Public Document Pack

West Lindsey District Council

Guildhall Gainsborough
Lincolnshire DN21 2NA
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AGENDA

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

Thriving People Committee
Thursday, 16th July, 2026 at 6.30 pm
Council Chamber – The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA

Members:

Councillor Stephen Bunney (Chairman)
Councillor Tom Smith (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Jeanette McGhee
Councillor Moira Westley
Councillor Trevor Young

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Public Participation Period**
   Up to 15 minutes are allowed for public participation. Participants are restricted to 3 minutes each.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (PAGES 3 - 6)
   To confirm and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on Tuesday, 28 April 2026

4. **Declarations of Interest**
   Members may make declarations of interest at this point or may make them at any point in the meeting.

5. **Public Reports for Approval**

   i) Squaddie Box (PAGES 7 - 25)

   ii) Domestic Abuse Resident Policy (PAGES 26 - 40)

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

Large Clear Print: Braille: Audio: Native Language

6. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

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

7. **Exempt Report(s)**

Paul Burkinshaw
Head of Paid Service
The Guildhall
Gainsborough

Wednesday, 8 July 2026

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 28 April 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:	Councillor Emma Bailey (Chairman) Councillor Tom Smith (Vice-Chairman) Councillor Owen Bierley Councillor Frazer Brown Councillor Stephen Bunney Councillor Christopher Darcel Councillor Jacob Flear Councillor Sabastian Hague Councillor Paul Lee Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Also Present:	Councillor D Dobbie Councillor M Westley
In Attendance:	
Sally Grindrod-Smith	Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Robert Gilliot	Head of Waste and Street Cleansing
Andy Gray	Head of Environmental Services
Ele Snow	Senior Democratic and Civic Officer
Also in Attendance:	1 Member of the Public
Apologies:	Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Membership:	Councillor I Fleetwood was appointed substitute for Councillor A Lawrence

49 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND OPENING SPEECH

The Chairman opened the meeting, on the rising of the concurrent meeting of the two policy committees, at 7.38pm. She thanked all present for their attendance and patience. As the meeting was to be the last one for the Prosperous Communities Committee, ahead of moving into a new committee structure, the Chairman made the following opening speech:

"Over the past year, we have overseen delivery of the committee's constitutional responsibilities, making a strong contribution to Corporate Plan priorities, particularly housing, economic resilience, and sustainable communities. The Committee has provided strategic oversight of housing, economic growth, regulatory services, and community safety; supported housing growth, tenant protection, homelessness prevention, and responses to legislative change; and championed economic regeneration in our towns and opportunities for rural communities and young people. We have also demonstrated the importance of transparent, robust decision making, balancing growth, regulation, and community wellbeing in the best interests of West Lindsey's residents. We have ensured that each project, each item of business put before us, has been given the detailed attention it requires, focusing on good governance for the strongest decisions. Thank you all for your contributions."

50 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

51 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

> **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 17 March 2026 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

52 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

53 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

With no comments or questions, the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions as at 20 April 2026, was **DULY NOTED.**

54 WASTE & RECYCLING OPERATIONAL POLICY REVIEW

The Committee heard from the Operational Services Manager who explained there had been a number of changes made to the Waste and Recycling Operation policies following a standard two-yearly review. He highlighted a selection of changes, noting that the full table of amendments was detailed within the report.

With regard to the Council not accepting responsibility for the emptying of bins which may have had parcel deliveries left inside, Members enquired as to whether the Council could run a communications campaign to advise residents of the risk. Additionally, in response to a query regarding the replacement of damaged bins and removed bins, it was clarified that damaged bins were replaced for free on the first occasion, and the charge to the resident was in the case of it being the same resident at the property, not where there had been change of resident.

Members requested it be put on record that the Committee extended thanks and praise to the Manager and his team for the success of the rollout of the food waste collections. It was acknowledged that, as a new service, there would be a 'bedding in' period, and in response to a query regarding the hygiene and safety of the collections, it was confirmed that all operatives had been trained on the correct use of PPE and manual handling, and, where

Members had seen operatives actively running during the collection rounds, it was confirmed this was a personal choice not mandated due to the time pressures of collection routes.

In response to a query regarding the increase in household size required for a larger general waste bin, it was explained this had been introduced as a result of the food waste collections, with general waste amounts expected to reduce. Lincolnshire County Council had an education team who would visit residents to discuss waste and recycling processes in order to achieve the most efficient use of bins and waste generated.

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

RESOLVED that

a) all changes in table one of the report be approved for making to the Waste & Recycling Operational Services Policy; and

b) the Policy be reviewed and return to committee in two years.

55 RENTERS RIGHTS ACT - POLICY UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report presented by the Housing & Environmental Enforcement Manager, seeking approval for the revised Housing Enforcement Policy and Revised Civil Penalties Policy in light of the introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025. He explained that the Renters Rights Act (RRA) 2025 would come into effect on 1 May 2026. This was phase 1 of the implementation and would be followed by further phases of which the specific timescales were unknown. The RRA was the single biggest legislative change to the private rented sector to have ever been delivered and was aimed at giving renters much greater security and stability so they could stay in their home for longer, build lives in their communities and avoid the risk of homelessness.

Members heard there were around 8000 properties in the private rented sector within West Lindsey and the report sought to gain approval for a revised Housing Enforcement Policy, including the provisions which would enable the Council to carry out its statutory duties as set out in the Act. Members were provided with an overview of the measures within the Act and how these would impact on those in the private rented sector.

Members were also advised of the additional information which had been circulated, and the recommendation that the new burdens allocation from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government relating to the Renters Rights Act implementation of £88k, be authorised for spend on a staffing resource to contribute to the Council’s response to the additional requirements of the Act.

Councillor I. Fleetwood declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was a landlord, but not within the district.

Members engaged in significant debate regarding the potential benefits and pitfalls of the RRA, including the risk of losing ‘small portfolio’ landlords, and therefore leaving the market open to only large developers and businesses. It was explained that anecdotally, it did appear that single property landlords were choosing to leave the sector, however it would take some time for the full impact to materialise.

Members discussed the balance between enforcement actions versus working proactively with landlords to affect change, to which it was confirmed that dialogue and education was used primarily, with enforcement action following should there be no sign of improvements. In response to a query regarding the social housing sector, it was confirmed the RRA would not cover those properties, and the sector had its own regulator and requirements under law.

With regard to the request for approval to be given for the employment of an additional staff member, Members were keen that the resource be available as a matter of urgency, and sought advice from the Democratic Services Officer in terms of the correct way to expedite such a decision. Members were advised that they could recommend an urgent delegated decision be taken by the Head of Paid Service, following consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Chairman of the Committee, should they be minded to do so. Having debated the specifics of the role, Members proposed the suggested amendment, and it was duly seconded. On taking the vote, it was

> **RESOLVED** that the additional recommendation be amended to enable an expedited decision to be made by way of urgent delegated decision by the Head of Paid Service, following consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Chairman of the Committee.

With no further comments, questions, or points of debate, the Chairman read aloud the written recommendations with the amendment as carried above.

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

> **RESOLVED** that
>
> a) the revised Housing Enforcement Policy be approved; and
>
> b) the revised Civil Penalties Policy be approved; and
>
> c) an update on progress be provided to the relevant policy committee before the end of the 2026/27 financial year; and
>
> d) Members of the Prosperous Communities Committee approve and recommend via an urgent delegated decision by the Head of Paid Service, subject to consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Chairman of this Committee, that the new burdens allocation from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government relating to the Renters Rights Act implementation of £88k, be authorised for spend on a staffing resource to contribute to the Council's response to the additional requirements of the Act

The meeting concluded at 9.04 pm.

Chairman

Committee – Thriving People	
Date Thursday 16th July 2026	

Subject: Squaddie Box

Report by:	Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Contact Officer:	Sarah Elvin Head of Housing, Health & Wellbeing Sarah.elvin@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Executive Summary:

This report sets out the Squaddie Box proposal, as required following a motion agreed by Full Council on 13 April 2026.

Squaddie Box is an initiative delivered by a charitable organisation that provides a secure postal address for homeless veterans who do not have access to a permanent address. Through the provision of a physical mailbox, correspondence can be received and collected safely by veterans who would otherwise be unable to receive mail. The proposal is detailed in full within this report and its accompanying appendix.

Having reviewed the available data and intelligence, there is currently insufficient evidence of identified need within West Lindsey to support progressing the proposal at this time.

The report also outlines the Council's current approach to meeting its obligations under the Armed Forces Covenant Duty and demonstrates how these responsibilities are being fulfilled across West Lindsey.

Appendices to Report

- Appendix 1 - Squaddie Box Partnership proposal
- Appendix 2 – Veterans Address Stability Infrastructure proposal

RECOMMENDATION(S):

a) **That the Council does not implement the Squaddie Box Service at this time**

b) **That thanks be extended to Squaddie Box for their proposal and time spent working with Officers and Members**

c) **That Thriving Council note the position and actions taken by the Council which ensures compliance with that duty.**

1. Introduction

1.1 On 13th April 2026 a motion was agreed at Full Council for WLDC to consider rolling out a pilot initiative of the Squaddie Box project to the District of West Lindsey.

1.2 Squaddie Box is a CIC specialising in supporting veterans and emergency services personnel who are facing homelessness. The charity offers practical solutions in the form of a personal mailbox for veterans who have no fixed abode.

1.3 Squaddie Box provides secure physical mailboxes, placed at trusted community locations which allows mail to be delivered to a safe and secure place via the normal postal system.

1.4 As a specialised service for veterans, Squaddie box understand many veterans who present to homelessness services are navigating complex transition issues after leaving the Armed Forces. The Armed Forces Covenant recognises that this cohort can face challenges linked to relationship breakdown, mental health issues and the broader difficulties that can arise during transition to civilian life.

2. The Squaddie box service

2.1 Access to a postal address is not a requirement for services such as homelessness & housing, Department for Work & Pensions or GP services, all of which are happy to register a person for services without a postal address.

2.2 However, Squaddie box articulates through their correspondence with WLDC that "*even though services may technically be available, engagement from veterans can still be fragile. Something as simple as having a stable and recognised correspondence address can make a meaningful difference to how individuals reconnect with those services. It restores a degree of legitimacy and stability, allowing them to receive time-sensitive correspondence, maintain benefit claims, progress housing applications and engage with employment opportunities.*"

2.3 Squaddie Box go on to detail *"There is also a very human aspect to this that we see repeatedly when speaking with veterans who are struggling. For some individuals dealing with trauma, pride and the loss of identity that can accompany homelessness, the prospect of having to regularly attend a Department for Work and Pensions office simply to collect their mail can feel deeply difficult and, in some cases, humiliating. The experience can reinforce feelings of failure or embarrassment, which may lead to further disengagement from the very systems designed to help them….. Squaddie Box helps remove that barrier. By providing a secure personal mailbox with 24-hour access, veterans are able to collect their correspondence privately and at a time that suits them, without needing to attend public offices. This* *small adjustment can make a significant difference in restoring a sense of independence, dignity and control"*

2.4 Another aim of Squaddie Box is to start providing data and insight into some of the challenges the veteran cohort face when accessing services. One of the challenges that Squaddie Box have identified nationally is the *"lack of clear operational data around the barriers faced by veterans experiencing housing instability… By working collaboratively with councils to capture anonymised insights, we hope to contribute to a clearer evidence base that can support future policy development across local government and the Ministry of Defence."*

3. Requirement for Squaddie box

3.1 Although West Lindsey and wider Lincolnshire have a large cohort of veterans, this doesn't result in a high number of homelessness cases. Over the past three years, there have been 17 approaches to homelessness services at West Lindsey from people who have declared they served in the HM Armed Forces.

3.2 Of those 17, five were identified as having no fixed abode but they were not rough sleeping. To give those figures context, over the same period, 1,700 homeless applications were received at West Lindsey and 78 of those were identified as rough sleeping for at least one night.

3.3 Due to these figures indicating that there potentially would not be a high need for this service, it was proposed to Squaddie Box that the post box could also be utilised by civilians when not in use for veterans, with a priority system being in place should a veteran require this service. However, West Lindsey is still not experiencing a letter box as a barrier for people to access services.

3.4 Should a person who has a homelessness application with West Lindsey not have access to a mobile phone, one can be purchased by the Homelessness Prevention Office to ensure they can contact them, that can also be utilised to receive texts and calls from DWP and GP services.

4 Squaddie Box proposal & financial implication

4.1 The proposal would provide 1 Squaddie Box pod which would support up to 4 homeless veterans at any one time to provide a secure verified postal address for them to receive their mail in a secure place with access 24 hours a day.

4.2 As detailed above at 3.3, there would also be the opportunity for civilians to utilise this mailbox when it was not in use by veterans, with a clear priority given to veterans when they required it, but to maximise the use and identify whether there is also a need for this service for the wider homeless cohort.

4.3 The cost of installation of the pod itself would be fully funded by Squaddie Box CIC – this is detailed by Squaddie Box as costing

£1,000 and is a capital cost to the charity upfront. Should it be agreed to continue with this pilot scheme, a location for the box will need to be explored and determined in conjunction with Squaddie Box and the WLDC Member rep for Armed Forces.

4.4 The costs which would be required to be funded by WLDC are to cover the Annual Licence Infrastructure Fee of £,7500 per annum for 2 years totalling £15,000 for the 2- year pilot. These costs are set out in the Squaddie Box Partnership Proposal detailed at appendix 1.

4.5 The annual licence fee covers the following:

- Infrastructure Provision
- Safeguarding and verification Framework
- Compliance and Governance
- Operational Oversight

Full details of all elements which are covered in the licence fee are explained at appendix 1 paragraph 4.

4.6 Should the proposal be agreed, the roll out of the pilot project and the programme phasing will be implemented as set out in the Partnership proposal for a 2-year period initially, with the potential to extend should an evidenced need for this be established through the pilot.

