

## 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 26 January 2021 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 Mrs Tracey Coulson  
Councillor Christopher Darcel  
Councillor Michael Devine  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne  
Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth  
Councillor Tom Regis  
Councillor Jim Snee  
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee  
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn  
Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**  
Sally Grindrod-Smith Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration  
Ady Selby Assistant Director of Commercial and Operational Services  
Diane Krochmal Assistant Director Homes and Communities  
Sue Leversedge Business Support Team Leader  
Katie Storr Senior Democratic & Civic Officer  
James Welbourn Democratic and Civic Officer

**Also Present** Mrs Julie Taylor – resident for public participation

**Apologies:** No apologies received

**Membership:** No substitutes appointed

### 38 REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE

The Chairman welcomed all present to the virtual meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee and undertook the customary roll-call of Members, which was followed by a roll-call of Officers in attendance.

### 39 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman advised the meeting that one question/ statement had been submitted under the Public Participation Scheme, inviting Mrs Julie Taylor, of Market Rasen to address the Committee, who in turn made the following statement : -

“Thank you for this opportunity to encourage your support for consideration of Market Rasen in your deliberations tonight.

I am a member of Market Rasen Community Partnership Group. I have lived in Market Rasen for 45 years and worked in education in the town for 38 years. However, I have played little part in the overall community endeavors until March 2020. As a trustee of the Eleemosynary Charity, I was invited to join the Community Partnership. This partnership is comprised of representatives of numerous community groups that previously operated independently. However, the pressing needs facing the community from 2020 drew together these groups, including Churches, Rotary, Lions, Town councilors, local businesses, charities and willing volunteers, many of whom were involved in community activities for the first time.

Since March 2020, the Partnership has driven forward a vital service providing food boxes, meals, shopping, prescription collection, mass community occasion boxed “picnics” at Easter, Summer Bank Holiday, Christmas, and emotional support through a telephone contact line. In addition, the Partnership worked to raise the mood of the town and encourage local people to use the shops in the town, by organizing, financing and deploying Christmas lighting throughout the town.

We are all desperate to see the end of this current crisis, but one consequence of this past year has shown the strength of the combined energy, commitment and initiative of the community of Market Rasen. We see our work over the coming years to include the development of the economic fortunes of the town, encouraging and supporting independent traders and developing diversification by utilizing appropriate areas for small workshops and outlets. We are also committed to the protection, development and promotion of the natural environment and the heritage of the historic buildings of the town. We believe that by the provision of publicized walks and cycle tracks in this small market town close to the Lincolnshire Wolds we can build a better economic and environmental future for the town.

I would ask you to support us in this exciting future.”

The Chairman thanked Mrs Taylor for her submission and invited Vice-Chairman of the Committee and Local Ward Member for Market Rasen, Councillor John McNeill, to respond.

“Thank you for your question. You will receive a written copy of this response following the meeting.

The global Covid-19 pandemic has raised many challenges for all of us, whether

in the form of economic hardship, directly or indirectly impacting our health, including our mental health, by restricting our activities or keeping us from our friends and families. These are difficult time for us all.

I am grateful for your inspiring narrative; volunteering and taking on additional responsibilities is a really great way for members of our communities to help make a difference during these difficult times. I applaud those in the Market Rasen community, such as the Churches, the Rotary Club, the Lions Club, members of the Town Council, local businesses, and charities as well as other individuals, who came together to tackle the pressing needs of their community. I know that the Council has awarded several grants to support the work of the Market Rasen Community Partnership Group, indeed, I believe, another application is currently being assessed for circa £5,000 – which I fully support.

Among the many activities the group has undertaken, I was pleased to support the Christmas Lights' initiative along with my fellow ward members, Cllr Stephen Bunney and Cllr Mrs Cordelia McCartney, from our Councillor Initiative Funds.

On our agenda tonight is a report amending the terms of and extending the allocation of a £200,000 capital grant to Market Rasen. In 2017, when I first approached our former Commercial Director, Mrs Eve Fawcett-Moralee, I was keen that the many growth projects the Council were undertaking were not limited to the western side of the A15. From these discussions the idea of a capital grant to help the town spearhead growth projects was brought to fruition in 2018 by this and the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee. I therefore hope that members will support the change to this grant later in this meeting, to allow heritage-led regeneration projects to be enabled in Market Rasen, in a similar way to our Gainsborough Heritage-led Regeneration Projects.

