

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Epic Centre - Lincolnshire Showground - LN2 2NA on 28 June 2021 at 7.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Steve England (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway	Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Liz Clews	Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson	Councillor Christopher Darcel
Councillor Timothy Davies	Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor David Dobbie	Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Mrs Caralyne Grimble	Councillor Cherie Hill
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan	Councillor Mrs Cordelia McCartney
Councillor Giles McNeill	Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Peter Morris	Councillor Keith Panter
Councillor Roger Patterson	Councillor Mrs Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers	Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Jeff Summers	Councillor Robert Waller
Councillor Mrs Angela White	Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**

Ian Knowles	Chief Executive
James O'Shaughnessy	Head of Policy Strategy and Sustainable Environment / Deputy Monitoring Officer
Katie Storr	Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager (Interim)
Emma Redwood	Assistant Director People and Democratic Services
Ele Snow	Democratic and Civic Officer
Steve Leary	Commercial Waste Manager

**Apologies**

Councillor Jane Ellis  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne  
Councillor Tom Regis  
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn

### 8 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the Epic Centre and the first in person meeting of Full Council since March 2020. The Chairman reminded Members of the fire procedures and covid measures in place before formally opening the meeting.

## **9 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

## **10 DISTRICT COUNCIL BY-ELECTION RESULTS - MAY 2021**

Members gave consideration to a report which set out the results of the recent District Council By-Election for the Kelsey Wold Ward held on 6 May 2021.

Members welcomed and congratulated newly elected Councillor, Councillor Peter Morris.

**RESOLVED** that the results of the District Council By-Election for the Kelsey Wold Ward held on 6 May 2021 be noted.

## **11 CHAIRMAN'S CHAPLAIN**

The Chairman of Council moved a vote of thanks to his outgoing Chaplain, the Reverend Adam Watson, in his absence for his services and support during the past two years.

The Chairman of Council advised that his Chaplain for the forthcoming year was to be the Reverend Jane Foster-Smith, whom had earlier taken prayers.

Reverend Foster-Smith was in receipt of the Chaplain's stole.

Members congratulated Reverend Foster-Smith on her pending ordination.

**RESOLVED** that the Reverend Jane Foster-Smith be appointed as the Chairman's Chaplain.

## **12 TO ELECT A LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Owen Bierley be appointed as the Leader of the Council.

There were no further nominations. On being put to the vote it was:-

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Owen Bierley be elected Leader of the Council for the remainder of the 2021/22 civic year.

Councillor Bierley addressed Council and expressed his thanks at having been re-appointed.

### 13 TO ELECT A DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Anne Welburn be appointed as the Deputy Leader of the Council.

There were no further nominations.

A request for a recorded vote was made and duly seconded by a further Member.

On being put to the vote, votes were cast in the following manner: -

**For:** - Councillors Bierley, Brockway, Coulson, Darcel, Davies, Devine, England, Fleetwood, Grimble, Hill, Howitt-Cowan, Lawrence, McCartney, G McNeill, J McNeill, Morris, Patterson, Rodgers, Summers and Waller (20)

**Against:** - Councillors Dobbie and Panter (2),

**Abstentions:** - Councillors Boles, Bunney, Clews, Cotton, Rainsforth, Rollings, M Snee, J Snee, White, and Young (10)

With a total of 20 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 10 abstentions, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Anne Welburn be elected Deputy Leader of the Council for the remainder of 2021/22 civic year.

### 14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a) Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 12 April 2021

Having being moved and seconded, and with no questions raised, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 12 April 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

b) Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Full Council held on 4 May 2021

Having being moved and seconded, and with no questions raised, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Full Council held on 4 May 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### 15 MATTERS ARISING

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

A Member expressed disappointment that the action entitled "motion to combat litter" had been

delayed but were understanding of the reasoning,

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

## **16 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Chairman**

The Chairman had had the pleasure of being able to undertake several engagements in recent weeks, making reference first to the raising of the Pride Flag, outside of the Guildhall, in celebration of Pride month.

The Chairman had also paid honour to all of the Armed Forces, on National Armed Forces Day, raising the flag alongside the Chief Executive, his Chaplain and the Council's Member Champion for Armed Forces and recording prayers and messages on social media.

Only last Friday the Chairman had had the pleasure of joining Sir Edward Leigh at the opening of new facilities at Riseholme College – a truly amazing facility to have within the District.

Only this Saturday, alongside the Chief Executive, the Chairman had visited the very well attended Merry Olde Market in Gainsborough. It had been a pleasure meeting the stallholders, entertainers and members of the community, and all seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves

### **Leader**

The Leader made the following address to Council

“Firstly I very much welcome the ability to hold meetings in person once again, both in the community and as a Council, even though the safety requirements mean they are by no means as they were before the pandemic. Huge thanks are due to all those who, through their hard work and commitment, have made this the successful process it has proven to be to-date.

Members will be aware that the District Council's bid to the Levelling Up Fund was completed and submitted in good time, though we will not learn the outcome until the Autumn. Again, given that such a high quality application was prepared within a really challenging timeframe is a notable achievement, reflecting the ambition of this Council and the wider partnership.

