

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 9 February 2023 commencing at 6.30 pm.

- Present:**
- Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn (Chairman)
 - Councillor Jeff Summers (Vice-Chairman)

 - Councillor Owen Bierley
 - Councillor Matthew Boles
 - Councillor Stephen Bunney
 - Councillor Michael Devine
 - Councillor Ian Fleetwood
 - Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
 - Councillor John McNeill
 - Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
 - Councillor Mrs Tracey Coulson
- In Attendance:**
- Emma Foy Director of Corporate Services and Section 151
 - Sally Grindrod-Smith Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
 - Alison McCulloch Revenues Manager
 - Claire Bailey Change, Projects and Performance Officer
 - Darren Mellors Performance & Programme Manager
 - Sue Leversedge Business Support Team Leader
 - Peter Davy Financial Services Manager (Deputy Section 151 Officer)
 - Ellen King Policy & Strategy Officer – Corporate Strategy & Business Planning

 - James Makinson-Sanders Economic Growth Team Manager
 - Grant White Enterprising Communities Manager
 - Katie Storr Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager
 - Cara Markham Commercial Development Manager
 - Elaine Bilton Waste Policy & Commercial Waste Lead Officer
 - Ele Snow Senior Democratic and Civic Officer
- Apologies:**
- Councillor Robert Waller
 - Councillor Trevor Young
- Membership:**
- Councillor Mrs Tracey sat as substitute for Councillor Robert Waller

61 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

62 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/S

The minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held on 15 December 2022 were **APPROVED** and signed as a correct record.

The minutes of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 19 January 2023 were **NOTED**.

63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

64 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

With no comments or questions from Members, the Matters Arising Schedule was **DULY NOTED**.

65 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUND 2023/24

The Committee was advised by the Revenues Manager that the Government had recently announced another scheme to support council tax support claimants with the cost of living crisis. This was fully funded by Central Government.

All billing authorities were required to show a reduction of £25 for all council tax support claimants on their annual council tax bills but where the liability was less than £25, the reduction should be applied to bring the liability down to NIL.

West Lindsey District Council had been awarded the sum of £160,263 and, after some financial modelling, it had been calculated that the Council would be able to make an increased payment of £50 to all eligible council tax payers when the annual council tax bills were calculated. This would be the £25 as directed by Government plus a further £25 discretionary award. This would leave a discretionary fund of approximately £54k to enable anyone suffering severe financial hardship to make an application for council tax assistance.

The report before the Committee set out the financial implications in detail and the rationale for the increase in the initial award from £25 to £50.

Members supported the proposal, noting that if approved, the Council would still enable finance to be made available to help people suffering from severe financial hardship.

Having been moved and seconded, it was

RESOLVED that

- a) all eligible council tax support claimants be awarded a one-off amount of £50 against their council tax liability for 2023/24, to be shown on their council tax bills, this being the reduction of £25 as stated in the guidance by

the Government, plus a further discretionary reduction of £25, which was an increase on the minimum amount required; and

- b) the remaining balance be set aside as a council tax discretionary hardship fund to enable anyone (not just council tax support claimants) experiencing financial hardship to make an application from this fund, which would accord with the guidance that stated that councils could use their remaining allocation as they saw fit to support vulnerable households with their council tax bills.

66 2023/24 MEASURE AND TARGET SETTING FOR PROGRESS AND DELIVERY

The Committee received a report from the Change, Project and Performance Officer concerning proposals for the 2023/24 Progress and Delivery measure set. As referenced in the report, a light touch approach was proposed for 2023/24, with a full review of all measures and targets being undertaken for 2024/25. This review would be undertaken in alignment with the refreshed Corporate Plan, with work commencing later this year. This would include setting up a Member working group to allow for an evaluation of measures and targets prior to sign off in early 2025.

Members were reminded that a number of new measures had been introduced at the beginning of this financial year. In accordance with the approved process, targets were not assigned to these. Instead the year was used to baseline data for these measures and this baseline information would be used to inform targets for the next financial year. The report included the rationale for this. Members were advised that with regard to the target for Local Land Charges – Market share, this would remain at 40%.