I am also pleased to confirm that at yesterday's Council meeting a motion, proposed by Cllr Mrs Anne Welburn, regarding the 'Slow Ways' initiative, was agreed; this is an exciting project to map and promote walking routes nationally. West Lindsey District Council is now committed to promoting this initiative to all those who live, work, or visit our district.

I am also able to confirm that this council is already taking forward work to review Market Rasen's Conservation Areas, which should be going out for consultation in the spring. This work will support the Heritage-led approach for the grant already mentioned.

I am confident that I speak for us all when I say that we very much support the work of community groups and individuals, like yourself, who give of their own time, talents, and resources to make a difference in their local communities. I hope that your endeavours over the coming years are fruitful and West Lindsey District Council will be ready and willing to support you where we are able to do so.

I hope that the response I have provided is helpful. You may wish to stay for the rest of this meeting, but if not, thank you for your question.”

The Chairman again re-iterated that the verbal response given would be provided in writing.

Mrs Taylor thanked the Committee, confirmed that she had no supplementary question and indicated that she would leave the meeting at that point.

#### **40 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

(a) Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee – 1 December 2020.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 1 December 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

#### **41 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **42 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Chairman introduced the report advising Members that the report would be taken “as read” unless Members had any questions.

Members’ attention was also drawn to the two green matters arising entitled “P and D Extra Info - Cost of B and B accommodation to the Council” and “P and D - additional data - Market Rasen LC Subscriptions”. Since producing the report, Members had received the requested information via e-mail and the matters arising report would be updated accordingly.

With no questions raised and with no requirement for a vote, the Matters Arising were **DULY NOTED**.

#### **43 PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES REVENUE BASE BUDGETS 2021/22 TO 2025/26**

Members gave consideration to a report which presented the Prosperous Communities Committee budget for 2021/2022.

The 2021/22 base budgets and variance to the 2020/21 base budget were explained in the body of the report.

The Business Support Team Leader highlighted the key points of the report to the Committee including the total cost of services for 2021/22 being £4.603m (£4.708m 2020/21).

This had resulted in base budget increases of £0.111m, and additional income of £0.217m,

resulting in a net movement of £0.109m.

Included within the movement of £0.109m was £0.05m relating to Secondary Employer Pension Contribution payments (Pension Deficit contribution). In addition, there were £0.144m of budgets relating to Earmarked Reserves to support one off project resources in 2021/22 (£0.409m in 2020/21). This was a movement of £0.265m from 2020/21 to 2021/22.

Services within the Committee had also contributed to Earmarked Reserves £0.085m in 2021/22 for asset replacement programmes (£0.085m in 2020/21). There was no movement from 2020/21 to 2021/22 to report.

Excluding pension deficit and earmarked reserves, there was an increase of £0.13m on the base budgets for the committee, further details of which were contained within the report at section 2 and summarised to the Committee.

In response to Members' enquires, Officers confirmed the earmarked reserve for climate and sustainability was £500k. Earmarked reserves were a combination of projects reported both to committee and Management Team. Officers undertook to circulate the list of current reserves.

Officers clarified the reduction in the Leisure Management Fee was not related to Covid but rather as a result of a re-negotiation of the base budget fee. Budgets had been set at pre-Covid levels, any loss against predicted income would be reported through the Government Covid Impact reporting and recouped through grants, as had been the case this year (20/21). As such no adjustments had been or would be required.

With reference to trade waste and the reduced income, Officers clarified that a number of business had been covered by an umbrella contract. That contract had expired, Officers were approaching the businesses on an individual basis. It was hoped that some business would be retained but as the contracts were not yet secured, they could not be included within the base budget.

In responding to further questions, Officers confirmed the Well-Being contract was due to expire 2023, hence there was no projected income beyond that date. The Authority was not anticipating re-tendering for the contract. It was clarified that no figures had been included in the line termed "other Council properties" for future years, as these were expected to reach a cost neutral point. Street naming and numbering had been a new service area created mid-year

Members took assurance from the survey results that the Council's Corporate Priorities and Objectives appeared to be in line with respondents. Whilst noting it was in conflict with some other priorities, Members felt it worthy of noting the number of respondents indicating they would still prefer/require paper communications and considered this was something that should be borne in mind in future engagement and consultation work.