Whilst recognising the amazing progress made in combatting the coronavirus pandemic, especially through the vaccination programme, considerable challenge and uncertainty remains as new variants emerge. Continued adherence to the guidance and regular self-testing remain vital tools available to us all as we strive towards the easing of restrictions on or after 19<sup>th</sup> July.

Consultation on the draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (Regulation 18) will begin next week and run for an eight-week period. The document contains a number of ambitious, cutting edge proposals, particularly in support of the climate change and sustainability imperative. It is vitally important that as many individuals and organisations as possible now share their views.

Two announcements have recently been made that respond to ambitions of many years standing however neither, at this stage, contains the optimal, desired, solution for West Lindsey. I'll refer to the railway proposal under Agenda Item 11, but can advise that the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB boundary review has not been included in the first round of projects by Natural England.

Finally Chairman, whilst we should never underestimate what we have achieved so far as a Council during a time of unprecedented challenge and change, much remains to be done and will be done on behalf of those we represent. My heartfelt thanks go to each and every one of you, to our colleagues in local government and to all of our partners in the community."

## **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive addressed Council and was pleased to advise the election in May had gone smoothly, paying recognition to the Elections team and the 200 plus officers involved in hosting the polling stations and undertaking the count for four different elections.

Members were advised that the Monitoring Officer would be leaving the Council on 17<sup>th</sup> August. He thanked Mr O'Shaughnessy for his support, congratulated him on his new role and wished him the best of luck for the future.

Referring Members to the programme of events to launch the Gainsborough Townscape Heritage Programme, which had started with the Merry Olde Market on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June. The market had been well received and was busy for much of the day between 9am and 3pm.

A further employee survey had been undertaken over the last few weeks. The Chief Executive was pleased to report that there had been a high response with 64% of employees continuing to report that they felt their needs were being catered for during the pandemic. There was a high proportion of employees looking to work from home or have a mix of office and work from home in the future. From 5 July employees would be able to book work stations within the Guildhall. This being the first phase in developing a new way of working.

That concluded announcements for the meeting.

## **17 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chairman advised the meeting that no public questions had been received.

## 18 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

The Chairman advised the meeting that four questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.9 had been submitted to the meeting. These had been circulated separately to the agenda.

The Chairman invited the first questioner, Councillor Trevor Young, to put his question to the meeting, as follows: -

“The Government introduced a number of different financial grants to support businesses during this Covid Pandemic which have been administrated by local authorities.

My question is have these business grants been paid to any political associations and groups across the District since their introduction?

If so Leader: -

- please outline how political parties/ associations would meet the criteria for grant assistance as they are not businesses nor do they provide a service.
- And if payments have been made please confirm whether these payments have been returned to the Council or whether it is intended for them to be returned.

Many local businesses have financially struggled during this Covid Pandemic and many employees are at risk of losing their jobs. People across the district would be disheartened to hear that financial grants intended to support local businesses have been paid to support such groups and associations should that be the case.

Thank you”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Owen Bierley, responded as follows: -

“Thank you for your question Cllr Young. Yes, one grant payment of £10,000.00 was paid under Small Business Rate Relief on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020. It was repaid (allocated on the ledger) in two amounts, £5,000.00 on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 and £5,000.00 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020.

The eligibility criteria for the Small Business, Retail, Leisure and Hospitality grants (the first phase of business grants in April 2020) was determined by the business rates register. Rate paying organisations were entitled to receive grant support.”

Councillor Young thanked the Leader for the response.

The Chairman then invited the second questioner, Councillor Mandy Snee, to put her question to the meeting as follows: -

“It was great to see West Lindsey District raising the flag to celebrate the beginning of Pride Month.

At this event the Chair Councillor England said that “one of his main priorities as the Chairman of the Council was to make sure that everybody in West Lindsey felt supported and included in the District”. Rightly so.

Please:

What are the actions in place to ensure this happens?

The Annual Equality Statement (drawn from the Equality strategy) and uploaded on W.L.D.C.'s website, records the Equality objectives and actions from 2018.

What are the current objectives and how are we going to meet these as a Council?

Thank you”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Owen Bierley, responded as follows: -

“Thank you for your question Cllr Mrs Snee and for highlighting the fact that the Council fully supports Pride Month and in doing so publicly expresses its commitment to promoting equality and to help bring about an inclusive society.

As a local authority the Council has a responsibility to meet the Equality Duty which is set by law as part of the Equality Act 2010. To ensure this happens, Members are reminded that at the March 2020 meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee, Members approved the Council’s Equality Strategy and Action Plan. It can be viewed here: <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/my-council/how-the-council-works/key-plans-policies-and-strategies/equality/equality-strategy/>

The Strategy has a four year timeframe 2020 – 2024 and its aim is to support strong, active and inclusive communities who can influence and shape the district of West Lindsey. It is imperative that we work to ensure that no one is marginalised through personal circumstances and everyone is offered the best opportunity to realise their potential.

As Members of this Council we all have a responsibility to provide community leadership within the District of West Lindsey and use our role to promote equality and community cohesion as well as sharing ideas and good practice with our partners and other service providers.

