West Lindsey District Council

Guildhall Gainsborough
Lincolnshire DN21 2NA
Tel: 01427 676676 Fax: 01427 675170

This meeting will be webcast live and published on the Council's website

AGENDA

Prayers will be conducted prior to the start of the meeting.
Members are welcome to attend.

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA, , on **Monday, 10th November, 2025 at 7.00 pm,** and your attendance at such meeting is hereby requested to transact the following business.

To: Members of West Lindsey District Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
   To confirm and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 8 September 2025.

   (PAGES 4 - 25)

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
   Setting out the current position of previously agreed actions as at 31 October for noting.

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

Large Clear Print: Braille: Audio: Native Language

(PAGES 26 - 27)

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS
   i) Chairman of Council
   ii) Leader of the Council
   iii) Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
Questions, if received, under this Scheme will be published by way of supplement following closure of the deadline.

(TO FOLLOW)

7. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9
Questions, if received, under this Scheme will be published by way of supplement following closure of the deadline.

(TO FOLLOW)

8. MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10
No motions have been submitted to this meeting for consideration.

9. REPORTS FOR DETERMINATION

a. Local Government Reorganisation

(PAGES 28 - 49)

b. Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan and Progress Update

(PAGES 50 - 58)

c. Review of Working Groups

(PAGES 59 - 71)

d. Appointment of Independent Members to Governance and Audit Committee

(PAGES 72 - 75)

e. Appointment of Two Parish Councillor Representatives to Standards Committee

(PAGES 76 - 78)

Paul Burkinshaw
Head of Paid Service
The Guildhall
Gainsborough

Friday, 31 October 2025

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 8 September 2025 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Matthew Boles (Chairman)
Councillor Stephen Bunney (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor John Barrett	Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway	Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Christopher Darcel	Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Adam Duguid	Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan	Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence	Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Peter Morris	Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Pilgrim	Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Tom Smith	Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee	Councillor Paul Swift
Councillor Baptiste Velan	Councillor Moira Westley

In Attendance:

Bill Cullen	Interim Head of Paid Service
Peter Davy	Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer)
Lisa Langdon	Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
Rachael Hughes	Head of Policy and Strategy
Ellen King	Policy & Strategy Officer – Corporate Strategy & Business Planning
Katie Storr	Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager
Ele Snow	Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

Also in Attendance: 3 representatives from Dunholme Parish Council and Neighbourhood Planning Group

Also Present: 2 members of the public

Apologies Councillor Emma Bailey
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Liz Clews
Councillor Jeanette McGhee
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Roger Patterson

Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Trevor Young

32 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND MINUTE'S SILENCE FOR FORMER COUNCILLOR KEITH PANTER

Having just remembered former District and Town Councillor Keith Panter in prayers prior to the meeting, in formally opening the meeting, the Chairman asked Members to remain standing for a minute's silence in respect of their former colleague.

On resuming seats, before moving to the agenda, the Chairman took a moment to reflect on his time serving alongside former Councillor Panter, a stalwart for his local community, good humoured, good fun and passionate about serving the community, representing, in particular, the armed forces and veterans. Councillor Panter had embraced the opportunity of being Town Mayor and embraced the role to it's fullest, known for his love of music and dancing at Civic events. The Chairman offered his sincerest condolences to former Councillor Panter's friends and family, for a man who would be fondly remembered.

Other Members paid moving tributes to their former colleague, speaking of his service to the community during Covid, his driving force behind the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan development, his commitment to the veteran's community and again his love of fun, good humour, his town and its people and his love to serve both with passion and drive.

Bringing tributes to an end the Chairman formally welcomed representatives from Dunholme Parish Council and Neighbourhood Planning Group, who would later in the meeting formally present their Reviewed Plan to Council.

33 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Dobbie advised the Chamber he would be abstaining from the vote and outlined his reasoning relating to minute 30 specifically.

Having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was:-

> **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 7 July 2025 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Note: Councillor David Dobbie requested that his abstention against the above decision be recorded.

34 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this point in the meeting.

35 TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2025/26 CIVIC YEAR

In introducing the item, the Chairman paid tribute to his out-going Vice-Chairman, thanks were expressed for the manner in which he had conducted the role and support the had given, with a round of applause from the Chamber.

Nominations were sought for the position of Vice-Chairman of Council, with Councillor John Barrett being proposed and seconded.

There being no further nominations it was:

> **RESOLVED** that Councillor John Barrett be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year.

The Chairman of the Council congratulated Councillor Barrett on his appointment.

Councillor Barrett made and signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office, in the presence of the Head of Paid Service, and indicated that it was an honour and a privilege to have been elected as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the civic year. He looked forward to supporting the Chairman in every way possible during his tenure and would strive at all times to promote and uphold the good name of West Lindsey.

36 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman introduced the report advising Members that it would be taken “as read” unless Members had any questions that they wished to raise.

With no comments or questions and with no requirement to vote, the matters arising were **DULY NOTED.**

37 ELECTION OF LEADER

Nominations for the position of Leader had been sought in accordance with Article 6 of the Constitution, with only one nomination having been received.

Councillor Jackie Brockway had been proposed by Councillor Maureen Palmer and seconded by Councillor Stephen Bunney.

A request for a recorded vote was made, with a second member supporting that request, the motion was put to a recorded vote, with votes being cast as follows: -

For: Councillors Barrett, Bennett, Bierley, Boles, Bridgwood, Brockway, Bunney, Carless, Darcel, Duguid, Flear, Fleetwood, Key, Lawrence, Lee, Morris, Palmer, Pilgrim, Rodgers, Smith, Snee J, Snee M, Swift and Westley. (24)

Against: Councillors Dobbie and Hague (2)

Abstentions: Councillors Howitt-Cowan and Velan (2)

With a total of 24 votes cast for, 2 votes against, and 2 abstentions the motion was declared **CARRIED** and as such it was:

> **RESOLVED** that Councillor Jackie Brockway be elected Leader of the Council for the remainder of 2025/26 civic year.

Councillor Brockway addressed Council to express her thanks at having been elected and made the following short address: -

> "First of all, could I thank those Councillors who have voted for me to take on this role. This will be a leadership of a different kind where I will try to use what is a very privileged position to be an enabler and a facilitator so that we can all be confident in sharing our talents and abilities for the good of West Lindsey.
>
> I'd also like to thank those who have voted against me or who have abstained because the honourable dissenting voice and a healthy positive challenge are important for the creation of robust policy.
>
> I would particularly like to publicly express my confidence in the integrity and the dedication of the Officers who support us daily, who work tirelessly to deliver services to our residents, often in very difficult circumstances. Finally, tonight we aim to create the West Lindsey model of local governance. This goes way beyond the usual concept of coalition. This is a full and good-hearted co-operation between like-minded people whose aim is to serve West Lindsey so that residents, Officers and Councillors can flourish in confidence.
>
> Thank you"

38 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER

The Leader having been elected to position, nominated her Deputy Leader as Councillor Mrs Moira Westley. Having been seconded and with no further nominations, on being put to the vote, it was: -

> **RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs Moira Westley be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council for the remainder of 2025/26 civic year.

Councillor Westley expressed her thanks and made a short acceptance address as follows: -

> "I would like to thank my fellow Council members for granting me the privilege of being Deputy Leader for the remainder of the civic year.
>
> It has been heartening to see how all the different groups within the Council have come together over the past few weeks to form a new joint administration, putting politics and party aside, to bring the West Lindsey community to the forefront of everyone's priorities, as we are, first and foremost, councillors dedicated to

representing our individual communities within the wider West Lindsey district.

The years and months left of WLDC present an exciting opportunity for us as a Council to leave a legacy for all our communities. With a new Chief Executive starting his tenure next month, we can build on the excellent work already undertaken by previous administrations.

As we head into the uncertainty of Local Government Reorganisation and what that will look like for WLDC, what we can do is ensure that we leave the district in a strong position, deliver some lasting community projects, and showcase the skills and talents of the amazing WLDC team and workforce.

WLDC may have an uncertain future in its current form, but with the new administration and CEO in place there is already a sense of renewed hope and optimism, and I look forward to working in partnership with you all".

39 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman

The Chairman addressed the Council and whilst the summer period had generally been quiet, with the Chairman having attended a few events, one which he wished to draw to the Chamber's attention was his attendance at Aegir Special School in Gainsborough, for the premiere of short film made, produced and staring the students, something made possible via the grant funding from West Lindsey.

A media company had worked with their children to produce a fantastic short film and it had been really quite impressive to see the children that were involved in the process and the hard work they undertaken. The end result had been a really high-quality production, and Members were encouraged to take the time to have a look.

The Chairman also highlighted that the BBC Radio 4 "Any Question" programme was going to be held at Gainsborough Old Hall on Friday the 22nd of September starting at 8.00pm Tickets were available to be an audience member. It was pleasing to see an event at Gainsborough, that would garner national coverage, which was good for both the town and the Old Hall.

Leader

Having only just taken office the newly elected Leader advised Council that she would be starting her first round of meetings the next day including the District Joint Committee, District Leaders and Chief Executive meetings and meetings associated with MCCA, alongside the Chief Executive. She also had a number of briefings scheduled over the coming weeks to ensure that she was fully abreast of all matters and fully aware of the needs of West Lindsey to enable her to fulfil her duties to the best of her ability when representing the Authority at meetings.

Head of Paid Service

The Interim Head of Paid Service addressed Council opening his announcements by acknowledging the evening's meeting marked a significant reset for the Council, not only politically but organisationally.

Remarking on the main focus being on serving our communities and the businesses that we host in the District the best we can. To do this effectively, relationships needed to be strong, council business needed to be conducted in the right spirit with mutual respect and the right values and behaviours permeating through everything the Council did.

He spoke of the talented, committed, and passionate people, Members and Officers alike, within the Council and how uniting these assets would ensure West Lindsey became even stronger in its endeavours to deliver the best possible services and outcomes to its communities.

Since the last Council as evidenced by the meeting's agenda significant advances, not only in political arrangements for the Council, but also in organisational change that had commenced in the background, preparation for refocusing of the Council's priorities, and also enabling the organisation to be more efficient and effective in its decision -making internally, responding to the national Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken in January 2025.

Most importantly, the Council had continued to deliver for the communities and the Head of Paid Service outlined just a few of the key initiatives and programmes that had been delivered over the summer period over and above the business as usual.

The community grants programme 2025/26 continued to go from strength to strength. With a total of 19 grant awards made to projects across West Lindsey. Almost £200,000 had been awarded to projects such as new speed indicator devices, play park improvements, community events and community building works.

The Council had also successfully applied for school games funding from Sport England to deliver the Winter School Games programme. The programme would be delivered in partnership with local partners, national governing bodies and community organisations.

The Council would also be working with secondary schools to deliver the leadership opportunities for local young people to inspire the next generation.

As part of the Council's community defibrillator scheme, over the summer an additional 15 facilities at new locations across the District had been installed, bringing the total in West Lindsey to 125. Defibrillators supplied by the Council had been deployed eight times in the past year, helping saving lives across this district.

Gainsborough's Trinity Arts Centre had been shortlisted as a finalist in the APSE award for best service team, sport, leisure and culture earlier this summer, building on the Council's finalist status at the Destination Lincolnshire awards earlier in the year. The Council had narrowly missed out on £5m funding from the Arts Council for improvements to the Centre, however the work stood the Council in good stead to secure future external funding bids.

Marking a significant milestone in the regeneration of Gainsborough, the official opening of the Savoy Cinema had been in July, the public realm enhancements to the Market Square completed, and the handover of the beautifully transformed cafe on Whitten Gardens along the riverside.

The third annual Gainsborough Wordfest was due to take place in the town centre on Saturday the 13th, open to residents from across the District. The exciting event was a wide celebration of creativity and storytelling, with a rich programme of free activities across multiple themes, inviting visitors of all ages to explore the written word in a variety of imaginative and engaging ways.

Officers from the Enforcement and Customer Services teams had been attending various venues during the last month across the District, including Sudbrooke, Caistor, Scotter, Upton and Lea, to discuss local concerns with local residents. It had also provided teams the opportunity to highlight the work that they were undertaking across the District in tackling fly tipping, dog fouling and antisocial behaviour.

The Council had also been undertaking some key consultation and engagements exercises over the summer, one around the budget consultation and LGR due to end on the 15 September; one on the Local council tax support scheme, with consultation having ended 6 September; and the Car Parking Strategy due to end 6 October.

The Interim Head of Paid Service referred to the serious incident over the bank holiday weekend, at a property in Waddingham, and at which Officers from the Council had helped with the response. The nature of the incident was outlined along with the work undertaken by various teams across the Council in responding to the incident, including the setting up of rest centres for families dispersed from their accommodation. Officers were continuing to work with Police as part as part of the tactical joint working with partners.

The Head of Paid Service placed on record his thanks to all those Officers associated with all the initiatives mentioned through his announcements with particular thanks expressed to Grant White and his colleagues for the incident response in Waddingham.

Confirmation had been received last week that the Council had received an award of over £5m, on behalf of all central Lincolnshire authorities. West Lindsey’s share would support households across the district to insulate their homes for the winter.