4.7 The Partnership Proposal does include figures which are not fully evidenced in relation to savings on temporary accommodation or emergency placements, the pilot project will seek to understand how the implementation of this can have an impact on homelessness prevention and improve the lives of those who are able to utilise this service.

4.8 As no evidence of need for this can be established from a homelessness perspective, funding this from the Homelessness Prevention Grant is not an option as it does not fall within the guidance for this grant funding.

4.9 Should the proposal be agreed, it is suggested that funding for this would need to be agreed by Thriving Council Committee and the £15,000 funding required would be utilised from WLDC reserves.

4.10 4.10 More detail on the original Squaddie Box Proposal can be found at appendix 2.

5. Armed Forces Covenant Duty

5.1 The Covenant Duty is a legal obligation on certain public bodies to have due regard to the principles of the covenant, and requires decisions about the development and delivery of certain services to be made with conscious consideration of the needs of the armed forces community.

5.2 Details of how West Lindsey currently meet the Armed Forces Duty Covenant are available on the website following this link [Armed Forces Covenant | West Lindsey District Council]

5.3 This includes:
- Allocation of social housing accommodation
- Understanding housing needs
- Homelessness strategy, prevention and housing advice
- Disabled facilities grants
- Tenancy strategy

5.4 The published position statement and action plan was adopted in 2023. All identified actions have now been completed and implemented

5 Options

5.1 Do nothing

5.1.1 There is no clear evidenced need for this service and no evidenced cost savings that can yet be identified. Should the Thriving People committee decide not to implement Squaddie Box, homeless veterans would continue to be supported through our housing and homelessness services.

5.1.2 A postal address is not a barrier to accessing council services, DWP or Health provision, however, Squaddie Box are expressing that there are other underlying challenges faced by the veteran cohort which means that a Squaddie Box could be required. Presently, there is no data to evidence what unmet local need there is currently.

5.2 Utilise a Royal Mail PO Box

5.2.2 PO boxes are currently available and is an option that could be utilised by anyone and funded by WLDC should it be required from a housing or homelessness prevention perspective, for example, should a postal address be a barrier to employment which would result in someone not being able to afford accommodation.

5.2.3 The cost of a PO Box is detailed at the following webpage as is summarised below Royal Mail PO Box® | Royal Mail Group Ltd :

Collect your mail from your PO Box at your Customer Service Point.

Duration	Price
Monthly* (Direct Debit only)	£50.40
6 months	£243.00
12 months	£416.40

5.2.4 Squaddie Box suggest that a PO Box requires the user to adhere to opening times of a Post office alongside being able to navigate the post office itself which could be a barrier to utilisation of this service for veterans who are struggling with daily interactions.

5.3 Implement a longer term scheme - securing this project for a 10-year period

5.3.1 The proposal at appendix 1 gives an opportunity to put Squaddie Box in place for a 10 year period. The costs for this are detailed in that proposal but summarised below:

10-Year Financial Projection (3% CPI from Year 3)
Year Annual Fee
1 £7,500
2 £7,500
3 £7,725
4 £7,957
5 £8,196
6 £8,442
7 £8,695
8 £8,956
9 £9,225
10 £9,502
Estimated 10-Year Total: **£83,698**

5.3.2 With the current evidenced need not being in place and the large and on-going revenue cost this would incur, it is thought that a pilot of 2 years with a lower outlay and the opportunity to continue with the service should a need be clearly identified would be a more measured approach.

	Option	**Rational for not recommending**
1	Implement a 2-year pilot	There is no evidence of need or correlation between homelessness prevention or access to Council services and being able to receive
2	Utilise a Royal Mail PO Box	Does not over come some of the barriers experienced by veterans
3	Implement a 10 year scheme	Not cost effective for a service where no identification of need is established

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

None

Financial: FIN/45/27/TP/AP

The proposed 2-year Squaddie Box pilot scheme in West Lindsey would require funding of £15,000 to cover the Annual Licence Infrastructure Fee (£7,500 pa).

This would be funded from reserves.

The proposal at Appendix 1 gives an opportunity to put Squaddie Box in place for a 10 year period with a projected cost of £83,700 over the 10 year period. This would be a budgetary pressure for the MTFP.

However, Thriving People Committee Thanks Squaddie Box for their proposal and the time taken to detail how that would work in West Lindsey, but the committee does not take the Squaddie Box Proposal forward at this time.

Staffing:

This service will be managed within existing recourse capacity

LGR implications:

No LGR implication due to suggested length of pilot project

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

Not required

Data Protection Implications:

GDPR compliance is detailed in appendix 1 as being covered under the Annual Licence fee costs

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

N/A

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

N/A

Health Implications:

Barriers to accessing services alongside safe and secure housing can have a huge impact on your physical and mental health. This project suggests a correlation between having a safe and secure mailbox, and accessing these services and looks to overcome those barriers and evidence how this can create a better and healthier environment for veterans.

Risk Assessment:

A risk assessment of the location of the Squaddie Box will be undertaken as part of the implementation of the project

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

Agenda for Council on Monday, 13th April, 2026, 7.00 pm | West Lindsey District Council

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**	

SQUADDIE BOX©

Veterans Stability, Identity & Reintegration (VSIR)

10-Year Managed Infrastructure Plan

West Lindsey District Council – Gainsborough

Prepared by:
Dean Wormleighton
CEO – Squaddie Box CIC

Unit 7c Modern Moulds Industrial Estate, Littlehampton.

Date: 1st March 2026

1. Executive Overview

West Lindsey District Council has requested a 10-year strategic framework for the deployment of Squaddie Box VSIR infrastructure within Gainsborough.

This proposal sets out a 10-year managed service model in which:

- Squaddie Box funds and retains ownership of the pod infrastructure.
- The Council pays a revenue-based annual licence fee.
- No capital purchase is required from the Council.
- No asset liability sits with the Council.

This structure removes procurement friction and simplifies budget allocation.

2. Financial Structure (Revenue-Only Model)

Capital Cost of Pod:
Fully absorbed and funded by Squaddie Box CIC.

Annual Licensed Infrastructure Fee:
£7,500 per annum.

Years 1–2: Fixed
Years 3–10: Indexed annually by CPI.

No additional capital contribution required from West Lindsey.

3. 10-Year Financial Projection (3% CPI from Year 3)

Year	Annual Fee
1	£7,500
2	£7,500
3	£7,725
4	£7,957
5	£8,196
6	£8,442
7	£8,695
8	£8,956
9	£9,225
10	£9,502

Estimated 10-Year Total: ~£83,698

No capital exposure for Council.

4. What the £7,500 Annual Licence Covers

This is not rental of a mailbox.

It is licensed reintegration infrastructure under managed governance.

The annual licence includes:

Infrastructure Provision

- Fully funded pod installation
- Secure 4-compartment unit
- Maintenance coordination
- Asset lifecycle oversight
- Replacement planning

Safeguarding & Verification Framework

- Controlled allocation
- Identity verification standards
- National safeguarding model
- Access governance

Compliance & Governance

- GDPR compliance
- Data governance structure
- Incident management protocols
- Annual compliance assurance

Operational Oversight

- Allocation management
- Escalation protocols
- Reporting framework
- Partner integration guidance

The Council pays for stability infrastructure, not hardware ownership.

5. Programme Phasing

Phase 1: Pilot (Years 1–2)

Objectives:

- Establish operational baseline
- Confirm local demand
- Measure reintegration acceleration
- Review referral pathways

18-month review milestone.

Phase 2: Consolidation (Years 3–5)

- CPI index applied
- Embed within housing workflows
- Strengthen stakeholder engagement
- Introduce structured outcome reporting

Optional break clause at Year 5.

Phase 3: Long-Term Integration (Years 6–10)

- Longitudinal data analysis
- Cost avoidance measurement
- Strategic renewal review
- Potential scaling decision

6. Capacity & Impact

Each pod supports up to 4 veterans concurrently.

Conservative throughput:
8–10 veterans per year.

Over 10 years:
80–100 veterans supported.

Annual cost per veteran:
£1,875.

Daily cost per veteran:
£5.13.

7. Return on Investment

Temporary accommodation:
£15,000–£25,000 per year per individual.

Emergency accommodation:
£80–£120 per night.

If one 30-day emergency placement (£2,400–£3,600) is prevented, the cost begins to offset.

If one long-term escalation is prevented annually, the intervention materially exceeds its cost.

The programme operates as preventative infrastructure.

8. Governance & Risk

Infrastructure Ownership:
Retained by Squaddie Box CIC.

Council Asset Risk:
None.

Inflation Risk:
Managed through CPI index from Year 3.

Failure Contingency:
Asset replacement or repair coordinated by Squaddie Box.

Termination Protection:
Structured review points at Years 2, 5, and 10.

9. Why This Model Strengthens the Council Position

- No capital outlay
- No depreciation or disposal liability
- Revenue-only budgeting
- Predictable CPI-adjusted expenditure
- Clear review milestones
- Low-cost preventative intervention

10. Summary

This 10-year VSIR model provides:

- Fully funded infrastructure
- Licensed reintegration framework
- Administrative stability for veterans
- Structured governance
- CPI-protected sustainability
- Minimal financial exposure for Council

For Gainsborough, this is a practical structural solution to an identified barrier.

Squaddie Box©

Veterans Address Stability Infrastructure Proposal

West Lindsey District – Gainsborough

Who are we?

Squaddie Box provides secure, verified postal address infrastructure for homeless and housing-unstable veterans.

We operate under a licensed national safeguarding framework designed to:

- Protect veterans
- Protect councils
- Protect partner organisations
- Ensure consistent governance and controlled verification

We are not a housing provider.
We remove a structural barrier that prevents reintegration.

WHY THIS IS NEEDED

The veteran currently residing in Gainsborough does not have a recognised postal address.

Without an address, a veteran cannot reliably:

- Maintain Universal Credit or PIP claims
- Receive housing correspondence
- Register or remain registered with a GP
- Receive NHS referrals or hospital letters
- Maintain banking access
- Apply for employment
- Receive legal correspondence
- Renew identification documents

The system is address-dependent.

Without one, progress slows, paperwork is delayed, benefits can be disrupted, and engagement with services becomes inconsistent.

WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING

Deployment of:

1 Squaddie Box Pod

Supporting up to 4 verified veterans
Located within West Lindsey District (Gainsborough)

Annual Licensed Infrastructure Fee:
£7,500 per year
24-month minimum term

The capital purchase of the pod is funded separately (by council or sponsor).
Currently £1000

The annual fee covers:

- Brand licence and IP usage
- Safeguarding and verification framework
- Data governance and GDPR compliance
- Operational standards and oversight
- Allocation and access management
- Escalation and incident protocols
- Annual reporting and compliance assurance

This is not rental of a mailbox.

It is licensed veterans reintegration infrastructure.

SELF-ENABLING MODEL

Squaddie Box does not create dependency.

It enables independence.

Once a stable address is in place:

- Benefit applications process more smoothly
- Housing correspondence is received without delay
- NHS appointments are not missed
- Banking access can be maintained
- Employment applications become viable

Administrative friction reduces.

Reduced friction accelerates reintegration.

It allows the veteran to move forward under their own momentum.

COMPLEMENTING EXISTING SERVICES

Squaddie Box does not replace:

- Council housing services
- Outreach teams
- Veterans charities
- Armed Forces Champions
- Support workers

It complements them.

It gives all partners a stable administrative anchor point.

Once installed, it speeds up the administrative processes required when applying for:

- Benefits
- Housing support
- Healthcare services
- Identification documents
- Employment and training opportunities

It strengthens the work already being done locally.

WHEN

Subject to agreement on host site and capital funding route, implementation can begin immediately.

Typical deployment timeframe: 4–8 weeks from approval.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Each pod supports up to 4 veterans.

At £7,500 per year:

- £1,875 per veteran per year
- £156 per month
- £5.13 per day

Compared to:

- Temporary accommodation (£15,000–£25,000 per year)
- Housing First and other intensive support models

This is a preventative infrastructure investment.

If just one escalation event is avoided — emergency accommodation, sanction, enforcement action — the intervention offsets its cost.

SUMMARY

Squaddie Box provides:

- Address stability
- Administrative acceleration
- System access
- Dignity and legitimacy

It is a practical, low-cost intervention that strengthens local support structures rather than replacing them.

For Gainsborough, this is not abstract policy.

It is a direct solution to an identified barrier.

Dean Wormleighton CEO Squaddie Box CIC ©

Agenda Item 5b

Committee **Thriving People**	
Date 16th July 2026	

Subject: Domestic Abuse Residents Policy

Report by:	Director for Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Contact Officer:	Sarah Elvin Head of Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Domestic Abuse Resident Policy (June 2026).

The policy sets out how the Council will prevent, identify, and respond to domestic abuse affecting residents, ensuring compliance with statutory duties and supporting a consistent, trauma-informed approach.

The Domestic Abuse Resident Policy provides a robust and comprehensive framework for supporting residents affected by domestic abuse. Adoption will ensure the Council meets its statutory duties in relation to domestic abuse, delivers consistent and high-quality services, and contributes to safer, more resilient communities.

Adoption of this policy will lead to improved outcomes for residents, and alignment with partnership working.

Appendices to Report

- Domestic Abuse Residents Policy

RECOMMENDATION(S):

(a) That members adopt the Domestic Abuse Residents Policy

(b) That members delegate authority to the Director for Planning, Regeneration and Communities in consultation with the Chair of Thriving People Committee to approve minor amendments to the policy should they be required

(c) That members not the ongoing statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 Domestic abuse is a significant national and local issue, affecting individuals regardless of age, gender, background or circumstance. It includes physical, emotional, coercive, economic and psychological abuse, and can occur within a range of personal relationships.

1.2 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced strengthened duties on local authorities, including recognition of children as victims in their own right and expectations around coordinated support services.

1.3 The Council has a key role in:

- Safeguarding vulnerable residents
- Providing housing advice and support, including rehousing where required
- Working with partners such as police, health services, and specialist domestic abuse organisations

1.4 This policy replaces previous arrangements and reflects current legislation, best practice, and local partnership frameworks.

