

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held via MS Teams at <https://west-lindsey.public-i.tv/core/portal/home> on 20 October 2020 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Owen Bierley (Chairman)
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Vice-Chairman) and
Councillor John McNeill (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne
Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Jim Snee
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn
Councillor Trevor Young

In Attendance:
Ian Knowles Chief Executive
Sally Grindrod-Smith Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration
Ady Selby Assistant Director of Commercial and Operational Services
James Welbourn Democratic and Civic Officer
Katie Storr Senior Democratic & Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson
Councillor Tom Regis

Membership: No substitutes were appointed

21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 14 July 2020.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 14 July 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

(b) Concurrent Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources and Prosperous Communities Committees – 16 July 2020.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Concurrent Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources and Prosperous Communities Committees held on 16 July 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

23 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 12 October 2020.

With Members indicating their contentment at the position, the Matters Arising were duly **NOTED**.

24 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

25 CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE WHITE PAPER

The 'Planning for the future' White Paper was published in early August and included significant changes at both Policy and Development Management stages.

Since 1947 planning applications in England have been assessed on a case-by-case basis against a long-term local plan, with permission ultimately decided by committee. The new system proposes to diminish this.

Land would instead be classified into three zones within a new Local Plan, with outline planning permission awarded automatically if proposals meet specific criteria within specific zones.

As well as introducing a zonal planning approach the White Paper also sought to make changes to:

- The development of local plans
- The role of Councillors in Development Management
- Public Engagement
- Developer Contributions
- Design
- Enforcement

Members therefore gave consideration to a report which considered these proposals and the implications of the White Paper. Section 2 of the report set out a summary of the key proposals, section 3 the implications of each proposal and section 4 the next stages.

The report also sought agreement on the proposed consultation response, appended to the report.

A workshop had been offered to all Members to attend to discuss the implications of the White Paper for West Lindsey, its communities and residents. This had been held on 7 October and all discussion points and comments had been collated and added to the West Lindsey response. Members were provided with a final opportunity to add further comment to the response as drafted and highlight to Officers where they considered the response could be more emphasised or strengthened.

Debate ensued with the following areas being identified: -

Affordable Housing – the need for affordable products that meet local needs, not a nationally prescribed product that doesn't assist locals, particularly our young people to access.

Climate Change - the White Paper wasn't considered radical enough, Members were of the view that consideration should be being given to all aspects of sustainability, not just carbon neutrality.

Regeneration and renewal – Members considered there was too much emphasis within the White Paper about the new; new development, new design and not enough focus on the benefits of re-use, regeneration and renewal.

Lack of public / Member engagement afforded within the proposals – This was something of real concern to Members. Some were of the view that the system was already heavily weighted in favour of developers. The democratic engagement of communities and a system where Members were at the heart of the decision making process was key. The proposals appeared to be the direct opposite of what the public would expect, already often requesting that they be more involved and receive more notification of proposals. Digital consultation in rural communities was also a matter of concern, given connectivity issues. Inclusivity seemed to be lacking.

Officers undertook to make necessary adjustments in line with Members' comments, with the final consultation response being signed off under delegated powers in consultation with the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked Members for their participation and encouraged Members to make individual responses to the consultation.

On that basis it was **RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the conclusions of the report and the suggested response to each question be endorsed; and
- (b) Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration, Projects and Growth in consultation with the Chair of Prosperous Communities Committee to finalise and submit the response, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council, in line with the content of the report and the comments made throughout the debate, summarised above.

26 WORKPLAN

Members gave consideration to the Committee Workplan. A Committee Member enquired whether the Strategic Visitor Economy Strategy could be brought forward, currently planned for March 2021. The Assistant Director for Planning and Regeneration indicated the Council's work programme was aligned to the work of the Tourism Action Zone and as such bringing the Strategy forward earlier may not be feasible. Officers undertook to bring forward a position update in the absence of the full Strategy.

RESOLVED that the workplan as set out in the report be received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.06 pm.

Chairman