With the new Chief Executive, assuming post on 29 September, Mr Cullen outlined the working relationship established to date and the hand over arrangements. Finally, in light of this being his last Council meeting, the Interim Head of Paid Service took the opportunity to express his thanks for the incredible support he had been given by staff and Members since arriving. He spoke of pleasure and privilege at having worked with such passionate, talented, and committed people, which had enabled him to move some key areas forward at a pace as demonstrated by the evening’s agenda.

40 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman advised the meeting that no public questions had been received.

41 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

The Chairman advised the meeting that no questions, pursuant to Council Procedure 9 had been received.

42 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

The Chairman advised the meeting that one Motion had been submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.10 and this was as set out in the agenda.

As the mover of the motion Councillor Jackie Brockway was invited to read aloud her motion to the meeting, as follows: -

> "West Lindsey is currently undergoing radical changes in its administration and opposition.
>
> A large majority of Councillors would like to work together more closely in a manner which transcends party politics, in order to improve our collective service to West Lindsey residents and businesses. This change aims to improve the resilience of the Council and to increase experience available to as many Councillors as possible.
>
> I invite Councillors to support the following ten-point commitments:

1. That the West Lindsey Administration be acknowledged as the administration of the council.

2. That the Leader of the council should hold the Leader's position only and should not hold chairmanships or vice-chairmanships on any committee at WLDC.

3. That Councillors, whenever possible, should hold no more than one Special Responsibility position and should receive no more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

4. That Councillors from different parties within the WLA are allowed to substitute for each other to cover absences, so long as they are members of the formally constituted WLA.

5. Each committee should have one vice-chairman. In the absence of the named person a vice-chairman should be nominated from the body of the committee for the duration of the meeting.

6. That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of any West Lindsey Council committee should not be in the same political party unless the political balance of the Council prevents this.

7. That the new Administration commits to a timely refresh of the Council's Corporate Plan with the adoption of new values and behaviours to reflect the priorities on the new Administration and welcomes the member and staff engagement that is planned in September

8. That the new Administration welcomes the review of internal governance arrangements currently underway to streamline decision making and become more delivery focussed

9. That the Council commits to respond positively and in a timely manner to the Corporate Peer challenge recommendations to ensure the positive work of the council is fully reflected and acknowledged by the LGA Peer Team in its follow up visit next year.

10. That the Council continues to collaborate with its Lincolnshire local authority partners on LGR to ensure that the challenges and opportunities for West Lindsey are fully recognised in proposals that are submitted to government for the benefit of our communities.

I so move
Councillor Jackie Brockway"

With the motion duly seconded debate ensued, a Member in reference to point 10 suggested that not enough consideration had been given to the reflect the natural integration of services across the Central Lincolnshire region (Lincoln City, West Lindsey and North Kesteven) and that this could have been a viable LGR proposal in his view.

Opposition Members also questioned the merit of point 2, suggesting it was unnecessarily limiting in nature, and outlined scenarios where it would prevent potentially the best person resuming a role.

Reference point 9 of the motion, and the word timely, Opposition Members sought to understand the exact time-line.

The mover of the motion responded to the points, she shared the Member's view regarding there having been potential in a Central Lincolnshire proposal for LGR, unfortunately, Leaders from other Authorities did not share that view. Point two of the motion she considered captured the ethos of the new Administration and her leadership style, to enable. Her view was that the resilience of the council would be increased significantly if more councillors were involved in decision -making strengthening the Council's position.

The newly appointed Leader gave her commitment to update all Members, on any meetings she attended regarding LGR or relevant conversations, meetings of the District Joint Committee or MCCAA Boards. The matter relating to the Peer Review featured later on the agenda.

Having been proposed and seconded on being put to the vote it was **RESOLVED** that the motion as written be **ACCEPTED**.

43 ADOPTION OF THE DUNHOLME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

The Chairman, prior to introducing the report, again welcomed representatives from Dunholme Parish Council and Neighbourhood Planning Group, Councillors Pache, Kettley and Forrester who would have opportunity to address the Chamber and formally present their Plan.

Members gave consideration to a report which sought Members' approval to adopt the review of the neighbourhood plan for the parish of Dunholme. This would be the third reviewed neighbourhood plan to be adopted within West Lindsey. The reviewed plan would replace the original neighbourhood plan for Dunholme to form part of the development plan and thereby have a major influence on planning application decisions in the Dunholme parish.

The Dunholme Neighbourhood Plan Review had involved two rounds of public consultation and had been successful at both examination and referendum. The Referendum had been held on 24 July and the outcome of this was shown in section 3.6 of the report.

As such the Plan was now ready to be adopted or "made" by Full Council as it had completed all its stages and had the support of its local community.

The Chairman moved the recommendations before inviting Councillor Pache, Chairman of Dunholme Parish Council to address the Chamber.

Councillor Pache spoke of the intense community consultation and engagement which had taken place to develop the reviewed Plan. He spoke of the commitment dedication and sheer hard work undertaken by those involved in developing the Plan. The community also recognised that no development within their Parish was not a realistic option but by creating and reviewing their neighbourhood plan they could go some way to preserve the way of life offered by what was a beautiful settlement.

At the conclusion of the address the Chairman of Council then formally received the Plan from the Chairman of the Parish Council to a round of applause from all Members.

Having been proposed and seconded, on being to the vote it was: -

> **RESOLVED** that the Dunholme Neighbourhood Plan Review, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, be formally adopted (made) to form part of the West Lindsey Development Plan for the Dunholme parish area, replacing the Dunholme Neighbourhood Plan adopted January 2017.

44 REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS ON COMMITTEES / SUB COMMITTEES

The Chairman presented the report, which set out details of the political groups on the Council, the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each Committee, and the allocation of seats on each of the Committees based on political groupings, noting the reasons for the review as detailed in the report and with the last review having been undertaken at the Full Council meeting held on 7 July 2025.

This was a matter, which had been determined by the Head of Paid Service under his delegated authority, in Consultation with the Group Leaders, with all Group Leaders having indicated their agreement to the allocations, as such, there was no requirement for a vote.

With no questions or comments posed, the following was **DULY NOTED: -**

(a) the details of the political groups, as set out in Appendix A of the report,

(b) the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each committee and sub-committee; and

(c) the allocation to different political groups of seats on committees/sub-committees, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

45 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CIVIC YEAR 2025/26

The Chairman of the Council presented the report which set out the wishes expressed by the political groups in respect of the appointment of Members to serve on each of the Council's formal Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 Civic Year.

Members were advised that the published report had contained some blanks where nominations had still been awaited from the Group Leader of the West Lindsey Administration Group namely: -

- 1 seat on Prosperous Communities Committee
- 1 seat on Governance and Audit Committee
- 1 seat on Planning Committee
- 1 seat on both Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

The Group Leader requested additional time to give her nominations and as such, it was suggested that a motion delegating authority to the Head of Paid service to fill the vacancies, post the meeting of Council, on notification from the Group Leader be passed. Having been proposed and seconded, including the suggested addition it was **RESOLVED** that**:**

(a) in accordance with the provisions of section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the wishes expressed by political groups, Members be appointed to serve to the Council's Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year as follows: -

Chief Officer Employment Committee (11 Members)

Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan

Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Mandy Snee
Councillor Moira Westley

Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (11 Members)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor Jeanette McGhee
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Paul Swift
Councillor Moira Westley
Councillor Baptiste Velan
Councillor Trevor Young

Governance and Audit Committee (8 Members)

Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Chris Darcel
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Swift
Councillor …………………………………. (Admin Group)

Licensing Committee (11 Members)

Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mandy Snee
Councillor Trevor Young
Councillor ……………………………………….. (Admin Group)

Regulatory Committee (11 Members)

Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Angela Lawrence
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mandy Snee
Councillor Trevor Young
Councillor ……………………………………….. (Admin Group)

Planning Committee (11 Members)

Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor ………………………………(Admin Group)

Prosperous Communities Committee (11 Members)

Councillor Emma Bailey
Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Chris Darcel
Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor ………………………………(Admin Group)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (11 members)

Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Jacob Flear

Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Jeannette McGhee
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Roger Pilgrim
Councillor Mandy Snee

Standards Committee (8 Members)

Councillor Emma Bailey
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor Diana Rodgers
Councillor Mandy Snee
Councillor Baptiste Velan ; and

(b) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Paid Service to fill the remaining Committee seats, on notification from the Group Leader, and this notification be not later than 3 weeks from the date of the meeting.

46 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN FOR THE REMAINDER CIVIC YEAR 2025/26 AND TO CONFIRM THE NORMAL COMMENCEMENT TIME FOR EACH COMMITTEE

Having re-appointed the Committees, the report under consideration sought to appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to each of the Committees and for Council to re-affirm the normal commencement time for each meeting.

The report also sought to reduce the number of Vice-Chairmanships to one per Committee, in line with the ethos of the motion passed earlier in the meeting.

Nominations had been printed in the published report, and the Chairman advised that a counter nomination had been received for the position of Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The counter-nomination was verbally withdrawn from the meeting.

Having sought additional counter nominations, but with none being made, the Chairman indicated that if Members were content the recommendations would be taken en-bloc. Members indicated their contentment to the process but there was a request made for a recorded vote which was duly supported by a second member.

As such, the recommendations were put en-bloc to a recorded vote, with votes being cast as follows: -

For: Councillors Barrett, Bennett, Bierley, Boles, Bridgwood, Brockway, Bunney, Carless, Darcel, Duguid, Flear, Fleetwood, Howitt-Cowan, Key, Lawrence, Lee, Morris, Palmer, Pilgrim, Rodgers, Smith, Snee J, Snee M, Swift and Westley. (25)

Against: Councillors Dobbie and Hague (2)

Abstentions: Councillor Velan (1)

With a total of 25 votes cast in favour, 2 votes against, and 1 abstention the recommendations were declared **CARRIED** and as such it was:

RESOLVED that:

(a) the number of Vice-Chairmanships be reduced to one per committee;

(b) the following persons be appointed as Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, for the remainder of 2025/2026 Civic Year to the following Committees:

Committee	Chairman	Vice Chairman	Normal Start Time
Chief Officer Employment	(Leader's Nominee) Councillor Peter Morris	Councillor Trevor Bridgwood	Meetings convened as required
Corporate Policy & Resources	(Leader's Nominee) Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Paul Swift	6.30pm
Planning	Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Jacob Flear	6.30pm
Governance & Audit	Councillor Stephen Bunney	Councillor Angela Lawrence	2.00pm
Licensing	Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Maureen Palmer	6.30pm
Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor Jeanette McGhee	Councillor Roger Patterson	6.30pm
Regulatory	Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Maureen Palmer	6.30pm
Prosperous Communities	Councillor Emma Bailey	Councillor Tom Smith	6.30pm
Standards	Councillor Adam Duguid	Councillor Mandy Snee	Meetings convened as required

(c) the normal commencement time for each of the Committees be as set out in the table at (b) above.

47 TO RE- APPOINT TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Chairman again introduced the report and advised the Chamber that in light of the political re-set of the Council, the newly appointed Administration had requested that a number of outside body appointments be revisited along with the membership of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee, which sat outside of the political balance rules.

Members were advised that the published report had contained some blanks where nominations had still been awaited and these were listed aloud to the Chamber.

The awaited nominations for three of the outstanding bodies were provided verbally to the meeting, as follows: -

- Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (reserve Member) – Councillor Stephen Bunney;
- Rural Services Network (SPARSE) – Councillor Jackie Brockway
- Trustees of the Charles Cooper Trust – Councillor Matthew Boles

The Leader requested additional time to provide the remaining outstanding nominations, and again it was suggested that a motion delegating authority to the Head of Paid service to fill the vacancies, post the meeting of Council, on notification from the Leader be passed. Having been proposed and seconded, including the suggested addition it was **RESOLVED** that**:**

a) Members be Appointed to the Outside Bodies, in accordance with the provisions set out at Section 1.3 (i) – (iv), and in line with the nominations detailed in the table at Appendix 1 of the publish report and provided verbally at the meeting, including two new outside bodies namely: -

   * LGA Special Interest Group – Internal Drainage Boards
   * STEP Strategic Collaboration Group

(b) Members detailed in Section 2.3 of the report be appointed to the Joint Staff Consultative Committee until May 2027 namely;

Members
Councillor Paul Key
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Moira Westley

Reserves
Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Tom Smith

Councillor Jackie Brockway ; and

(c) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Paid Service to fill the remaining Outside Body vacancies, on notification from the Leader.

48 WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE PROGRESS REPORT

Members considered a report which presented an update on progress against the recommendations made in the Council's Corporate Peer Challenge report.

The Local Government Association (LGA) required all councils to undertake a full Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) once every five years. West Lindsey District Council's latest CPC took place in January 2025 and the report before Members highlighted the findings and recommendations of the Peer Team.

In responding to the findings of the Peer Team, the Council was required to produce an Action Plan setting out how the recommendations would be implemented. The report provided, for information, an update on work to-date against the recommendations, with particular focus on progress in relation to three areas of work, these being:

1. A refreshed Corporate Plan based on the priorities of the Council through the lens of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR);

2. Designing a new organisational structure that was aligned to the core themes of the refreshed Corporate Plan; ensuring the Council had the right capacity in the right places to deliver key priorities and prepare for the implementation of LGR; and

3. Implementing a new internal governance and monitoring framework that aligned with the new Corporate Plan, streamlined decision-making touch points and empowered both staff and Members to focus on delivering the priorities of the Council over the next three years.

