WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Thriving Places Committee held in the Council Chamber – The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 14 July 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:	Councillor Peter Morris (Chairman)
	Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
	Councillor Maureen Palmer
	Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
	Councillor Moira Westley
	Councillor Karen Carless
Also Present:	Councillor J Barrett
	Councillor S Bunney
	Councillor T Young
In Attendance:	
Sally Grindrod-Smith	Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Steve Leary	Policy and Strategy Officer - Climate and Sustainable Environment
Claire Hill	Economic Growth Officer
Wendy Osgodby	Economic Growth Team Leader
Robert Gilliot	Head of Waste and Street Cleansing
Ele Snow	Senior Democratic and Civic Officer
Apologies:	Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Membership:	Councillor K Carless was appointed substitute for Councillor T Bridgwood

1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3 RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY BENEFIT POLICY

Visiting Member Councillor Bunney, Chairman of the Environment and Sustainability Working Group, introduced the report and outlined the proposed policy framework for securing community benefit contributions from large scale renewable energy developments. It was emphasised that the policy sat outside the planning process and sought to provide a consistent approach to negotiating benefits for local communities hosting such developments.

Visiting Member Councillor Barrett also addressed the Committee and shared experience of similar community benefit arrangements operated elsewhere. Reference was made to the administration and distribution of funding, including the potential role of parish councils and community representatives in determining local priorities.

The Chairman read a statement submitted by Councillor Bailey, who had submitted her apologies for being unable to attend in person. In her statement, Councillor Bailey welcomed the proposed policy, thanked officers and Members involved in its development, and highlighted the importance of securing social value benefits, including support for local businesses, apprenticeships, skills development and community sustainability.

During the debate, a Member of the Committee expressed support for the policy and thanked officers and Members of the Environment and Sustainability Working Group for their work in developing the proposal. Reference was made to the absence of mandatory community benefit requirements for large scale solar developments and the opportunities the policy presented to secure social value and community benefits for affected areas. The Member also highlighted the example provided by similar arrangements adopted by other authorities.

With no further comments, and having been proposed, seconded, and voted upon, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

a) the Large Scale Renewable Energy Community Benefit Policy as set out at Appendix B be adopted; and

b) authority for minor amendments to the policy be delegated to the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities, in consultation with the Chairman of the Thriving Places Committee; and

c) the Government's intention to introduce mandatory community benefit requirements through primary legislation, expected to come into force by the end of 2027 at the earliest, be noted, and that this policy positions the Council to negotiate effectively in the interim period; and

d) the financial implications arising from the potential scale of Community Benefit Fund income be noted; and officers explore appropriate fund governance arrangements, be that via a Special Purpose Vehicle, Community Investment Company or other entity.

4 PRIDE IN PLACE UPDATE

The Economic Growth Team Leader provided an update on the Pride in Place programme and progress made since the previous report. Members were advised that extensive community engagement activity had taken place, including attendance at community events, engagement with local groups and workshops delivered in primary and secondary schools. It was reported that approximately 2,000 residents had been engaged to date.

It was noted that Government guidance identified Neighbourhood Boards as the decision making bodies for funding allocations, with the Council acting as the accountable body. Members were advised that the programme permitted the use of early funding for "quick wins" projects in response to priorities identified through community engagement and to support momentum whilst the longer term Pride in Place Plan was developed.

Reference was made to the availability of "quick wins" funding, which could be used to respond to priorities identified through community engagement and support early delivery of improvements whilst the longer term programme was developed.

The Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities advised that, in addition to providing an update on progress, the report sought delegated authority to finalise arrangements for the allocation of quick wins funding in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.

During the debate, a Member of the Committee welcomed the progress made through the Pride in Place programme and expressed support for the proposed approach to delivering early "quick wins" projects. It was considered that such initiatives would help build community confidence and encourage ongoing engagement with the programme.

A Member sought assurance regarding the balance between community led decision making and the delivery of projects that would provide a lasting legacy. In response, the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities advised that the "quick wins" funding represented an initial allocation intended to support early interventions, whilst most of the investment would be determined through the longer term investment plan and ten year strategy. Members were advised that community engagement findings would be considered alongside local data and evidence to inform future priorities.

