconded, and, with no other nominations on the table, the Chairman took the vote. It was

unanimously

RESOLVED that Councillor M. Boles be appointed as Vice-Chairman for this meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday, 11 March 2025 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

5 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

With no comments or questions, the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the position of previously agreed actions as at 4 June 2025, was **NOTED**.

6 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 7

The Committee gave consideration to a report presented by the Benefits Manager, who explained that the Household Support Fund (HSF) was first introduced in October 2021 and had been renewed every six months or annually until March 2025. West Lindsey had been successful in distributing over £2m to the residents of the district over the previous HSF schemes. She highlighted that the Household Support Fund 2025-26 was announced by the Government and the details of the fund were clarified on 5 March 2025 to commence 1 April. The fund would run for 12 months to 31 March 2026 and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) had been awarded £9.63m. The funding would be received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who issued guidance on how the money may be spent. LCC had been through internal governance processes and had proposed that each district would get a fund to distribute to its residents. It was estimated that West Lindsey would receive funding of approximately £400,000.

Members heard that in using the learning from the previous six HSF distribution processes, it was known that to reach as many residents as possible partner organisations such as food banks and charitable organisations needed to be involved. It was also known that a costly resource was needed if the Local Authority chose to accept direct applications from residents wishing to apply for funding. The report recommended that to reach as many residents as possible, whilst keeping the administration costs controllable, funding was distributed via food banks and voluntary organisations with at least one of the voluntary organisations administering an application-based process. Under the 2025-26 fund, the DWP had asked that local authorities considered distributing some of the funds to organisations or processes that could help prevent households needing extra funding for food and utilities, and it was suggested that the Council partnered with such organisation(s)

that could help with this.

The Chairman thanked the Benefits Manager for her introduction and detailed report, and invited comments from the Committee.

Members expressed their support for the ongoing funding and appreciated the work over previous tranches of funding which had led to an efficient and fair approach to the distribution of the monies. The element of preventative action was much welcomed, with Members recognising that assisting families to avoid the need for crisis intervention was far more useful than simply responding to a crisis. Partnered organisations were also praised for the work they undertook and recognised for the invaluable knowledge they brought with them.

In response to a question relating to the distribution of funds to those families who accessed free school meals, it was explained that Lincolnshire County Council would manage that aspect, and there had been contingencies built into the funding, in recognition of the increasing number of families requiring free school meal assistance. In response to a question regarding the differing approaches between food bank providers, it was also clarified that the Council only worked with trusted partners where their procedures were known and supported, which included providing advice, guidance, training opportunities and suchlike. With the focus being on preventative measures as well, the pool of trusted partners was being widened to encourage that element of work.

Note: Councillor T. Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he volunteered at the Caistor food bank, clarifying that he had no involvement in the management or distribution of funding.

Members of the Committee enquired as to what was considered to be preventative action, as there could be differing interpretations. It was explained that, whilst there was no prescribed definition provided by Government, local authorities across Lincolnshire were working together to establish a common approach to the preventative elements, in order to avoid a 'postcode lottery' for residents in different areas. It was highlighted that there had been appointed a performance management team for the current round of funding, meaning councils would be monitored and assessed on how the scheme was managed and where the monies were distributed.

With no further questions or comments, and having been moved and seconded, the Chairman took the vote. It was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the delivery of the Household Support Fund 7, to run to 31 March 2026, be approved; and
- b) should there be relatively minor amendments made to the scheme, unless considered 'significantly material', the Benefits Manager, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer), be delegated to implement such changes after consultation with the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee Chairman, to ensure the scheme can adapt to requirements where the need to respond promptly is required, as well as

remaining consistent with principles of the Lincolnshire Districts scheme.

7 LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND 3 UPDATE REPORT

Members heard from the Homes and Health Manager who provided an update on the third tranche of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF 3). It was explained that the fund was announced by the Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities in March 2024 proposing to fund more high-quality temporary accommodation for homeless families and provide housing for those on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. The Council submitted an Expression of Interest in March 2024 to LAHF 3 which proposed to deliver eight units of temporary accommodation and four resettlement units in the district. The Council was informed on 30 July 2024 that the application for a capital grant was successful, and was allocated £1,290,275 to deliver seven units of temporary accommodation and four resettlement units. On 17 October 2024, the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approved the full business case for the project, including additional S106 funding to deliver the resettlement element of the project.