Finally, Councils were required to take part in a progress review to assess progress against the recommendations, the report sought approval from Council to arrange a follow-up review in the first half of 2026.

The amount of work undertaken by Officers over the summer was acknowledged by Members who were supportive of the next steps as outlined.

Having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was: -

RESOLVED that:

(a) the findings and recommendations from the Council's LGA Corporate Peer Challenge 2025 (Appendix 1) be received and noted;

(b) the progress that had been made to-date against the recommendations be noted; and

(c) the proposal for a Peer Challenge Progress Review to take place in the first half of 2026, subject to agreement with the Local Government Association, be approved.

49 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE

Members considered a report which provided an update to Council on the latest position regarding progress with plans for Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire.

Members were reminded that on 7 July, Council had resolved to undertake supportive engagement with other local authorities in developing proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Greater Lincolnshire. At that point in time there were four proposals in development for the area.

Since then, Members were advised the number of proposals in development had increased, as detailed in the report.

All final proposals had to be submitted to Government no later than 28 November 2025. The report provided Members with the most up-to-date position as work continued across Greater Lincolnshire to prepare for LGR and primarily focused on three areas:

1. Latest Government communication and guidance;
2. Engagement with other local authorities and public sector partners;
3. Public engagement, including early findings from the Council's own ongoing engagement exercise

The update ensured Members had all the latest information available to them to support ongoing considerations of which of the proposals, currently in development best met the needs of West Lindsey residents and businesses, based on the criteria set out in the Statutory Invitation, namely:

- A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.
- Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
- Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.
- Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.
- New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements
- New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

Members advised a further paper would be presented to Council on 10 November for decision on West Lindsey's position ahead of the submission deadline.

Following a thorough introduction by Officers, debate ensued. A number of Members spoke of their displeasure at LGR, and of their belief that removing a Council like West Lindsey would not drive community benefit, with media speculation about the cost savings and change in Minister, Members questioned whether LGR as a policy could be scrapped, but heard the Government were still committed to LGR and the timetable which had previously been published and outlined in the report.

There was much debate across the Chamber about the likelihood of LGR delivering for local communities, with powers taken further away from local community representatives and creating a greater democratic deficit.

The difference between LGR and devolution were clarified to the Chamber. Members also spoke of how Town and Parishes had not been factored into the equation, acknowledging how in rural communities, they were large in number and provided a number of services.

Following much debate with very little support for the merits of LGR, having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was: -

> **RESOLVED** that the latest update on plans for Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire be received, and the current position in respect of:
>
> i) Latest Government guidance, correspondence and timelines;
> ii) West Lindsey engagement and collaboration in the development of final proposals across Greater Lincolnshire;
> iii) Public engagement across Greater Lincolnshire, including early findings from West Lindsey's engagement exercise;
>
> be noted in particular.

50 RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - NEW FEE RELATIVE TO MARKETS FOR 2025/26

The then Chairman of the Corporate of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee presented the report which sought Council approval that a new fee and charge be introduced for Markets, specifically an Event pitch, at a proposed priced of £50 applicable to event traders only.

It was stressed that registered or casual traders attending usual markets would pay the standard fee on event days, traders who only attended events (who can come from across the UK) would be charged the new event rate.

It was considered the proposed fee reflected the cost of promoting and organising the events, and the benefits of the increased footfall. The Council also included power and security. The fee remained competitive but reflected the space as premium for special events.

The current pricing schedule for such event traders was provided for information and was currently in line with the casual trader rate for a Saturday market.

The recommendation was proposed before a period of questioning ensued. In response to questions, it was confirmed that the fee did not affect independent traders, unless that independent trader only traded on event days.

It was again clarified that any trader already registered with the Council or trading casually on normal markets would not be subject to the new event fee, as such it would have no impact on regular traders. Only those traders, who only applied to trade, when the Council was hosting an event, would be subject to the new rate. The recommendations were duly seconded.

A Member made reference to those trading at event markets, who did not rent a pitch or space, for example balloon sellers, LED light sellers and sought to understand if they were subject to a fee to trade.

Members also enquired as to whether the fee was VAT inclusive.

In the absence of the information, Officers undertook to advise the Members of the position in respect of both questions outside of the meeting.

Having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was: -

> **RESOLVED** that the recommendation from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and the new fee, namely an Event Pitch / Stall Fee of £50.00 for event traders only, be approved for immediate implementation.

51 RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

The then Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee introduced the annual treasury management report for 2024/25 recommended by the Committee. The report provided an update on progress against the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council in March 2024 for 2024/25 financial year and was a requirement of compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice.

The report contents were summarised to the Chamber with Members noting interest rates during the period had been above those expected when the original treasury management strategy had been written. Therefore, the Council has benefited from increased interest rates on its investments, generating £1.166m during 2024/25. This had overachieved the budget by £515k.

By closely monitoring cashflow and the capital programme underspending in year, external borrowing had been kept down where possible. This has meant the exposure to increased interest costs payable had been minimised resulting in a spend on interest payable of £760k.

Members noted some existing borrowing would need to be refinanced in the short term, but borrowing would be taken as late as possible to take advantage of projected interest rate reductions.

The Chairman of the Committee was pleased to confirm that there had been no breaches of the prudential indicators during 2024/25.

The recommendations were moved. In response to a question regarding whether there were any ethical rules in place to safeguard the Council from investing with high-risk vendors or high carbon output firms, for example, the Section 151 Officer outlined the Treasury Management Investment criteria starting with security, liquidity, yield. Environmental, social and governmental considerations were then considered. More green investments were being offered but often at a slightly lower yield than a standard investment.

However, if a green investment was on the counterparty list approved by Council, then an investment was permissible and where rates were only very marginally different, the Council would always try and move towards green investments.

With the recommendation duly seconded on being put to the vote it was: -

> **RESOLVED** that the Annual Treasury Management Report and actual Prudential Indicators 2024/25 be approved.

52 DISPENSATION FOR COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE - COUNCILLOR LIZ CLEWS

The Chairman introduced the report, the purpose of which was self-explanatory. Members expressed their good wishes to Cllr Clews and her family and asked that a token of thought be sent from the Chairman's office.

Having been proposed and seconded on being put to the vote it was: -

> **RESOLVED** that Councillor Clews' non-attendance at meetings of the Authority, due to ill health, for a six-month period be approved and a dispensation be granted for a further six months (up to 12 May 2026), pursuant to Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972, to avoid her disqualification as a Member of West Lindsey District Council.

53 CLOSING REMARKS

Before closing the meeting, this being the last Full Council for the interim Chief Executive, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank Mr Cullen for the support he had given the organisation over the last few months. He spoke of the up-beat atmosphere around the organisation, and of the positive feedback he had received from Officers. The work Mr Cullen had undertaken in his short time was evident from the Council papers considered during the meeting.

Other Members expressed thanks and gratitude for Mr Cullen's, support, commitment and inclusive style and wished him well for future endeavours, followed by a round of applause.

Mr Cullen in turn paid tribute to West Lindsey's Members and Officers and spoke of his enjoyment in having undertaken the role. He was of the view that West Lindsey had strong foundations and committed Members and Officers to position the District well through the unknown path of Local Government Re-Organisation.

With a final round of applause, the Chairman called the meeting to a close.

The meeting concluded at 8.54 pm.

Chairman

Council Matters Arising Schedule

Purpose:
To consider progress on the matters arising from previous Council 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
Black	**Motion to Council to improve GP Access**	Council at its meeting on 2 September passed a motion relating to the above - immediate actions requested were o To call on the ICB to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to demonstrate accurate need around GP provision. o Engage with local health authorities, NHS representatives, and community stakeholders to gather input and support for the initiative.	**Initial communication has been sent to the ICB - Council will be updated of any progress through Council Matters Arising Schedule**		
Black	**Motion To Council – Protecting British Farms and Preserving Rural Communities**	Motion to Council Jan 2025 Chief Executive and Leader to write to the chancellor setting out DC views on this matter and negative impact on communities	**Letters have been issued . Progress or responses to the letters will be reported through Council Matters Arising Schedule**		
Black	**Outstanding Cttee Places**	delegated authority be granted to the Head of Paid Service to fill the remaining Committee seats, on notification from the Group Leader, and this notification be not later than 3 weeks from the date of the meeting	**All places were filled by to the deadline of 29 September**	29 Sept 25	

Black	**Market Fees – Member queries**	A member made reference to those trading at event markets, who did not rent a pitch or space, for example ballon sellers, LED light sellers and sought to understand if they were subject to a fee to trade. Members also enquired as to whether the fee was VAT inclusive. In the absence of the information, Officers undertook to advise the Members of the position in respect of both questions outside of the meeting.	**All Members advised by email – Market Fess do not have VAT , and street sellers are covered by street trading licences. They must move every 15 mins.**	30 Sept 25	

West Lindsey District Council

COUNCIL	
Monday, 10th November 2025	

Subject: Local Government Reorganisation

Report by:	Chief Executive Paul Burkinshaw paul.burkinshaw@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Contact Officer:	Rachael Hughes Head of Policy and Strategy rachael.hughes@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	The purpose of this report is to – 1. provide an update to Council on the latest position regarding progress with plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), 2. set out the proposals for LGR that have been developed for Greater Lincolnshire for submission to Government by the deadline of 28th November 2025, 3. set out the options available to Members in response to the Minister's statutory invitation of 5th February 20205 to submit proposals for LGR, and 4. outline the next steps and timeline in connection with LGR

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council:

1. Notes the matters in this report, and,

2. That having had regard to the options set out in the report, the Council does not express support for any of the proposals for LGR in Greater Lincolnshire that have been developed in the report but does provide a written response to Government setting out the council's position, and

3. That the response to Government be drafted and approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council based on the content of this report, and a copy of the response be sent to all Members of the Council, for information.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

On 16th December 2024, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government presented the English Devolution White Paper to Parliament. The overarching intention of the White Paper is for Devolution to become the universal position across England, accompanied by a large-scale, England wide programme of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). In respect of Devolution, a Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) has already been established in Greater Lincolnshire, with a new Mayor elected in May 2025. The focus of this paper is purely on the Local Government Reorganisation element of the White Paper.

In respect of LGR, the White Paper sets out the intention to facilitate a programme of reorganisation for all two-tier areas in England, and for unitary councils where there is evidence of failure or where the size or boundary may be hindering their ability to deliver sustainable and high-quality public services.

The legal framework for unitarisation is provided by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Under the legislation, the Secretary of State may invite a principal authority to propose single tier local government arrangements, and then consult upon these proposals before making a decision under this legislation.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, sets out the various different options for restructuring that can be put forward. The options as drafted in the Act does not currently include a scenario where two existing unitary councils, like North and North East Lincolnshire Councils may be merged together in isolation. This means that currently any proposal that suggests this must instead leave those two councils as separate unitaries.

Any proposal which suggests an existing unitary council merges with a district council is permissible under the current operating legislation and therefore can remain unchanged.

However, some of the proposals previously being promoted by Lincolnshire Councils included proposals to merge the two unitary councils in North Lincolnshire and North-East Lincolnshire. To reflect the legal stipulation of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, these proposals have had to be amended which has resulted in an increase in the number of unitary councils being proposed for Greater Lincolnshire.

Following the publication of the White Paper, on 5th February 2025, the Minister for Local Government and English Devolution issued a statutory invitation to Council Leaders in two-tier areas inviting them to develop proposals for reorganisation. The Council submitted its interim plan on 21st March 2025, with initial feedback received via a government letter to Lincolnshire Leaders on 3rd June. Any final proposals must be submitted by 28th November 2025.

On current government timelines, it is expected that new unitary authorities in Greater Lincolnshire will become operational on 1st April 2028, known as Vesting Day. Elections to the new Shadow Authority are expected to take place in May 2027.

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial : FIN/66/26/CL/SL

In June 2025, the Minister announced funding to support the development of final LGR proposals; Greater Lincolnshire's allocation being £357,246. It was agreed by Chief Executives that this funding would be allocated to Lincolnshire County Council who would disseminate the funding to those Councils developing a final proposal as required.

The Interim Plan Feedback letter and the funding allocation letter make it clear that collaboration across areas is required, specifically in relation to information and data sharing. As such, some of this money has been used to develop a shared data baseline, with the remaining monies allocated to specific proposal development. This ensures a fair share of monies and also accounts for any local authorities that have chosen not to engage in the broader LGR programme.

On the 7th July 2025 Council acknowledged that there are resource implications as a result of LGR both in the short and longer term. Due to the scale of evidence, resource and financial implications had not at that time been fully developed and as such it was acknowledged that a sum of up to £50,000 can be drawn down through existing delegation from reserves or contingencies to support and facilitate the Council's involvement during the summer.

A further paper was presented to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 25th September which provided an overview of the anticipated resource and financial implications of developing the Council's position in relation to LGR in Greater Lincolnshire up to the decision point by Government, anticipated in Autumn 2026.

Based on current information, following the submission of proposals in November 2025 and the Government's statutory consultation and decision-making processes, it is anticipated that a further paper on broader financial implications in relation to supporting the transformation and transition arrangements into a new unitary Council will be required.

Staffing :

LGR is a new priority workstream for all Councils undergoing reorganisation which will, by its nature, put pressure on the capacity and resources of some corporate and other service areas who will be required to respond to the different elements of the LGR process and there will be more significant implications for the Council's own resources to facilitate and enable to transition into a new unitary Council. This will need to be considered as part of the broader staffing structure and considered in a future paper.