There are four objectives contained with the Equality Strategy:

1. To review Corporate Plan and Equality objectives to ensure links are clear and objectives are evidence based
2. To ensure that all our staff, elected Members and volunteers are aware of our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
3. Engage our communities to participate in the determination of our priorities

and decision making

4. Ensure we are transparent in decision making.

The Action Plan that accompanies the Strategy contains a number of specific actions to be undertaken to achieve these objectives; including updating the Annual Equality Statement; training and awareness for staff and Members and the provision of guidance and supporting information.

Due to unforeseen circumstances there has been a delay in progressing some of this work; however Officers are now back in a position to make headway and ensure that the action plan is delivered. Information on the Council's website will also be updated and the objectives will be displayed. This is also an area in which our new Chairman's Chaplain, Revd. Jane Foster-Smith, takes a keen interest"

Councillor Snee thanked the Leader for the response, but advised that the Equality Strategy did not appear to be loading on the website and the links within Strategy did not appear to fully functional.

This fact was disputed by way of Point of Information from another Member, advising that he had successfully accessed the document. Officers undertook to investigate the documents accessibility on the website after the meeting.

The Chairman then invited the third questioner, Councillor Stephen Bunney, to put the first of his questions to the meeting as follows: -

**"Market Rasen Swimming Pool Business Plan** - The former Leader, in his speech to Full Council earlier on in the year, when he outlined the work of The Council in the civic year 2021 – 2022, he pledged that the schedule would include a review of the business case for a swimming pool in Market Rasen.

Could the Leader please confirm that this piece of work is still on the to-do list?

Could he also explain the full range of criteria that will be used when determining the business case and confirm that any conclusions made will not be purely on short term economic grounds but also take into account post austerity environment, social, health and wellbeing co-benefits over the working life of a rural community based swimming pool.

Thank you"

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Owen Bierley, responded as follows: -

"Thank you for your question Councillor Bunney. As outlined by the then Leader of the Council, the workplan for the 2021/22 civic year does include a review of the business case for a swimming pool in Market Rasen.

Whilst the full scope of the review is yet to be determined work has commenced and I can reassure residents that it will not purely be based on a financial assessment and will be developed in accordance with our five case model, which

ensures we take into account wider considerations.

The five case business model looks at: -

- The strategic case – assesses how the project will meet corporate priorities,
- The financial case – how the project impacts on ongoing resources and availability of funding
- The commercial case – is there a market for the activity and will it generate income
- The legal case – do we have the legal power and
- The operational case – what is the business need”

Councillor Bunney thanked the Leader for the response.

The Chairman invited Councillor Bunney to put his second question to the meeting, and the fourth and final question for this meeting, as follow.

**“Levelling Up Fund across The District** - The ‘Thriving Gainsborough 2024’ proposal under the auspices of the Government’s Levelling Up Fund initiative is an exciting and extremely beneficial project. Let’s hope that the funding is forthcoming as expected. The positive developments in the town will have major benefits for the residents, businesses and visitors to the wider West Lindsey Area. However, for this to happen there needs to be an effective dissemination of the potential initiatives and improved communications/transport links between Gainsborough and the outlying areas. Currently, there is a prevalent north-south bias, between Grimsby, Lincoln, Leicester and beyond, in such movements within most of the district’s area. For instance, it is not possible to use the Call Connect bus service from Market Rasen to Gainsborough, to make up for the lack of a regular daily bus service.

What plans are in place to develop these essential links?

If they are still being formulated what brief has been issued to the Officers and what is the anticipated time line for finalising these plans?

Thank you”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Owen Bierley, responded as follows: -

“Thank you for your question Cllr Bunney. WLDC work strategically with LCC as the Highways Authority to influence and plan for connectivity across all modal activity. The overarching Transport Plan for Lincolnshire (LTP5) is currently being re-drafted, our Officers are part of a working group with a mandate to ensure alignment with our adopted Corporate Plan. Consultation on LTP 5 will include members of the two Transport Strategy Boards, our Transport Member working group and wider public engagement, to be managed by Lincolnshire County Council.

As Members will be aware, the peak and off peak bus service between Market Rasen and Gainsborough, operated by Stagecoach was withdrawn in 2013 as it

was no longer commercially viable. This was as a result of low passenger numbers, some of which was driven by changes in school movements. Analysis at the time showed that most journeys were made between Hemswell and Gainsborough, this is now possible on Call Connect.

The publication of the National Bus Strategy has reaffirmed aspirations to deliver a bus network fit for the future. LCC are leading work to bring together an Enhanced Partnership and Bus Service Improvement Plan by October 2021 with a view to delivery commencing from April 2022. Officers continue to raise the matter of connectivity across the district and there is commitment from LCC to discuss priorities and aspirations with all stakeholders as the Bus Service Improvement Plan is developed.

Finally, LNER have recently published their draft proposed timetable for May 2022. It appears that the opportunity for the reinstated Cleethorpes to London service (withdrawn in 1993) to stop at Market Rasen (and indeed Barnetby and Habrough) has been overlooked. WLDC will be submitting a formal response to the consultation and I would encourage all Members and partner organisations to also consider making a response. The consultation will be open until 5<sup>th</sup> August and can be accessed here: <https://lner.citizenspace.com/>

Councillor Bunney thanked the Leader for the response in particular the information regarding the LNER consultation.

The Leader gave his assurance that he would continue to raise these matters at relevant meetings.