Members heard that, to date, three of the four resettlement units had been delivered by Acis through a Grant Funding Agreement. These properties were in the process of being matched to families through the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). Of the seven units of temporary accommodation, four properties had been secured and were currently going through the conveyancing process. All addresses of the properties had intentionally been excluded from the report, to ensure the safety of vulnerable occupants.

It was also explained that two properties owned by the Council had been identified as being suitable to be repurposed for the project and agreement had been obtained from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to utilise the funding for these properties.

Members again expressed their support for the project and the benefits it would bring to residents of the district. In response to a comment that properties were required across the area, not solely in one or two town locations, it was explained that following a recent announcement of additional monies for the project, there would be scope to extend into other areas within the district.

A Member of the Committee posed a question regarding the accessibility of properties under the scheme, and also enquired as to whether funds were best placed in renovating the two council-owned properties or purchasing properties elsewhere in the district. It was explained that property prices in other areas of the district were relatively restrictive compared to renovations on the existing properties, although the aim was for the scheme to be extended when possible. It was noted that the majority of need for temporary housing was in the areas where properties were being used or identified. Members were advised there were alternative options for those in areas away from the located properties, such as the use of AirBnB. The officer highlighted that the renovation of the two buildings in question brought additional benefits, such as the opportunity to be fully accessible for disabled occupants, as well as outside space for those individuals who may have animals, which often created a barrier to accessing temporary housing.

Having been proposed and seconded, and having no further speakers, the Chairman read aloud the printed recommendations and took the vote. It was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the progress of the project to date be noted; and
- b) the repurposing of the two properties owned by West Lindsey District Council, to be utilised for this project, be approved; and
- c) property purchases within this project be delegated to the S151 Officer.

8 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY QUARTER FOUR REPORT AND SUMMARY OF YEAR END PERFORMANCE 2024/25

Members gave consideration to the quarter four and year end Progress and Delivery Report for 2024/25. It was explained by the Change, Projects and Performance Officer that as the final report of the year, subsequent reports would change to reflect the measures and targets approved by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in early 2025.

Members heard that overall performance showed 87% of measures were either exceeding or within tolerance of their targets. This was an improvement from 83% in quarter four 2023/24 and 78% in quarter three 2024/25. The number of measures in the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) had been reduced from seven to six year-on-year.

There were two changes reported from the previous quarter within the Performance Improvement Plan. The percentage of Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) completed within 20 working days had reported below target in quarter three, however performance had improved and was reporting above target for quarter four. This had therefore been removed from the performance improvement plan. Additionally, the percentage of Food Standards Agency inspections completed had reported below target all year, before finishing the year only 1% off target. This was within tolerance and had been removed from the performance improvement plan this quarter. A total of 334 food inspections were completed throughout 2024/25, with 114 of those conducted in quarter four. In comparison, 229 inspections were completed in total during 2023/24, which was a 46% increase this year. Performance had been expected to improve with additional resource in place and Members heard that this had carried on into the current reporting data for 2025/26 with the team already exceeding target for April and May.

With regards to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), the position was clear and it was not expected that the performance of associated measures would change given the budget position. In relation to the percentage of households spending more than 42 nights in B&B accommodation, this was expected to remain in the PIP as the target was set at zero. This was in line with guidance and what needed to be aimed for, however it was not currently achievable with only limited temporary accommodation available. The project to provide an additional eight units was underway and would improve the performance data over time.

It was explained that the measure relating to the Local Land Charges market share had reported below target, however, this had been removed from the measure set for 2025/26 as it was considered out of the control of the team, due to others undercutting on fees. It had been agreed to retain the statistic to maintain visibility, however the team would continue to focus on maintaining high-performance in-service delivery.

In relation to market stalls data, the Tuesday markets continued to feature, with updated information to include the updated stall infrastructure and layout to be delivered in Summer 2025, alongside the opening of the new cinema and leisure scheme. Officers were starting to receive some positive community feedback for the Tuesday offer which was being monitored. Finally, regarding T24 savings delivered, these measures had been replaced to include the cumulative value of cashable savings identified and monitored within the council.

Having received a series of comments and questions when the report had been presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee on 3 June 2025, the Officer provided Members with the responses, in addition to the information contained within the report.