LGR will impact on all of the council's workforce. Council staff are being kept informed of key developments relating to LGR via a dedicated page on the Council's intranet, through weekly staff messages, and all staff updates as required. This will continue throughout the next stages of the indicative LGR timeline.

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

High-level consideration has been given to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications and more detailed considerations will be undertaken over the course of the summer, as part of the Council's options appraisal of the final proposals that are in development.

Data Protection Implications:

Effective collaboration through the development of shared assumptions and datasets is a key requirement within the government's assessment criteria. It is therefore expected that councils will openly and effectively share data and information, with government prepared to intervene where this is not the case.

In Greater Lincolnshire, a shared data agreement is in place, facilitated through a secure shared data portal where individual councils can upload their data and information. Much of this is open-source data, however, the data sharing agreement includes provisions to safeguard and ensure handling of data is GDPR compliant and that high standards of data management are adhered to at all times.

A shared financial and demand baseline is also in development which will allow all bids put forward on behalf of Greater Lincolnshire to be based on the same principles, and allowing for alternative forecasting and assumptions to be tested in support of the variety of models being developed.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

None arising from this report.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None arising from this report.

Health Implications:

None arising from this report.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :
English Devolution White Paper 2024 Statutory Invitation from the Minister for Local Government & English Devolution to Greater Lincolnshire Council Leaders - 05.02.2025. Local Government Boundary Commission for England LGR FAQs WLDC LGR Interim Proposal Report to Full Council 18.03.2025 MHCLG: Summary of Feedback on Interim Plans - 03.06.2025 WLDC LGR Update Paper to Full Council - 07.07.2025 WLDC LGR Update Paper to Full Council - 08.09.2025 WLDC LGR Resources Paper to CPR 25.09.25

Risk Assessment :
The Government has stated its intention to reorganise all two-tier local authority areas within this Parliament. Within the criteria, Government has been clear that it's preference would be for Councils working together to develop a single proposal for the area although it is recognised that in most areas this will not be possible. Not engaging in the discussions creates a risk that any future decisions regarding local government structures in Lincolnshire do not represent the best interests of West Lindsey. These risks continue to be mitigated by regular and consistent engagement in LGR discussions at the local, regional and national level by both members and senior officers. Where agreement has not been possible, government has stipulated that Councils can submit individual proposals if they wish, but a council can only submit or support one proposal.

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**	x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications	**Yes**		**No**	**x**

1 Introduction

1.1 On 5th February 2025, local authorities in all 21 two-tier areas across England received a Statutory Invitation letter from the Minister for Local Government and English Devolution ("the Minister") inviting proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). 6 areas in the country were included in the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) and had an earlier deadline for submission of proposals. This did not include Greater Lincolnshire.

1.2 Following submission of interim proposals in March 2025, local authorities in all 21 two-tier areas continue to prepare for LGR in line with Government timelines. The next key milestone for Greater Lincolnshire and other areas not part of the DPP is 28th November 2025, when councils in each of these areas must submit their final LGR proposals for consideration.

1.3 At the Council meeting held on 07th July 2025, it was resolved the Council would undertake "supportive engagement working across all final proposals being developed for Greater Lincolnshire", with further assessment and decision-making opportunities for members at a future Council meeting.

1.4 Members received a further update on LGR at Council on 08th September 2025, which provided the latest position on Government guidance, correspondence, timelines and public engagement across Greater Lincolnshire, including early findings from West Lindsey's engagement exercise.

1.5 Officers have acted on the mandate from Council, seeking to proactively engage with other Councils and public sector partners, working collaboratively to progress the work required up to 28th November, and regularly keeping staff and members informed of key developments.

1.6 However, members will be aware that whilst the Council has continued to engage and collaborate across Greater Lincolnshire, this has not resulted in the Council having early sight of any of the specific final proposals being worked up by other Councils across the area.

1.7 This has meant that officers have been unable to undertake an objective assessment of the bids/proposals to understand which may present the best opportunity for the residents and businesses to continue to thrive across the district, which in turn impacts on the options available to the Council as set out in this report, ahead of the 28th November deadline.

2 Correspondence and Timelines

2.1 In updating local authorities on the LGR process and timeline, the Minister set out a seven-stage process which is summarised in fig.1 below. Councils are currently at stage two: submission of formal unitary proposals.

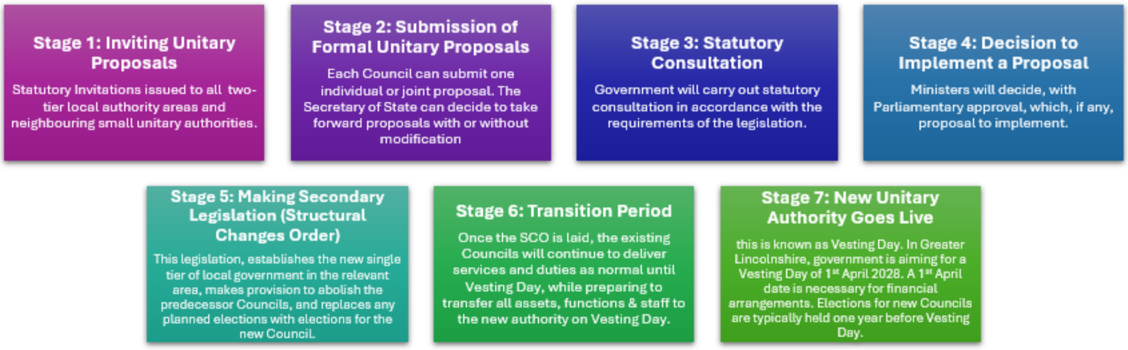


Fig.1 MHCLG Seven Stage LGR Process

2.2 The letter re-stated that Councils may only submit one proposal for unitary local government, which can be either –

- an individual submission or
- a joint submission with other councils that were invited to do so.

Any proposals must be for the whole area concerned, in this case the ten administrative areas covering Greater Lincolnshire, and proposals must meet the criteria set out in the original Statutory Invitation letter. An updated copy of the timeline is included below (fig.2).

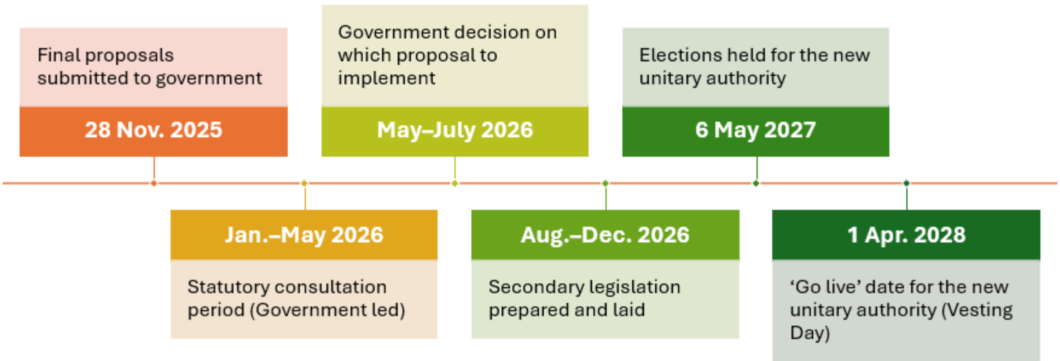


Fig.2
Indicative MHCLG Timeline for LGR Implementation in Greater Lincolnshire

3 Options

3.1 In responding to the statutory invitation to submit LGR proposals referred to earlier in this report, the Council has the following options –

1. **To not formally support any proposal**
2. **Submit a joint proposal with other authorities (i.e. express and indicated the council's support one of the proposals that has been developed across Greater Lincolnshire).**

3.2 Option 1 accords with the direction of the Council to date and is considered to be the only viable option at this stage due to the inability, as set out, to consider the proposals that have been developed and whether the Council can reasonably support these.

3.3 Summary details of each of the proposals, including current publicly available maps showing the proposed geography is shown in Appendix 1.

3.4 Whilst agreement had been reached that West Lindsey could be engaged in the development of the various final proposals being developed across Greater Lincolnshire, in reality limited engagement in relation to the detail of the bids has been possible.

3.5 It has also recently been confirmed that many of the final proposals won't be published until close to the final submission date of 28th November.

3.6 Acknowledging the requirements set out in the Statutory Invitation, and subsequent guidance on formulating a final submission for a geographical area, the Council has, in the spirit of that invitation, sought to engage and work collaboratively with partners across Greater Lincolnshire.

3.7 Whilst there has been some collaboration, particularly around Council data and sharing working practices, there has been limited collaboration around the detail relating to the specific geographies being promoted; specifically, how each of the proposals accords with the Government's criteria for proposals set out below and how these proposals will deliver the best possible outcomes for the residents of West Lindsey, or Greater Lincolnshire.

1. The proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government
2. Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks
3. Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high-quality and sustainable public services to citizens
4. How Councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local need and is informed by local views
5. Ability of the new unitary structures to unlock devolution
6. New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment.

3.8 As these details are not available and the Council will not have advance sight of any of the proposals in prior to final submission, officers are not able to undertake the level of detailed assessment required to understand the risks and opportunities of each proposal, nor how the proposal will continue to promote the interests of West Lindsey in the new Council, and to inform members.

3.9 Resultingly, the Council is not considered to be in an informed position to change its position and support any of the final proposals being developed. Despite this, the Council will continue to actively engage in the LGR process and will continue to promote the interests of the Council to partners across the area and in Government.

3.10 We recognise the importance of West Lindsey in Greater Lincolnshire and the key strategic role both the district and the Council continue to play in a successful Local Government Reorganisation programme for its residents and delivering the ambitious devolution vision for Greater Lincolnshire.

3.11 It should be noted that in addition to the above options, the Council could have developed its own proposal for LGR however there is clearly not sufficient time for that to be done and is therefore not a viable option.

4 Update on Public Engagement in West Lindsey and Across Greater Lincolnshire

4.1 In developing any final proposal, one of the key requirements is for public engagement across the whole area concerned. Whilst West Lindsey has not developed its own LGR proposal, at a meeting of Corporate Policy & Resources Committee on 24th July 2025, members approved a West Lindsey engagement exercise to run alongside the Council's Budget Consultation over a six-week period between 25th July and 15th September. The results of the public engagement exercise undertaken by the council, and details of public engagement undertaken by other authorities across Greater Lincolnshire are set out in Appendix 2.

4.2 Elsewhere in Greater Lincolnshire, there have been a number of separate engagement activities taking place on the other proposals that are in development. These have all now closed, and whilst the results have not yet been made publicly available, a summary and links of these can be found below.

- East Lindsey and South Holland, backed by Boston, ran public events across the area under the banner "A Greater Lincolnshire for All."
- Lincolnshire County Council ran an online survey called "Your Lincolnshire: Strengthen. Simplify. Save" supplemented with public events across the County.
- North Lincolnshire distributed a survey to all households, businesses and voluntary organisations called "Your Services, Your Say, Your Future"
- North Kesteven and South Kesteven were running an online survey and again did some local public engagement.
- Finally, North East Lincolnshire have a webpage Your Council, Your Future which also includes an online survey.

5 West Lindsey Principles for Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire

5.1 Whilst the Council has not developed a final LGR proposal, it remains actively engaged in the process. The Council is committed to influencing the development of future governance arrangements and effective transition to any new unitary authority to ensure that the distinct needs, strengths, and aspirations of Our Council, Our People and Our Place are fully recognised and reflected.

5.2 In recognition of the council's position, this report recommends that the Council does write to the Minister to advise of its rationale for not supporting any of the proposals that have been submitted to the Government and setting out the key issues from West Lindsey District Council's perspective, based on a number of principles.

5.3 Each principle, as set out below, will outline the Council's position within each of the six criteria for LGR proposals, and highlight the key place-based challenges, opportunities, and expectations of LGR proposals both for West Lindsey and Greater Lincolnshire based on evidence and experience.

5.4 It is proposed that the principles presented, as an early draft, in paragraphs 5.4..1 – 5.4..11 of this report are used as the basis for the Council's letter to the Minister referenced in paragraph 5.2 to set out the outcomes West Lindsey District Council would like to see from any local government reorganisation and to support continued engagement with partners through the next stages of the LGR process.

5.5 These principles will also be used as the basis of the framework for the Council to carry out a full options assessment of all final LGR proposals submitted for Greater Lincolnshire, in order to understand the risks and opportunities of each proposal and help to inform the Council's position and response to future Statutory Consultation(s).

5.5..1 Sensible economic area

- Proposals reflect the economic priorities of the council and the regional opportunities relating to our places and established economic drivers, such as agri-tech, security and defence and clean energy.
- Proposals recognise the needs relating to the rurality and sparsity of West Lindsey within transport and infrastructure planning.
- Proposals identify local skills gaps and respond with targeted investment in training and education that meets community needs.

5.5..2 Areas of inequality and considerations

- Proposals should target areas of deprivation in West Lindsey, embedding equity into service design and delivery.
- Proposals must include place-based, integrated service models that respond to the distinct needs of local communities.
- Community investment decisions should be data-driven and built on genuine partnership with residents and local organisations

5.5..3 Local identity, culture & heritage

- Proposals recognise culture as a driver of regeneration, wellbeing, and local pride, which is then embedded in service design.
- Community engagement plans should include support for grassroots and volunteer-led cultural initiatives.
- Cultural planning should be integrated into wider strategic frameworks, including regeneration, health, and education.