## **19 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10**

The Chairman advised the meeting that one motion pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.10 had been submitted to the meeting, this was as set out in the agenda.

Councillor Trevor Young, was invited to put his motion to the meeting, as follows: -

“Chairman

In 2016 Lincolnshire County Council turned off almost half of the street lights across the County resulting in many residents living in fear for their safety at night.

At a recent presentation by Lincolnshire Police (18<sup>th</sup> Feb ) it was stated that the lack of street lighting has significantly impacted on crime levels in parts of the Gainsborough South West Ward and their ability to effectively deal with crime during hours of darkness.

Perception of personal safety is important especially for the vulnerable. The recent events of the Sarah Everards case have placed emphasis on women’s safety, particularly at night time.

Surely it is time this position was re-considered?

I call upon Members to support this motion requesting that the Leader of this Council commences robust discussions with Leading Members of the County Council with a view to seeking the re-introduction of street lighting in parts of West Lindsey, particularly into those communities we ourselves have deemed to be vulnerable.

Furthermore, the Leader be required to feed back to this Council, by way of reporting to Prosperous Communities, the outcome of these discussions, potential options which could be investigated and their associated costs.

I so move”

Having being duly seconded debate ensued, with the Leader of the Council indicating that he was unable to support the Motion, and outlined his reasons for this. He considered there was a more appropriate way for this matter to be addressed - that being for individual town and parishes with support from their County Councillor, to approach the County Council direct regarding their specific area, an option which was currently available.

The facts within the Motion were disputed. A dual hatted Member indicated she had sought further information direct from the County and had been advised of the 68,000 street lights owned by LCC 42,000 remained on for part of the night. This approach saved £2.5 million for the tax payer. Data available showed no correlation between lighting and crime levels, and whilst perception of crime initially rose this had eased. There was a danger that fear could be easily created. There was a process by which street lighting could be reintroduced, with parishes and neighbourhoods being charged a one-off fee.

Councillor Young as the Motion submitter was asked to quantify the statement made regarding Lincolnshire Police, which some Members considered was at odds with their understanding and as such they could not support the Motion.

In responding, reference was made to the pledges which had been made in recent County Council and Police Commissioner elections. The statement had been made at a Member briefing on 18 February attended by the Police and Crime Commissioner when he had spoken of the difficulties the force were experiencing hampered by street lighting.

Councillor Young further advised of campaign pledges made by the Crime Commissioner and of his visits to Gainsborough and had indicated he would support any campaign to re-instate street lighting on those streets where there had been an impact. In Gainsborough Councillor Young was of the view almost 90% of the street lights were off. During lockdown crime in the area had significantly increased, the darkness allowed crime to thrive. As a Council, he considered it a duty to ensure residents had safe environments to live, without a safe environment there was little point. Personal Safety had to be a priority, not a political matter, and Councillor Young urged the Council to acknowledge the issue existed, commence robust discussions with the County Council and report back to this Committee options and costs to re-

introduce street lights where they were required.

Reference was made to the work undertaken by a former Leader of this Council, however the costs were significantly higher than those that had been stated by previous speakers. He urged the council to fully understand the costs and the options to a full discussion about finding a solution. Can areas be turned on, individual lights?, individual streets? The Chamber were again urged to acknowledge the problem, Gainsborough was in total darkness after midnight, it had a night time economy, with aspirations for this to grow. Members were challenged to walk Gainsborough in the evening and confirm they felt safe.

The facts were again disputed but Members were keen to understand where these differences had arisen.

Personal perception data was not collected and yet personal perception was key, this impacted lives and if the District was to be successful in attracting businesses , visitors, employment, personal safety and public perception needed to be addressed.

Some Members were not supportive of the reporting back proposal and questioned the constitutional appropriateness. In response it was suggested both the process and testing the evidence were not the real issues for discussion. Community safety was of paramount importance, people needed to feel safe. Speaking to residents there was a genuine fear.

A Member suggested a report back to Council, following discussions with LCC and the Police and Crime Commissioner, outlining those areas which may benefit, may be more appropriate and something he could support should the Motion be amended.

Several Gainsborough Ward Members spoke of the experience of the town of an evening, the feedback received from residents, concerns around emergency services been unable to find addresses. It was suggested a saving of £2.5 million within a budget the size of the County Council's was not significant enough given the impact on the community. Councillor Devine, Gainsborough East Ward Member advise Members he had written directly to the Executive Member of the County Council , but had been advised there was no evidence to suggest crime had increased in the absence of street lighting.

A request for a recorded vote was made and duly seconded by a further Member.

On being put to the vote, votes were cast in the following manner: -

**For:** - Councillors Boles, Bunney, Clews, Cotton, Coulson, Darcel, Davies, Devine, Dobbie, Hill, Howitt-Cowan, Panter, Rainsforth, Rollings, M Snee, J Snee, White, and Young (18)

**Against:** - Councillors Bierley, Brockway, England, Fleetwood, Grimble, , Lawrence, McCartney, J McNeill, Morris, Patterson, Rodgers, Summers and Waller (13)

**Abstentions:** - G McNeill (1)

With a total of 18 votes in favour, 13 votes against and 1 abstention, it was it was **RESOLVED** that the motion be **ACCEPTED** and as such

- (a) The Leader of the Council to commence robust discussions with Leading Members of the County Council with a view to seeking the re-introduction of street lighting in parts of West Lindsey, particularly into those communities we ourselves have deemed to be vulnerable; and
- (b) the Leader feed back to this Council, by way of reporting to Prosperous Communities, the outcome of these discussions, potential options which could be investigated and their associated costs.