With regard to the percentage of abandoned calls received into the Customer Services team only, Members were advised that following the telephony switchover to the new Contact Centre Solution in November 2024, the project was very much in the delivery phase. An email had been sent to all members update on abandonment rates, which formed part of the ongoing communication plan for the project. The increase was due to demand across a range of services at that time of year and some displaced demand due to utterances within the system. It was clarified that an utterance was a single word, few words or sentence spoken by the customer at the start of the call, which the system picked up and directed the calls to the correct queue. It was confirmed there were no AI loops in the system, with all routes leading to a queue for an officer to answer a call. There had been significant work undertaken by the Customer Service and Change teams with the aim to reduce the demand on customer services and direct customers to the correct department in the first instance. As additional information, for the first two months in quarter one of the current year, the abandonment rate had reduced, reporting 11.03% for April and 10.72% for May, with a call wait time of just over 3 minutes on average.

In response to a query regarding staff absenteeism, it was explained that this was measured as the average days lost per full-time equivalent (FTE) per month, and had remained within tolerance for quarter four. It had also further reduced to 0.4 days in April 2025. The reference to effective case management highlighted the council's proactive approach to supporting staff who were absent from work. This included tailored interventions such as wellbeing action plans, home visits, and referrals to Occupational Health where appropriate. These measures were designed to facilitate a supported return to work and help reduce future sickness absence through individual case-by-case management.

In relation to the average spend per head on secondary sales at the trinity Arts Centre, it was explained that the average was down compared to the previous year however the total secondary income for 2024/25 reached £57,467, which was up from £45,187 in 2023/24. This was an increase of 27%, so whilst there had been a reduced average, it was an overall increase for income.

To conclude, the Officer explained that the measure related to employee satisfaction was linked with a specific question which formed part of the annual staff survey, with the responses this year being different options to the previous year, and this had impacted on the data reporting. Additionally, this measure had been removed for 2025/26.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for her detailed presentation and Members of the Committee welcomed the feedback from queries raised by the Prosperous Communities Committee. It was explained by a Member that the Leisure, Culture, Events and Tourism

Working Group had received a detailed breakdown from the Trinity Arts Centre Manager and it was requested that this be shared with the Committee. It was also requested that Members be provided with additional information relating to health and safety issues contained within the report and whether there was more detail regarding the decrease in membership at the Gainsborough leisure centre. It was explained that there had been a new gym open in the town, which had impacted on membership numbers, however there were frequent client meetings and Members would be updated regularly.

In response to a question regarding the overall performance of the council, it was confirmed that there had been a marked improvement in the number of measure reporting under target. The specific areas of concern were detailed within the Performance Improvement Plan. Additionally, it was reiterated that the T24 savings project had come to a conclusion, hence it being removed as a measurable dataset.

A Member of the Committee highlighted the positive improvement regarding the crematorium and sought to praise the team for their ongoing involvement in several charity initiatives.

With no further questions or comments, and having been moved, seconded, and voted upon, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the performance of the Council's services through agreed performance measures had been assessed, and areas where improvements should be made had been indicated, having had regard to the remedial measures set out in the report; and
- b) the Progress and Delivery Performance Improvement Plan for Quarter Four (January-March) 2024/25 be approved; and
- c) the Progress and Delivery Year End 2024/25 Report be approved.

9 WLDC UKSPF/REPF 2025/26

The Committee gave consideration to a report presented by the Economic Growth Team Manager, seeking approval of the expenditure (establishment of capital and revenue budgets) and monitoring arrangements of the Council's programme for the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26 Programme.

As had been presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee, it was explained that the council had been allocated both UK Shared Prosperity Funding and Rural England Prosperity Funding, which was seen as a transitional continuation of the previous 2022 – 2025 programme. Under the new arrangements for the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority, Members heard that North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) were the Accountable Body for this funding.

Additionally, it was highlighted that the Government had set a spend deadline of 31 March 2026, with any unspent funding being lost. The Accountable Body, NELC, would require the

council to report on expenditure in September/October 2025 and January 2026. Any funding at risk of being unspent could be reallocated at those stages.