2. Policy overview

2.1 The Domestic Abuse Resident Policy applies to all residents within the district and sets out how the Council will respond to domestic abuse cases, including both victims/survivors and perpetrators

2.2 Within the policy, West Lindsey make some key commitments which set out that the Council will:

- Take all disclosures seriously and respond in a non-judgemental way
- Provide appropriate support regardless of background or protected characteristics
- Work collaboratively with partners to ensure coordinated support
- Take action against perpetrators where powers allow
- Ensure a victim-led approach that prioritises safety and wellbeing

2.3 Service Delivery - Residents can expect safe and confidential engagement and undertaking of risk assessments (including DASH where appropriate) if they approach West Lindsey and declare they are a victim of domestic abuse.

2.4 There will be agreed action plans and regular reviews alongside access to specialist support services. If its safe to do so, support to remain safely at home will be provide or alternatively, assistance to move where required

2.5 Housing and Rehousing Support – where victims/survivors are not able to remain at home, they will be supported through homelessness duties by a homelessness prevention officer. Where someone is fleeing domestic abuse, priority need status applies under homelessness legislation ensuring everyone who is fleeing domestic abuse is provided with help and support. Temporary accommodation will be provided where necessary to ensure safety

2.6 Safeguarding and Data Protection

- Information will be handled in line with GDPR and safeguarding responsibilities
- Information sharing will occur where necessary to protect individuals at risk

3. Key benefits

3.1 Adoption of this policy will ensure a consistent and lawful response across all West Lindsey District Council services when someone approaches any area of the Council and discloses they are a victim of domestic abuse.

3.2 The policy is also designed to strengthen prevention and early intervention to allow more affective delivery of services and reduction in those presenting as feeling domestic abuse. This will be done through improved partnership working and awareness of domestic abuse both internally and externally.

3.3 By implementing this policy and improving early intervention and prevention, we will improve the safety for victims and their children and increase positive outcomes

Implementation, monitoring and review

4.1 Alongside implementation of this outward facing policy, a number of staff policies and procedures are internally being adopted, this will ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and understand how to respond should someone disclose they are a victim of domestic abuse, or, should a staff member suspect that.

4.2 The policy will be kept under review and should a minor change be required, this will be agreed by the Director for Planning, regeneration and Communities in consultation with the staff champions panel and JSCC if required. A version control of the policy will be kept online.

4.3 Performance will be monitored through case reviews, partnership reporting and service feedback. Continual improvement will be expected through the staff champions group.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 **Do nothing** – West Lindsey already have a robust approach to ensuring that anyone who is a victim of Domestic Abuse is offered a service which is equitable and helps to keep them safe and secure.

5.2 The policy firms up the approach and ensures that everyone is aware of the responsibilities we have as a local authority and can hold us to account should they feel we are not adhering to the policy.

5.3 However, as we already have excellent practices in place, should members choose to not adopt this policy, it will not have an impact on some of our most vulnerable residents as the services are already in place, the policy just formalises those and highlights the good work taking place

	Option	**Rational for not recommending**
1	**Do nothing**	This policy demonstrates the good work already being undertaken by West Lindsey and gives clear information to our residents who may be fleeing Domestic Abuse.

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The policy supports compliance with:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Homelessness legislation, including priority need duties
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR

Failure to adopt an up-to-date policy may expose the Council to legal and reputational risk.

Financial: FIN/51/27/TPE/SL

The policy will be delivered within existing resources.

Any additional costs (e.g. temporary accommodation or security measures) will be managed through existing housing and homelessness budgets and partnership arrangements.

Staffing:

None

LGR implications:

None

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

The policy explicitly recognises that domestic abuse affects all communities and commits to:

- Supporting individuals regardless of protected characteristics
- Addressing barriers faced by vulnerable groups (e.g. disability, language, immigration status)

An Equality Impact Assessment is embedded within the policy approach

Data Protection Implications:

The policy has significant data protection implications, but these are appropriately mitigated through adherence to legislation, strong confidentiality controls, and clear guidance on information sharing. Effective implementation will ensure both compliance and the safety of victims/survivors.

The policy makes clear that:

- Information will not be shared without consent unless required by law or where there is a safeguarding risk
- Personal data may be shared with partner agencies (e.g. police, health services, specialist support providers) where necessary to protect individuals

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

N/A

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

N/A

Health Implications:

Domestic abuse has significant and wide-ranging impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. The adoption of this policy will contribute positively to mitigating these impacts and improving public health outcomes.

Risk Assessment:
N/A

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**	**x**	**No**	

Introduction

Anyone can experience Domestic Abuse. Home Office research indicates that whilst the majority of abuse is against women it also occurs in Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender relationships, in heterosexual relationships where men are abused by women and by grown up children against their parents.

Domestic Abuse is very common. It can affect anyone in their lifetimes, regardless of age, social class, race, disability or lifestyle. Certain characteristics may make someone more vulnerable to abuse, such as a physical disability, a language barrier, immigration status etc. West Lindsey District Council recognises the need to take these barriers in to account when looking into Domestic Abuse and offering support services to victims and survivors.

Domestic Abuse accounts for around 1 in 10 of all reported violent crimes. In any one year there are around 2.3 million victims of Domestic Abuse in those aged 16-74, two-thirds of whom are women (Statistics taken from the Home Office, 2021).

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed further duties on Local Authorities and other Partner agencies in order to protect and support victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse, it also recognised for the first time that children who witness Domestic Abuse are direct victims themselves and services must be put in place to protect them.

1. Scope

This policy aims to ensure that all residents understand Domestic Abuse and outlines West Lindsey District Council's response to Domestic Abuse for our residents.

The policy outlines how we will tackle Domestic Abuse by offering support and guidance to victims/survivors or dealing with perpetrators.

The policy relates to all West Lindsey residents.

2. Aim of the policy

West Lindsey District Council believes that Domestic Abuse is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The Domestic Abuse policy will help us to meet our corporate aims of improving wellbeing across the district, creating strong, resilient communities and promoting positive life choices for disadvantaged residents and putting our customers at the centre of everything we do.

West Lindsey District Council aims to:

- Increase awareness and understanding of Domestic Abuse amongst our residents and staff
- Improve the safety and well-being of adults and children who are affected
- Improve our response to Domestic Abuse
- Offer assistance to residents regardless of their background
- Hold perpetrators of abuse to account for their actions
- Encourage and maintain multi-agency working to ensure a seamless service to victims/ survivors and their children and families
- Ensure that staff have regular training relevant to their roles and that good practice is shared with staff and customers as part of ongoing learning
- Update processes to fall in line with any new legislation

- Monitor and review Domestic Abuse cases to ensure good practice is followed and positive outcomes are achieved.

3. Key terms and definitions

Domestic Abuse is a serious social and criminal problem that has significant human and financial consequences for individuals, families and communities.

"Definition of "Domestic Abuse" as per the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act

(1) This section defines "Domestic Abuse" for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "Domestic Abuse" if—

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

(b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following—

(a) physical or sexual abuse;

(b) violent or threatening behaviour

(c) controlling or coercive behaviour;

(d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));

(e) psychological, emotional or other abuse; and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

(4) "Economic Abuse" means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to—

(a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or

(b) obtain goods or services.

(5) For the purposes of this Act A's behaviour may be behaviour "towards" B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B's child)."

Definition of "personally connected"

(1) For the purposes of this Act, two people are "personally connected" to each other if any of the following applies—

(a) they are, or have been, married to each other.

(b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other.

(c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.

(f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));

(g) they are relatives.

Domestic Abuse includes but is not limited to:

- Physical violence – slapping, pushing, kicking, stabbing, damage to property or items of sentimental value, attempted murder or murder
- Sexual violence – any non-consensual sexual activity including: rape, sexual assault, coercive sexual activity or refusing safe sex
- Coercive control – using a pattern of behaviour over time to exert power and control, can be used to isolate and intimidate individuals (see below)
- Emotional/ psychological abuse –intimidation, social isolation, verbal abuse, humiliation, constant criticism or enforced trivial routines
- Economic abuse – controlling/ withholding access to money or resources, stealing, depriving or taking control of money, running up debts, withholding benefits books or bank cards.
- Female Genital Mutilation – also referred to as ‘cutting’ or ‘female circumcision’.
- Tech abuse – abusive behaviour via various forms of technology, demanding access to devices, controlling access, using technology to monitor an individual.

Domestic Abuse and Disabled People

Disabled people can be abused by partners, family members and paid carers.

If you are disabled and experiencing abuse, it is common for abusers to use your impairments to control and hurt you through:

a) Physical Abuse – deliberately ignoring your care needs, pushing you onto the floor when you are unable to get back up, hitting you when you are unable to get away or defend yourself

b) Emotional Abuse – saying you couldn’t cope without them, saying that no one else would want you because of impairments, humiliating you because you need help to use the toilet or other basic care and failing to provide it, removing aids which help you to be independent

c) Sexual Abuse – disabled women in particular are twice as likely to be raped or assaulted

d) Financial Abuse – controlling your finances, taking your money without you knowing or agreeing, spending your disability benefits on themselves

Domestic Abuse and The Law

Many forms of abuse are a crime, such as, harassment, assault, criminal damage, attempted murder, rape, false imprisonment, threats to kill and more recently, controlling and coercive behaviour and so called ‘revenge porn’. Not all Domestic Abuse is criminal, but there is recourse through civil law, via injunctions and non-molestation orders, for example.

What is Coercion and Controlling Behaviour?

Coercion uses a pattern of acts like threats, intimidation, or humiliation to frighten a victim.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make someone subordinate and dependent by isolating them, exploiting their resources, and regulating their daily life.

Controlling behaviour is often what enables coercion to be successful and makes a person subordinate and dependent.

The following types of behaviour are examples of coercive and controlling behaviour:

- isolating you from your friends and family
- controlling how much money you have and how you spend it
- monitoring your activities and your movements
- repeatedly putting you down, calling you names or telling you that you are worthless
- threatening to harm or kill you or your child
- threatening to publish information about you or to report you to the police or the authorities
- damaging your property or household goods
- forcing you to take part in criminal activity or child abuse

4. West Lindsey District Council’s Policy on Domestic Abuse

West Lindsey District Council will:

- Pledge its commitment to take claims of Domestic Abuse seriously and handle any disclosures in a way that is non-judgemental and does not place the victim/ survivor at greater risk.

- Whilst recognising that Domestic Abuse disproportionately affects women and girls, assist victims/ survivors irrespective of gender, sexuality, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, social background and any other protected characteristic defined within the Equality Act 2010, responding in an anti discriminatory manner.

- Ensure those affected by Domestic Abuse are provided with assistance and protection, including temporary accommodation if it is appropriate.

- Refer victims/ survivors to our in-house teams who are able to work with partners to manage their safety and accommodation needs.

- Ensure that customers are made aware of how to report Domestic Abuse by regularly updating our website and sending out messages on our social media

• Work with Partners to ensure the best outcome for those suffering Domestic Abuse.

• Provide a supportive and enabling environment, which encourages people to report Domestic Abuse.

• Hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and take action against them where we have the power to do so

• Be victim/ survivor led, trying where possible to enable a person's choices whilst ensuring the safety of themselves and their children.

• Be open and honest around confidentiality, ensuring that victims/ survivors understand the basis on which we will be required to share relevant information with partners.

- Explore possible options for victims/ survivors of Domestic Abuse, such as added security to their homes if they wish to stay, or rehousing if they do not, ensuring that the victim/ survivor is awarded with the relevant needs to aid their move.

- Provide assistance to victims/ survivors regardless of the level of risk, understanding the importance of preventative work.

    - Recognise that when people refuse support or struggle to engage with support that there are a number of reasons this may happen.

      These can include:
      - Fear of the abuser and/or what they will do
      - Lack of experience or knowledge of other victims who have successfully left an abusive partner
      - Doubt about the impact of any action taken by Police or the courts, and fear of pressure to pursue a criminal case
      - Lack of knowledge/access to support services
      - Lack of resources, financial or otherwise
      - Fear of not being believed
      - Love, loyalty, attachment towards their partner and the hope that they will change
      - Feelings of shame or failure
      - Pressure from family/children/friends
      - Religious or cultural expectations
      - Long term effects of abuse e.g. self-neglect, depression, low self esteem
      - Drug and/or alcohol addiction
      - Anticipated impact on children, or fear of losing contact with children/other relatives/friends
      - Fear of being stigmatized
      - Fear of moving out of the area and changing the environment for any children within the family

Service Provision

Victims and Survivors of Domestic Abuse can expect:

- To speak to a member of staff in a private and safe environment and via an agreed safe contact method.
- An assessment of risk will be completed (DASH) where possible
- To be listened to and empowered to make their own decisions, whilst focussing on the safety of the person and their children.
- The option to receive assistance, where possible, from a member of staff of a specific gender.
- An independent signer or interpreter to be present at appointments if required.
- An agreed action plan to meet the needs of the victim/ survivor which will be reviewed with them at regular intervals.
- Signposting to an appropriate specialist Domestic Abuse support service if this is required.
- Help to improve security at home if the victim/ survivor wishes to remain in their property or assistance with moving.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

West Lindsey District Council will not divulge information, without the consent of the person experiencing Domestic Abuse, unless required to do so by law or unless the information is necessary to protect a child or an adult at risk.

West Lindsey District Council will ensure that it treats personal information lawfully and correctly. To this end West Lindsey District Council fully endorses and adheres to the Principles of Data Protection as set out in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) and the Data Protection Act 2018 ('Data Protection Law').

Partnerships

Domestic Abuse is very complex. People involved may have disabilities, mental health problems, drug and alcohol dependency or additional needs. It is essential to work with other agencies who have the necessary expertise.