## **20 REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS ON COMMITTEES/SUB -COMMITTEES**

The Chairman presented the report, which set out details of the political groups on the Council, the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each Committee, and the allocation of seats on each of the Committees based on political groupings.

The requirement to review the allocations was as a result of the recent by-election held in the Kelsey Wold Ward at which Councillor P Morris was elected . Councillor Peter Morris has given due notice under Regulation 9b that he wishes to be treated as Member of both the Conservative Group and the Administration.

This was a matter, which had been determined by the Head of Paid Service under his delegated authority, and as such, there was no requirement for a vote.

With no questions posed, the following was **DULY NOTED**: -

- (a) the details of the political groups, as set out in Appendix A of the report,
- (b) the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each committee and sub-committee; and
- (c) the allocation to different political groups of seats on committees/sub-committees, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

## **21 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND COMMENCEMENT TIME OF MEETINGS**

The Chairman of the Council presented the report which set out the wishes expressed by the political groups in respect of the appointment of Members to serve on each of the Council's formal Committees for the remainder of the 21/22 Civic Year.

Requests had been received that the Overview and Scrutiny be not politically balanced.

Members were asked to suspend the rules relating to proportionality in respect of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and appoint the Members named in the report to the respective Committees.

The report further sought to appoint Chairmen and Vice/Chairmen for the remainder of the 21/22 civic year and determine the normal commencement time for each Committee .

Whilst the Council had had the need to re-appoint the Committees in accordance with its duty to make appointments to Committees in accordance with the wishes expressed by political groups, all Group Leaders had indicated they had no wish to amend the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmanship appointments previously made, with the exception of one. This being the Vice-Chairmanship for Chief Officer Employment Committee (COEC).

This report therefore merely sought re-affirmation of the majority of the positions and sought Council approval to amend the vice-chairmanship for the COEC from Councillor Owen Bierley to Councillor Mick Devine

No changes to usual commencement times of meetings were being proposed.

A Member indicated that in future, where a committee had two vice-chairmanships, the report should make clear which Councillor held vice-chair 1 and vice-chair 2, as this had implications for other council procedures, Concurrent committee being one such example.

With no questions posed, following a unanimous vote in favour it was

**RESOLVED** that

- (a) That the rules relating to proportionality be suspended in relation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (b) In accordance with the provisions of section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the wishes expressed by political groups, Members be appointed to serve to the Council's Committees for the remainder of the civic year as follows: -

**Chief Officer Employment Committee (8 Members)**

Councillor Owen Bierley	
Councillor Jackie Brockway	Chairman
Councillor Mick Devine	Vice-Chairman **
Councillor Diana Rodgers	
Councillor Lesley Rollings	
Councillor Anne Welburn	
Councillor Angela White	
Councillor Trevor Young	

**Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (12 Members)**

Councillor Owen Bierley  
Councillor Matt Boles  
Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor Mick Devine

Councillor Ian Fleetwood  
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan  
Councillor Giles McNeill  
Councillor John McNeill  
Councillor Mandy Snee  
Councillor Jeff Summers Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Anne Welburn Chairman  
Councillor Trevor Young

**Governance and Audit Committee (7 Members)**

Councillor Jackie Brockway Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor Tracey Coulson  
Councillor Chris Darcel  
Councillor David Dobbie  
Councillor John McNeill Chairman  
Councillor Anne Welburn

**Licensing Committee (12 Members)**

Councillor Liz Clews  
Councillor David Cotton  
Councillor Tim Davies  
Councillor Caralyne Grimble  
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan  
Councillor Angela Lawrence Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Cordelia McCartney  
Councillor Jessie Milne Chairman  
Councillor Peter Morris  
Councillor Judy Rainsforth  
Councillor Jim Snee  
Councillor Jeff Summers

**Regulatory Committee (12 Members)**

Councillor Liz Clews  
Councillor David Cotton  
Councillor Tim Davies  
Councillor Caralyne Grimble  
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan  
Councillor Angela Lawrence Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Cordelia McCartney  
Councillor Jessie Milne Chairman  
Councillor Peter Morris  
Councillor Judy Rainsforth  
Councillor Jim Snee

Councillor Jeff Summers

**Planning Committee (12 Members)**

Councillor Matthew Boles  
Councillor David Cotton  
Councillor Mick Devine  
Councillor Jane Ellis  
Councillor Ian Fleetwood Chairman  
Councillor Cherie Hill  
Councillor Cordelia McCartney  
Councillor Jessie Milne  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor Bob Waller Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Judy Rainsforth  
Councillor Angela White

**Prosperous Communities Committee (12 Members)**

Councillor Owen Bierley Chairman  
Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor Tracey Coulson Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Chris Darcel  
Councillor Mick Devine  
Councillor Steve England  
Councillor John McNeill Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Jessie Milne  
Councillor Mandy Snee  
Councillor Jim Snee  
Councillor Tom Regis  
Councillor Trevor Young

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee (11 members unbalanced)**