Further discussion took place regarding engagement activity with local schools and young people, with officers outlining the approach taken to gather views on the area, identify priorities and inform future investment decisions. Reference was also made to the rationale for prioritising engagement with schools located within the programme area.

Visiting Member Councillor Young welcomed the investment being brought into the area and highlighted the opportunity to secure additional investment and community benefits through the programme. In response to a query regarding communications with the co-Chairs of the Board, officers provided clarification regarding arrangements for responding to correspondence.

In further discussion, a Member of the Committee highlighted examples of regeneration projects delivered elsewhere and emphasised the importance of pursuing initiatives that would create lasting benefits for the community.

With no further comments, and having been proposed, seconded, and voted upon, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

a) the Neighbourhood Board's proposal to allocate the next available tranche of Pride in Place funding to a package of quick win projects be approved, subject to each project meeting programme guidance, subsidy control requirements and procurement regulations, with income and expenditure budgets to be created to reflect grant funding received and associated capital and revenue expenditure; and

b) authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to finalise project approvals, funding agreements and any related due diligence required to enable delivery.

5 THRIVING PLACES THEMATIC BUSINESS PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Members gave consideration to the progress report for the Thriving Places Thematic Business Plan, as introduced by the Director for Planning, Regeneration & Communities. She explained that the report provided an update for deliverables, performance and strategic risks aligned to the Thriving Places aim of West Lindsey District Council’s Corporate Plan. The Thematic Business Plan set out how the Council’s priorities for 2026/27 would be delivered, ensuring services and programmes contributed effectively to the Corporate Plan aims. The plan provided a clear line of sight from strategic objectives through to delivery, performance measurement, and risk management.

Members heard details of the three core components presented within the report, those being Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), with performance assessed against agreed targets using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating; Key Deliverables, with projects being managed through the Council’s Project Management Office (PMO) to provide a consistent and robust approach to project delivery; and Strategic Risks, which were considered as those faced by the Council which, if materialised, would adversely impact the delivery of corporate priorities.

The report replaced the biannual performance and delivery reports previously considered by committees. It was noted that the performance indicators representing the performance of the markets in Gainsborough remained in red, with the performance improvement plan having also been refreshed. Members heard the performance was moving steadily in the right direction and it was expected to move out of the improvement plan. Other indicators highlighted included the food, health and safety inspections, which were being affected by the implementation of a new case management system and the retirement of a long serving member of staff. Additionally, the performance of the waste service indicator relating to missed bins was reporting as red, and the Committee was joined by the Head of Waste and Street Cleansing to answer any specific queries relating to that service.

Members welcomed the report and, in particular, praised the ongoing work and improvements in the town centre of Gainsborough. In response to a question regarding vacant units in the town centre, it was explained that, whilst there was not a performance indicator relating to that data, it was a highlighted deliverable under the themes of the Corporate Plan. Members were advised that the response to a similar question posed to Full Council would be shared with the Committee.

In response to a question from a Visiting Member regarding the reduced percentage rates of fly-tipping being collected, it was agreed that the breakdown of data would be circulated to the Committee. Specifically, it was enquired as to whether the drop in collection rates was due to an increased amount of fly-tipping, or because there was slippage in making the collections.

A Member of the Committee reiterated praise for the improvements in Gainsborough town centre, and, in relation to the market performance indicators, enquired as to whether an indoor market could be a feasible option. It was confirmed this had been considered in the past, however was not viable in Gainsborough. It was noted that, in comparison to the performance of the markets in previous years, there was a notable improvement, with Officers working closely with stall holders and traders, and local businesses providing anecdotal evidence of the benefits of the improved offering. It was acknowledged that there were challenges, however Officers were committed to ensuring the continued growth and success of the markets.

Members also praised the success of local traders offering mobile services, for example food and drinks trucks at local events. It was noted that there was now a meeting of local business owners which aided the continuity of growth, and involved them in the conversations around the town centre.

With no further comments or questions, the Chairman noted the recommendations contained within the report and, having been proposed, seconded, and voted upon, it was

RESOLVED that

a) the aligned deliverables, performance, and strategic risks of the associated Corporate Plan aim had been duly assessed; and

b) the Quarter One Thematic Business Plan report be approved.

6 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

With no comments, questions, or requirement for a vote, the work plan was **DULY NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 7.17 pm.

Chairman