5.5..4 Housing supply

- Build on the success of coordinated housing delivery across the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan area, using proven models and partnerships.
- Ensure strategic housing and regeneration sites in West Lindsey are fully reflected in future growth plans.
- Reference devolution powers to unlock funding and accelerate housing delivery, especially in areas with viability challenges

5.5..5 Effective democratic representation

- Ensure strong county-level representation for West Lindsey residents, on par with other areas.
- Strengthen local governance arrangements to empower Parish Councils in representing their communities.
- Embed mechanisms that ensure the resident voice is clearly heard in decision-making at both local and unitary levels.

5.5..6 Models for effective engagement

- Establish Neighbourhood Area Committees that reflect existing communities and are embedded within the new unitary framework.
- Propose to maintain and strengthen relationships with parish councils as key partners in community engagement, in light of demand on capacity.
- Identify proposals to support VCSE organisations with the resources and capacity needed to play a central role in delivering community engagement models.

5.5..7 Neighbourhood working model

- Recognise the importance of place-based provision which is tailored to the specific populations and geographies of West Lindsey.
- Provide dedicated support for VCSE organisations to co-design and deliver neighbourhood services, ensuring long-term sustainability, inclusivity, and community ownership.
- Address rural challenges by identifying investment required in connectivity to enable effective neighbourhood working.
- Respond to, and recognise the important role of Parish and Town Councils, providing a clear plan for long-term support and capacity building.

5.5..8 Opportunities to improve service delivery

- Ensure funding and service models reflect the higher costs and access challenges of delivering services in rural areas like West Lindsey.
- Ensure service design builds on WLDC’s transformation work by expanding digital access and data-led service design.
- For the new unitary to explore delivering pilot programmes which have been successful in addressing West Lindsey’s specific challenges.

5.5..9 Opportunities for public service reform

- Proposals to commit to engaging with districts to learn ‘what works’ in their areas, committing to developing this into a practical deliverable model.

- Public service reform proposals should address flexible service models that respond to the distinct needs of urban centres, market towns, and rural communities.
- Proposals must prioritise investment and service delivery in areas facing deprivation, ensuring equitable access and improved outcomes.

5.5..10 Impact on statutory public services

- Commitment to integrated service planning across health, housing, education, and transport.
- Proposals should address rural service delivery challenges by investing in infrastructure, digital connectivity, and transport to ensure all residents, regardless of location, can access statutory services effectively.
- Proposals should support a positive and inclusive culture, including a commitment to workforce development and retention in key service areas to ensure organisational memory isn't lost.

5.5..11 Considerations for devolution

- Proposals should show how the local voice will be heard in regional decision-making through deep community engagement.
- Proposals must commit to cross-boundary collaboration and shared evidence bases, building on successful models like the Central Lincolnshire Partnership.
- Proposals should show how they can build on existing national and regional strategies and identify how they can be leveraged locally.

6 Next Seps and Conclusions

6.1 The Council is eager to ensure that its strategic priorities are central to any future governance and service models within a new unitary covering the existing West Lindsey geography. A commitment to inclusive growth, local voice, and strategic alignment with regional and national reforms is of paramount importance to the future success of Greater Lincolnshire.

6.2 These principles make clear the Council's vision for place-based transformation, rooted in strong local partnerships, data-driven decision-making, and tailored service delivery across its diverse geographies.

6.3 The Council is clear that the distinct needs of West Lindsey's rural, urban, and fringe areas must be served through effective neighbourhood working, multi-agency collaboration, including with Parish and Town Councils, and community engagement to build resilient, empowered communities and deliver sustainable public services.

6.4 In order to continue to promote the Council's position in the LGR process, these broad principles will be worked into a final document to be approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, which will be used initially to provide a clear position of the Council to send to Government by 28th November. A copy of the letter will be sent to all Members of the Council for their information.

6.5 Post the 28th November the principles will provide a framework for the assessment of submitted proposals, response to the statutory consultation and ultimately used as a basis for negotiation and transformation once the final decision on geography has been made by government.

Greater Lincolnshire LGR Proposals currently in development

Proposal 1: Four Unitary Model		
Proposed By	**Model**	**Population**
North Kesteven South Kesteven	**Unitary 1:** North Kesteven, South Kesteven, South Holland, Rutland	410,360
	Unitary 2: West Lindsey, Boston, Lincoln, East Lindsey	420,585
	Unitary 3: North Lincolnshire	171,336
	Unitary 4: North-East Lincolnshire	159,911

Greater Lincolnshire LGR Proposals currently in development

Proposal 2: Two Unitary Model		
Proposed By	**Model**	**Population**
Boston East Lindsey South Holland (the South-East Lincolnshire Partnership)	**Unitary 1:** West Lindsey, City of Lincoln, North Lincolnshire, North-East Lincolnshire	531,000
	Unitary 2: North Kesteven, South Kesteven, Boston, South Holland, East Lindsey	574,000

Greater Lincolnshire LGR Proposals currently in development

Proposal 3: Three or Four Unitary Model		
Proposed By	**Model**	**Population**
City of Lincoln	**Unitary 1:** City of Lincoln geography incorporating parts of West Lindsey and North Kesteven districts.	TBC
	Unitary 2: The rest of the County of Lincolnshire	TBC
	Unitary 3 & 4: North & North East Lincolnshire remaining separate or combined	171,336 159,911

Image 1: Four unitary council model

Image 2: Three unitary council model

Greater Lincolnshire LGR Proposals currently in development

Proposal 4: Three Unitary Model		
Proposed Separately by*	**Model**	**Population**
Lincolnshire County Council **North Lincolnshire** **North-East Lincolnshire** **(* at present, these are being submitted as three separate proposals, albeit using the same geography)**	**Unitary 1**: existing Lincolnshire County geography	789,502
	Unitary 2: North Lincolnshire	171,336
	Unitary 3: North-East Lincolnshire	159,911

Results of the Council's LGR Engagement Exercise

Context

In developing a final proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), one of the key requirements is for public engagement across the whole area concerned, in this case, the 10 local authority areas that make up Greater Lincolnshire.

Whilst West Lindsey has not developed its own LGR proposal, at a meeting of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 24th July 2025, members resolved to undertake a West Lindsey based public engagement exercise to run alongside the Council's budget consultation over a six-week period from 25th July to 15th September.

The aim of the engagement exercise, branded "Have Your Say on the Future of West Lindsey," was to understand what is important to West Lindsey residents in respect of place identity and future priorities for how local services are delivered.

This paper presents in full the results of the survey to inform and support decision-making. If you have any questions on this, or any aspect of LGR, please contact the Policy & Strategy Team via corporate.plan@west-lindsey.gov.uk

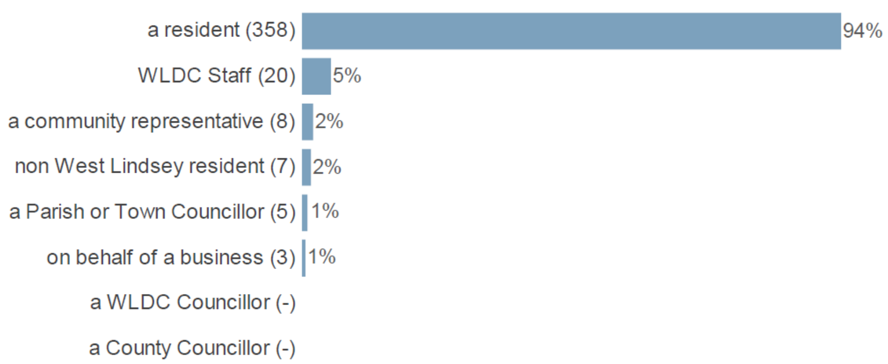
Methodology and Response Rate

The survey was open online to all West Lindsey residents between 25th July and 15th September 2025 with alternative formats available on request. A communications plan ensured the survey was promoted weekly on all of the Council's social media channels, as well as utilising all available newsletters (e.g. Parish newsletter and Business eBrief).

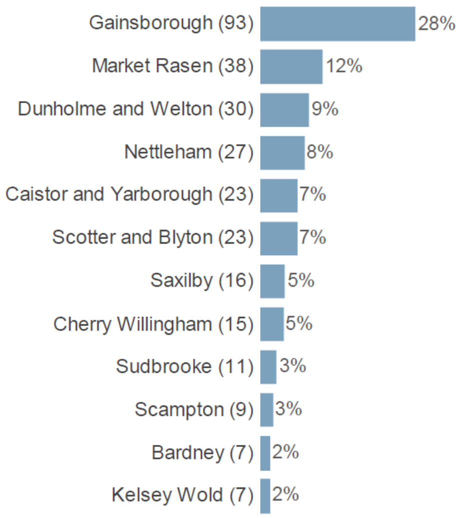
Additionally, officers were present at each of the in-person Budget Consultation events that took place in Gainsborough, Caistor and Market Rasen over the summer to conduct the survey in-person and to answer any questions on LGR.

A total of 381 respondents completed the survey, representing a response rate of 0.38% based on the district's total resident population. A breakdown of respondents by type, and by geographical area is detailed below:

Are you responding as: **Please tick all that apply**



Where do you live? **Please tick one box only**

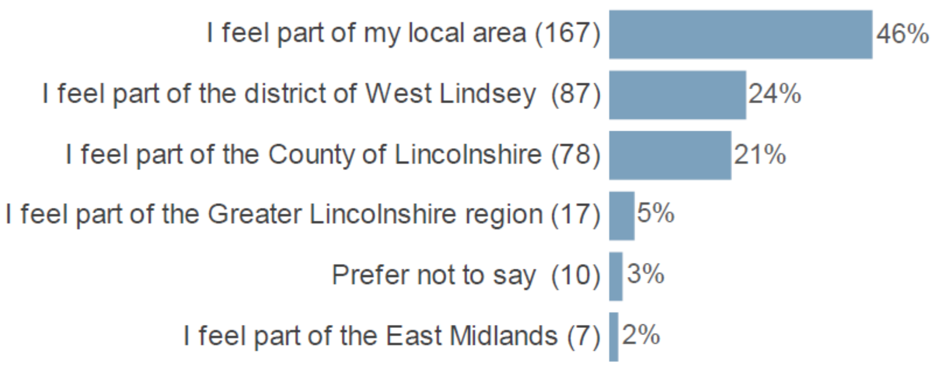


PLACE IDENTITY

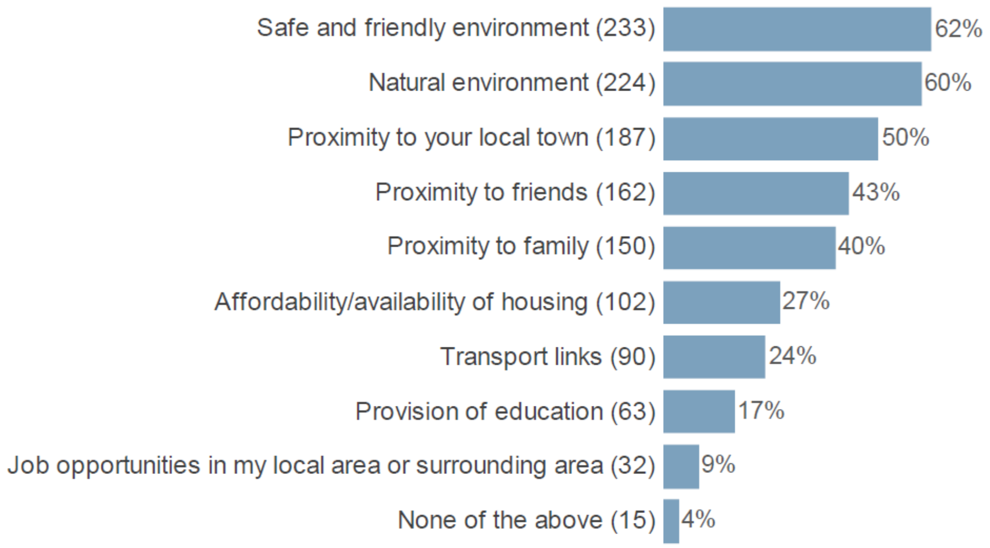
Questions 1, 2 and 3 sought to understand what people value most about where they live. The results are shown in the graph below. In terms of place identity, the majority of respondents (46%) identify with their local area, compared to 24% who identify most closely with West Lindsey district, and 21% who identify with the county of Lincolnshire.

In considering what people value most about where they live, being in a safe and friendly environment ranked highest at 62%, followed by the natural environment (60%). Provision of education and job opportunities ranked lowest at 9% and 4% respectively.