Councillor Liz Clews  
Councillor Tim Davies  
Councillor David Dobbie  
Councillor Caralyne Grimble  
Councillor Cherie Hill  
Councillor Angela Lawrence  
Councillor Keith Panter  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor Diana Rodgers Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Lesley Rollings Chairman  
Councillor Angela White Vice-Chairman

- (c) The current committee Chairmen, and Vice-Chairmen) be re-affirmed, and the amended Vice-Chairmanship relating to the Chief Officer Employment Committee be approved as follows;

Committee	Chairman	Vice-Chairman/men
Chief Officer Employment	Councillor Jackie Brockway	Councillor Mick Devine
Corporate Policy and Resources	Councillor Anne Welburn	Councillor Jeff Summers
Planning	Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Robert Waller
Governance and Audit	Councillor John McNeill	Councillor Jackie Brockway
Licensing	Councillor Jessie Milne	Councillor Angela Lawrence
Overview and Scrutiny	Councillor Lesley Rollings	Councillor Diana Rodgers Councillor Angela White
Regulatory	Councillor Jessie Milne	Councillor Angela Lawrence
Prosperous Communities	Councillor Owen Bierley	Councillor Tracey Coulson Councillor John McNeill
Standards Sub-Committee	Councillor Anne Welburn	David Cotton

and

- (d) the normal commencement time for each of the Committees be approved in accordance with the schedule detailed in table 2 of the report, as follows: -

Committee	Chairman
Chief Officer Employment	Meeting to be convened as and when required
Corporate Policy and Resources	6.30pm
Planning	6.30pm
Governance and Audit	2.00pm

Licensing*	6.30pm
Overview and Scrutiny	6.30pm
Regulatory*	6.30pm
Prosperous Communities	6.30pm
Standards Sub-Committee	Meeting to be convened as and when required

\* =Sub Committees for these meetings will be convened as required and will be held at various times during office hours.

## **22 APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OTHER BODIES (INCLUDING ANY OUTSIDE BODIES DUE TO EXPIRE )**

Council considered a report which sought to appoint Members to Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Panels, Boards and Outside Bodies which were due to expire or where notification had been received from the main Group Leaders.

Councillor Trevor Young indicated that since the reports publication he wished to replace Councillor Judy Rainsforth on the Community Awards Panel, and appoint Councillor Keith Panter as her replacement. The amendment was formally moved and seconded and on being put to the vote, the **AMENDMENT** was **CARRIED**.

**Note:** Councillor Giles McNeill requested his vote against the above amendment be recorded.

The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee highlighted references to the former Challenge and Improvement Committee (now Overview and Scrutiny Committee), within the membership of Honours Panel. It was again noted that reference was also made to the Committee's Vice-Chairman, of which there were now two. As such it was suggested these matters be further addressed as appropriate for increased clarity.

In response to Members' queries, regarding the Joint Staff Consultative Committee, noting its absence from any of the reports. Officers confirmed the membership was to remain as previously appointed. In light of Group Leaders' having indicated, they did not wish to amend its Membership, reference to both it and the Standards Sub-Committee had been excluded from the report. It was accepted that, for transparency, its inclusion for noting would have been more appropriate.

It was also confirmed the Standards Sub-Committee remained a sub-committee of the Governance and Audit Committee.

**RESOLVED** that : -

- (a) Councillors Steve England and Caralyne Grimble be appointed to the Climate and Sustainability Working Group;

- (b) Councillor Judy Rainsforth be re-appointed to the following Outside Bodies, for a further four year term, expiring Annual Council 2025 (subject to re-election in May 2023)-
- \* Trustees of Francis Barker Trust
  - \* Trustees of Gainsborough Education Charity
  - \* Trustees of WG Rose Memorial; and
- (c) Councillor Keith Panter be appointed to the Community Awards Panel in replacement of Councillor Judy Rainsforth.  
(Membership of the remaining bodies detailed in Appendix A of the report to remain unchanged).

**Note:** No amendments to the Membership of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee or Standards Sub-Committee were being made as a result of this report.

## **23 ADOPTION OF THE SCOTTON, BISHOP NORTON AND ATTERBY, GAINSBOROUGH, AND MORTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS**

Members gave consideration to a report sought approval to adopt (make) the Scotton, Bishop Norton and Atterby, Gainsborough, and Morton Neighbourhood Plans as part of the West Lindsey Development Plan, following each plan's successful referendum, held on 6 May 2021, having been delayed by the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Chairman of Council, as Member Champion for Neighbourhood Planning presented the report and in doing so made reference to his joy at seeing more plans being made. It was custom and practice for Neighbourhood Planning Groups to formally present their plans to the Council Meeting. Disappointingly, current restrictions had not made this possible, but the Chairman indicated of his intention to ensure Group representatives, were invited in due course, to meet with him at a separate event when restrictions allowed more easily.

Members across the Chamber acknowledged the enormous amount of hard work and dedication it took to complete a Neighbourhood Plan. Members directly involved with the production of both the Gainsborough, Morton and Scotton Plans addressed the meeting and placed on record their thanks to the individuals involved, and the hours of work numerous volunteers had undertaken to reach this stage.