Members commented that this was a well written report and having indicated that it would be helpful in future to have separate statistics for full fee-paying members and non-members of the leisure centres, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED that the proposed changes to those Progress and Delivery measures and targets for 2023/24, as outlined in the report, be approved.

67 BUDGET AND TREASURY MONITORING QUARTER 3 2022/2023

The Committee received a report from the Business Support Team Leader providing an oversight of financial performance at the end of quarter 3 2022/23 in relation to revenue, capital and treasury management.

Revenue

In relation to revenue budgets, the forecast outturn position was a net contribution to reserves of £119,000. This was a decrease of £97,000 from the forecast contribution reported to this Committee in November for Quarter 2.

At this stage of the year there was an increase in the number of variances being reported, as services had been able to report an outturn position with more certainty. The movement from Quarter 2 was primarily due to the following reasons.

Employee expenditure pressure had increased to £175,000 for the year. This reflected the final impact of the 2022/23 pay award which had been applied in November and backdated to April 2022. Provision had been made to allow for up to a 4% pay award in the 2022/23 budgets. However, the final award had been an average of 6% with a fixed amount payable at each scale point.

As there had been an increase in income above budget in other areas, it had been possible to contain the additional impact of the pay award within existing budget provision, resulting in an overall surplus position.

Bank charges had resulted in a pressure of £90,000. This was due to the payment of Government support via faster payments. However, Government guidance had now advised local authorities that future payments were to be made via BACS upload which took slightly longer to be received by the payee but was a lower cost process. Reimbursement of these costs was being sought but as yet this has not been confirmed.

A £59,000 balance of a corporate contingency budget which was not needed could be returned to reserves.

The net interest receivable in investments had increased to £309,000. This was due to the budgets being set when interest rates were historically low, and this, combined with larger balances than expected in the early part of the year had meant that the Council was forecast to exceed its interest receivable budget.

The forecast planning fee income above budget had increased to £221,000 due to applications for major developments already received, and others that were anticipated to be submitted in this financial year.

Capital

In relation to capital, schemes were reporting a £2.808m underspend against a revised budget of £10.55m. £2.765m of this was to be carried forward into future years. The majority of this related to reprofiling of the cinema development budget. £0.043m was reported as an underspend in year, which was mainly due to the website replacement scheme which was now complete.

Fees and Charges

Members were invited to approve three amendments to the fees and charges schedule:

- The first was Land Charges. Lincolnshire County Council had now confirmed their search fees for 2023/24.
- The DBS checks within taxi licensing fees were to remain unchanged from the current year. In the original schedule, a small increase had been anticipated.
- The Crematorium. The Tributes supplier had added some new products around webcasts and slide shows which had been added to the fees schedule. They had also changed the description of some of their existing products and the schedule had been

amended to reflect this.

Having been advised that action was being taken to seek to recover bank charges, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED that

Revenue

- a) The forecast outturn position of £0.119m net contribution to reserves as at 31 December 2022 relating to revenue activity be accepted.
- b) The use of Earmarked Reserves during the quarter approved by the Chief Finance Officer, using delegated powers be accepted.
- c) The amendments to the fees and charges schedules for 2023/24 (to be effective from 1 April 2023) be approved and Council be **RECOMMENDED** to implement any new fees and charges from that date.

Capital

- d) The current projected Capital Outturn as detailed in section 3.1.1. of the report be accepted.
- e) The adjustment to the Capital Budget as detailed in 3.2. of the report be accepted.
- f) The revised Capital Budget of £7.853m be approved.

Treasury

- g) The report, the treasury activity and the prudential indicators be accepted.

68 CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE DRAFT BUDGET 2023/24 & ESTIMATES TO 2027/28

The Business Support Team Leader presented a report setting out the Committee's base budget position for 2023/2024 and estimates for 2024/2025 to 2027/2028, incorporating the Medium Term Financial Planning Principles, those being, to focus on achieving outcomes; to drive a robust and sustainable financial position; to support growth and service delivery, utilising the Council's resources; and to ensure financial decision making was based on robust risk assessed business cases that clearly matched the Council's ambitions.