Members were advised that in line with the Council's constitution, the Prosperous Communities Committee was required to approve the investment themes and delegate signatory of the funding agreement. These resolutions had been passed at the meeting on 3 June 2025. The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee was then required to approve the drawdown and expenditure of funds. It was further highlighted that the proposed investments had been shaped based upon local priorities alongside their fit with the Government's programme requirements, and Greater Lincolnshire priorities.

The Committee expressed their thanks to all involved in the work around UKSPF, and reiterated their support. The risks of the tight timescales and requirement to return unspent monies was acknowledged, with Members highlighting their own role within their communities to spread the word of funding opportunities available.

With acknowledgment of the discussions at the meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee, and having been proposed and seconded, the Chairman took the vote, and it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) following the recommendation from the meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee on 3 June 2025 regarding the identified UKSPF/REPF Programme 2025/26, the expenditure (establishment of capital and revenue budgets) and monitoring arrangements as set out in para 2.5 of the report, be approved; and
- b) authority be delegated to the Director - Planning, Regeneration & Communities to manage the UKSPF programme via the UKSPF Programme Board.

10 BUDGET AND TREASURY MONITORING FINAL OUTTURN 2024/2025

Members gave consideration to a report presented by the Business Support Team Leader, who explained it detailed the final budget and treasury outturn position for 2024/25, subject to the audit of the statement of accounts. In summary, it was explained that against revenue budgets, there was a net contribution to reserves of £1.126m. The variance against service budgets was virtually breaking even with a small underspend of £6,000, which demonstrated excellent budget management on behalf of budget managers and their teams. The significant variance of £1.12 million arose from corporate budgets including:

- Net interest on investments (an increase in income of £504,000)
- Corporate contingency budgets not required (a saving of £325,000)
- And Government grants received in the final quarter (total income of £291,000)

Members were being asked to approve the allocation of the surplus to reserves as follows:

- £250,000 to an earmarked reserve to support the new capital assets created from grant funded schemes

- £50,000 to the Neighbourhood Planning reserve
- the balance of £826,000 to the Business Rates Volatility Reserve – which may be applied to reduce the forecast funding deficit in 2026/27 (with the gap currently estimated at £1.245m)

In relation to capital Members heard there was a variance against revised budget of £5.563m. Of this £4.789m was requested for carry forward into 2025/2026 (the largest being £1.788m for HUG Phase 2 with final payments due to be made in 25/26). The balance of £0.774m being net underspends on scheme budgets.

In addition to the allocation of the revenue surplus, there were several recommendations for Member approval, those being: the total use of reserves of £0.380m which included RAF Scampton legal costs (as previously agreed by the committee) and revenue costs for the cinema project; the contribution to reserves of £0.639m being the balance of grants received during the year with no conditions to repay, and return of match funding for UKSPF projects; the spend of the revenue budget carry forward of £35,000 for the extension of LUF resources for 3 months; the amendments to the 2025/26 fees and charges schedule for land charges search fees which were set by Lincolnshire County Council, and statutory private water supply work to reflect amended regulations; and to approve the amendments to the capital schemes contained within the report at section 3.2.

Members thanked the Officer for her concise summary and the clarity of the information contained within the report. In response to a question regarding the Scampton costs, it was confirmed that the Committee would continue to receive updates through the quarterly reports and as and when final figures were available these would be shared with Members. It was also clarified that the introduction of the big bin hire was considered to be additional income and therefore not included in the commercial waste deficit details.

A Member of the Committee enquired as to whether monies had been required to be returned to government under the capital schemes referenced within the report. It was confirmed that where there were underspends in capital schemes, that money was required to be repaid. Further detail was provided by the Communities Manager who explained that regarding the Safer Streets scheme, there had been a partner who had pulled out of a CCTV installation project meaning the council had needed to find alternative ways to spend the allocated monies, hence there being a small underspend which was repaid. Assurance was provided that Officers worked proactively to ensure funds could be redistributed.

The Chairman invited comments from Visiting Member Councillor J. McGhee who enquired of the Committee to consider an amendment for the use of the reserves funds to include an amount for options to install a 'changing places' facility. It was recognised this had been discussed and raised previously, however it was considered by the Visiting Member to be a key part of the tourism economy, to be able to provide facilities for all. She highlighted this would extend the scope of attracting visitors to the area and was in line with current strategies.