West Lindsey District Council is part of the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership that includes representatives from Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Community Health Services, the Probation Service, Public health, Victim Support and other local authorities and delivers the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Strategy https://professionals.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2140/lincolnshire-domestic-abuse-strategy-2021-2024

Contacts

West Lindsey District Council will signpost external sources of help and support to employees and managers including information on:

- The Refuge Website https://www.refuge.org.uk/
- Respect https://www.respect.uk.net/, lead on the development of safe, effective work with perpetrators, male victims, and young people using violence in their close relationships.
- the National Domestic Abuse Helpline https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/ which provides advice for those experiencing Domestic Abuse
- The Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Specialist Service - https://ldass.org.uk/

Domestic Abuse and Rehousing

West Lindsey District Council assists victims/ survivors of Domestic Abuse by awarding a priority need for rehousing through the Allocations Policy and will also take a homeless application from anyone suffering Domestic Abuse who is considered at risk in their home.

Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, a homeless or threatened with homeless applicant who has experienced Domestic Abuse will be in priority need under the homelessness legislation. Alternative temporary accommodation will be made available when needed to keep the applicant or their family members safe.

Victims/ survivors can approach any Local Authority for assistance without the need for a local connection if it is unsafe for the applicant or household member to remain in their home area. In these circumstances, under homelessness legislation, they will not be referred to an area where they or a member of their household would be at risk of harm.

Conversely, those who perpetrate Domestic Abuse may be deemed unsuitable for acceptance on to the housing register due to unacceptable behaviour towards others.

5. Equality and Diversity

The Council will take into account our statutory duty to promote equality and the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme when making decisions. When making any assessments or decisions on whether or not to recommend any particular course of action, the Council will strive to ensure that no person experience discrimination or is disadvantaged because of disability, race or national origin, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age.

6. Feedback on our service

The Council encourages and welcomes feedback on its services. If you wish to provide feedback you can do so by visiting: www.westlindsey.gov.uk/feedback

7. Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis or as required by any legislative changes.

8. Related Documents

Customer Charter – Homelessness and Housing advice - https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/West%20Lindsey%20Homelessness%20Customer%20charter%202024.pdf

Lincolnshire Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy - https://professionals.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2140/lincolnshire-domestic-abuse-strategy-2021-2024

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 - https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents

Committee: Thriving People	
Date: 16th July 2026	

Subject: West Lindsey Employment and Skills Strategy and Delivery Plan 2026–2030

Report by:	Sally Grindrod-Smith, Director Planning, Regeneration and Communities
Contact Officer:	Amanda Bouttell, Senior Project Officer – Employment and Skills Amanda.Bouttell@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Executive Summary:

To present the West Lindsey Employment and Skills Strategy 2026–2030 and supporting Delivery Plan for consideration and approval, establishing a clear framework for how the Council will work with partners, employers and providers to improve skills, increase access to employment and support inclusive economic growth across the district.

Appendices to Report

- Appendix 1 – Employment & Skills Strategy
- Appendix 2 – Employment & Skills Delivery Plan

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. That Committee approves the Strategy as the Council's framework for supporting skills development, employability and employer engagement across West Lindsey.
2. That Committee endorses the Delivery Plan as the supporting implementation framework for the Strategy.
3. That Committee delegate authority to the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities, following consultation with the Chair of this committee, to make final presentational, factual and typographical amendments prior to publication.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Employment and Skills Strategy 2026–2030 sets out the Council's strategic approach to strengthening the local skills pipeline, improving pathways into work and ensuring residents can benefit from economic growth. The accompanying Delivery Plan translates the Strategy into a practical framework for partnership working, employer engagement and measurable outcomes.

1.2 The Strategy supports the Council's wider economic ambitions by focusing on the people, skills and labour market conditions needed to sustain growth. It places particular emphasis on young people, residents facing barriers to work, local employers experiencing recruitment and skills challenges, and the opportunities arising from priority sectors and major investments, including STEP Fusion.

1.3 Given the absence of dedicated programme funding, the proposed approach is intentionally focused on leadership, coordination and influence. The Council's role is to align partners, shape local priorities, support delivery through existing provision and maximise external opportunities and investment where these benefit West Lindsey residents and employers.

2 Background and Rationale

2.1 West Lindsey has strong economic potential but continues to experience challenges linked to workforce participation, skills gaps, access to training and recruitment pressures in key sectors. Rurality, transport barriers, health-related inactivity and uneven progression routes into skilled employment all affect residents' ability to access opportunity and employers' ability to recruit and retain staff.

2.2 The proposed Strategy responds to these challenges by setting out a focused, place-based and partnership-led approach. It complements the Council's Economic Growth Strategy 2025–2030 by ensuring that local people are better equipped to access jobs created through business growth, regeneration and inward investment. It provides a strategic framework for aligning employment and skills activity to emerging sector opportunities and long-term economic priorities.

3 Main Considerations

3.1 Strategic fit - the Strategy has been developed to support inclusive growth, strengthen workforce resilience and improve progression into employment across West Lindsey. It aligns with the Council's wider economic objectives and provides a clear policy basis for employment and skills activity over the period 2026–2030.

3.2 Delivery approach - the supporting Delivery Plan sets out priority actions, delivery partners, desirable outcomes, key performance indicators and wider success measures. This provides a practical implementation framework while recognising that delivery will depend on partnership working and alignment of existing resources rather than direct commissioning by the Council.

3.3 Target groups and sectors - the Strategy prioritises young people, adults facing barriers to work, residents with low or outdated skills, people affected by rural isolation, and employers within key growth and shortage sectors. It also identifies wider workforce reskilling and progression as an enabling theme to support long-term productivity and labour market resilience.

3.4 Major opportunity - the Strategy recognises STEP Fusion as a major long-term opportunity to shape higher-value skills development, employer engagement and workforce pathways. Early strategic alignment will help maximise local benefit and create stronger conditions for a lasting employment and skills legacy.

4 Governance and Next Steps

4.1 Subject to approval, the Strategy and Delivery Plan will provide the Council’s agreed framework for employment and skills activity through to 2030. Progress will be reviewed through relevant internal and partnership governance arrangements, with periodic review of priorities to reflect labour market conditions, delivery progress and external funding opportunities.

Alternative Options

Two alternative options were considered alongside the recommended approach. These are set out below to support Member consideration.

	Option	**Rational for not recommending**
1	Do not adopt the Employment and Skills Strategy and Delivery Plan currently.	This is not recommended because it would leave the Council without an agreed strategic framework for coordinating employment and skills activity, weaken the ability to align partners and priorities, and reduce confidence in the Council’s approach to securing local benefit from emerging opportunities.
2	Adopt the Strategy in principle but defer approval of the Delivery Plan pending further development.	This is not recommended because the Delivery Plan provides the practical implementation framework needed to translate the Strategy into action. Deferring approval would reduce clarity over delivery; delay coordinated implementation and weaken accountability for outcomes and progress

		monitoring.

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Adoption of the Strategy provides a clear policy framework for the Council's employment and skills activity and supports transparent decision-making and partnership engagement.

Financial:FIN/24/27/TPE/AP

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Staffing:

Existing officers within the West Lindsey Communities and Growth teams.

LGR implications:

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

A core purpose of the Strategy is to improve access to opportunity for residents who face the greatest barriers to work and progression. Delivery should therefore continue to apply an inclusive and accessible approach.

Data Protection Implications:

The strategy itself does not require the routine processing of personal data. However, some delivery activity may involve the collection or sharing of personal information relating to residents participating in employment and skills support. Any such activity must comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, with appropriate data sharing arrangements, privacy notices and impact assessments in place where required.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:
No direct environmental impacts arise from adoption of the report itself, although the Strategy supports workforce development linked to sectors including clean growth, retrofit and sustainable economic transition.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

No direct crime and disorder implications have been identified arising from adoption of the Strategy and Delivery Plan. Indirectly, the proposed focus on employability, progression and reducing barriers to work may support wider community wellbeing and help address some of the underlying factors associated with exclusion and disengagement.

Health Implications:

The Strategy and Delivery Plan is expected to have a positive indirect impact on health and wellbeing by improving access to skills, employability support and pathways into work.

Risk Assessment:

Without a clear strategic framework, there is a risk that employment and skills activity may become fragmented, reactive or insufficiently aligned to local economic need. There is also a risk that major investments and sector opportunities do not generate maximum local benefit.

This risk will be mitigated through the adoption of the Strategy and Delivery Plan, regular performance and governance review, continued partnership working, and ongoing alignment of activity to labour market intelligence, employer need and emerging opportunities.

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

West Lindsey Skills Insight Report (Nov 2023) - https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/jobs-volunteering-employment/employment-skills

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**	**x**	**No**	

Key Decision:

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

Investing In Our People:

Building Skills, Producing Jobs, Powering our Communities

West Lindsey Employment and Skills Strategy and Delivery Plan 2026–2030

Introduction

West Lindsey is committed to ensuring residents can live, learn and work locally by improving access to skills development, progressing clear routes into employment and strengthening relationships with employers.

This Employment and Skills Strategy sets' out how the Council will work with partners, businesses and communities to tackle skills gaps, increase economic participation and support inclusive growth across the district.

The Strategy complements and enables delivery of the Council's Economic Growth Strategy 2025–2030. While the Economic Growth Strategy focuses on driving business growth, investment and regeneration, this Strategy concentrates on equipping local people with the skills, confidence and opportunities needed to access and benefit from that growth.

In particular, it supports priority sector development and major investments such as STEP Fusion, ensuring that skills provision, employer engagement and employability support are aligned with West Lindsey's long-term economic ambitions.

Contents

About our District

- Population of 99,208
    - 16,329 are aged 0 to 15 years
    - 25,519 are aged over 65 years

West Lindsey is a large and predominantly rural district in Lincolnshire, made up of market towns, villages and dispersed communities. Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor provide important service, employment and community hubs, while much of the district's identity and economy is shaped by its rural landscape, heritage, land-based industries and strong sense of place.

The district has a population of just under 100,000 residents, with a growing older population alongside children, young people and working-age adults who will shape the future workforce. This creates both opportunities and challenges: supporting young people to see a future locally, helping adults to progress or retrain, and enabling residents of all ages to access learning, employment and wider support in ways that work for their lives and communities.

West Lindsey has a diverse local economy with strengths in manufacturing, engineering, construction, health and social care, logistics, land-based industries, visitor economy and business services. Major opportunities linked to clean growth, advanced manufacturing and STEP Fusion have the potential to create new employment pathways, raise aspirations and strengthen the district's long-term economic resilience.

However, residents and employers do not experience opportunity equally. Rurality, transport connectivity, digital access, health, confidence and the availability of local training can all affect whether people are able to participate in learning, enter employment or progress in work. Some employers also face persistent recruitment and skills challenges, particularly where specialist, technical or higher-level skills are needed.

Sources:

(1) State of the District Report – West Lindsey District Council

Our District in Number

West Lindsey Employment and Skills Baseline- 2024/25

1. Labour Market Overview (Resident-based)

Employment and Economic Activity

- Economic activity rate (ages 16–64): 80.0%
- Employment rate (ages 16–64): 80.0%
- Economic inactivity rate (ages 16–64): approx. 20%

West Lindsey's economic activity rate is slightly above the East Midlands average, reflecting a generally strong labour market, although there are significant variations between communities, particularly around rural accessibility and deprivation hotspots.
[nomisweb.co.uk]

Unemployment

- Model-based unemployment rate: 3.1%
- APS indicative unemployment rate: approx. 3.9%

Unemployment in West Lindsey remains lower than regional and national averages, though caution is advised due to small survey sample sizes at district level.
[nomisweb.co.uk], [plumplot.co.uk]

2. Young People and Participation

Young People (16–24) in Education, Employment or Training

- Estimated participation rate: c. 86–88%
- NEET rate (16–24): estimated 12–14%

While West Lindsey performs broadly in line with England overall, data indicates pockets of risk, particularly among:

- young people with SEND
- those living in rural or poorly connected areas
- those transitioning from education to work without clear progression routes

Local authority-level NEET data for 16–17 year olds indicates low headline NEET levels, but a persistent cohort of "not known" young people, representing disengagement risk.
[gov.uk], [data.youth...dation.org], [explore-ed...ice.gov.uk]

3. Skills and Qualifications

Qualification Levels

- Level 3 and above: lower than national average

- Higher-level technical and specialist skills: undersupply relative to demand

Evidence suggests:

- strong demand in health & care, manufacturing, engineering, construction and low-carbon energy
- gaps in technical, digital, engineering and supervisory skills
- progression from entry-level training into skilled employment is not always clear or sustained

This baseline reflects findings from the West Lindsey Skills Study and Nomis qualifications data. [west-lindsey.gov.uk], [nomisweb.co.uk]

4. Apprenticeships and Work-based Learning

- Apprenticeship starts (resident-based): increasing year-on-year
- Concentration at intermediate and advanced levels
- Lower participation at higher and degree-level apprenticeships, particularly in STEM subjects

Apprenticeship take-up is positive, but alignment with future skills demand (STEP Fusion, energy, advanced manufacturing) is at an early stage.[msn.com], [ons.gov.uk]

5. Employer Engagement and Workforce Demand

Employer Profile

- Dominated by SMEs
- Strong employment in:
  - manufacturing and engineering
  - health and social care
  - logistics and land-based industries

Baseline evidence shows:

- high vacancy churn in some sectors
- recruitment challenges linked to skills availability, pay, transport and shift patterns
- positive employer appetite to engage with skills solutions where coordination is led locally [west-lindsey.gov.uk]

6. Barriers to Employment

Identified baseline barriers include:

- Limited transport connectivity in rural areas
- Digital exclusion
- Health and long-term conditions
- Lack of confidence and prior negative experiences of the labour market

These factors contribute to economic inactivity and underemployment, despite relatively low headline unemployment. [west-lindsey.gov.uk]

7. STEP Fusion: Skills and Employment Baseline

Current Position (2024/25)

- STEP Fusion is in early delivery and design phases
- Local workforce pathways are emerging but not yet embedded
- Skills demand expected to rise significantly post-2030, particularly in:
  - engineering
  - digital and data
  - advanced manufacturing
  - construction
  - project management and systems integration