The report summarised the process used for the preparation of the budget which had included meetings with Budget Managers; a robust fees and charges review; regular challenge of service budgets and pressures; regular meetings with Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs; consideration of the implications of the draft Capital Programme 2023/2024 to 2027/2028; consultation with Parish/Town Councils, residents and business ratepayers; a review of earmarked reserves and the strategies of the Council.

In the current climate, the emphasis was on keeping pressures to a minimum. The net movement from the 2022/23 base budget for this Committee was an increase of £1.423m, excluding the use of earmarked reserves. The significant movements were summarised as follows.

Pressures on service expenditure budgets included inflation of £329,000. Approved changes to the establishment had resulted in an increase in budget of £635,000 for this Committee. However, within this movement there had been a reallocation of Director and Assistant Director salary budgets of £338,000 into the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

These budgets had previously been allocated across services within both this Committee and the Prosperous Communities Committee. However, from 2023/2024 they would be held in one place within the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee to simplify monitoring during the year. Actual costs would be allocated across the services within each Director/Assistant Director's responsibility at the year end to show the total cost of providing that service.

There would be a corresponding reduction in the Prosperous Communities Committee's service budgets, but this change would not impact on the overall budget position across both Committees.

The salary budgets included the incremental impact of the average 6% pay award for 22/23, and an estimated 2% increase for 23/24. Based on recent information regarding pay award negotiations, there was a risk that the 2% increase might not be sufficient for 2023/24, and a contingency budget of £200,000 had been set aside to allow for an increase of up to 4%.

The external audit contract had increased by £69,000, as advised by the Public Sector Audit Appointments following their procurement exercise for audit services from 2023/24.

The cost of the insurance contracts had increased by £24,000 following a new contract tender exercise, effective for 3 years from 31st May 2022, with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

The Net Housing Benefits Subsidy had reduced by £68,000 and there was a reduction in Housing Benefits administration grant of £11,000.

There was an income gain in investment property rental income of £88,000 to reflect contractual rent increases across the current portfolio.

There was an ongoing saving of £23,000 on the grounds maintenance contract for this Committee (£78,000 across both committees).

Revenue contingency budgets had been increased for 2023/24. The business planning budget by £114,000, increasing the total budget to £200,000; and the commercial contingency budget had been increased by £27,000 up to £200,000. This budget mitigated several commercial risks, including investment properties and demand led service generated income.

Members commented that the layout/format of the report was an improvement over previous

reports and aided better understanding of the information. Members were also pleased to note the increase in income from the commercial property portfolio. Members received a brief commentary on the reasons why the external audit fees had increased.

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

RESOLVED that

- a) the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee budget for 2023/2024 be accepted and Council **RECOMMENDED** to approve its inclusion within the overall Council budget for 2023/2024.
- b) the Prosperous Communities Committee budget for 2023/2024 be accepted and Council **RECOMMENDED** to approve its inclusion within the overall Council budget for 2023/2024.
- c) any minor changes that might be necessary be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer after consultation with the Chairman of this Committee.
- d) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to include the 2023/2024 estimates for both this Committee and the Prosperous Communities Committee in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 (as might be amended by any decisions taken at this meeting).

69 EXECUTIVE BUSINESS PLAN AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24

Members considered a report which presented the Executive Business Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2023/24 to 2027/28. This included the financial strategy and Medium Term Financial analysis. These documents were central to the Council's financial planning and played a key role in the budget setting process to ensure that resources were aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities through to the setting of the Revenue Budget.

The report set out the revised financial plans within the Financial Analysis for changes in Government Funding, the economic environment, local engagement and the priorities for the Council. The plan reflected the revisions to previous estimates and covered the period 2023/24 to 2027/28. The Medium Term Financial Plan Analysis included the draft budget for 2023/24 for scrutiny and consideration prior to recommending to Council.