Having being moved and seconded, on being put to the vote it was

**RESOLVED** that the Scotton, Bishop Norton and Atterby, Gainsborough, and Morton Neighbourhood Plans be adopted and made, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

## **24 APPOINTMENT TO REMUNERATION PANEL**

Consideration was given to a report which sought to appoint an Independent Member to serve on the Council's Remuneration Panel. The Monitoring Officer presented the report

and in doing so outlined the recruitment process which had been undertaken and personnel involved in that process.

The Council formally placed on record its thanks to outgoing Remuneration Panel Member Mr Peter Clay.

**RESOLVED** that Mr R Harvey be appointed to serve on the Remuneration Panel from 28 June 2021 for a period of 3 years to Annual Council 2024.

**Note:** The meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes at the conclusion of this item of business, with the meeting re-convening at 20.40 pm.

## **25 THE COUNCIL'S CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN AND DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

Members gave consideration to a report which presented the Council's Carbon Management Plan and draft Sustainability, Climate and Environment Strategy and action plan for approval having been recommended by both the Prosperous Communities Committee and the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee at their concurrent meeting in April 2021.

In summary the report provided

- a brief reminder to Members setting out the original rationale for this work, arising from a Motion to Council and the approach adopted to undertake the task;
- information produced by the Carbon Trust detailing the Council's revised carbon footprint and an associated carbon reduction action plan;
- the proposed Council's Sustainability, Climate Change and Environment Strategy and action plan for consideration and an outline of the process followed to develop the Strategy; and
- details of further matters for consideration to progress this agenda.

In presenting the report it was noted that a key message of the Strategy was that in addressing climate change a number of important co-benefits could accrue. In addition to greenhouse gas reductions, long-term sustainable financial savings; better development; improved health and wellbeing; new technologies and skilled employment; greater community resilience and secure energy supplies could be realised. Further information was contained in Section 2 of the report.

Climate change and its adverse impacts was considered one of the biggest issues individuals, communities, organisations and nations faced. Reference was made to the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which stressed the urgency with which greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

The draft strategy and action plan, before Members set out the Council's response to this

challenge. It provided a path way for the Council to follow in order to reach a net-zero carbon position across its own operations and for the wider District to achieve the same position by 2050 at the latest. It was considered not taking immediate action was not an option.

The scale of the carbon reduction challenge had been calculated. The Council's most recent carbon footprint had been calculated at 3428t CO<sub>2</sub>e pa, with an initial targeted footprint of 2089t CO<sub>2</sub>e pa. to be tackled. The Council's current carbon 'hotspots' have also been identified. The carbon footprint of the whole District was estimated at 524kt CO<sub>2</sub>e pa. which signified that the Council's overall impact was minimal in comparison. However, as a leader of place it was considered vitally important that the Council brought to bear its influencing skills to support and encourage all stakeholders across the District to also meet the challenge.

The key contributory factors to climate change had been identified and were discussed and detailed within the strategy. Their identification provided a robust framework against which action could be taken to mitigate their harmful effects on a themed approach.

The report also set out the key steps undertaken during the strategy's production. These included work with the Carbon Trust to deliver the CMP; two phases of consultation; training/awareness packages for staff and Members; the production of a communications plan; updates to the website and keeping abreast of the review of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

Consultation and feedback had shown that the Council had considerable support from stakeholders across the District. The Consultation findings were summarised within the report.

It was stressed the route towards achieving a net-zero carbon position would require a strong level of ambition. The creation of the Strategy was in effect "the end of the beginning". Members were advised that a number of matters remained to be determined. These related to the overall internal governance arrangements of the work required; how to achieve both District and County-wide collaboration and exert influence; and on-going resourcing requirements in terms of both Officer capacity and skills and finances. There was a need to identify projects which would work on scale and whilst Officers and Members understanding had significantly increased through the development of the Strategy and by working with such bodies as the Carbon Trust, there would be a need to procure technical expertise as the Council moved forward

In concluding it was again stressed the route towards achieving a net-zero carbon position would require the Council to continue to display a strong level of ambition. There was a strong mandate from the public to take action and the Strategy provided the road map by which this may be achieved.

Debate ensued and Members from across the Chamber spoke in support of the Strategy and the need to address climate change and sustainability. It was considered important that the Council made its financial investments in an ecological and considerate manner also. Members considered the document was well considered and welcomed delivery of the action plan commencing. Some would have liked to have seen greater aspiration for de-carbonisation of the District as a whole but acknowledged this would be further addressed and a long term plan developed. It was welcomed that the District Council as an organisation

was a small contributor to the total carbon footprint of the District, but some Members considered further consideration needed to be given to fleet conversion options, given their significant contribution to overall total emissions.

In response Officers advised that a range of options had been considered and continued to be considered, the Council was keen it didn't invest in short lived technologies, but rather technologies that would last decades. It was envisaged that proposals would be brought forward in coming years as part of the action plan.

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (a) the recommendations made on 22nd April 2021 by the Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committees be accepted, and in doing so, the Council's Carbon Management Plan and the Sustainability, Climate and Environment Strategy and action plan, be approved for formal adoption.
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Policy Strategy and Sustainable Environment in conjunction with the Chairs of The Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committees to undertake housekeeping amendments to the Strategy document.