Baseline position:

- No established local STEP-specific workforce pipeline
- Skills infrastructure development underway but not yet mature
- Significant opportunity for early alignment to avoid future displacement

Our Themes

Skills Provision Aligned to Employer Demand	Youth Pathways and Early Intervention
• Employers report improved confidence in the readiness and suitability of the local workforce • Skills provision is responsive to labour market change, with outdated provision reduced or redesigned • Residents can access training that leads to clear and realistic progression route	• More young people see our district as a viable place to begin and build their careers • Transitions from education into work are smoother and less fragmented • Youth aspiration is raised to support young people to make informed choices about careers based on local opportunities
Removing Barriers to Employment	**Employer Engagement and Workforce Development**
• Employment support is coordinated around the individual rather than delivered in isolation • Residents who previously struggled to engage can sustain participation and progress • Fewer people repeating short-term interventions	• Employers take a leadership role in shaping skills activity rather than acting as end-users • Strong, ongoing relationships exist between employers, providers and the Council • Employers demonstrate increased commitment to workforce development and local recruitment
STEP Fusion Skills and Legacy	
• Local people are visibly prioritised within STEP Fusion skills and employment opportunities • Training infrastructure developed through STEP Fusion benefits wider sectors and communities • STEP Fusion leaves a lasting skills legacy beyond the lifetime of the programme	

Priority Groups

Residents:

- Children and young people
- Young adults (19–25), including those at risk of becoming NEET
- Adults furthest from the labour market
- People with disabilities or health conditions
- Residents with low or outdated skills
- Care leavers and other vulnerable groups
- Economically inactive residents seeking to re-enter employment
- Residents affected by rural isolation that limits access to training and employment

Local Employers:

- SMEs and larger employers in priority and growth sectors
- Employers experiencing persistent recruitment or skills shortages
- Employers seeking to upskill or retain their existing workforce
- Businesses engaging with STEP Fusion supply chains and opportunities

The strategy focuses on residents who face the greatest barriers to education, employment and progression, alongside local employers who play a key role in creating and sustaining jobs. Supporting both groups ensures that local people can access opportunities as they arise, while employers are better equipped to recruit, retain and develop a skilled workforce, particularly in priority and growth sectors.

Wider West Lindsey Workforce – enabling group

Residents already in employment who

- need skills to progress
- want to change sector

- need reskilling due to labour market change or technology

While not defined as a priority group, residents already in employment are critical to productivity, retention and sector transition. Supporting progression and reskilling strengthens both the existing workforce and future labour supply.

Priority Sectors

Delivery will be aligned to sectors with growth potential and skills shortages, including:

- Energy and clean growth (including STEP Fusion)
- Engineering and advanced manufacturing
- Construction and retrofit
- Health and social care
- Logistics and transport
- Digital and business services
- Land-based and Agri-tech industries
- Visitor economy
- Defence and security

These sectors align with the West Lindsey Economic Growth Strategy and have been prioritised based on a combination of current labour market demand, forecast growth, skills shortages and their importance to the West Lindsey economy. They reflect areas where there is strong potential to improve employment outcomes for residents, support business growth and maximise the local benefits of major investment such as STEP Fusion and the former RAF Scampton.

Focusing delivery on these sectors helps ensure that skills provision is aligned to real job opportunities, supports workforce resilience in essential services, and prepares residents for emerging and higher-value employment. This targeted approach also allows the Council to work more effectively with employers and providers, concentrating resources where they can achieve the greatest impact for both residents and the local economy.

A Whole System Approach

We recognise that we cannot deliver our strategy without support. To make a meaningful and lasting impact, we will work collaboratively with partners who have a common purpose. By taking a co-ordinated approach, we can maximise our collective knowledge, resources and create sustainable outcomes.

Further & Higher Education Providers	Employer Groups & Sector Bodies
Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE)	Combined & Local Authorities
Careers & Youth Services	Local Employers
Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)	Health Organisations
Business Networks	STEP Fusion Partners
Regional Skills Bodies	Schools
Funders	

Delivering the Strategy`

Our Delivery Plan explains what we will do to help achieve the outcomes of our strategy. By working in partnership and taking a place-based approach, the Council can maximise impact, reduce duplication and ensure that support leads to meaningful progression for residents and a workforce that meets the needs of local employers.

Key principles of our delivery will be:

- Partnership-led: Working with providers, employers, schools, colleges, DWP, the voluntary sector and regional bodies.
- Employer-informed: Training shaped by real workforce needs.
- Inclusive and accessible: Removing financial, practical and confidence barriers.
- Place-based: Designed around West Lindsey's communities and economy.
- Outcome-focused: Clear measures of impact, not just activity.

Governance and Review

As part of delivering the strategy, we will:

- Annual review of progress and priorities
- Have oversight through relevant partnership and internal governance arrangements
- Refresh the strategy in line with labour market change and funding opportunities

Funding the Strategy

In the absence of dedicated programme funding, delivery of this Strategy will focus on leadership, coordination and influence rather than direct commissioning. The Council will work closely with employers, education and training providers, the voluntary sector and national agencies to ensure any existing provision is aligned with local priorities, limits duplication and strengthens access to skills and employment opportunities for residents.

This approach reflects the Council's role as a facilitator and enabler within a complex employment and skills system, ensuring that existing investment delivers maximum benefit for West Lindsey without creating additional financial commitments in the approach to Local Government Re-organisation.

Delivery of this strategy will rely on influencing and aligning investment from growth-sector programmes led by partners such as GLCCA, Lincolnshire County Council and national agencies, alongside private-sector investment. In particular, the Council will seek to ensure that major growth and inward investment initiatives support local skills and training development, maximising benefits for West Lindsey residents and employers.

Contact Details

West Lindsey District Council

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Introduction

This delivery plan sets out how West Lindsey District Council will turn the ambitions of the Employment and Skills Strategy into focused, practical action. It provides a framework for working with employers, education and training providers, partners and communities to improve local skills provision, widen access to employment and help residents benefit from emerging opportunities across the district, including priority growth sectors and STEP Fusion. The plan is structured around core themes, each supported by actions, outcomes and measures that reflect the Council's role as an enabler, convenor and partner within the wider employment and skills system.

Action, Outcomes and Measures

The plan aligns skills and employability activity with the West Lindsey Economic Growth Strategy 2025–2030, supporting business growth, priority sectors and inclusive prosperity. Actions are linked to outcomes and measures so progress can be tracked across workforce readiness, employer engagement, employment progression and growth sector alignment.

Monitoring will focus on delivery, impact and evidence of progress over time, including:

- Outcomes from Council-led and Council-influenced activity
- Partner feedback and employer intelligence
- Case studies and qualitative evidence of impact

Communication and Engagement

We will commit to:

- Strengthening and broadening our engagement with existing and new partners through effective partnership working.
- Building on our existing relationships with partners and key stakeholders to deliver our shared ambition for employment and skills.
- Sharing our stories and learnings to demonstrate impact and to support and review of our work.

West Lindsey DISTRICT COUNCIL

Our Themes

Skills Provision Aligned to Employer Demand	**Youth Pathways and Early Intervention**
• Employers report improved confidence in the readiness and suitability of the local workforce • Skills provision is responsive to labour market change, with outdated provision reduced or redesigned • Residents can access training that leads to clear and realistic progression route	• More young people see our district as a viable place to begin and build their careers • Transitions from education into work are smoother and less fragmented • Youth aspiration is raised to support young people to make informed choices about careers based on local opportunities
Removing Barriers to Employment	**Employer Engagement and Workforce Development**
• Employment support is coordinated around the individual rather than delivered in isolation • Residents who previously struggled to engage can sustain participation and progress • Fewer people repeating short-term interventions	• Employers take a leadership role in shaping skills activity rather than acting as end-users • Strong, ongoing relationships exist between employers, providers and the Council • Employers demonstrate increased commitment to workforce development and local recruitment
STEP Fusion Skills and Legacy	
• Local people are visibly prioritised within STEP Fusion skills and employment opportunities • Training infrastructure developed through STEP Fusion benefits wider sectors and communities • STEP Fusion leaves a lasting skills legacy beyond the lifetime of the programme	

Skills Provision Aligned to Employer Demand

Outcomes	How we will measure impact
Employers report improved confidence in the readiness and suitability of the local workforce	• Number of residents completing accredited skills and training programmes • Percentage of training programmes aligned to recognised standards and priority sectors • Proportion of learners progressing into employment, apprenticeships or further training.
Skills provision is responsive to labour market change, with outdated provision reduced or redesigned	
Residents can access training that leads to clear and realistic progression route	

Key Actions	
1	Coordinate with training providers to ensure provision meets recognised standards and employer needs. (e.g. scoping the business case for local provision of higher-level growth sector linked skills provision, a trade school and entry level technical and vocational skills)
2	Use local labour market intelligence to shape commissioning and funding bids.
3	Promote flexible, bite-size training for adults.
4	Support upskilling and reskilling for residents affected by labour market change.

Youth Pathways and Early Intervention

Outcomes	How we will measure impact
Young people make informed choices about careers based on local opportunities	• Percentage of young people (16–24) in education, employment or training • Number of young people accessing apprenticeships, traineeships or supported internships • Number of children and young people participating in work experience and aspirational career activities
Transitions from education into work are smoother and less fragmented	
More young people see West Lindsey as a viable place to begin and build their careers	

Key Actions	
1	Expand work experience, sector encounters and employer talks in schools and colleges.
2	Support routes into apprenticeships, work placements and supported internships.
3	Collaborate with schools on careers education linked to local opportunities.
4	Promote local progression routes to retain young talent.

Removing Barriers to Employment

Outcomes	How we will measure impact
Employment support is coordinated around the individual rather than delivered in isolation	• Number of residents receiving targeted employability support • Percentage of participants overcoming identified barriers (e.g. transport, digital access, childcare) • Progression rates into employment or volunteering from support programmes
Residents who previously struggled to engage can sustain participation and progress	
Fewer people repeating short-term interventions	

Key Actions	
1	Provide targeted support for those facing multiple barriers (transport, childcare, digital access, health).
2	Work with commissioned services to offer wraparound employability support.
3	Promote inclusive recruitment practices with employers.
4	Support residents into volunteering and intermediate steps to employment.

Employer Engagement and Workforce Development

Outcomes	How we will measure impact
Employers take a leadership role in shaping skills activity rather than acting as end-users	• Number of employers actively engaged in employment and skills programmes • Number of employers contributing to training design, delivery or careers activity • Employer satisfaction with local skills provision and workforce preparedness
Strong, ongoing relationships exist between employers, providers and the Council	
Employers demonstrate increased commitment to workforce development and local recruitment	

Key Actions	
1	Strengthen employer networks and forums around key sectors.
2	Promote co-design of training and recruitment programmes.
3	Support SMEs to access skills funding and workforce support.
4	Encourage employer participation in schools, colleges and training delivery.

STEP Fusion Skills and Legacy

Outcomes	How we will measure impact
Local people are visibly prioritised within STEP Fusion skills and employment opportunities	• Delivery milestones achieved within the STEP Fusion skills collaborative business plan • Number of residents accessing STEP Fusion-linked training and pathways • Number of employers engaged in STEP Fusion skills activity
Training infrastructure developed through STEP Fusion benefits wider sectors and communities	
STEP Fusion leaves a lasting skills legacy beyond the lifetime of the programme	

Key Actions	
1	Play an active role in developing and delivering the STEP Fusion skills collaborative business plan.
2	Ensure residents can access pathways into STEP Fusion-related employment.
3	Align local training provision to future skills needs generated by the programme.
4	Secure long-term skills and employment legacy for West Lindsey.

Committee Thriving People	
Date 16 July 2026	

Subject: Community Grants Programme 2026-2028

Report by:	Sally Grindrod-Smith, Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities
Contact Officer:	Grant White, Head of Localities and Community Services

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval to establish a Community Grants Programme for 2026/27 and 2027/28, with a budget allocation of up to £4 million from Council reserves.

The programme will build on the Council's existing grant activity and provide four funding routes: the Councillor Initiative Fund, Community Action Fund, Community Facilities Fund and Community Environment Fund.

A formal review will take place when £2 million has been awarded, allowing Members to consider impact, demand and affordability before further delivery is confirmed.

The report provides further details of the structure of the programme including award values, application process and eligibility criteria.

Appendices to Report

- Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION(S):

(a) **That committee approve the delivery of a Community Grants Programme as detailed within this report.**

(b) That members recommend to Thriving Council committee to approve the allocation of up to £4,000,000 from the Reprioritisation (Investment for Growth) Reserve to deliver the Community Grants Programme across 2026/27 and 2027/28.

(c) That members recommend to Thriving Council committee to delegate authority to approve spend of the £4,000,000 to Thriving People Committee, with a formal review when £2,000,000 has been awarded or during 2027/28 Q1, whichever is sooner.

(d) That members approve the continuation of the Councillor Initiative Fund in 2027/28. £36,000 funding from the Community Grant Scheme Reserve to be approved under delegation by the Chief Finance Officer (S151).

(e) That committee approve the delivery of the Community Environment Fund. £50,000 funding from the Environment & Climate Change reserve to be approved under delegation by the Chief Finance Officer (S151).

(f) That members recommend to Thriving Council committee to approve the allocation of up to £86,400 from the Community Grant Scheme Reserve for staff costs to deliver the Community Grants Programme across 2026/27 and 2027/28.

1. Introduction

1.1 Since June 2023, the Council has operated a Community Grants Programme made up of various funds. The grant funds operated by the Council have become well established with communities, parish and town councils, voluntary and community organisations and other eligible applicants across the district.

1.2 Between June 2023 and February 2026, the programme awarded 130 grants with a combined value of £1,355,442. Further awards from the previous programme are still being progressed, so these figures will continue to increase.

1.3 The programme has supported a broad range of activity, including community buildings, local activities, feasibility work, cultural activity, sport and physical activity, environmental projects and projects supporting health and wellbeing. It has also provided an established brand and delivery route which communities now recognise and understand.