It was reported that a balanced budget for 2023/24 was being proposed without the requirement to support it with funds from General Fund balances. The provisional local government finance settlement had been delivered in December which had announced a further year's New Homes Bonus in 2023/24 which would be put into the growth reserve and also a new Funding Guarantee grant which had not been expected. The reset of Business Rates and a wider review of local government funding were not now expected until 2025/26 which gave the Council breathing space to look at savings which were likely to be required from 2025/26 onwards. The magnitude of these savings was unknown but local government funding was likely to be reduced in the medium to longer term. Since publishing the report, the final local government finance settlement had been announced with only minor changes and these would be reflected in the final report to Council in March.

The referendum limit for Council tax had been increased for district councils for 2023/24 and 2024/25 from up to 2% or £5 whichever was the higher, to up to 3% or £5 whichever was the higher. The MTFP was predicated on a rise of 2.99% for 2023/24 and 2024/25 before reverting back to 1.99% thereafter. For 2023/24 this equated to a rise of £6.80p for a band D property.

The 2023/24 Draft Budget totalled £16.671m and was fully funded and represented a balanced budget. Contributions to Earmarked Reserves totalled £2.367m and use of Earmarked Reserves totalled £1.696m, with reserves projected to be £15.080m at the end of 2023/24. The movement on the General Fund Balance was forecast as a reduction of £0.587m and was anticipated to be £3.513m at the end of 2023/24. Included within the reserves section of the MTFP was a recommendation to set up a new 'Invest to Save' reserve which it was envisaged would provide initial investment in projects which would deliver savings in the medium to longer term and, subject to Committee approval, it was intended to transfer £500,000 be into this new reserve from General Fund balances.

The Capital Programme totalled £31.240m over the Medium Term Financial Plan period and was fully funded.

Also included in the MTFP was a risk register and the pay policy and human resources statements.

Whilst the Corporate Plan set out the Council's strategic priorities, the Executive Business Plan outlined how the Council proposed to deliver these priorities, taking into account the national, regional and local policy framework in which the Council operate.

The Executive Business Plan was a rolling three-year programme of key deliverables identified through the Council's annual business planning process. These key deliverables were set out under the three Corporate Plan themes of our people, our place and our Council, as well as an additional stream of deliverables which were aligned to the Council's environment, sustainability and climate change strategy.

Members commented on a number of issues and were advised that Chief Officer/Senior Management salaries were benchmarked. An explanation of the proposed Invest to Save Reserve was given.

Members felt that the recommendations should make it clear exactly what the proposed Council Tax increase was. It was confirmed that this would be included in the report to Full Council, however it was possible to include that information in any decisions made by the Committee. It was subsequently moved and seconded that an additional recommendation be included for consideration, that being:

“Council be recommended to approve an increase in Council tax for 2023/24 of 2.99%, giving a Band D equivalent Council tax of £234.54, compared to £227.74 last year.”

On taking the vote, it was

RESOLVED that an additional recommendation be considered, as written above.

With Members content with the recommendations as printed, and with the inclusion of the additional one, and having been moved and seconded, the Chairman took the vote and it was

RESOLVED that

- a) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Executive Business Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2023/2024.
- b) The review of reserves and the proposed use and contributions to both General Fund Balances and Earmarked Reserves as detailed in section 2.8 of the report be approved.
- c) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve a balanced Revenue Budget for 2023/2024 as set out in Appendix A to the report.
- d) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Capital Programme for 2023/2024 as set out in Appendix 4 of the report.
- e) The statement of the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of the reserves be accepted.
- f) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Pay Policy Statement as set out in Appendix 6 to the report.
- g) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to create a new Earmarked Reserve for Invest to Save projects.
- h) Any housekeeping or changes required due to the final financial settlement and any approvals referred to elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting in relation to the Executive Business Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan be delegated to the Director of Corporate Resources (Section 151 Officer), after consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, prior to final consideration by Council on 6 March 2023.
- i) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve an increase in Council tax for 2023/24 of 2.99%, giving a Band D equivalent Council tax of £234.54, compared to £227.74 last year.

70 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND BUSINESS CASES

The Committee received a report on the development of West Lindsey District Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan which set out a vision and priorities for UKSPF investment.