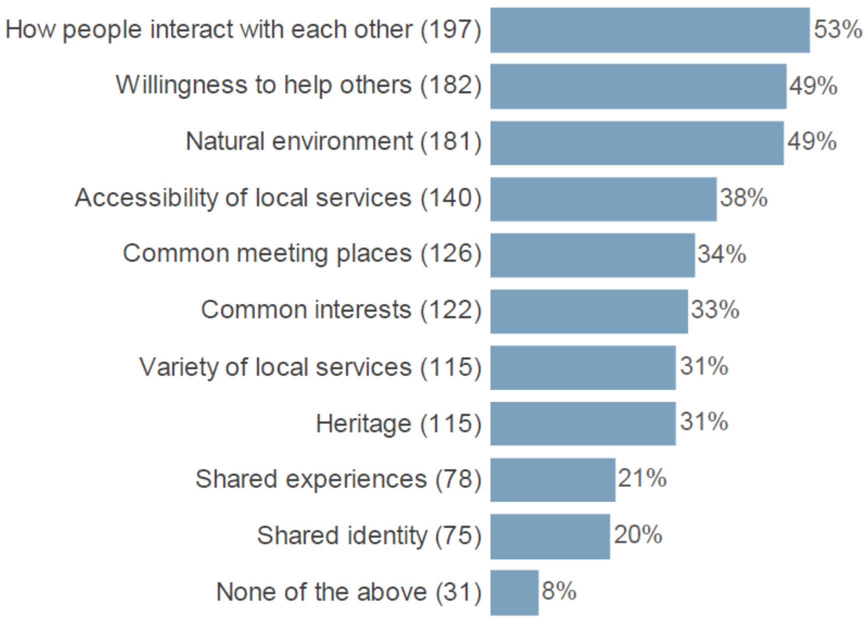
When asked “what ties your local community together?” respondents particularly valued how people interact with each other (53%) and people’s willingness to help others (49%). Shared experiences and a shared sense of identity ranked lowest at 21% and 20% respectively.



What do you value about your local area? **Please tick all that apply**

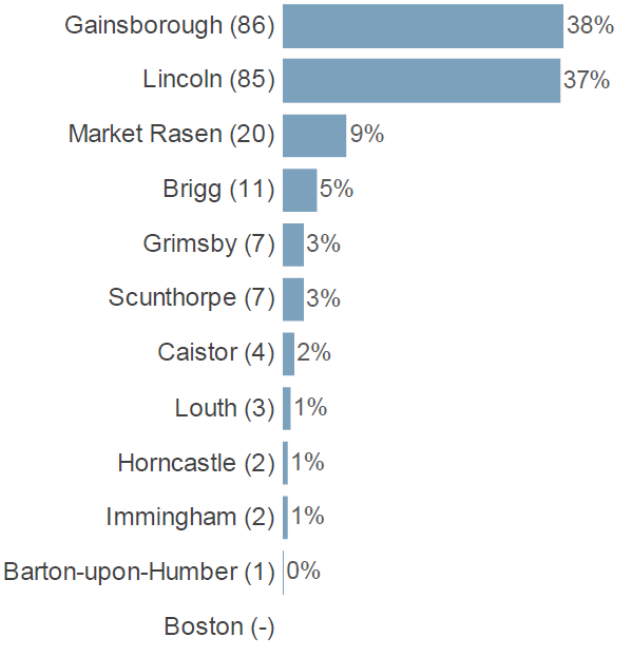


What ties your local community together? **Please tick all that apply**



Respondents were asked to state which Greater Lincolnshire town centre they visited most frequently. Gainsborough is the most frequently visited (38%), followed by Lincoln (37%) and Market Rasen (9%). Immingham (1%), Barton-upon-Humber (1%) and Boston (0%) were cited as the least frequently visited town centres.

Which town centre do you visit most frequently? **Please tick one box only**



DELIVERY OF LOCAL SERVICES

The second part of the survey reminded residents of the services currently delivered by district and borough councils and asked respondents what they consider to be important with regard to service delivery in a new unitary authority.

When asked to rank services in order of highest and lowest priority, the following responses were received:

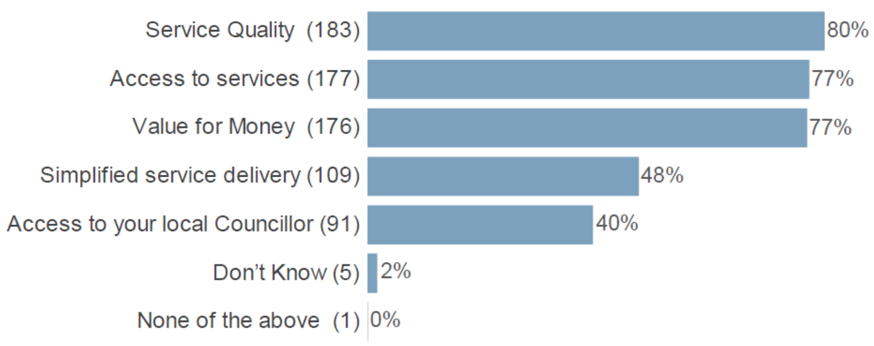
Service	Rank (based on number of responses)
Supporting the local economy and creating job opportunities	Top (43)
Rubbish collection	2nd (41)
Protecting the environment and keeping it clean	3rd (40)
Helping people stay healthy and safe	4th (24)
Availability of affordable housing, including provision of homelessness services	5th (12)
Open spaces including parks and play areas	6th (10)
Building related services, including planning applications, Building Control, enforcement, protecting our heritage	7th (9)
Local facilities like public toilets and leisure centres	8th (8)
Working to mitigate the impact of climate change	9th (4)
Support for Council Tax and Benefits	10th (3)

The final question asked to respondents to state what concerns they have, if any, about Council services being delivered by a single unitary Council. This was a free text question and the responses have been grouped into the following themes:

- **Centralisation of services and concerns regarding loss of access to services in rural areas** – respondents raised concerns that resources will be focused on larger urban areas, with smaller towns, villages and rural areas left behind. Concerns were also raised regarding the ability to meet the diverse needs of communities across a larger geographical area. Many respondents were complimentary about the service received from WLDC, and feared this level of service would not be replicated in a new and larger authority. Concerns related to centralisation of services, and inability to access services at the local level constituted the majority of responses.
- **Weakened democratic representation** – concerns were expressed regarding a lack of ability to access local councillors, or that decisions would be made across a larger geography by people who have a lack of knowledge or awareness of the needs and priorities of local communities.
- **Increased financial cost** – some respondents expressed concern that LGR would result in increased financial costs of running services, poor value for money, or an increase in Council Tax.
- **Loss of local identity** – some responses pointed to concerns about the loss of local identity, particularly in rural areas and villages which some respondents felt would be ignored in favour of larger urban centres.

Finally, respondents were asked what the priority should be when thinking about proposals for LGR in Greater Lincolnshire. The following responses were received:

When thinking about proposals for local government reorganisation in Lincolnshire, what should the priority be? **Please tick all that apply**



Agenda Item 9b

COUNCIL	
Monday, 10th November 2025	

Subject: Corporate Peer Challenge

Report by:	Chief Executive Paul Burkinshaw paul.burkinshaw@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Contact Officer:	Policy & Strategy Officer – Corporate Strategy & Business Planning Ellen King ellen.king@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	This report sets out in full the Council's Action Plan in response to the Corporate Peer Challenge, which took place in January 2025. Members are asked to note the progress made against each of the recommendations

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council:

1. Receives the Action Plan in response to the recent Peer Challenge and notes the progress that has been made against each action to date.
2. Agrees that any amendments to the Action Plan be made via delegation to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

There are no legal implications arising from this report. It is a requirement on all Councils under the Best Value Duty to undergo a Corporate Peer Challenge every five years, and to publish the recommendations and action plan. In publishing this report, the Council has fulfilled this requirement.

Financial: FIN/102/26/CL/MT

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

This report contains a number of recommendations, some of which will have financial implications. Where appropriate, proposals to answer specific recommendations will be brought to the appropriate committee for decision, and the associated financial implications will be laid out in full.

Staffing:

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

The report makes reference to a senior management restructure. Where appropriate, proposals related to staffing will be brought to the appropriate committee for decision, and the associated staffing implications will be laid out in full.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

Not applicable in the context of this report.

Data Protection Implications:

Not applicable in the context of this report.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Not applicable in the context of this report.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

Not applicable in the context of this report.

Health Implications:

Not applicable in the context of this report.

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

Peer Challenge Interim Progress Report to Full Council 08th September 2025

Risk Assessment :
Not implementing an action plan that responds to the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge creates a risk that the Council fails to make progress against identified areas for improvement. This risk is mitigated by a) publishing an action plan, which demonstrates the Council's commitment to continuous learning and improvement; b) implementing the action plan and monitoring progress at regular intervals; and c) committing to a follow-up Peer Challenge in order that progress can be evaluated by an external Peer Team.

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**	x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications	**Yes**		**No**	x

Executive Summary

The Local Government Association (LGA) requires all councils to undertake a full Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) once every five years. West Lindsey District Council's latest CPC took place in January 2025. As part of a Corporate Peer Challenge it is necessary publish the recommendations and action plan. The CPC report was presented to the meeting of the Council held on 8th September 2025 and this report now presents the action plan and an update against the actions.

This follows the report to Council on 8th September 2025 at which the Council received a report that highlighted progress against three of the main workstreams which incorporate the majority of the eight recommendations made by the Peer Team. These workstreams are:

1. A refreshed Corporate Plan, based on the priorities of the Council through the lens of LGR.
2. Designing a new organisational structure that is aligned to the core themes of the refreshed Corporate Plan; ensuring the Council has the right capacity in the right places to deliver key priorities and prepare for the implementation of LGR.
3. Implementing a new internal governance and monitoring framework that aligns with the new Corporate Plan and streamlines decision-making.

The purpose of this report is to present the Action Plan in full, demonstrating how the Council is progressing against each of the eight recommendations made by the Peer Team. The action plan will form the basis of a Peer Challenge Progress Review, which is expected to take place in the Spring of 2026.

1 Introduction

1.1 Between 21st and 24th January 2025, the Council participated in its latest Corporate Peer Challenge, which resulted in eight main recommendations. A copy of the LGA Peer Team's findings and recommendations is attached as Appendix 1.

1.2 On 8th September 2025, Council received a report which outlined progress against the main recommendations arising from the CPC packaged into three main workstreams, these being:

i) Refresh the Corporate Plan
ii) Introduce a new senior management structure
iii) Implement new internal governance arrangements to streamline and focus decision-making

1.3 Taken together, these workstreams deliver the majority of the recommendations made by the Peer Team, and puts the Council in the strongest possible position to focus over the next three years on being a well-managed, forward-looking authority that delivers good quality services and contributes to improved outcomes for 'Our People' and 'Our Place'.

1.4 At the 8th September meeting, Council also resolved to undertake a Peer Challenge Progress Review in the first half of 2026. In preparation, this report presents to Council the full action plan against which progress will be monitored by the Peer Team.

1.5 In presenting the action plan, Council is asked to note the current progress made to date against each of the eight recommendations.

1.6 Following the resolution at September Full Council, officers are in contact with the Local Government Association (LGA) to make the necessary arrangements for a Progress Review. This will primarily involve a one or two day site visit where members of the original Peer Team will meet with the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and other members and officers as appropriate to assess the Council's progress against the recommendations, making further suggestions for improvement where required.

2. WLDC – Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan

Peer Challenge Recommendation	Action / Update	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Status
1. Review your management structure as a priority – your Management Team may only comprise of three officers by June 2025 and may not include two of your three statutory roles. Staff are concerned about the impacts this could have on their capacity and increased workloads. A gap in the officer structure between service managers and directors is also causing a few issues. So, complete your review of, and agree, your management structure with your administration to enable you to recruit accordingly.	• Work is underway to review the management structure and is an immediate priority of the Head of Paid Service to progress and conclude. A report will be presented to the Chief Officer Employment Committee during quarter 3 (Oct-Dec) 2025/26 with a view to complete by the end of quarter 4 (March 2026) The review will have regard to the actions being undertaken in connection with recommendation 4 below.	Chief Executive	April 2026	**In Progress**
2. Prioritise the filling of your new management structure, especially the Head of Paid Service and Section 151 Officer – following on from recommendation one appoint, on an initial interim basis if necessary, to ensure your statutory appointments start work as soon as possible. Prioritising recommendations on and two will build your management resilience to maintain 'business as usual' and progress as a Council.	• The previously vacant statutory posts of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and Section 151 Officer have now been filled, with the new permanent Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service taking up his post on 29th September 2025.	Chief Executive	Not applicable	**Complete**
3. Continue discussion with the Peer Team and LGA on the best way to resolve the identified Councillor / Officer relationship challenges – these challenges are hindering progress and working relationships in some areas. Peer Team members supported some of your colleagues affected by this during their visit and will continue to do so. This will align with the work the LGA is	• A number of actions are in place to continue building good working relationships between officers and members, which remain largely positive and productive. Where issues arise, these will be addressed between the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and the Monitoring Officer, supported by the appropriate policies and procedures where necessary.	Chief Executive / Leader of the Council / Monitoring Officer	Ongoing	**In progress**