1.4 The continued delivery of a community grants programme will directly support community projects and activity that will contribute towards the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.

1.5 The Council's Community Grants Programme has already demonstrated strong demand and clear community value. Continuing to enhance the programme for 2026 to 2028 will enable the Council to support more practical, community-led projects across West Lindsey, maintain momentum from the previous grant funding work and provide a clear route to invest in community projects.

2. Community Grants Programme 2026-2028

2.1 The Community Grants Programme will start in the 2026/27 financial year and run until the end of 2027/28, subject to available budget.

2.3 Recognising that we have an established community grants programme brand with distinct funds for revenue or capital projects, the programme will be delivered through four funds.

2.4 Each of the four funds is designed to meet different community and project needs:

Fund	Purpose	Award Values
Councillor Initiative Fund	Small grants for community activities and projects supported through Ward Councillor allocations.	Up to £1,000 per project.
Community Action Fund	Revenue grants for community activities and projects aligned to Corporate Plan objectives.	£1,000 to £20,000 with exceptional strategically important projects considered up to £50,000.
Community Facilities Fund	Capital grants for community facilities and assets which provide wider community benefit.	£1,000 to £75,000 with exceptional strategically important projects considered up to £100,000.
Community Environment Fund	Small grants for community environment, biodiversity, tree planting, green space and carbon reduction projects.	Small awards of £200 to £1,000 Larger awards of £1,000 to £5,000.

2.5 The following graphic helps to visualise the four funds making up the community grants programme:

2.6 To support organisations seeking grant funding, a community funding front-door approach is taken. Organisations are able to complete a short expression of interest form or contact officers directly with their funding request and are then directed to the most appropriate fund.

2.7 During the application process, officers continue to work closely with organisations offering advice and support.

3. Fund Details

3.1 **Councillor Initiative Fund**

The Councillor Initiative Fund is currently operating and has a budget to run until the end of the 2026/27 financial year. This report proposes continuing this fund until the end of the 2027/28 financial year which would align to the delivery timeline of the entire community grants programme.

3.2 The existing application process and eligibility criteria would be maintained, with an additional £1,000 allocation for each Councillor for 2027/28, creating a total additional allocation of £36,000.

3.3 **Community Action Fund**

The Community Action Fund will provide revenue grants for community activities and projects. Existing eligibility criteria will be maintained, with applications expected to align to relevant Corporate Plan objectives such as cultural activity, environmental impact, health and wellbeing, neighbourhood planning, sport and physical activity, skills and support for vulnerable residents.

3.4 The minimum grant value will be £1,000 and the maximum grant value will be £20,000, with no match funding requirement. Applications above the maximum may be considered by exception for strategically important projects up to £50,000.

3.5 **Community Facilities Fund**

The Community Facilities Fund will provide capital grants for community facilities and assets. This can include community buildings, village halls, play areas, sports facilities, green spaces, public realm, churches and schools.

3.6 The minimum grant value will be £1,000 and the maximum grant value will be £75,000, with no match funding requirement. Applications above the maximum may be considered by exception for strategically important projects up to £100,000.

3.7 **Community Environment Fund**

The Community Environment Fund will provide small grants for community environment and carbon reduction projects. Along with supporting Corporate Plan objectives, this fund will specifically support the aims of the Council's Environment and Sustainability Strategy 2024. The fund will support activity such as energy efficiency, carbon reduction, biodiversity and nature recovery, tree planting, green spaces and climate engagement.

3.8 The fund will deliver small and larger grant awards. It is anticipated most awards will be small grant awards. Small awards will be between £200 and £1,000. Larger awards will be between £1,000 and £5,000. There will be no match funding requirement.

4. Eligibility Criteria

4.1 The Council has well established eligibility criteria for community grant funds to ensure effective and safe delivery of grant funding to community projects. The following are key eligibility criteria used for Council community grant funds.

4.2 **What community grants cannot be used for:**

- Anything illegal
- Support to lobbying or campaign groups
- Anything that will bring the Council into disrepute
- Anything party political, including supporting political organisations
- Anything contrary to the Council's financial regulations or Council policies
- Anything that an organisation or local authority has a statutory obligation to deliver
- Projects based/operating outside of West Lindsey unless they provide significant benefit to communities within West Lindsey
- Anything that has already been spent or committee before receiving a grant (known as retrospective funding)

4.3 **Eligible organisations**

The following organisations can apply to funds within the community grants programme:

- Business*
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Constituted Community Group
- Faith Organisation*
- Parish Council
- Parish Meeting
- Public Sector Organisation
- School or Academy*
- Social Enterprise
- Town Council

* Projects delivered by these organisations must be for wider community access and benefit and not to support normal school/business activity or to promote faith or religion.

4.4 **Organisation requirements**

To be eligible for funding, organisations must have the following:

- Constitution or similar governing document (excluding Parish/Town Councils)
- Bank account in the same name as the organisation
- Relevant policies/safeguards if the project involves children, young people or vulnerable adults

During the application process we also request additional supporting information such as quotes, data, letters of support, confirmation of other funding and photo/video.

4.5 **Grant Funding Agreement**

Grant funding agreements are used with all community grant funds. Grant funding agreements provide standard terms and conditions along with any specific conditions for individual grant awards.

5. Grant Award Process

5.1 The community grants programme will use established review practice and introduce additional Ward Member input as part of the assessment process.

5.2 The following review process will be used for the Community Action Fund, Community Facilities Fund and Community Environment Fund:

1. **Eligibility Check**
   Officers will check eligibility of the organisation and project against the relevant fund criteria. Ward Member(s) will be notified of new applications.

2. **Application Scoring**
   Officers will score applications against project criteria and make a recommendation.

3. **Ward Member Review**
   Application form, completed scoring and officer recommendation will be shared with Ward Member(s) for comments and input, except where there is a conflict of interest.

4. **Panel Review**
   The Community Grants Panel (operating as a Member Working Group supported by officers) will make a final decision on grant awards, considering officer recommendations and Ward Member input.

5.3 Community Grant Panel meetings will take place at a frequency to meet the demands of the programme. This can be monthly meetings to ensure applications are reviewed promptly and to support quick delivery of community projects.

5.4 The application scoring phase will include consideration of key areas including:

- Management & Deliverability
- Environment Impact
- Project Accessibility
- Community Benefit
- Consultation and Evidence of Need
- Projects Costs and Funding
- Sustainability
- Plans, Priorities and Strategies

5.5 The existing award decision-making process for the Councillor Initiative Fund will continue to be used.

6. Geographic Scope

6.1 As part of establishing the programme, other funding programmes and future council investment have been considered. The main focus of the Community Action Fund and Community Facilities Fund will be to support projects delivered in areas outside of Gainsborough, recognising the separate Pride in Place Programme for Gainsborough and other future Council investment.

6.2 There may be projects that deliver some activity within Gainsborough where wider resident access and district benefit can be demonstrated. For example, a community group may use a venue in Gainsborough but be able to demonstrate impact for residents from other locations.

6.3 The Community Environment Fund will be available across the whole of West Lindsey recognising its role in supporting the Environment and Sustainability Strategy district wide.

7. Finance

7.1 To deliver the Community Grants Programme, this report proposes allocation of budget from Council reserves. This section of the report details the specific allocations for approval per fund.

7.2 **Councillor Initiative Fund**

To continue delivery of this fund to the end of 2027/28, an allocation of £36,000 from the Community Grant Scheme Reserves is proposed.

7.3 **Community Action Fund and Community Facilities Fund**

The proposed budget allocation for these funds will be delivered in two stages:

Stage	Proposal

Stage 1 – Initial Delivery	Allocation of up to £4 million from Council reserves
Stage 2 – On-going Delivery	Review when £2 million has been awarded

At the point of awarding £2 million from these funds or by 2027/28 Q1, a review of impact, external factors and the Council's financial position will be completed. The review will inform the decision to continue, pause or end delivery of these funds.

7.4 **Community Environment Fund**

To deliver this fund, an allocation of £50,000 from the Environment and Climate Change Reserve is proposed.

7.5 The following summarises the proposed budget allocations:

Fund	Source	Amount
Councillor Initiative Fund	Community Grant Scheme Reserve	£36,000
Community Action Fund and Community Facilities Fund	Reprioritisation (Investment for Growth) Reserve	£4,000,000
Community Environment Fund	Environment & Climate Change Reserve	£50,000
Resources	Community Grant Scheme Reserve	£86,400
	TOTAL	**£4,172,400**

8. Resources

8.1 The scale of the proposed community grants programme will require additional delivery capacity within the Council's Localities and Community Service. To successfully deliver the programme officers will need to provide active promotion, applicant support, eligible assessment, project scoring, panel administration, payment processing, monitoring, evaluation and impact reporting.

8.2 It is proposed that the Community Grant Scheme Reserve is used to support staff resourcing within Localities and Community Services. Up to £86,400 will be allocated to support staff resource costs. This represents an 18 month fixed-term post, at the top of band 9.

8.3 This approach will help ensure the programme has sufficient officer capacity and resilience to make it accessible to applicants, managed effectively and delivered within timescales.

9. Communication and Marketing

9.1 A communications and marketing plan will be developed to support the launch and delivery of the community grants programme. The primary aim will be to ensure eligible organisations are aware of the funding available, understand the eligibility criteria and have sufficient information to submit good quality applications.

9.2 Promotion will include using channels such as the Council' website, social media, parish/town council newsletter, resident newsletter and voluntary & community sector forums. Officers will attend external events as appropriate to further promote the programme.

9.3 Launch activity will include online or in-person briefing sessions where potential applicants can attend to learn about the programme criteria, application process and ask project specific questions.

9.4 On-going communication will be used during delivery of the programme to share successfully projects, demonstrate community impact and encourage geographic reach.

10. Timescale and Launch

10.1 Subject to committee approval, the community grants programme will launch in August 2026. This will include publication of fund criteria, application process and initial communications.

10.2 The final closing date for applications will be in November 2027, subject to remaining budget. The programme may close earlier if all funds are awarded.

11. Alternative Options

	Option	**Rational for not recommending**
1	Do not deliver a community grants programme.	Without a continuation of a wider community grants programme, the council will not be able to support community project delivery which can

		contribute towards Corporate Plan objectives. The benefits and community impact from community grant funding would not be realised. Community projects in West Lindsey may not be able to proceed without funding support from the Council. Alternative sources of funding can be limited.
2	Deliver the Community Grants Programme with different funds compared to those proposed in this report.	The proposed funds in this report build on the grant programme brand already established since 2023. The funds proposed allow for various community projects to be supported with appropriate governance processes. The funds proposed in this report have already been delivered so the processes, governance and working knowledge of their delivery is already in-place. This enables an immediate launch and fast-paced delivery of the programme.
3	Commission an external organisation to deliver a Community Grants Programme.	Due to the budget value being proposed any external commissioning of programme delivery would require extensive planning for a procurement process. Any procurement process would add additional setup time to delivering community grant awards. It is expected the costs of external commissioning for the scale of this programme would exceed the cost implications of additional staff resource proposed in this report. This may reduce the total amount of budget available to issue as grant awards to projects. The Council has staff with experience of community grant programme delivery. External commissioning may lead to a loss of engagement and relationship development with organisations.

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The community grants programme will be delivered in accordance with the Council's constitution, financial rules and subsidy control requirements. Standard grant funding agreements will be used for all grant awards and will be reviewed to ensure they are proportionate to the value, nature and risk of projects supported.

Financial: FIN/59/27/TPE/AP

Approval to use earmarked reserves is subject to release by:

- The Chief Finance Officer (Section 151) - Delegated power to approve spending up to a value of £50,000.
- Thriving Council Committee – Must approve spend greater than £50,000

The following proposals require recommendation to Thriving Council Committee for approval:

a. The council agreed to utilise £8m from reserves for member priorities. This report is requesting usage of £4m from this reprioritisation allocation for the delivery of the Community Action Fund and Community Facilities Fund across 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Description	£
Allocation Approved for Reprioritisation	8,000,000
RIBA Stage 3 Alliance Leisure	(273,700)
Community Grants Programme 2026-2028	(4,000,000)
Remaining Balance:	**3,726,300**

b. Approval of the allocation of up to £86,400 from the Community Grant Scheme Reserve for staff costs to deliver the Community Grants Programme across 2026/27 and 2027/28. This is based on an 18 month fixed term post at band 9.

The following proposals may be approved under delegation by Chief Finance Officer (Section 151):

a. The continuation of the Councillor Initiative Fund in 2027/28, £36,000 to be funded from the Community Grant Scheme Reserve.

b. The delivery of the Community Environment Fund, £50,000 to be funded from the Environment & Climate Change Reserve.

Staffing:

For the delivery of the programme, it is proposed to allocate funds to support staff resourcing within Localities and Community Services. Officers will work with People Services and the Leadership Team to establish the most appropriate resourcing options.

Any staffing arrangement will be developed in consultation with Human Resources, Leadership Team and Finance and will follow relevant Council's procedures. Where fixed-term posts are created, the duration, funding source and end of contract implications will be clearly identified before recruitment.

LGR implications:

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

The community grants programme will be delivered in accordance with the Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy. Organisations applying for funding will be required to demonstrate how their project provides community benefit and will be accessible to the communities they intend to support.

Grant funding agreements include appropriate requirements to ensure organisations funded meet relevant standards.

Data Protection Implications:

Information collected whilst delivering the community grants programme will be managed securely and in line with the Council's policies. A Communities Privacy Notice is in place which references grants for community projects and services.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

The community grants programme will provide direct opportunities to support community-led projects that can have an impact on environment, biodiversity, nature recovery, tree planting, carbon reduction and climate engagement.

Specifically, the Community Environment Fund will focus on this area of impact.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

There are no direct implications, however some funded projects may have a direct or indirect impact on reducing crime, disorder or anti-social behaviour. Examples may include projects that provide youth activity, community cohesion, support for vulnerable residents, safety/security improvements and improved public spaces.