It was reported that much of 2022 had been spent on developing plans for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which included a tour of the district, developing the evidence base and theory of change, collaborating with partners, stakeholders and colleagues and Member workshops. This had culminated in a special concurrent meeting of this Committee and the

Prosperous Communities Committee signing off the investment plan in July 2022 ahead of submission to Government. Since this time, the Government had published the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), and the Council went through a mini process to develop the proposals for the fund, which again was signed off at a concurrent Committee meeting and submitted to Government. In December 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed with the Government for UKSPF and Members were advised that the first tranche of funding had arrived. Final sign off of the REPF was expected to follow shortly.

Throughout this process the Council had committed to the development of a Green Book compliant business case for each of the three Government investment priorities in order to confirm the case for investment, setting out what would be invested in and how, and the management and monitoring arrangements. The three business cases were now subject to sign off so that the Council could move into the delivery stage. The Committee report summarised the position across the programme and each Business Case along with its suite of appendices formed part of the Committee report.

The total fund for UKSPF / REPF and confirmed match funding was £4,716,458 which had to be spent by 31 March 2025. The fund was split across the three priorities as follows:

- Communities and Place: £2,292,100
- Local Business: £1,888,331
- People and Skills: £408,000

Members heard there were twelve interventions across the three investment themes. The business cases set out the detailed proposals for each of the interventions and a short slide presentation illustrating the proposed level of interventions was given.

Each of the three cases had been assessed to understand their benefit/cost ratio. All three cases demonstrated high value for money and when assessed would retain this position even if costs increased and benefits decreased. Supporting the business cases was a scalable approach to communications which was set out in the supporting local businesses document. Similar work was being undertaken in relation to the other two cases. The success of the programme would require officers to engage widely with local communities and businesses. Therefore the roll out of this programme was key and work was proceeding on developing the materials that supported the programme roll out.

It was proposed to have the grant funding schemes live by the beginning of April 2023. For the business support element this would depend upon procuring a delivery agent as per the commercial case.

The Council had been awaiting the detailed subsidy control advice from its advisors and it was reported that this had now been received. The advice subsequently received was that that each intervention appeared capable of being designed to comply with Subsidy Control law, but in order to manage this, technical compliance requirements would need to be carefully handled during the award process and delivery.

The programme governance was aligned to the recently established LUF governance arrangements and would sit within the Council's Programme Board structure.

The Committee was invited to approve sign off of the business cases with associated

delegations to carry the proposal forward.

Officers responded to a number of queries and comments from Members, including the need to keep communities advised of progress being made with various schemes and the importance of partnership working in the delivery of schemes. The possible need for additional reporting back to Members on the progress of schemes, as well as financial information, was discussed, with Members assured there would be additional reporting if required.

Overall however Members were supportive of the actions that had been taken and thanked the Officers for their hard work on what was a complex arrangement.

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

RESOLVED that

- a) the Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills UKSPF Business Cases be approved; and
- b) authority be delegated to the Director – Planning, Regeneration and Communities to manage the UKSPF programme via the UKSPF Programme Board; and
- c) the quarterly and annual reporting arrangements as identified in section 6 of the report, be approved, these being: quarterly updates on expenditure be given to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee; and an annual update on the progress of the programme be given to the Prosperous Communities Committee; and
- d) authority be delegated to the Director – Planning, Regeneration and Communities, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, to make updates, as required, to the UKSPF outputs and outcomes with Government through the identified reporting arrangements.

71 RECOMMENDATION FROM PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE: COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report setting out the recommendations of the Prosperous Communities Committee in relation to the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027, and the continued delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027. It was explained that in 2018, the Prosperous Communities Committee had approved the delivery of a Community Grants Programme over a five year period. The Programme comprised £144,000 for the Councillor Initiative Fund from April 2018 to 31 March 2023 (£4000 per Councillor) and £450,000 for the Match Funding Grant, consisting of grants of up to £8,000 (up to 50% of project costs). There was an additional £50,000 for the Community Defibrillator Scheme. A full spend had been forecast for all these schemes.