With no further questions on being moved, seconded and put to the vote, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the draft Prosperous Communities budget 2021/22 and revenue estimates to 2025/26 be recommended to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for the purpose of budget setting 2021/22 and for inclusion in the Medium

Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2025/26.

#### **44 REINTRODUCTION OF RENTS ON GAINSBOROUGH MARKET**

Members gave consideration to a report which sought to re-introduce rental charges for traders onto Gainsborough Market.

The report also sought to update Members on performance with the Marshall's Yard contract and ongoing work for the long-term strategy for the Market.

Part 1 of the report considered the reintroduction of rental charges for traders on Gainsborough Market from 1 April 2021. The report identified options and took into consideration the position on other local markets and the lack of evidence that charging would act as a barrier to traders attending, and as such, recommended that rental charges for stalls should be re-introduced.

Part 2 of the report updated on performance with the two year contract currently in place with Marshall's Yard. Marshall's Yard currently provided promotional and marketing support for the General Market, was responsible for organising and promoting the monthly Farmers Market, as well as delivering two annual events in the Town Centre.

Whilst the Farmers Market and events had been successfully delivered wherever possible within restrictions, it had not resulted in any growth of the General Market and it was difficult to identify what impact the Covid crisis had had on attendance.

Finally, part 3 identified the work which Officers had been undertaken regarding the long term future of the Market. Officers were in the final stages of procurement of a consultant to produce a headline report for Members to consider in the spring. This future report would give an assessment of the current position with the Market, linked to regeneration work in the town centre, as well as give an options analysis for future delivery of the function.

Prior to opening the matter for debate Members were reminded that the meeting would need to move to "closed session" should Members wish to discuss in detail the contents of the appendix.

Debate ensued and Opposition Members suggested that a much broader approach and wider thinking around the Markets was required, this should be seen in the context of supporting the wider town centre through what had been and would continue to be a difficult period.

Some expressed disappointment with the recommendations, and were of the view that the position had not changed in recent years. In signing the contract with Marshall's Yard there had been a belief a positive impact would be seen on the wider town centre. Whilst accepting it had been a difficult year, the results of the contract were disappointing.

It was considered that there was a real need for new creative initiatives and to address the wider issues, such as how to increase footfall to support the wider town. Examples of initiatives Members felt should be further investigated and aspired to, including a travelling farmers market, were shared. With the continued uncertainty around the end date of national restrictions, some considered it far too early to be re-introducing charges. Traders, if they

were to attend, needed to have the opportunity to take an income and at present they simply didn't, disputing that all markets were in decline.

In responding, Officers acknowledged that this had been an unprecedented year with much of the focus being on maintaining and delivering front line services. Members were reminded the two year contract had been put in place to allow time to develop the wider strategic work referenced by Councillors. It was acknowledged that had been delay however, the Council had engaged the services of an experienced consultant. The Council had worked hard to ensure the scope for the review was appropriate and included how the Council may deliver markets in other towns and large villages across the District. It was anticipated these wider proposal would be brought before Committee in the spring with a view to delivery commencing once approved and on expiry of the current contract.

Members urged that the service needed to be financed and resourced appropriately and did not consider this had been the case historically.

The need to support the wider town centre and the market was shared across the Chamber, however it was disputed whether simply not charging rent would be part of the solution, particularly if resources were to be invested. Rental charges appeared to have little impact on the number of traders attending.

Members acknowledged the additional marketing work which had taken place, but referring to early comments, some suggested whether different mediums now needed to be re-introduced.

Officers acknowledged that a number of initiatives aimed at supporting the markets had been developed over the years with limited success. Historically the market had been seen as a "cost centre" with little recognition of the wider benefits a thriving market could bring to a town. Officers accepted a much more holistic approach with less focus on the market being a commercial entity was required, and that had been the brief provided to the consultant. Members were advised that this wider work, with this revised ethos, was anticipated to be presented to Members in the spring.

Having heard of the planned future work there was still considerable unease at re-introducing charges from 1 April. Some members were of the view that the traders had been amongst some of those most severely effected and therefore rents should remain free until at least the end of lock down and maybe beyond.

It was also suggested that the Markets for some years had had no clear direction, making policy development difficult. The effectiveness of the marketing was again questioned, with examples being cited as to where this could have been improved and garnered a wider audience. The value for money on the contract was questioned.