Members of the Committee welcomed the input from the Visiting Member and supported the introduction of accessible facilities, such as 'changing places' and shop mobility schemes. It was highlighted there had been a review previously undertaken which had considered options for such a facility as was being suggested. A Member of the Committee stated his support and proposed an amendment to recommendation (b) contained within the report,

that:

an amount of money be held in reserve for installing a 'changing places' facility in Gainsborough.

A Member of the Committee, in seeking further clarity regarding the amendment requested whether the options were to be district wide or Gainsborough focussed, with concerns raised as to whether it was prudent to specify only one area of the district.

There was a second proposal made that:

an amount of money be held in reserve, subject to a district wide options paper being presented to the Committee, for the installation of a 'changing places' facility.

In response, it was explained that a high level feasibility study had previously been undertaken and it would be possible for Officers to provide the Committee with an updated options report, which would cover areas of the district outside of Gainsborough, including updated quotations, requirements and technical specifications, and how to undertake engagement and consultation with experts, service users, and town and parish councils. It was also confirmed by the S151 Officer that the reserve amount specified for the Business Rates Volatility Reserve would be reduced to enable the amendment, and that, based on previous studies, an amount of £100,000 would be prudent for the work suggested.

On the basis of the Officer responses, the second proposer altered his proposal to reflect the detail clarified by Officers.

The Democratic Services Officer clarified for the Committee that there were two amendments on the table, summarising the first being to look at options for a facility in Gainsborough, the second being to look at options for a facility in West Lindsey. It was also confirmed that neither proposal had been seconded.

Expressing support for the amendment to consider district wide options, a Member of the Committee duly seconded the second proposal. With no seconder for the first proposal, that fell, and the Chairman took the vote. It was

RESOLVED that recommendation (b) be amended to include the following, noting this would also amend the amount of funds for the Business Rates Volatility Reserve:

Up to £0.1m to a reserve to consider options for a 'changing places' facility within West Lindsey, with Officers requested to present a report to a future meeting of the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee detailing updated quotations, requirements and technical specifications, and how to undertake engagement and consultation with experts, service users, and town and parish councils.

With no further comments or questions, and with repeated thanks to the Finance Team as a whole and the Business Support Team Leader specifically, the written recommendations, including the amendment as detailed above, were duly proposed and seconded. On taking the vote it was

RESOLVED that

REVENUE

- a) Members of the Committee accept the out-turn position of a £2.057m gross contribution to reserves against the revised budget for 2024/2025, which includes £0.931m of approved revenue carry forwards into 2025/2026. The remaining balance being a net underspend and contribution to reserves of £1.126m.
- b) Members of the Committee approve the balance of £1.126m be transferred as follows:
 - £0.250m to an earmarked reserve for Public Realm Works
 - £0.050m to the Neighbourhood Planning Reserve
 - Up to £0.1m to a reserve to consider options for a 'changing places' facility within West Lindsey, with Officers requested to present a report to a future meeting of the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee detailing updated quotations, requirements and technical specifications, and how to undertake engagement and consultation with experts, service users, and town and parish councils.
 - £0.726m to the Business Rates Volatility Reserve
- c) Members of the Committee approve the use of Earmarked Reserves - £0.380m (2.4.1).
- d) The Committee accepts the use of Earmarked Reserves approved by the Chief Finance Officer using Delegated powers (2.4.2).
- e) Members of the Committee approve the contributions to Earmarked Reserves - £0.639m (2.4.3)
- f) The Committee accepts the contributions to Earmarked Reserves approved by the Chief Finance Officer using Delegated powers (Section 2.4.4).
- g) Members approve the spend of the revenue carry forward into 2025/2026 for the extension of LUF resources £0.035m (2.5 and Appendix 8).
- h) The Committee approves the amendments to the fees and charges schedules for 2025/2026 (2.3.2).

CAPITAL

- i) The Committee accepts the final Capital Outturn position of £17.398m (Section 3).
- j) Committee approves the amendments to the Capital Schemes 2024/2025 as detailed in 3.2.1 to 3.2.2, and the amendments to the 2025/2026 Capital Schemes as detailed in 3.2.3.

TREASURY

- k) The Committee accepts the report, the treasury activity and the prudential indicators (Section 4).

11 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

The Committee heard from the Interim Financial Services Manager (Deputy S151) regarding the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2024/25. It was explained that Council was required to receive, as a minimum, an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year, which was presented in March 2024; a mid-year treasury update report, which was presented in January 2025; and an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy, which was the report presented to the Committee at his stage, for recommendation to Council. In addition, the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee received quarterly treasury management update reports.