In July 2022 a concurrent meeting of this Committee and the Prosperous Communities

Committee had approved the West Lindsey UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan (referred to elsewhere in these minutes). The Investment Plan included the creation of a new Flagship Community Grants Programme. In December 2022, the Prosperous Communities Committee had approved the continued delivery of the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027, and the continued delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme (from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027). It was recommended by the Prosperous Communities Committee that resources should be made available to deliver grant activity aligned to the UKSPF Flagship Community Grants Scheme, those being £144,000 from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027 for the Councillor Initiative Fund (£4,000 per Councillor for 2023 to 2027) and £200,000 from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027 for the Flagship Community Grants Programme – year 3 (25/26) and 4 (26/27), to provide continued funding beyond the current UKSPF.

Members were supportive of the proposals and the recommendation as printed was proposed and seconded and, on taking the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the recommendation from the Prosperous Communities Committee to approve £144,000 for the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027 be approved; and
- b) the recommendation of the Prosperous Communities Committee to approve £200,000 for the continued delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027 be approved.

72 SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES 2023

The Committee received a report from the Communities Manager regarding proposed updates to the Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. The report summarised the Council's legal duties in relation to safeguarding and it was explained that the updates had been agreed in partnership with other local authorities within the County to ensure that the Council's arrangements aligned fully with those of the other authorities.

Officers responded to a number of comments from Members, including the need to maintain robust recruitment policies that took account of safeguarding principles both within the Council and in relation to contractors, as well as the need to guard against false allegations and to pursue investigations in an open and transparent manner without making conclusions in the absence of corroborated evidence. It was enquired as to whether there needed to be an audit of the Council's safeguarding practices after a reasonable period of operation of the updated policy, it was suggested that this be brought to the attention of the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Members were supportive of the proposed updates and the recommendations within the report were duly proposed and seconded. On taking the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedures documents be approved;

and

- b) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities to make any necessary minor amendments to the policy, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee.

73 COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2023/24 FOR APPROVAL (DRAFT TIMETABLES FOR 24/25, 25/26, 26/27)

Members were invited to consider and approve the timetable for the 2023/24 Civic Year. The report also asked that Members note at this stage the early indicative dates for the 3 years thereafter.

Section 1 of the report set out the range of factors that had been considered and which needed to be met when setting a timetable. Some of these factors were statutory, whilst others endeavoured to ensure alignment with the Council's decision making processes and aimed to facilitate the timely reporting of information.

Section 2 of the report set out the amendments made since the Committee had last seen the document. Brief reasoning was provided to support each proposed change.

Section 3 presented early indicative timetables for the remaining 3 years of the 4 year election term. It was emphasised that timetables for 26/27 onwards were very indicative at this stage and for noting only.

Having been moved, proposed, seconded and voted upon, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the timetable for the 2023/2024 civic year be approved and the indicative dates for the years 24/25, 25/26 and 26/27 be noted; and
- b) the indicative Committee dates attached to the report be presented annually for approval, with each subsequent report noting any changes proposed from previous versions.

74 PROVISION OF MEMBERS' ICT FROM MAY 2023

Members considered a report from the Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager, regarding the provision of Members' ICT devices for May 2023 onwards. It was explained that section 1 of the report set out the background to this matter. Members were advised that 2019 had been the first year in which Members had been provided with IT devices issued and maintained by Council. There had been a commitment at that time to review and refresh the offer available to Members every four years. It was recognised that since 2019 working practices had changed considerably and it was suggested that the offer for 2023 provided additional choice and accommodated the views and experiences of Members and Officers over the last four years.

It was proposed that each elected Member from May 2023 would be afforded a maximum of one iPad (Wi-Fi) with a detachable keyboard and cover; and/or one laptop akin to those issued to staff, with a mouse and carry bag. Members would also be permitted to access their Council e-mails, MS Teams and MS Office Products from their personal mobiles (subject to those devices being of an approved operating standard). This was something that Members had been keen to see facilitated.

Whilst a number of Members had had a positive experience with their iPads and had indicated they would not want to move away from the device, it was fair to say that this view had not been universal. Many of those provided with a laptop mid-term had chosen to surrender their iPad due to lack of use.