Peer Challenge Recommendation	Action / Update	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Status
already instigating to assist this. Continue these discussions and work positively with the Peer Team and LGA to best resolve this and progress positively as a Council.	• The refreshed Corporate Plan will include a new set of shared Values and Behaviours, which all staff and members are expected to adhere to in conjunction with existing policies, procedures and codes of conduct. • The LGA has articulated its packages of support for both officers and members, which the Council continues to take advantage of in order to support staff and member training and development.			
4. **Refresh your business planning –** most, but not all, of your Administration's top priorities feature clearly in your latest Corporate Plan and Executive Business Plan. Resultingly, your Leader and Deputy Leader cannot be sure their priorities are being sufficiently delivered. They should proactively work with officers in your Policy & Strategy team and other officers to fully articulate and align those top priorities throughout your corporate, service and financial planning processes. This will help ensure everyone understands what will be delivered and how.	• The Council has strong existing foundations already in place to support a review and refinement of the Corporate Plan, which is currently being undertaken alongside development of the supporting strategic planning framework to facilitate and enable effective and efficient delivery. • The refreshed Corporate Plan and associated Delivery Programmes will be presented to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in February 2026 and Full Council for approval alongside the budget Council Meeting on 2 March 2026	Head of Policy and Strategy and Director of Change Management, ICT and Regulatory Services	March 2026	In progress
5. **Develop plans to address the gap in your Medium-Term Financial Plan –** You have identified budget gaps from 2026-2029, recognise	• The impact of the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates reset on the council will be	Director of Finance and Assets	March 2026	In progress

Peer Challenge Recommendation	Action / Update	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Status
the need for a longer-term strategy and plan to address them. Your Together 24 Programme has identified actions that can assist, and your Savings Board is working to identify new income generation and further efficiency savings. Continue all this and any other work possible to balance your future budgets and enhance your financial sustainability.	known in December 2025. At this point, any gap in the Council's MTFS will become clear and appropriate plans will be put in place to address this having regard to planned Local Government Reorganisation in April 2028.			
6. Design and implement a continuous improvement / change programme – Your Together 24 Programme has delivered positive change and savings and intends to deliver more. You intend to use this work to develop a more ongoing continuous improvement programme. So, consider and agree the purpose and / or outcomes of the latter programme at the earliest opportunity, then robustly prioritise and allocate the resources it needs. This will help you develop and deliver and benefit from this approach fully.	• This recommendation was made in acknowledgement of the fact that the Council's flagship transformation programme, Together 24 ended in December 2024. The remaining recommendations from Together 24 are in the process of being implemented. • Since the Peer Challenge, the Government has invited proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) across all two-tier local authority areas including Greater Lincolnshire. Resultingly, the Council's focus has necessarily shifted to LGR and will do so going forward ahead of transition to any new unitary authority. Initial focus is on the submission of proposals for LGR by the deadline of 28th November 2025. Thereafter, an LGR preparation and transition programme will be developed which will also consider the council's future continuous improvement / change programme.	Chief Executive / Head of Policy and Strategy	Ongoing	Pending government decision on LGR

Peer Challenge Recommendation	Action / Update	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Status
7. **Review the number and frequency of your meetings –** the number of committees, boards, meetings and report requirements are increasing. This is negatively impacting on some officer workloads and raising questions about the value of all this work. So, review the number and frequency of your meetings to ensure they are as effective as possible. You may also wish to review the purpose, objectives and other issues related to this work to make the most of this opportunity.	• In tandem with the refresh of the Corporate Plan (recommendation 4), a review of internal governance arrangements is currently underway. This primarily focuses on a) reviewing the existing Programme Boards and aligning them more closely to Corporate Plan delivery, and b) reviewing the number and purpose of Member Working Groups. The purpose of these reviews is to streamline decision-making and reporting requirements, and ensure that capacity for both staff and members is delivery focused. • The review and recommendations in relation to Member Working Groups will be presented to Council in March 2026 for decision. • The review and recommendations in relation to the Council's Programme Board arrangements will be presented to Council in March 2026 for decision.	Head of Policy and Strategy and Director of Change Management, ICT and Regulatory Services	March 2026	**In progress**
8. Develop your internal comms to address issues raised in the CPC report.	• The approach to internal comms has been reviewed and updated, providing a more flexible, responsive and inclusive approach on key topics including LGR and development of the refreshed Corporate Plan. Our approach will continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	Assistant Director of People & Democratic Services	Not applicable	**Complete**

Full Council	
10 November	

Subject: Review of Working Groups

Report by:	Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Katie Storr Democratic and Elections Team Manager Katie.storr@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	This report sets out work and arising recommendations following a review of the working Groups, Boards and Panels currently in existence. The work has been undertaken in response to a recommendation arising from the Peer Review in January 2025.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

(1) That the Groups/ Boards/ Panels shown in Grey on Appendix 1, namely: -

- **Markets Working Group**
- **Cross Party Flooding Group**
- **Scampton Local Plan Group**
- **Transport Working Group**
- **Sports and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group**
- **Community Awards Panel**

cease.

(2) That the Groups/ Boards/ Panels shown in Peach on Appendix 1, namely: -

- **LCET (Leisure Culture Events and Tourism Working Group**
- **Environment and Sustainability Working Group**
- **Savings Board**

be reworked and refocussed, and this work be undertaken and reported through the relevant parent Committee

(3) That the Groups/ Boards/ Panels shown in White on Appendix 1, namely: -

- **Lincolnshire Show Group Task and Finish Group**
- **Funding Consultative Panel**
- **Community Rights Panel**
- **Editorial Advisory Board**
- **Appeals Board**
- **Community Grants Panel**
- **Member Development Group**
- **Honours Panel (inc Freeman/Freedom of District)**

Continue and Members be appointed thereto, as set out in the table at Appendix 2 until the Annual General Meeting in May 2027.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None

Financial : FIN/115/26/DN

No financial implications

Staffing :

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 :

Risk Assessment :

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. Background and Introduction

1.1 Members will be aware that the Council underwent a Peer Review process in January 2025 which resulted in a number of recommendations.

1.2 The Council has developed an Action Plan in response to the recommendations, and Members have been receiving updates on progress made.

1.3 One such recommendation was: -

> **Recommendation Seven – review the number and frequency of your meetings:** The number of committees, boards, meetings and report requirements are increasing. This is negatively impacting on some officer workloads and raising questions about the value of all this work. So review the number and frequency of your meetings to ensure they are as effective as possible. You may also wish to review the purpose, objectives and other issues related to this work to make the most of this opportunity.

1.4 The actions agreed to address the recommendation included reviewing the number and purpose of Member Working Groups, with the purpose of the Review being to streamline decision- making and reporting requirements and ensure that capacity for both staff and members was delivery focused.

1.5 This report sets out the outcome of that review and makes a number of recommendations as to which Groups should continue, which Groups should remain but be refocussed, and which should cease.

2. Review process.

2.1 A total of 17 meetings were identified which could fall into the Working Group, Task and Finish Group, Member Panel or Member Board Category.

2.2 These are listed in Appendix 1.

2.3 The Administration Group Leaders were provided with background information as to when each Group had been established, how often it was meeting, and any information considered pertinent to the review, including the views from the assigned Lead Officer for each Group, where appropriate.

3. Summary of Arising Recommendations

3.1 Arising from the work the 17 Groups have been divided into 3 Categories, those which are recommended to remain (shown in white on Appendix 1), those recommended to cease as the work has either completed or can be channelled into another meeting (shown in grey on

Appendix 2) and those recommended to continue but where further work should be undertaken to refine and refocus the purpose of the meeting.

3.2 If the recommendations are accepted, the review would see 6 Groups disbanded, 3 Groups refined and refocused, and 8 continuing.

3.3 However of the 8 remaining, 4 are Boards/Groups/Panels that only meet as and when required. Their removal would see the need for a Group/Panel/ Board to be established on each occasion the need arose, creating an administrative burden. The Administrations' view, shared through the review process was that they would prefer to have a Board/Group/Panel, established and held in abeyance, as opposed to having to establish one on each occasion. The other 4 in the "remain" category primarily only require support from one team each, and the Lead Officers of these Groups have indicated they find their existence of assistance in undertaking their role.

3.4 The Administration also indicated they would wish to re-appoint to those Groups/ Panels and Boards which remain post the review, as these appointments were not re-visited at the AGM or subsequently, pending this review.

3.5 Revised appointments to those Groups/ Panels and Boards recommended to remain or be refocussed are detailed in Appendix 2 for Approval

4. Recommendations

(1) That the Groups/ Boards/ Panels shown in Grey on Appendix 1, cease.

(2) That the Groups/ Boards/ Panels shown in Peach on Appendix 1, be reworked and refocussed, and this work be undertaken and reported through the relevant parent Committee.

(3) That the Groups/ Boards/ Panels shown in White on Appendix 1, Continue and Members be appointed thereto, as set out in the table at Appendix 2, until the Annual General Meeting in May 2027.

Working Groups/ Task and Finish Groups .

Initial Key:
White = Keep – Administration have expressed a desire to reappoint to those Groups retained.
Peach = Keep but Refine
Grey = suggested for winding up

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Initial Officer Commentary Provided to Group Leaders / and Updated	Rec to Admin Grp Leaders	Admin Grp Leaders view 16/10
Lincolnshire Show Group T&F	**CPR**	**Established – Long Standing – Pre 2010.** Whilst ever WLDC has had a show presence there has been a Member Consultation Group. Current Group operates more like a task and finish group, meets around 3/4 times per year running up to the show.	**Rec to remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members welcome this Grp** **KEEP GROUP**
Funding Consultative Panel	**CPR**	**Established – Long Standing – Circa 2012 –** Panel is used for looking at Funding under the ED/Heritage /Regen Banner – current owner Wendy Osgodby – Lead Officer view sought – funding still to be granted under these schemes – would like to retain Panel	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members welcome this approach** **KEEP GROUP – MEET ONLINE ONLY AS REQUIRED.**
Community Rights Panel	**CPR**	**Established – Long Standing – Jan 2014 –** This Panel only meets as and when but is there in abeyance to deal with any applications the Community make under certain rights. – Its removal would see a panel need to be appointed to each time. GW Lead officer – supportive of the Panel remaining	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members would prefer a Panel on stand by as opposed to having to appoint to one each time** **KEEP GROUP – MEET ONLINE ONLY AS REQUIRED.**
Editorial Advisory Board	**CPR**	**Established – Long Standing – Pre 2010** - used by Comms for a steer on resident publications. The grp review each newsletter bi-monthly and meet on-line. Lead Officer JH - only impact to resources is Comms team time (no wider Officer attendance) – Lead Officer welcomes the Group's steer and would like to retain .	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **KEEP ADVISORY BOARD – MEET ONLINE ONLY AS REQUIRED.**

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Initial Officer Commentary Provided to Group Leaders / and Updated	Rec to Admin Grp Leaders	Admin Grp Leaders view 16/10
Appeals Board	**CL**	This Board is formally referenced in the constitution and a number of policies given the nature of its work . (RforF) Below. *1.To hear appeals against decisions taken by the authority relating to homelessness cases. 2. To hear appeals against decisions taken by the authority relating to applications for housing. 3. To hear appeals against the initial decision made by the Revenues and Benefits Department on claims for discretionary housing payments. 4. To hear appeals against the decision made by the Section 151 Officer on applications for national non-domestic rate discretionary relief*. Its removal would see need for a Board to be created each time, however this Panel has only met once in recent years so could arguably be removed.	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members would prefer a Board on stand by as opposed to having to appoint to one each time** **KEEP BOARD RESOURCE IS MINIMAL**
Community Grants Panel	**PC**	**Established – Long Standing – Circa 2012.** This Group does meet but only as and when required. GW Lead Officer.- Group works well and he would wish to retain	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **KEEP GROUP – MEET ONLINE ONLY AS REQUIRED**
Member Development Group	**G&A**	**Established Aug 18 -** Would historically meet at least quarterly – only impact to resources is democratic team time and this has proved an invaluable forum for developing inductions, training programmes, buy in to changes such as IT Kit. Councils are encouraged to use a member forum for by-in. Not met recently due to long term sick of officer (post now filled) .	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec.** **KEEP GROUP MEET ONLINE ONLY AS REQUIRED**
Honours Panel (inc Freeman/Freedom of District)	**CL**	**Established circa 2012. -** This Panel only meets as and when and in the event of an application for an honour be rec'd. but is appointed to and held there in abeyance to deal with such matters should they arise – Its removal would see a panel need to be appointed to each time.	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members would prefer a Panel on stand by as opposed to having to appoint to one each time**

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Initial Officer Commentary Provided to Group Leaders / and Updated	Rec to Admin Grp Leaders	Admin Grp Leaders view 16/10
				KEEP GROUP
LCET (Leisure Culture Events and Tourism WG	**PC**	**Est – Long Standing pre 2014** – meets regularly – Members appear to engage	**Rec to Remain**	**Admin Leaders were of the view this was a more productive Group . Recent intro of sports updates should be taken from it - remit has become too big** **Accept Officer rec – but view – revamp role.** **GRP TO REMAIN – BUT FORMAT AND PURPOSE TO BE REVIEWED – PARENT COMMITTEE TO OWN**
Environ and Sustainability Working Group	**PC /OS**	**Established Jan 20 –** does meet regularly. Anecdotally Members have commented on relevance/ need	**Rec to Cease** **Prefer to keep – Officer structure needs to be correct -**	**Admin Leaders were keen to keep this Group.** **However it was felt the Group had lost its way a little, that agenda size and supply of papers needed greater attention and general Revamp and refocus was required .** **GRP TO REMAIN – BUT FORMAT AND PURPOSE TO BE REVIEWED.**
Savings Board	**CPR**	**Established Jan 25 -** Has only met once since established in January 2025. Audit Action had suggested establishing and previous administration supportive.	**Rec to Remain**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members would prefer a Board on stand by as**