Whilst Members were supportive of the planned future work and the intimated change in approach to financing of the market, the general consensus across the Committee was that it was not the right time to re-introduce charges.

Members made reference to the historical decisions taken and the negative impact these had had on the market place. The removal of parking from the town centre was considered to have been significantly detrimental and there were calls for this position to be re-instated.

Some suggested that charges should be revisited in 3 months. There were also proposals to reconsider the matter in June and with a view to rents being re-introduced at some point after that.

Given the opposing views across the Chamber, and with little evidence to suggest the recommendation in respect of the re-introduction of fees would be supported, it was proposed that the debate around this aspect of the report be adjourned (procedure rule 11k) until the Committee next met in March.

Officers highlighted that a deferral until March would mean charges could not be brought in any sooner than June. Should the charge also not be agreed this evening, this would need to be reflected in the base budgets earlier recommended by the Committee.

On that basis, and having had a proposal that the debate in respect of the fee be deferred, seconded, it was

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the ongoing work outlined in Part 3 of the report be noted and welcomed; and
- (b) the debate in respect of the decision as to whether to re-introduce rental charges for traders be deferred until the Committee's next meeting on 16 March 2021.

#### **45 LINCOLNSHIRE HOMES FOR INDEPENDENCE BLUEPRINT AND HHCDG WORKSTREAM**

Consideration was given to a report which presented the Lincolnshire Homes for Independence Blueprint, a document setting out shared and common aims and principles for achieving housing, health and care outcomes across the County.

The purpose of Homes for Independence Blueprint was outlined to Members. The Committee on 29 January 2018 had endorsed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to work together across housing, health and social care to deliver positive health outcomes for residents of Lincolnshire through the home.

The blueprint built on the set of principles adopted through the MOU and would further embed the role housing had to play in achieving health outcomes through the holistic approach taken by the Council.

The Blueprint was a high level vision and call to action to partners across the housing health and care sectors to identify and seek to provide a greater range of housing options to meet housing and housing related support needs and would form the basis for some of the work of the council within the Homes and Communities business area.

The blueprint, would be owned by the Housing Health and Care Delivery Group (HHCDG) and focussed on;

- growing the supply of appropriate housing to meet a range of specific housing needs
- aiming to influence the design, location and number of homes delivered
- secure better outcomes from existing resources
- enable residents of West Lindsey and Lincolnshire to plan ahead to meet their housing needs

The Blueprint would be used for project planning, providing evidence and justification in decision making processes as well as providing a focus on actions to secure greater provision of a wide range of housing choices and to further integrate services designed to promote independent living.

The national and local influences which had driven the development of the blueprint and provided the focus of work within the HHCDG were summarised to Members and outlined in Section 3 of the report.

The Homes for Independence Blueprint had been endorsed by the Health and Well-Being Board on 1 December 2020 with the recommendation that relevant partners adopt the blueprint through the appropriate decision making processes.

Programmes of work that contributed to meeting the objectives within the Homes for Independence blueprint would be delivered through a delivery plan. The plan supported the work of the HHCDG who oversaw the housing priority within the Lincolnshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Members spoke positively of, and welcomed, the cross-organisation work being demonstrated. Members urged this agenda be progressed quickly by all Partners.

**RESOLVED** that West Lindsey District Council adopt and agree to work towards meeting the objectives set out within the Lincolnshire Homes for Independence Blueprint.

#### **46 CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO SUPPORTING HOUSING DELIVERY AND PUBLIC SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Members gave consideration to a report which sought to update the Committee on the content of the consultation entitled “Supporting Housing Delivery and Public Service Infrastructure” and to share with them the draft technical consultation response for comment prior to submission.

The Government had launched the consultation on 3 December with a closing date for comments on 28 January 2021. The consultation sought views on further changes to the Planning System, related specifically to approaches to Development Management. These changes were being proposed by Government in order to support and speed up housing delivery, economic recovery and public service infrastructure.

The current consultation related to the following three themes:

- Supporting housing delivery through the introduction of a national permitted development right to change the use of commercial, business and service use class (Class E newly introduced in September 2020) to residential; and,
- Supporting public service infrastructure through the planning system; and,
- Consolidation and simplification of existing permitted development rights.