Health Implications:
There are no direct implications, however some funded projects may have a direct or indirect impact on health and wellbeing. This may include projects that support physical activity, access to community facilities, social connection, volunteering, cultural activities, access to green spaces and support for vulnerable residents. Health and wellbeing outcomes will be captured during any project evaluation work.

Risk Assessment:
Not applicable.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
Not applicable.

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**	**X**	**No**	

Thriving People Committee
Date: Thursday 16th July

Subject: Thriving People Thematic Business Plan Progress Report – Q1 2026/27

Report by:	Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Strategy)
Contact Officer:	Rachael Hughes Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Strategy) rachael.hughes@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Executive Summary:

The report provides an update for deliverables, performance and strategic risks aligned to the Thriving People aim of West Lindsey District Council's Corporate Plan.

Appendices to Report

- Thriving People Thematic Business Plan Progress Report – Q1 2026/27

RECOMMENDATION(S):

(a) That the Thriving People committee assess the aligned deliverables, performance and strategic risks of the associated Corporate Plan aim.

(b) That the Thriving People committee approves the Quarter One Thematic Business Plan report.

Alternative Options

Not applicable

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal: Not applicable

Financial: Not applicable

Staffing: Not applicable

LGR implications: Not applicable

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: Not applicable

Data Protection Implications: Not applicable

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: Not applicable

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: Not applicable

Health Implications: Not applicable

Risk Assessment:
Not applicable

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
Not applicable

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**

THEMATIC BUSINESS PLAN QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT - THRIVING PEOPLE

“Supporting people and communities to thrive by addressing inequality, tackling homelessness, improving housing conditions, boosting skills, adapting homes, improving health and wellbeing, and supporting those most in need.”

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: CHAMPION HEALTH, WELLBEING, CULTURE AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Corporate Plan Objectives:

1. Working effectively with our partners to deliver the districts Health & Wellbeing Strategy and to ensure equity of access to services
2. Delivering our emerging Sport & Active Leisure Strategy to increase district wide opportunities for participation in sport and leisure activities
3. Delivering our Cultural Strategy to increase district wide opportunities for participation in cultural events and activities

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

Corporate Plan Objectives:

1. Delivering our emerging Sport & Active Leisure Strategy to increase district wide opportunities for participation in sport and leisure activities
2. Promoting social capital and cohesion
3. Reducing overall inequality across the district and supporting our identified communities at risk through specific area action plans
4. Empowering communities to enhance their resilience to emergency events by promoting effective and robust local emergency planning

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: ENABLE INDEPENDENT LIVING, IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS & SUPPORT VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

Corporate Plan Objectives:

1. Support vulnerable residents to live independently at home by delivering services that promote dignity, choice and belonging
2. Preventing homelessness through early intervention and targeted support
3. Improving housing standards by developing and delivering our response to Private Rented Sector housing reforms

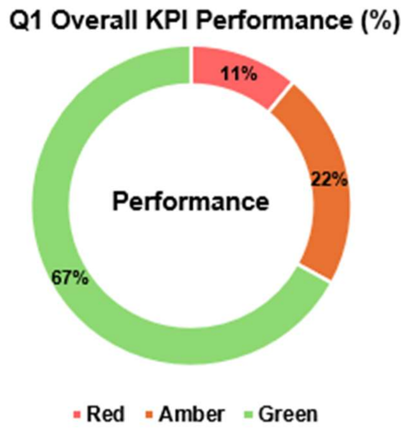
CORPORATE PLAN AIM: BOOSTING SKILLS AND PATHWAYS INTO EMPLOYMENT

Corporate Plan Objectives:

1. Working collaboratively to ensure appropriate skills training and provision is in place Preventing homelessness through early intervention and targeted support
2. Delivering our Employment and Skills Strategy to strengthen opportunities for residents to gain the skills and confidence needed for sustainable employment
3. Increasing pathways into sustainable employment
4. Playing a key role in developing the STEP Fusion skills collaborative business plan

QUARTER ONE 2026/27 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OVERVIEW

PERFORMANCE BY SERVICE AREA				Red		Amber		Green	
	Not reported Q1	Statistic	KPI	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Trinity Arts Centre	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	100%
Culture	0	2	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Communities	0	2	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support	0	0	2	-	-	1	50%	1	50%
Home Choices	0	1	4	1	25%	1	25%	2	50%
Homes Health and Wellbeing	0	0	2	-	-	-	-	2	100%
Total	**0**	**6**	**9**	**1**	**-**	**2**	**-**	**6**	**-**
Previous Quarter Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**



PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – QUARTER ONE 2026/2027

The Performance Improvement Plan focuses on measures that have underperformed for two or more consecutive quarters. It provides additional context on the reasons for underperformance, associated impacts, and the actions in place to drive improvement, including expected timescales.

Portfolio / Service	Measure	Reason	Impact	When will we see an improvement?
Homelessness	**PPL-M12 - % of households spending more than 42 nights in B&B accommodation**	• Due to the unsuitability of temporary accommodation in Gainsborough for some cases. • Since the only temporary accommodation is located in the town, if someone cannot be accommodated in Gainsborough, the only alternative is to use B&B accommodation. •The Homelessness Code of Guidance states it is not acceptable for anyone to spend more than 42 nights in B&B accommodation. For this reason, the target for this measure was set at zero.	•Increased use of B&B accommodation. •B&B accommodation is only considered suitable for short-term use, due to the lack of amenities. •Financial impact to the Council for the use of B&B accommodation.	•The temporary accommodation/Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) project is underway to ensure the Council are delivering within the code of guidance to have this measure at zero.

Actions – what can we do to improve?

- End of financial year 2026/2027
- Completion of all five properties as part of this project has now occurred and the final lease agreements to hand the properties over are being finalised.
- Lease agreements on-going, with them expected to be handed over to Framework by the end July 2026

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KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR – QUARTER ONE 2026/2027

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: CHAMPION HEALTH, WELLBEING, CULTURE AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

					Preceding four quarters				2026/27	
Service Area	**Ref**	**Key Performance Indicator**	**Perspective**	**Q1 Target**	**Q1 25/26**	**Q2 25/26**	**Q3 25/26**	**Q4 25/26**	**Q1 26/27**	**Trend**
Trinity Arts Centre	PPL-M01	Cinema audience figures as a % of capacity	More is better	Stat	15%	7%	17%	9%	**8%**	↓
Trinity Arts Centre	PPL-M02	Live theatre audience figures as a % of capacity	More is better	60%	71%	80%	70%	83%	**65%**	↓
Culture	PPL-M03	Audience satisfaction score from legacy events (go-festival, illuminate, Christmas lights and Wordfest)	More is better	Stat	No data	No data	No data	No data	**4.6**	N/A
Culture	PPL-M04	Number of visitors to legacy events (go-festival, illuminate, Christmas lights and Wordfest)	More is better	Stat	No data	No data	No data	No data	**4,352**	N/A

QUARTER ONE PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY:

PPL-M02: Performance for live theatre audience figures as a percentage of capacity remained above target during the quarter, although lower than typical levels. Attendance averaged 53% in April and 60% in May before increasing to 81% in June. The lower performance at the start of the quarter reflects a reduced programme of live events, as the team focused on maintaining core operations and ensuring a safe, high-quality experience for audiences attending scheduled performances.

PPL-M03/M04: During June, the Cultural Team delivered three events: GO Festival Market Rasen, GO Festival Gainsborough and Welton WordFest. The events attracted an estimated combined footfall of 4,352 attendees. Feedback collected through QR codes and online surveys reported an average audience satisfaction score of 4.6 out of 5 across all three events.

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

					Preceding four quarters				2026/27	
Service Area	**Ref**	**Key Performance Indicator**	**Perspective**	**Q1 Target**	**Q1 25/26**	**Q2 25/26**	**Q3 25/26**	**Q4 25/26**	**Q1 26/27**	**Trend**
Communities	PPL-M05	% of identified communities that have their own emergency plan	More is better	Stat	No data	No data	No data	No data	**62.5%**	N/A
Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support	PPL-M06	End to end processing times (days)	Less is better	5	4	4	4	3	**4**	↓
Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support	PPL-M07	Claims older than 50 calendar days	Less is better	6	4	4	6	4	**7**	↓

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: ENABLE INDEPENDENT LIVING, IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS & SUPPORT VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

					Preceding four quarters				2026/27	
Service Area	**Ref**	**Key Performance Indicator**	**Perspective**	**Q1 Target**	**Q1 25/26**	**Q2 25/26**	**Q3 25/26**	**Q4 25/26**	**Q1 26/27**	**Trend**
Home Choices	PPL-M08	% of homelessness approaches with positive outcomes	More is better	75%	83%	85%	88%	80%	**77%**	↓
Home Choices	PPL-M09	% utilisation of temporary leased accommodation	More is better	75%	45%	95%	81%	86%	**68%**	↓
Home Choices	PPL-M10	% of households spending more than 56 nights in Temporary leased accommodation	Less is better	40%	19%	7%	36%	53%	**16%**	↑
Home Choices	PPL-M11	Total number of households in temporary leased/B&B accommodation	Less is better	Stat	68	74	85	122	**89**	Stat

					Preceding four quarters				2026/27	
Service Area	**Ref**	**Key Performance Indicator**	**Perspective**	**Q1 Target**	**Q1 25/26**	**Q2 25/26**	**Q3 25/26**	**Q4 25/26**	**Q1 26/27**	**Trend**
Home Choices	PPL-M12	% of households spending 42 nights or more in B&B accommodation	Less is better	0%	17%	12%	26%	30%	**30%**	→
Homes, Health and Wellbeing	PPL-M13	The average number of working days from DFG referral to completion of works	Less is better	120	117	110	106	105	**102**	↑
Homes, Health and Wellbeing	PPL-M14	% of DFG referrals completed within 120 working days	More is better	50%	46%	66%	69%	67%	**75%**	↑
Communities	PPL-M15	Number of completed target hardening referrals completed	N/A	Stat	No data	No data	No data	No data	**10**	N/A

QUARTER ONE PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY:

PPL- M09: The utilisation of temporary leased accommodation has been impacted this quarter, despite an increase in provision from five to seven units. A number of challenges relating to repairs, maintenance and void periods have reduced utilisation levels below the desired target. Work is ongoing to implement a waiting list to reduce sign-up times and to ensure repairs are completed as quickly as possible.

PPL-M13/14: Demand for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) continues to rise, alongside an increasing complexity of cases. This is placing growing pressure on the available budget and is likely to result in a need to temporarily hold applications to avoid overspend. Careful management is required to strike a balance between minimising delays to essential adaptations and ensuring financial risk to West Lindsey remains controlled.

In addition, a number of referrals require works that exceed current mandatory grant parameters. A process is being developed to assess and manage these cases, ensuring that discretionary funding can be considered in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been exhausted.

KEY DELIVERABLES PROGRESS UPDATE – QUARTER ONE 2026/2027

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: CHAMPION HEALTH, WELLBEING, CULTURE AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Ref	Key Deliverable	Head of Service	Status	Confidence	Commentary
PPL-D01 Project	**Health Centre Feasibility Study.** *To address the urgent need for improved healthcare services in Gainsborough by establishing a new General Practitioner (GP) service to cater for the growing population and current demand.*	J Makinson Sanders	Healthy	High	Stage 2: Feasibility study due to be presented Thriving People Committee 16th July.
PPL-D02 Project	**Changing Places.** *Development of an approved changing places facility in Gainsborough and assessment of opportunities of provision in other areas of the district.*	G Reevell	Healthy	High	Stage 3: The tender process successfully completed and the contract awarded. Contract meeting held in June, with fortnightly progress meetings scheduled, marking the transition into the delivery phase.
PPL-D03 Project	**Housing related projects (Greater Lincs Pipeline & Local Needs Assessment).** *To strengthen the Council's strategic housing position through two linked workstreams; contributing to the Greater Lincolnshire Housing Pipeline to support regional planning and investment and delivering a robust Local Housing Needs Assessment to inform policy, development decisions, and future housing delivery.*	S Elvin	Healthy	High	Stage 1: Participated in GLCCA housing strategy and pipeline, awaiting publication of prioritised list of sites. Completed review of Housing Zone and Housing Delivery Plan. GLCCA Brownfield Land Fund opens for applications 29 June 2026, bids to be made to seek funding. Housing Needs Assessment update commissioned by Local Plans Team to inform review of Local Plan Policies.
PPL-D05 Project	**Leisure Centre Feasibility Study.** *To evaluate the future of leisure provision in the district, including the feasibility of refurbishing, replacing, or reconfiguring existing leisure*	C Thornhill	Healthy	Concerns	Stage 2: Core elements of RIBA 3 to be presented to concurrent meeting of Thriving People and Thriving Council (date to be confirmed) with recommendation to proceed to RIBA 4.

Ref	Key Deliverable	Head of Service	Status	Confidence	Commentary
	centre facilities at Gainsborough Leisure Centre.				
PPL-D35 Project	**Review of facilities at Market Rasen.** *To evaluate the future of leisure provision at Market Rasen Leisure Centre.*	C Thornhill	N/A	N/A	Work is underway to scope the requirements for the refurbishment of West Lindsey Leisure Centre as a priority. At an appropriate time, enhancement opportunities will then be considered for the Market Rasen Leisure Centre, with options brought forward for consideration and decision.
PPL-D06 Project	**Trinity Arts Centre Feasibility Study.** *To assess the long-term viability, development potential, and investment requirements for the Trinity Arts Centre, ensuring it remains a vibrant, financially sustainable cultural asset for the district*	C Thornhill	Healthy	Concerns	Stage 2: Funding for capital works identified and subsequent applications to be submitted over the next quarter.
PPL-D04 Strategy	**Develop and deliver Sport & Physical Activity Strategy.** *To create and implement a district-wide Sport and Physical Activity Strategy that promotes health, wellbeing, participation, and community cohesion.*	G White	N/A	N/A	Delivered: Sport & Physical Activity Strategy and the Active Together Action Plan was approved at Prosperous Communities Committee in March 2026. As such, this action is considered complete and can be removed from the Thematic Business Plan.
PPL-D36 Strategy	**Deliver Sport & Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan.** *Delivery of the Sport & Physical Activity Strategy Action Plan to deliver the aims of the strategy.*	G White	N/A	N/A	Approved at Prosperous Communities Committee in March 2026. On-going development work supporting sports clubs and groups across West Lindsey. School Games delivery continuing in 2026/27 with additional funding awarded to the Council from Sport England.
PPL-D07 Strategy	**Update the cultural programme to support delivery of the cultural strategy.** *Develop a cultural programme that reflects local*	C Thornhill	N/A	N/A	Enhanced cultural programme now in delivery. £100k Arts Council England submission planned for end of July 2026 to support delivery.