## **26 ANNUAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW 19/20 AND 20/21 AND MONITORING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT COVERING THE SAME PERIOD, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Council gave consideration to a report which presented the 19/20 and 20/21 Annual Review of the Constitution and arising recommendations as considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 13 April and recommended for approval.

The report also included an Annual Report from the Monitoring Officer for the period 19/20 and 20/21. The report aimed to provide an holistic view of all governance associated matters.

The Governance and Audit Committee Chairman in presenting the report advised Members that comprehensive reviews were undertaken in 2011,14 , 17 and large sections of the document were also amended in 2018. As such a number of relatively minor amendments , detailed in Section 2 of the report were being proposed. All changes included a rationale for doing so. It was noted that changes made during Annual Reviews were driven by a number of factors, including responding to questions and motions, with Members' attention being drawn to sections 2.6 and 2.7.

These constitutional amendments would be supported by a number of training sessions throughout the year aimed at Parish Councils and their understanding of the planning process, in a bid to develop a common understanding of the process and help reduce any confusion and ultimately complaints

As part of the last Annual Review considered by Council in May 2019, Members had agreed

a list of associated work to be undertaken during the 2019/20 civic year. Section 5 of the report provided a brief update of the work which had undertaken and the arising outcomes over the two year period.

Whilst undertaking the annual review of the Constitution a number of other associated actions for further work, development or “watch in brief” had been identified, these were detailed at Section 6 of the report and progress and any arising recommendations from this work would form part of the 21/22 review reportable to Governance and Audit in April 2022.

The remaining sections of the report 7 -13 made up the Monitoring Officers Annual Report which aimed to provide an holistic overview of all governance associated matters and again covered a two year period on this occasion.

In the ensuing debate Members welcomed the report and in particular those amendments being proposed to further assist Parish Councils in the responding to planning applications process.

Whilst the amendments to Membership restrictions relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were welcomed it was suggested this matter should have been considered prior to the Committee’s membership have been determined.

Having being moved and seconded it was

**RESOLVED** that the recommendation from the Governance and Audit Committee be accepted and as such: -

- (a) the outcome of the annual reviews detailed within the report be noted;
- (b) the amendments detailed throughout Section 2 of the report, including those detailed in Appendix 2 relating to the Planning Delegation scheme be approved, adopted and implemented with immediate effect;
- (c) that the proposed amendments, raised through the review process, but which are not being progressed, detailed at Section 2.8 be not included;
- (d) the appointments of Mrs Alison Adams, Mr Peter Walton, and Mr Andrew Middleton be approved;
- (e) the progress made with regards to the areas of work agreed for further development in the previous reviews (Section 5);

the further planned work for 2021/22 (Section 6);

the statistical data provided within the report in respect of the number, nature and outcome of Code of Conduct Complaints (Section 8);

the support offered to Parish Councils (Section 11);

the use of the Council’s RIPA powers during the period (section 13); and

the updated financial and contract procedure rules as approved by the

Governance and Audit Committee in April 2021 shown at Appendix 3 and 4 be noted.; and

- (f) the interim decision making process(es) that have been in place during the COVID -19 Pandemic be acknowledged.

**Note:** Councillor David Cotton declared a personal interest as he had known Mr Walton on a personal level for a significant number of years.

## **27 REPORT ON WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 2020/21**

The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee presented the report to Council which provided an overview of the work of the Governance & Audit Committee during 2020/21.

Despite working under the constraints of lockdown, necessitating the holding of virtual meetings, the Committee had fulfilled its obligations as set out in its terms of reference. The Chairman summarised some of the activities the Committee had undertaken including a self-evaluation exercise to identify any aspects that required improvement in order that the Committee could be a more effective body. This had proved to be a useful piece of work and had led to some improvements in the way the Committee operated.

The Chairman of the Committee took the opportunity to thank the outgoing Monitoring Officer for all his support over the past year. These comments were echoed by other Members.

Members of the Committee thanked the Governance and Audit Committee Chairman for the way he engaged his Members and managed his committee. Members welcomed the introduction of full Committee pre-briefings, which it was considered, had greatly improved Members' ability to engage.

Having being moved and seconded it was

**RESOLVED** that the work undertaken by the Governance and Audit Committee during 2020/21 be noted.

## **28 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented her Committee's Annual Report to Full Council. The report covered a two year period, owing to the impact of the Pandemic, and detailed everything from the changes implemented following the 2018/19 scrutiny review right through to the focus on the flood risk work that had been ongoing for the last 12 months.

The Committee had continued to welcome outside agencies, even in the virtual world, especially in relation to the focus on leisure when it had received presentations from three leisure agencies across the district

Over the coming year the Committee planned to widen its involvement with outside agencies as well as addressing some ongoing concerns in the district such as fly-tipping. The Committee's work around flooding would continue.

In response to questions, the Chairman of the Committee considered real progress, with cross party involvement had been made in a number of areas including flooding and drainage. The Committee had seen a number of meetings cancelled and benefitted, due to the nature of the Committee, from in persons meeting. It was hoped a return to these would see progress and relationships improve even more. She thanked Officers and Members alike for their support, including former Monitoring Officer Alan Robinson, Ady Selby and Ele Snow.

**RESOLVED** that the Annual Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 9.15 pm.

Chairman