The report as presented summarised capital activity during the year; the impact of that activity on the Council's underlying indebtedness, (the Capital Financing Requirement); the actual prudential and treasury indicators; the overall treasury position identifying how the Council had borrowed in relation to this indebtedness, and the impact on investment balances; a summary of interest rate movements in the year; detailed debt activity; and detailed investment activity. During 2024/25, the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The Director of Finance and Assets (S151 Officer) also confirmed that borrowing was only undertaken for a capital purpose and the statutory borrowing limit, (the authorised limit), was not breached.

Members of the Committee were satisfied the information presented to them, and extended their thanks, not only to the presenting officer, but to the team as a whole for maintaining the financial integrity of the council.

Having been proposed, seconded, and voted upon it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the Annual Treasury Management Report and actual Prudential Indicators 2024/25 be **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council for approval.

12 REVIEW AND REPRIORITISATION OF EARMARKED RESERVES

The Committee gave consideration to a report, as presented by the Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer), to review the Council's earmarked reserves and identify reserves which could be repurposed to meet priorities. It was explained that Officers had been requested by the Administration Group to review the levels of earmarked and general reserves, partly driven by an ageing leisure centre in Gainsborough which would require significant investment to bring it up to modern requirements, and with an anticipation to reduce the amount of ongoing maintenance required. Whilst it was hoped that external funding could be acquired, it would still require a significant amount of Council investment to deliver any future agreed priorities. This would come from earmarked reserves and potentially borrowing. The report sought to inform Councillors of the potential resources available to support any future works, and to provide a basis for what may be affordable.

Members were thankful for the review, citing uncertain future funding for local authorities and the benefits of having reserve figures detailed in one report. It was suggested that, whilst the priorities discussed may originate from the Administration Group, it was important for there to be collaboration with all Councillors as well as partner organisations. It was also recognised that it was prudent to not rush into spending reserves, with Local Government Reorganisation looming, but to take a measured approach.

With no further comments, the Chairman read aloud the recommendations as detailed in the report. Having been moved, seconded, and voted upon it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the amount of earmarked reserves which could be released to fund future agreed priorities be noted; and
- b) the governance process for developing new priorities be noted.

13 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

With no comments or questions, the Committee Work Plan was **DULY NOTED**.

Note: The meeting adjourned at 8.19pm for a 10 minute comfort break and reconvened at 8.29pm

14 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Note: The meeting entered closed session at 8.31pm

15 SURESTAFF/WLDC STAFFING SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26

Members heard from the Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities who presented the Surestaff Business Plan 2025/26 and explained that the Committee was being asked to approve changes to WLDC Staff roles.

In response to a question it was confirmed that the roles were appointed to individual officers, however it was recognised that where they held interim positions, there would be a need to re-appoint in the future.

The Democratic Services Officer highlighted to Members that recommendation two within the report was an oversight, as the Committee had previously approved the creation of a new company director post, therefore the Committee was being asked to consider four recommendations in total.

Having been proposed, seconded, and voted on, it was

RESOLVED that

- a) the contents of the Business Plan 2025/26 provided in Appendix 1 be noted; and
- b) Mr Alan Bowley be approved into the vacant Director Post; and
- c) Mr Comie Campbell be approved as the Company Secretary; and
- d) Mr Peter Davy be approved as the Council's shareholder representative on the company board.

16 LEA FIELDS BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW

The Committee heard from the Commercial, Cultural and Leisure Development Manager who presented a report which reviewed the Crematorium Business plan and updated the performance and financial position for 2024/25.

It was explained that at the Corporate, Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 17 October 2024 it was agreed that an update on the performance and financial position of the Lea Fields Crematorium business plan would be presented after six months. The report had been developed alongside the Finance Business Partner and the Crematorium Manager, as well as having been presented to the Commercial Board.

In response to a question regarding market share, it was explained that national data was examined and used to manage expectations for the use of Lea Fields. It was also recognised that there would be continue to be a period of families choosing to use other locations as there would be exiting links with those sites.

Members welcomed the update and positive details within the report, and with no requirement for a vote, the report was **DULY NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 8.44 pm.

Chairman