This report briefly highlighted some of the key issues across the three themes and attached at Appendix 1 was the draft responses to the specific questions posed by the consultation. Officers had approached the responses with a priority focus on rural issues.

In response to questions, Officers confirmed the wholesale review was across all permitted developments rights. Concern was expressed that there was again an emphasis from the Government on speed and reduced consultation. Some spoke of their discomfort at the proposed new permitted development right –for the change of use from any use within the new Commercial, Business and Service use class (use class E) to residential (use class C3), without the requirement of planning permission from the Local Planning Authority. It was feared retail units would disappear and along with it “the High Street”.

Having been moved and seconded, on being put to the vote it was unanimously: -

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the conclusions of the report and the suggested response to each question be endorsed.
- (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 consultation response, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council, in line with the content of the report and any comments made throughout the debate.

#### **47 SUPPORTING GROWTH AND REGENERATION IN MARKET RASEN**

On 19 July 2018, the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee approved a recommendation for an “in principle” allocation of £200k funding from the Capital Programme towards the delivery of growth projects detailed within the Market Rasen Vision & 3 Year Strategy subject to:

- Consultation and support for the strategy
- Setting up of an agreed implementation mechanism i.e. Charitable Incorporated Organisation
- Suitable financial regulation

The purpose of the funding was to enable Market Rasen to maximise the benefits derived from housing led growth to create a self-sustaining town with capacity to address social, economic and environmental issues.

Members gave consideration to a report which sought to update the Committee on progress

made in supporting growth and regeneration in Market Rasen.

Since the funding was approved, Market Rasen Town Council had been unable to bring forward and agree projects that met the requirements set out in the originally approved report, the reasons for which were outlined in the report.

Given that over two years had lapsed, it had been considered appropriate to review the capital programme commitment. It would be essential for the Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy & Resources Committees to review and agree any changes whilst also continuing to commit to the principles of local consultation and wider support.

Senior Officers had begun a series of meetings to review the challenges and opportunities. An outline heritage-led proposal, (based upon Market Rasen's Heritage Action Zone Bid) had been identified as an option that aligned with priorities raised and supported previously with the community and Market Rasen Town Council.

Section 3 of the report outlined how the heritage lead approach may be facilitated, namely by a Council led partnership to develop a small-scale Townscape Heritage project. It was anticipated that such a project would act as the catalyst for the heritage-led regeneration of Market Rasen town centre and would provide an opportunity to seek match funding to increase the reach and impact of the investment.

If Members were minded to approve this revised approach, the next steps would be to develop a fully costed project and scheme plan. This would include the creation of key documents required for the delivery of a historic buildings grant scheme as detailed within the report.

Section 6 of the report set out indicative timescales should the proposal be supported. There would also be the need to establish partnership and governance arrangements. Section 7 of the report detailed at a high level what such a partnership may look like, although it was noted governance arrangements would form part of any future report.

Debate ensued and Members from across the Chamber whole-heartedly welcomed the change in approach, particularly welcomed was the increased Officer support and expertise being afforded as part of the revised delivery model.

Members made reference to the successes delivered by the Gainsborough THI Project. It was recognised that there was a real opportunity to apply the learning and knowledge gained through those previous successes to deliver similar benefits to Market Rasen. The proposed approach also facilitated greater community engagement, partnership working and match funding opportunities all of which were commended.

Having been moved and seconded, on being put to the vote it was unanimously: -

**RESOLVED** that

- (a) the principle of utilising the allocated £200k capital budget to fund a Townscape Heritage project in Market Rasen, be approved and in doing so the principles of this funding allocation, as set out in the report of 19 July 2018 to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee, be rescinded.

- (b) a fully costed Townscape Heritage project and scheme plan be developed for approval by Prosperous Communities Committee, in June 2021, (with recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate).

#### **48 WORKPLAN**

Members gave consideration to the Committee Workplan.

The Chairman encouraged Members to review this coming Friday's Members Newsletter, which would include an information report detailing progress of on-going trials of separate paper and card collections in various Districts across Lincolnshire. A report for decision on this matter was due before the Committee in early Autumn.

In response to a question, Members were advised the bequest referenced was being dealt with informally through Chairs Briefing with no formal decision required from the Committee.

With no further comment and with no requirement for a vote, the Work Plan was **DULY NOTED.**

The meeting concluded at 8.38 pm.

Chairman