

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 6 December 2022 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Owen Bierley (Chairman)  
Councillor John McNeill (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Stephen Bunney  
Councillor Liz Clews  
Councillor Christopher Darcel  
Councillor Michael Devine  
Councillor Jane Ellis  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne  
Councillor Jaime Oliver  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings  
Councillor Jim Snee  
Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**  
Sally Grindrod-Smith Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities  
Ady Selby Director - Operational & Commercial Services  
Sarah Elvin Homes, Health & Wellbeing Team Manager  
Grant White Communities Manager  
Ele Snow Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson  
Councillor Mrs Cordelia McCartney

### 40 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

### 41 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 1 November 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

With reference to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2022, which had been considered at the Committee's Meeting on 1 November, and where it had been resolved that:

*“subject to amendments being made to the membership and attendance record, the minutes of the meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee, held on 21 September 2022, be confirmed as a correct record, with the corrected version to be signed at the next meeting”.*

The Chairman indicated the required amendment had now been made and with Committee’s consent the amended version was signed.

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

Reference the matters arising entitled “Member Flood and Drainage Working Group - Confirmed Membership”, a Member of the Committee referenced the issues which existed in parts of the District and placed on record her thanks to the Group, and in particular its supporting Officers, for the “in-roads” they were making, and the positive relationships being built with key partners to try improve the situation for residents, for which they were very grateful.

The Chairman advised of a recent suggestion by the Local Government Association to create a special interest group to address flooding and water management. He further advised that this was something the Council would like to support and initially 10 expressions of interest were required. West Lindsey had expressed an interest, the process thereafter was unclear at this stage but Members would be kept informed as this matter progressed.

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

#### **43 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **44 RESPONSE TO MOTION - STREET LIGHTING IN WEST LINDSEY**

Members gave consideration to a report that provided the response to a Motion passed by Full Council on 28 June 2021, namely that:

- 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;
- 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.

The report under consideration summarised the response which had been received from the County Council’s responsible Portfolio Holder and included the County Council’s adopted

Protocol for Reversal of Part Night Lighting, noting that applications should be made by Local Parish Councils.

During the course of their discussions, Members of the Committee expressed their disappointment with the response by the County Council and asked for a true reflection of the crime situation be considered. It was also stated that there were black spots in more rural areas that needed to be considered. It was highlighted that the safety of residents and the community was key and having no lights also restricted help to the emergency services if needs were arising.

Members asked to see a full response regarding crime figures, explaining they were saddened by the lack of key information and asking those Members who were also County Councillors to ask to reconsider 'black spots' in the rural areas and crime figures.

The expense of the maintenance of lights was noted, however the Committee did not feel this outweighed the benefits of having the lights on. A Member of the Committee suggested that an invitation to the County Council Portfolio Holder could be extended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in order to review the associated costings and reasoning behind the 'lights off' policy. With Members of the Committee supportive of this suggestion, the Senior Democratic and Civic Officer undertook to share this with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Having been moved and seconded, and on taking the vote, it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the response to the Motion to Council made on 28 June 2021, regarding street lighting in West Lindsey, be noted; and
- b) Members of Lincolnshire County Council be invited to a meeting of West Lindsey District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss street lighting.

#### **45 LINCOLNSHIRE HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2022-2027**

The Committee received a report regarding the Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 – 2027. It was explained by the Homes, Health and Wellbeing Team Manager that the Homelessness Act 2002 required all Local Authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their areas, formulate and publish a strategy based on the findings of this review, keep the strategy under review and consult with other local or public authorities and voluntary organisations before modifying or adopting a strategy.

Members heard that a consultation was completed throughout the development of the strategy which involved a wide range of stakeholders including, Lincolnshire County Council, third sector organisations and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. A review of the previous strategy provided a basis on which the new strategy could be formulated along with stakeholder comments from the consultation.

Members thanked Officers for the report and the hard work that had been undertaken. In response to a question raised regarding the age of young people covered within the strategy, it was confirmed that young people up to the age of 25 years, and specifically care leavers, would be supported. It was noted that there was, currently, temporary accommodation and support for five units which would hopefully increase to 13 being available in the near future. It was anticipated that there would be a higher demand on the service with the cost of living increase.