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Initial Officer Commentary Provided to Group Leaders / and Updated	Rec to Admin Grp Leaders	Admin Grp Leaders view 16/10
		The existence of the Grp was again referenced in a recent Audit Cttee (Sep). Both the Sec151 and G and A Chair would like to retain – CIPFA good practice to have a constituted Board to stand up when needed		**opposed to having to appoint to one each time** **KEEP BOARD – MEET ONLINE ONLY AS REQUIRED – BUT REFINE AND REFRESH TERMS OF REFERENCE – PARENT COMMITTTE TO OWN**
Markets Working Group	**PC**	**Established Oct 23 -** Not met since October 2024 Was a desire of previous Leader.	**Rec to Cease**	**Accept Officer Rec** **GROUP TO CEASE**
Cross Party Flooding Group	**PC**	**Established Dec 22 –** Does meet regularly but its work is very much business as usual – this arguably should have been a T and F Group when established.	**Rec to Cease**	**Accept Officer Rec** **Members felt the Grp had achieved its goals** **GROUP TO CEASE**
Scampton Local Plan Group	**PC**	**Unclear when est.** This Group has not met for a while – Original Purpose Work now complete – SGS/RH – Lead Officers confirm work completed and Grp no longer needed	**Rec to Cease**	**Accept Officer Rec** **GROUP TO CEASE**
Transport Working Group	**PC**	**Established – Long Standing – Circa 2012 -** Group has not been meeting. Lead officer Grant White of belief Group is wound up (but nothing formal to that effect).	**Rec to Cease**	**Accept Officer Rec** **GROUP TO CEASE**
Sports and Physical Activity T and F Group	**PC**	**Established – Oct 24 but did not have membership until March 25.** Have met once? May 2025. GW Lead Officer. Purpose to be engaged in the creation of a Strategy . Lead Officer GW – content this work can be reported and approached in an alternative way under new Administration **–** making use of the newly established Administration Group Leaders meeting	**Rec to Cease**	**Accept Officer Rec** **GROUP TO CEASE** **Direction to be received through ADMIN GRP LEADERS going forward on this Strategy's Development**

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Initial Officer Commentary Provided to Group Leaders / and Updated	Rec to Admin Grp Leaders	Admin Grp Leaders view 16/10
Community Awards Panel	**PC**	**Established 2012.** Group operated more like a task and finish group, would meet on the run up to annual awards. No awards have been held since 2019 and therefore the Group have not met. Elected Members have expressed no desire for its return since Covid	**Rec to Cease**	**Accept Officer Rec** **PANEL TO CEASE**

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Current Membership	Any requirements restrictions in Terms of Ref to Consider	Revised Membership from 10 November 2025
Lincolnshire Show Group T&F	**CPR**	Chair of Council – Cllr Boles Cllr J Barrett Cllr E Bennett Cllr L Clews Cllr M Palmer Cllr R Pilgrim Cllr L Rollings	**MUST INCLUDE CHAIR OF COUNCIL** **Any other 6 members**	Chair of Council – Cllr Boles Cllr J Barrett Cllr S Bunney Cllr A Lawrence Cllr M Palmer Cllr R Pilgrim Cllr P Swift
Funding Consultative Panel	**CPR**	Cllr L Rollings Cllr K Carless Cllr R Patterson (Vacancy) Reserves: Cllr M Snee Cllr I Fleetwood (Vacancy)	**appoint four Members and three reserves to serve on the Funding Consultative Panel –** **<u>At least one Member of the Panel should be from the Prosperous Communities Committee and one from the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.</u>**	Cllr O Bierley Cllr T Bridgewood Cllr K Carless Cllr R Patterson Reserves: Cllr I Fleetwood Cllr M Snee Cllr P Swift
Community Rights Panel	**CPR**	Cllr S Bunney Cllr M Snee Cllr T Bridgwood	Any 3 Members **<u>Serving Members of the Planning Committee cannot sit on this Panel</u>**	Cllr S Bunney Cllr M Snee Cllr T Bridgwood
Editorial Advisory Board	**CPR**	Cllr P Key Cllr D Rodgers Cllr L Rollings vacancy	**Should be one Member from each political party or Grp (so the size changes)**	Cllr P Key Cllr D Rodgers Cllr L Rollings Cllr J Brockway Cllr M Westley
Appeals Board	**CL**	Cllr S Bunney Cllr J Brockway Cllr I Fleetwood Cllr A Lawrence Cllr D Rodgers (Vacancy)	**Any 6 Members**	Cllr S Bunney Cllr J Brockway Cllr I Fleetwood Cllr A Lawrence Cllr D Rodgers Cllr M Palmer
Community Grants Panel	**PC**	Cllrs S Bunney Cllr P Howitt-Cowan Cllr O Bierley Cllr L Mullally Cllr L Clews	**five cross party Members**	Cllrs S Bunney Cllr M Palmer Cllr O Bierley Cllr L Mullally Cllr J Barratt

Name of WG/TF	Parent Cttee	Current Membership	Any requirements restrictions in Terms of Ref to Consider	Revised Membership from 10 November 2025
Member Development Group	**G&A**	Cllr S Bunney Cllr M Boles Cllr E Bailey Cllr O Bierley Cllr P Key Cllr P Morris Cllr R Pilgrim Cllr B Velan	**up to seven Members cross party**	Cllr S Bunney Cllr M Boles Cllr E Bailey Cllr O Bierley Cllr P Key Cllr P Morris Cllr R Pilgrim Cllr B Velan
Honours Panel (inc Freeman/Freedom of District)	**CL**	**Chair of Council** **A member from each political party**	**(selected at time of application to avoid conflicts of interest) – so no named Members appointed**	
LCET (Leisure Culture Events and Tourism WG	**PC**	Cllr L Rollings Cllr S Bunney Cllr J Flear Cllr P Howitt-Cowan Cllr M Palmer Cllr M Westley	**Any 6 Members** **Should be cross Party** **Should include Chair of PC**	Cllr E Bailey Cllr S Bunney Cllr J Flear Cllr P Swift Cllr M Palmer Cllr M Westley
Environ and Sustainability Working Group	**PC/OS**	**Cllr S Bunney** **Cllr M Boles** **Cllr k Carless** **Cllr I Fleetwood** **Cllr M Palmer** **Cllr P Swift** **(reg attendees in visiting capacity – Cllr J Barrett** **Cllr E Bailey)**	**Any 6 Members** **<u>Members serving should be on the Prosperous Communities or Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u>**	**Cllr S Bunney** **Cllr M Boles** **Cllr k Carless** **Cllr I Fleetwood** **Cllr M Palmer** **Cllr P Swift** **(reg attendees in visiting capacity –** **Cllr J Barrett** **Cllr E Bailey)**
Savings Board	**CPR**	Cllr T Young Cllr L Rollings Cllr O Bierley Cllr M Boles Cllr S Bunney Cllr I Fleetwood	**6 Members but must include the serving Chair of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee – who will chair the Board.** **Plus 3 Administration Members and 2 Opposition members from CPR**	Cllr T Young Cllr L Rollings Cllr O Bierley Cllr M Boles Cllr S Bunney Cllr I Fleetwood

	Council
	10 November 2025

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS TO GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Report by:	Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Lisa Langdon Monitoring Officer 01427 676591 Lisa.langdon@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To approve the appointment of an Independent Person to Governance & Audit Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Mrs Alison Adams and Mr Alexio Chandiwana be appointed to serve as Independent Members on the Governance & Audit Committee for a term of office expiring at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2029.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The Local Government Act 1972 provides that a Council may include up to 3 persons who are not members of the authority on a committee, and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) recommends that each authority's governance and audit committee should include at least two independent members to ensure the committee to carry out its role effectively.

Financial : FIN/114/26/DN The role carries a small allowance of £60 per meeting plus mileage and broadband allowance of £20 per month may be claimed. The independent lay Members also receive a Council device to use for Council purposes only. These costs can be met from existing budgets

Staffing : None

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : None

Risk Assessment : None

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
None

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**	**x**

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications	**Yes**		**No**	**x**

1. Background

1.1 It is standard good practice for an Audit Committee to appoint independent non - voting Members to the Committee and this is provided for in relevant legislation. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) recommends that each authority's audit committee should include at least two independent members to ensure the committee to carry out its role effectively.

1.2 The Council's Term of Reference allow for a minimum of one independent Member however the committee currently operates with two such Members, Mr Andrew Morris (appointed until May 2027) and Mrs Alison Adams, but has operated with up to three Members in recent previous years (up until May 2022). Members terms of office expire on a rolling four-year basis to allow for some level of continuity.

1.3 Recruitment to these roles can often be difficult, hence the flexibility afforded in the Committee's Term of Reference and the reduction in membership, from May 2022.

1.4 The term of office for independent member, Mrs Alison Adams, expired earlier in the year.

1.5 The role was advertised on the Council's website and social media platforms. Two applications were received from Mrs Alison Adams who re-applied and Mr Alexio Chandiwana.

1.6 The role carries a small allowance of £60 per meeting plus mileage and broadband allowance of £20 per month may be claimed.

1.7 Mrs Adams of course has experience of serving as an Independent Member on the Council's Governance and Audit Committee and is regarded as being highly effective in this role and has been an asset to the committee and its work. It is therefore recommended that Mrs Adams be reappointed.

1.8 Councillor S Bunney, Chairman of Governance & Audit, and Mrs Lisa Langdon, Monitoring Officer met with Mr Chandiwana on 7 October. Mr Chandiwana has a career grounded in governance, financial oversight, and strategic advisory roles spanning both global corporations and UK government agencies and currently serves as an Advisory Board Member for Microsoft, shaping global strategies around ethical technology deployment, data governance, and sustainable innovation. Previous experience has also seen Mr Chandiwana work with several UK government agencies on initiatives involving digital transformation, regulatory compliance, and public sector governance, and accounting.

1.9 It is felt that Mr Chandiwana would also add value to the committee's work and additional independence on the Committee and increased engagement from the local community is to be welcomed. It is therefore recommended that Mr Chandiwana also be appointed as an Independent Member on the Governance and Audit Committee.

1.10 The recommendations re-establish the independent representation on the Council's Governance and Audit Committee to three non-voting members.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Mrs Alison Adams and Mr Alexio Chandiwana is appointed to serve on the Governance & Audit Committee for a term of office expiring at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2029.

	Council
	10 November 2025

APPOINTMENT OF TWO PARISH COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Report by:	Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Lisa Langdon Monitoring Officer 01427 676591 Lisa.langdon@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To approve the appointment of two Parish Councillor Representatives to the Standards Committee until May 2027.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Councillor Dennis Dannatt (Gainsborough Town Council) and Councillor Stephen Riley (Grasby Parish Council) are appointed to serve as members ofn the Standards Committee (without voting rights) until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2027 (the next planned all out elections).

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The Local Government Act 1972 provides that a Council may include persons who are not members of the authority on a committee.

Under the Localism Act 2011 local authorities have the discretion to establish a standards committee

While a principal authority *may* choose to include a parish councillor on its standards committee (if chooses to establish one) as a matter of local discretion or best practice, it is not a statutory requirement imposed by the Localism Act 2011.

West Lindsey has previously made a local decision, given it is a heavily parished area, to include provision for non-voting parish councillor representation.

Financial : FIN/

The role is a voluntary one but does allow for the claiming of mileage (£0.45p/mile) and subsistence.

These costs can be met from existing budgets.

Staffing : None

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : None

Risk Assessment : None

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
None

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**	x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications	**Yes**		**No**	x

1. Background

1.1 A principal authority *may* choose to include a parish councillor on its standards committee, as a matter of local discretion or best practice, but it is not a statutory requirement imposed by the Localism Act 2011.

1.2 West Lindsey is of the belief it is good practice and beneficial for a Standards Committee to appoint non-voting Parish Council representatives, and has previously made a local decision, given the district is a heavily parished area, to include provision for non-voting parish councillor representation on its Standards Committee.

1.3 The Committees Terms of Reference allow for up to three non-voting parish representatives, but in recent years has been operating with only one such Member, Councillor Liz Hillman (Saxilby).

1.4 The normal period of office of the parish members is four years and all such members retire along with elected Members in the year of scheduled all out District and Parish Elections (May 2027)

1.5 The resignation of Mrs Liz Hillman as a Parish Councillor, earlier in the year, automatically resulted in her term of office on the Standards Committee ceasing.

1.6 The role was advertised via Parish Councils and two applicants applied, Councillor Dennis Dannatt (Gainsborough Town Council) and Stephen Riley (Grasby Parish Council).

1.7 The role is volunteer based but does allow for claiming of mileage at £0.45/mile and subsistence.

1.8 Interviews were held on Wednesday 29 October 2025.

1.9 The interview panel comprised Councillor A Duguid, Chairman of Standards Committee, and Mrs Lisa Langdon, Monitoring Officer.

1.10 Both applicants were successful and were offered the roles, subject to approval by Council.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Councillor Dennis Dannatt (Gainsborough Town Council) and Councillor Stephen Riley (Grasby Parish Council) are appointed to serve as members of the Standards Committee (without voting rights) until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2027 (the next planned all out elections).