



**Prosperous Communities  
Committee**

**Tuesday 2 June 2020**

**Subject: West Lindsey Parish Charter**

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

Grant White  
Enterprising Communities Manager

grant.white@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To present the results from the Parish Charter consultation and recommend approval of the final version of the Parish Charter document.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1. Approve West Lindsey Parish Charter**
- 2. Approve the approach to delivering Parish Forums**

## 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/15/21/A**

There are no financial implications arising from the report.

**(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 :**

There are no equality and diversity considerations for this report.

### **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.

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<b>Risk Assessment :</b>
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 On 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 the Prosperous Communities Committee approved a draft Parish Charter document and requested officers conduct a consultation amongst all parish and town councils in West Lindsey.
- 1.3 The consultation has now been completed and this report presents the results, feedback and officer recommendations based on these responses.

## **2. Consultation Responses**

- 2.1 The consultation opened on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and closed on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020. A total of 12 responses were received from parish and town councils.
- 2.2 A full report detailing the consultation responses has been produced and included with this report as an appendix.

### **APPENDIX 1 – Parish Charter Consultation Report May 2020**

### **APPENDIX 2 – West Lindsey Parish Charter**

- 2.3 Officers have reviewed consultation responses and have noted a number of key areas identified:

#### **Planning**

A number of comments made about planning matters. It should be noted work is currently underway to review the Councils constitution and include a new section which aims to address such concerns. These changes are due to be presented to Full Council in September 2020.

#### **Point of Contact**

A request was made to provide Parish and Town Councils a dedicated contact number. This provision has been re-introduced into the Parish Charter document. A dedicated contact number for Parish and Town Councils to use would be made available to them and direct incoming calls to a senior customer services adviser.

Direct contact details for the Enterprising Communities Service have also been added to the Parish Charter document for enquires relating to community based activity, funding or projects.

### **Acknowledgement Times**

A comment was made about response times being reduced due to greater use of modern technology. Officers felt the stated response times are correct and suit all service areas, however they should be viewed as a minimum standard and where possible the council should seek to exceed them.

The Parish Charter document has been updated to better explain response targets are our minimum standard and where possible we shall try to exceed these.

- 2.4 Overall the consultation responses indicate the Parish Charter document is easy to read and understand. The majority of responses also indicated the document fulfils the purpose of how we will work together.
- 2.5 Overall the consultation responses indicate the Parish Charter document will make no to little difference in the relationship between parish/town councils and the district council.
- 2.6 Based on the consultation responses there is a sense of agreement in the function of the Parish Charter document but that its actual impact is dependent on actual actions and engagement between organisations.

### **3. Parish Forums**

- 3.1 Officers will develop a Parish Forum plan based on the consultation responses. The plan will include at least 1 main Parish Forum event per year supported by online events. By introducing this mix of physical and online event the aim is to open the Parish Forums up to more attendees whilst reducing cost of travel for attendees.
- 3.2 The main Parish Forum will include:
  - Key presentations on useful/important topics
  - Advice/information on parish precept
  - Details of latest support including funding
  - Question and answer session with senior officers and members
  - Networking opportunity
- 3.3 The online events will include:
  - Recording from the main Parish Forum event for playback
  - Key messages
  - Question and answer session
- 3.4 Due to the on-going Coronavirus Pandemic the physical event may not be able to take place during 2020. An event will be organised when safe to do so. Officers will seek to organise online only events for 2020.
- 3.5 Areas of interest that the Parish Forums will cover include:
  - Planning matters
  - Budgeting and precept

- Grant funding and project support
- Local issues/challenges
- Climate, environment and sustainability

3.6 Parish Forum events will be organised by officers from Democratic Services and Enterprising Communities Service. This work will form part of existing service roles.

3.7 Evaluation of Parish Forum events will be conducted and changes may be made to ensure they remain relevant and meet the needs of parish and town councils.

3.8 In addition to delivering Parish Forums, officers will seek to further develop our working relationship with Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils in order to attend or organise events jointly.

#### **4. Publicity and Promotion**

4.1 Officers will undertake a range of publicity and promotional work to raise the awareness and profile of the new Parish Charter. This will include but not limited to:

- Press release(s)
- Direct promotion to parish/town councils
- Direct promotion to all Members
- Social media coverage

4.2 The new Parish Charter will be promoted amongst all Council service areas to ensure officers have an awareness and understanding of its purpose. This will be completed through team meetings and internal communications.

#### **5. Review and Reporting**

5.1 The Parish Charter will be reviewed every 4 years to ensure it is compliant and meets current needs of both parish/town councils and the district council.

5.2 An annual report will be presented to Prosperous Communities Committee detailing the impact of Parish Forum events and any other matters arising linked to the Parish Charter.

#### **6. Recommendations**

6.1 Approve the West Lindsey Parish Charter

6.2 Approve the approach to delivering Parish Forums