Members again expressed their thanks for the work involved in supporting those vulnerable through homelessness and rough sleeping, and, having been moved and seconded, it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the achievements detailed within the review of the Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2017-2021 be recognised and noted; and,
- b) the Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027 be adopted, and the mechanism for monitoring of the Strategy be noted.

#### **46 VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS**

The Committee heard from the Communities Manager, with a report seeking approval for the Core Voluntary and Community Sector Grants for 2023/24. It was explained that the Council provided a range of core Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants to support the delivery of projects and services for the benefit of local communities and residents. The delivery of these services contributed towards the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. Members were advised that the current Core VCS grant agreements would end on 31 March 2023, having been approved by the Prosperous Communities Committee on 7 December 2021 for a 1-year period beginning 1 April 2022. An additional recommendation from that meeting had been to undertake a review of VCS Grants, which had now completed.

Chairman and Members of the Committee thanked the Officer for the detailed report. A discrepancy was noted within the Officer recommendation, that being that the amount for Citizens Advice (Lindsey and Lincoln) should read £60,200, as was detailed within the body of the report, not the published £60,000. This was confirmed to have been a typographical error, with the correct amount being £60,200.

It was also noted how much the churches festival helped not only the local economy but had also expanded into the wider area, and should be supported for the significant impact it had on the visitor economy. Members highlighted that volunteers played a vital role in many projects across the district and were priceless for the support they offered. Members also wished to extend their thanks to the Officers and teams working with the volunteer groups.

**Note:** Councillor O. Bierley declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was involved with voluntary organisations.

A Member of the Committee expressed hesitancy in allocating such funding at a time when there was such financial uncertainty, however it was explained that the commitment to the

funds had been made and was according to existing budget setting, and that should the funding cease, some organisations would cease immediately. Members did recognise the current financial landscape, however, expressed robust support for the continuation of funding as agreed.

Having been proposed and seconded, the Chairman took the vote, confirming that the Committee was to vote on the recommendation within the Officer's report, with the amendment of the typographical error. It was therefore

**RESOLVED** that the Core Voluntary and Community Sector Grants for 2023/24 be approved as follows:

- Citizens Advice (Lindsey & Lincoln) - £60,200
- Gainsborough Adventure Playground Association
- £15,000
- Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride - £13,000
- The Conservation Volunteers - £30,000
- Voluntary Centre Services - £25,000
- West Lindsey Churches Festival - £8,000

#### **47 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME**

Members gave consideration to the final report of the evening, again presented by the Communities Manager, regarding the Community Grants Programme and seeking approval for the continuation of a Community Grants Programme from 2023/24 to 2026/27, linked to the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Members enquired as to the governance of the scheme, seeking assurance that the money distributed through such schemes was spent according to the requirements, it was also suggested that Council branding on projects funded by the schemes could be more prominent in order to emphasise the funding origin. It was confirmed that the governance processes in place sought to protect the investments made through the grant funding schemes. A Member of the Committee suggested that the governance could be included in the Monitoring Officer's review of the internal audit plan for the upcoming year and it was agreed that this suggestion be put forward.

Members heard that, alongside the UK Shared Prosperity Fund work, there would be increased branding and promotion of the projects supported through the scheme.

There was discussion regarding the use of the funds, and enquiries as to whether the money could be spent in other ways to benefit the district. It was explained that smaller amounts being granted to local communities achieved the most meaningful outcomes for those recipients, in a way that larger sums of money on one off spends could not always achieve. It was highlighted that without such funding, many community projects and organisations would cease to exist.

In response to concerns raised that there was unbalanced awareness of the funds, with some groups perhaps deserving and in need of financial support but unaware of how to access that, Members were assured that the Induction for all Councillors following the all-out

elections in May 2023 would cover those aspects.

Members of the Committee were, on the whole, supportive of the schemes, albeit recognising that further work could be undertaken ensuring the wider awareness and accessibility of such funding.

Having been moved and seconded, the Chairman took the vote and it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the delivery of the Councillor Initiative Fund be continued from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027; and
- b) the delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme (previously agreed) be continued from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027; and
- c) the continuation of the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027, and the Flagship Community Grants Programme from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, be **recommended** to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for financial approval.

#### **48 WORKPLAN**

With no comments or questions, the work plan was **DULY NOTED**.

The Chairman wished all present a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year and brought the meeting to a close.

The meeting concluded at 8.41 pm.

Chairman