



Prosperous Communities

Tuesday, 3 December 2019

Subject: West Lindsey Parish Charter Consultation

Report by:

Executive Director of Resources

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To present draft West Lindsey Parish Charter and begin consultation with parish and town councils.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Welcome the review of the new Parish Charter and the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter.
2. Officers to undertake a consultation with all parish councils across the district on the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter.
3. Submit a report to Prosperous Communities committee in May 2020 detailing the outcome of the consultation and the final charter for approval.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

There are no legal implications with this report or the proposed West Lindsey Parish Charter. The charter represents agreed principles and standards of how West Lindsey District Council and parish/town councils will work together but it does not represent a legal document or agreement.

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

Financial : FIN/132/20/SL

There are no financial implications arising from the report.

All costs of consultation events to be met from within existing budget provision.

(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref

Staffing :

There are no staffing implications for this report.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Consultation with parish/town councils shall be conducted following the principles of consultation and will ensure equal and faire access to enable people to participate fully.

NB: Please explain how you have considered the policy's impact on different groups (for example: young people, elderly, ethnic minorities, LGBT community, rural residents, disabled, others).

Data Protection Implications :

There are no data protection implications for this report.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

There are no climate related risks or opportunities for this report.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

There are no Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations for this report.

Health Implications:

There are no health implications for this report.

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

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment :

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

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Good communication and working relationships are essential between Local Authorities and Parish/Town Councils. A Parish Charter can help support how communication takes place and guide on how to work effectively together. They help to formalise relationships and set clear standards and expectations for everyone.
- 1.2 West Lindsey District Council's current Parish Charter with parish/town councils in West Lindsey was approved on 12th January 2006 by what was then the Resources Committee.
- 1.3 Due to the age of the current charter and a continuing need for greater partnership working between Local Authorities and parish/town councils, it is now timely to review the charter and look to introduce a new updated version.
- 1.4 The introduction of an updated charter provides the opportunity to ensure it reflects the current needs and aspirations of both West Lindsey District Council and parish/town Councils including parish meetings throughout the district.
- 1.5 A Parish Charter is an accord and as such it is a matter of working in good faith rather than law.

2 Research Conducted

- 2.1 In approaching an updated version of the Parish Charter officers have conducted research to examine versions of Parish Charter's currently used in other local authority areas.

This has included reviewing the following local authorities:

- Bassetlaw District Council
 - City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
 - North Yorkshire Council
- 2.2 By exploring other examples of Parish Charters currently in use, it has enabled officers to develop an updated draft West Lindsey Parish Charter.
 - 2.3 Officers have also sought input from Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) through a meeting and on-going discussion.

3 Internal Engagement Conducted

3.1 As part of developing an updated draft West Lindsey Parish Charter, officers have engaged with the following internal colleagues/teams:

- **Democratic Services**
Alan Robinson – Director of Governance
Katie Coughlan – Senior Democratic & Civic Officer
- **Customer Services**
Lyn Marlow – Customer Strategy & Services Manager
- **Business Improvement & Corporate Governance**
James O’Shaughnessy – Corporate Policy Manager
- **Communications Team**
Julie Heath – Senior Communications Officer
- **Communities Service**
Grant White – Communities Manager

3.2 The officers listed above have provided key input on the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter to ensure information is accurate and in-line with our corporate and customer standards.

3.3 Engagement has been completed with the Core Leaders Panel and Management Team on the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter.

4 Draft West Lindsey Parish Charter

4.1 Based on the external research, engagement with LALC and internal engagement with officers, a draft West Lindsey Parish Charter has been produced.

4.2 The draft West Lindsey Parish Charter is attached as:
Appendix 2 – Draft West Lindsey Parish Charter v0.3

4.2 The draft has been produced by the Senior Democratic & Civic Officer and the Communities Manager. The content represents a recommended approach to an updated Parish Charter following completion of external research and engagement work.

4.3 The current format of the document is ready to be used in wider consultation with parish/town councils and parish meetings.

4.4 The draft parish charter will include a link to a new web landing page listing all current support schemes available to parish and town councils. The webpage can be kept up to date as new schemes launch or existing schemes change without the need to keep updating the parish charter.

- 4.5 The Webpage Content is attached as:
Appendix 3 – Webpage Content v1.0

5 Consultation with parish/town councils and parish meetings

- 5.1 The West Lindsey Parish Charter represents core values and standards on how the District Council, parish/town councils and parish meetings will work together. Consultation on this updated version is therefore essential to allow full open participation in developing and agreeing the final version for adoption.

- 5.2 Upon approval of the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter, officers will begin a consultation with all parish/town councils and parish meetings. The consultation will provide a range of opportunities for comments and suggestions using existing methods such as surveys and direct engagement.

All results from the consultation shall be shared with all parish/town councils and parish meetings.

- 5.3 Results from the consultation will be analysed by officers and a further report will be presented back to Prosperous Communities Committee.

This will include a full summary of responses obtained along with any amendments, additions or redactions recommended. An updated version of the Parish Charter based on the consultation results will then be presented for consideration and adoption.

- 5.4 The consultation will be conducted by officers within the council's Communities Service with support from officers in Democratic Services. Delivery of this consultation will be resourced within current service structures and capacity.

6 Parish Liaison Meetings

- 6.1 West Lindsey District Council has historically held Parish Forum events. They have provided an opportunity for officers to deliver key updates on various areas of business and support parish/town councils with planning their precept.

- 6.2 The last such events were held during October 2017. Three events took place at different locations and resulted in a total of 20 parish/town councils being represented.

For reference there are 71 parish/town councils and 28 parish meetings in West Lindsey. The events in 2017 had attendance from 19.8% of local councils.

- 6.3 The locations and attendee numbers for the 2017 events were:
- **Gainsborough (Guildhall)**
12 attendees representing 7 parish councils
 - **Cherry Willingham (Cherry Willingham & Reepham Village Hall)**
11 attendees representing 8 parish councils
 - **Nettleton (Nettleton Village Hall)**
11 attendees representing 5 parish councils
- 6.4 No Parish Forum events were held during 2018 and none are currently planned for 2019.
- 6.5 As part of the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter we are seeking to renew our commitment to holding Parish Liaison Meetings. These types of meetings can provide an effective way of supporting good communication and sharing of information and ideas.
- 6.6 Various service areas of the council can benefit from such meetings with a well organised opportunity to engage meaningfully with parish/town councils and parish meetings.
- 6.7 The consultation with parish/town councils and parish meetings will include questions on the format and delivery of Parish Liaison Meetings.
- 6.8 The consultation results will provide valuable insight into what parish/town councils and parish meetings would value as an effective and productive Parish Liaison Meeting.
- 6.9 Any feedback obtained about the Parish Liaison Meetings will be presented in the consultation results and used to inform any proposals on how to deliver them in the future as part of adopting the updated Parish Charter.
- 6.10 Any future Parish Liaison Meetings will be organised by the councils Communities Service and supported by Democratic Services. Subject to the final recommendations on size, frequency and logistics, any financial or resource implications will also be identified in the subsequent report.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 Welcome the review of the new Parish Charter and the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter.
- 7.2 Officers to undertake a consultation with all parish councils across the district on the draft West Lindsey Parish Charter.
- 7.3 Submit a report to Prosperous Communities committee in May 2020 detailing the outcome of the consultation and the final charter for approval.