Ref	Key Deliverable	Head of Service	Status	Confidence	Commentary
	identity, supports creative industries, and enhances community participation and wellbeing across the district, and develop a strategic approach to lever in funds from sponsors to assist in the delivery of cultural activities				
PPL-D08 Strategy	**Develop cultural outreach plan** *To design a district-wide cultural outreach plan that expands access to arts and culture, strengthens community participation, and supports cultural inclusion across all localities*	C Thornhill	N/A	N/A	An initial draft of the operational workplan is being developed, incorporating learning from the completion of the GO and WordFest series.

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	Status	Confidence	Commentary
PPL-D09 Project	**Youth Provision.** *Conduct a feasibility study for youth provision facilities within the district*	G White	N/A	N/A	Currently being scoped.
PPL-D10 Project	**Village Halls and Community Facilities.** *Identify a programme of works to ensure the long-term sustainability of village halls and community facilities to be supported through grant funding opportunities.*	G White	Healthy	High	Stage 1: Community Grants Programme paper due to be presented Thriving People Committee 16th July.
PPL-D11 Strategy	**Refresh the Communities at Risk Strategy.** *Refresh the Strategy to ensure it reflects current needs, emerging risks, and the Council's ambition for prevention, resilience and targeted support.*	G White	N/A	N/A	An initial officer review of the strategy has commenced, with wider stakeholder engagement scheduled for quarter two and quarter three of 2026/27. A refreshed strategy and associated action plans are expected to be presented to committee in quarter four of 2026/27.

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	Status	Confidence	Commentary
PPL-D12 BaU	**Access to high-speed broadband.** *To improve digital connectivity across the district by supporting the expansion of high-speed broadband infrastructure, reducing digital exclusion, and enabling residents and businesses to benefit from modern digital services. This is dependent on the extension of current fixed-term contract.*	G White	N/A	N/A	WLDC-provided Community Wi-Fi hotspots are currently being delivered, with completion expected in quarter three of 2026/27.
PPL-D13 BaU	**Supporting the Armed Forces community.** *Support the delivery of the Armed Forces Community Covenant*	G White	N/A	N/A	Ongoing officer representation is maintained at Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership meetings and events. Funding has been secured for 2026/27 to support the Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer post, hosted by North Kesteven District Council.
PPL-D15 Policy/ funding initiative	**Deliver Communities at Risk Action Plans.** *Develop and deliver targeted action plans that respond to identified communities at risk.*	G White	N/A	N/A	Action Plans will be developed following the adoption of a new Communities at Risk Strategy. Linked to PPL-D11.
PPL-D35 BaU	**Parish Forums.** *Continue to engage with Parish and Town Councils across the district, including an annual programme of district wide Parish forums.*	G White	N/A	N/A	Parish Forum events are currently being organised for 2026/27, with delivery planned for quarter two and quarter three.

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: ENABLE INDEPENDENT LIVING, IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS & SUPPORT VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	Status	Confidence	Commentary
PPL-D14 BaU	**Review the approach to homelessness services.** *Review the allocation of funding and work with partners to understand how homelessness services will be funded in the future.*	S Elvin	N/A	N/A	Approach to Homelessness paper agreed at Prosperous Communities Committee in March 2026. These will be monitored for progress and updated where required. Next steps to adopt and deliver the required action plan.
PPL-D16 BaU	**Develop and deliver the councils response to the Renters' Rights Act 2025.** *To ensure the Council is fully prepared for, compliant with, and proactive in implementing the Renters' Rights Act 2025.*	A Gray	N/A	N/A	The Renters Reform Act came into effect on 1 May 2026, and the Council has subsequently reviewed and approved the relevant policies in response. To date, there has been limited engagement from tenants regarding the changes. The Council has agreed to recruit a Tenant Liaison Officer on a two-year fixed-term basis to strengthen its capacity in this area. The broader implications of the Act are still emerging and will continue to be monitored.

CORPORATE PLAN AIM: BOOSTING SKILLS AND PATHWAYS INTO EMPLOYMENT

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	Status	Confidence	Commentary
PPL-D17 Strategy	**Review the Employment and Skills Strategy and action plan** *To ensure the strategy is relevant and effective, local needs are identified and stay aligned with the changing skills and employment landscape.*	G White	N/A	N/A	Workshop took place in June 2026 with Employment & Skills Partnership members. Updated strategy and delivery plan due to be presented Thriving People Committee 16th July.
PPL-D18 BaU	**Start Small Dream Big - raising aspirations for young people** *To connect young learners with the world of work in a cost-effective and meaningful way through aspirational assemblies.*	G White	N/A	N/A	Raising Aspirations Assemblies won the One Big Idea UK REiiF award in May 2026. Delivery of aspirational assemblies continues across schools within the DN21 postcode, aligned to the academic year.

STRATEGIC RISKS PROGRESS UPDATE – QUARTER ONE 2026/2027

A strategic risk register is maintained to provide a structured approach to identifying, monitoring and proactively managing strategic risks, ensuring potential issues are understood, mitigated, and appropriately governed to support the successful delivery of council priorities.

Ref	Risk	Risk Owner	Direction of Travel/ Response	Risk Score	Planned Actions
PPL-R01	The threat is that we are unable to boost employment and skills due to limited opportunities within the labour market and low aspirations within our communities	G White	→ Treat	9	• Refresh the Employment and Skills Strategy and action plan • Development of projects to identify and address specific skills shortages (technical and vocational) within key employers/sectors, with a focus on key growth sectors including Agri Tech, Care, Manufacturing, Defence, Alternative Energy and the Visitor Economy. • Hold annual jobs and careers fair in partnership with DWP (as part of network of Job Centres delivery model) • Fully participate in UKAEA Skills Collaboration to ensure final tender submitted as provider collaboration for early skills delivery • Members and Officers of WLDC to engage in the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority Employment and Skills Board, including strategic development work wherever possible. Develop appropriate internal governance to ensure timely feed into and out of CCA activity. • Secure further funding in partnership with LCC for the Youth Aspiration Programme which provides mentoring opportunities, supports the development of young people and facilitates activities between schools and local employers

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Ref	Risk	Risk Owner	Direction of Travel/ Response	Risk Score	Planned Actions
PPL-R02	The threat is that we are unable to provide adequate support for vulnerable groups and communities due to lack of funding and capacity to deliver resulting in a widening of health inequalities and further demand on services and resources	G White	→ Treat	9	• Refresh the Communities at Risk Strategy and deliver the action plans • Develop and deliver a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy • Develop and deliver the council's response to the Renters Rights Act 2025
PPL-R03	The threat is that the health and wellbeing of our residents does not improve due to a failure to meet wellbeing, housing and leisure demand resulting in an increased burden on services and budgets and reduction in life expectancy and health for residents	S Elvin	→ Treat	9	• Refresh engagement with ICB post merger with Notts/Derbyshire and changes to Chief Exec • Continue strategic and political engagement with partners to secure review of funding mechanism for DFGs • Produce annual update on Health and Wellbeing Strategy • Supported Housing Strategy in place by March 2027 • Robust data and evidence of housing need and demand in all areas to ensure needs are met. • Continuation of Good Homes Alliance to assist people with housing related issues. • Health centre feasibility study • Development and delivery of Sports and Physical Activity Strategy

Thematic Business Plan: Supporting Information

Thematic Business Plan: Introduction

The Thematic Business Plans sets out how we will deliver the Council's priorities for 2026/27, ensuring our services and programmes contribute effectively to the Corporate Plan aims. This plan provides a clear line of sight from strategic objectives through to delivery, performance measurement, and risk management.

The report presents three core components: Key Performance Indicators, Key Deliverables and Strategic Risks.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

The plan sets out the KPIs for 2026/27, with performance assessed against agreed targets using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating. Progress is also shown using trend arrows, indicating whether performance has improved, declined, or remained stable when compared with the previous quarter.

Trend (compared with the previous qtr)		RAG Ratings	
↑	Performance is improving	Green	Performance met/exceeded approved target
↓	Fall in performance	Amber	Performance within approved tolerances
→	No change	Red	Performance below target

The Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) forms part of the Council's performance framework and includes key performance measures that have been below target for two or more consecutive quarters. The PIP provides additional detail on the causes of underperformance, its impact, the actions being taken to improve results, and the expected timescales for recovery.

Key Deliverables - Projects.

Projects within the TBP are managed through the Council's Project Management Office (PMO), which provides a consistent and robust approach to project delivery. This ensures that projects are delivered efficiently, on time, within scope, and within budget. Projects are monitored using agreed principles and frameworks. Each project included in the TBP is assessed using the following measures:

Element	Green	Amber	Red
Status. An overall assessment of how effectively a project is performing against its agreed scope, schedule, cost, quality, and risk parameters.	**Healthy**. Project is progressing without any issues	**Concerns**. Potential issues that need monitoring	**Serious** issues. Critical issues or areas that require immediate action
Confidence. A measured level of certainty regarding the project's ability to successfully meet its objectives, based on current performance, assumptions, and known constraints.	**High**. On track; low risk; stable resources; credible delivery	**Concerns**. Some concerns; moderate risks; recoverable with action	**Low**. Major issues; high risk; low confidence in delivery

Projects follow a four-stage lifecycle to provide a structured and consistent approach with clear governance and expectations.

Stage one. Initiation – defines why the project is needed and whether it is viable

Stage two. Scoping / Planning – works out what needs to be done and how

Stage three: Delivery / Execution – carries out the work

Stage four: Closure – finalises the project and reviews benefits

Strategic Risks.

Strategic risks are considered as being those faced by the Council that, if materialised, would adversely impact the delivery of corporate priorities.

To ensure that these risks are updated consistently across the three areas, a matrix and guidance are used to score, assessed against the likelihood and impact of the risk.

Score	RAG Ratings
1-3	Green
4-9	Amber
12-16	Red

The four risk responses -Tolerate, Treat, Terminate and Transfer - are used to determine how a risk should be managed to reduce its likelihood or impact. Planned actions set out the specific measures to be implemented.

Response	What it means
Treat	Accept & monitor
Tolerate	Reduce likelihood/impact
Terminate	Stop the activity entirely
Transfer	Pass to third party

Reporting of the Strategic Risks will also continue to be reported to the Governance and Audit Committee on a six-monthly basis.

Contacts.

For further information or to discuss the report further please contact either:

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Senior Transformation and Performance Officer
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Thriving People Committee Work Plan (as at 8 July 2026)

Purpose:
This report provides a summary of items of business due at upcoming meetings.

Recommendation:

1. That Members note the contents of this report.

Date	Title	Lead Officer	Purpose of the report	Date First Published
16 JULY 2026				
16 Jul 2026	Thriving People Thematic Business Plan Progress Report	Rachael Hughes, Assistant Chief Executive - Policy, Strategy and Performance	To present the progress report for the Thriving People Thematic Business Plan	
16 Jul 2026	Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan	Amanda Bouttell, Senior Project and Growth Officer	To review and approve the updated Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan	
16 Jul 2026	Domestic Abuse Resident Policy	Sarah Elvin, Head of Housing, Health and Wellbeing	To consider the Domestic Abuse Resident Policy	
16 Jul 2026	Squaddie Box	Sarah Elvin, Head of Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Paper setting out options for West Lindsey to have a post box available to residents who have no fixed abode	
16 Jul 2026	Health Facilities Feasibility Report	Matthew Snee, Project Officer	Update on works to assess feasibility for new / extended health facilities	
16 Jul 2026	Community Grants Programme 2026-2028	Grant White, Head of Localities and Community Services	To approve a Community Grants Programme 2026-2028.	
TBC CONCURRENT MEETING WITH THRIVING COUNCIL COMMITTEE - LEISURE PROJECT				
5 NOVEMBER 2026				
5 Nov 2026	Homelessness Action Plan	Sarah Elvin, Head of	To review and adopt the Homelessness	

		Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Action plan
5 Nov 2026	Proposed Fees and Charges 2027/2028	Sarah Scully, Finance Business Support Team Leader	Proposed Fees and Charges to take effect from 1 April 2027
5 Nov 2026	Thriving People Thematic Business Plan Progress Report		To present the progress report for the Thriving People Thematic Business Plan
5 Nov 2026	Review of Voluntary Sector Funding Contributions	Grant White, Head of Localities and Community Services	Review of Voluntary Sector Funding Contributions
28 JANUARY 2027			
28 Jan 2027	Supported Housing Strategy	Sarah Elvin, Head of Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Adopt Supported Housing Strategy
28 Jan 2027	Thriving People Thematic Business Plan Progress Report		To present the progress report for the Thriving People Thematic Business Plan
28 Jan 2027	Communities At Risk Strategy and Action Plan	Shayleen Towns, Senior Community Action Officer, Grant White, Head of Localities and Community Services	Update and refresh the Communities At Risk Strategy and Action Plan
28 Jan 2027	Thriving People Committee Draft Budget 2027/2028 and estimates to 2031/2032	Sarah Scully, Finance Business Support Team Leader	The report sets out details of the Committee's draft revenue budget for the period of 2027/2028 and estimates to 2031/2032.
15 APRIL 2027			
15 Apr 2027	Thriving People Thematic Business Plan Progress Report		To present the progress report for the Thriving People Thematic Business Plan

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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