It was therefore suggested that selecting only one device that would suit all Members, their individual working styles and IT literacy would be difficult. The proposal referred to in the report sought to offer Members a greater element of choice than previously afforded and recognised the changing ways elected Members were expected to use their devices.

Section 3 of the report set out the process for the purchase and issue of devices, with a view to ensuring all Members had their devices on Day 1 Induction (Tuesday 9 May).

It was emphasised that the figures contained within the report were an absolute maximum. There was an assumed budget of £28,000. However, the initial purchase indicated in the report, which was for 24 laptops and 14 iPads was £10,700 above that assumed budget.

Members were advised that there had been a real attempt to recycle and re-use wherever was possible, further reducing the final spend, with all returning Members expected to keep their device (if it was their preferred device).

It was indicated that, if the proposal was agreed, then Officers would report back to the Committee on the total amount spent against the maximum budget in the first budget monitoring report after the elections.

A number of comments were made by Members about the relative benefits of iPads and laptops. Of particular concern was the need to somehow resolve the need for those Members who also sat on other Lincolnshire authorities to have more than one device. Following significant discussion, an additional recommendation was proposed for consideration. This was duly seconded and, on taking the vote, it was

RESOLVED that an additional recommendation be considered, that being:
“That Officers be requested to explore options regarding the sharing of devices across councils in Lincolnshire”

With no further comments or questions, and having been moved and seconded, the Chairman took the vote. It was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the maximum provision for the Members’ ITC offer from May 2023 be agreed as up to:
 - One iPad, case and keyboard and/or

- One laptop, mouse and carry bag per Member;
- b) the transfer of £28,000 for the provision of IT devices to Members in 2022/2023 from the IT earmarked reserve into a new Members' IT earmarked reserve to be used for Members' IT devices be approved; and
- c) an additional maximum budget of £42,200 to be transferred from General Fund Balances to the IT earmarked reserve in 2022/2023, thus increasing the total reserve to £70,200 be agreed; and
- d) all funding (total £70,200) be placed in a separate earmarked reserve for IT equipment and drawn down as necessary as the expenditure requirement would vary depending on Member continuity between elections, it being noted that the initial drawdown in March 2023 was expected to be £38,700; and
- e) wherever possible devices should be re-used and recycled and where Members continued into the next term they would retain their existing devices if it was the device of their preference; and
- f) Officers would report back to the Committee on the total amount spent against the maximum budget in the first budget monitoring report proceeding the Elections; and
- g) Officers be requested to explore options for sharing devices across Councils in Lincolnshire.

75 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

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

76 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Note: The meeting entered closed session at 8.24pm

77 COMMERCIAL WASTE SOLUTIONS BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee gave consideration to report from the Commercial Development Manager regarding the Commercial Waste Solutions Business Plan. It was explained that the latest Business Plan had been produced to drive business activity over the next two years. The Plan identified a number of priorities which, if achieved, would increase turnover and profitability of the service. It was noted that commercial waste was a very competitive sector

with competition from local and national suppliers, however the Council's reputation was as a trusted and reliable business partner and had enabled increased turnover and profitability.

Members expressed their satisfaction with the details of the Business Plan and the progression of the service provided.

Having been moved, seconded and voted upon, it was

RESOLVED that the 2022-24 Commercial Waste Business Plan be approved.

78 RAF SCAMPTON

The Committee heard from the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities regarding the RAF Scampton Development Agreement. Members were provided with full details of the public procurement exercise, in particular the legal considerations and subsequent actions on approving the appointment of a development partner.

Members expressed their ongoing support for the work being undertaken, and thanked Officers involved for their hard work and dedication to achieving the best outcome for the area. There was specific discussion regarding the legalities of the current stage of proceedings, and Members were assured of the approach.

With repeated thanks, and having been moved and seconded, the Chairman took the vote and it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the Regulation 84 report (Appendix 2) which summarised the public procurement exercise, be accepted; and
- b) the appointment of the company named within the report be approved as the Council's Development Partner for the regeneration and redevelopment of RAF Scampton and authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate Resources in consultation with the Chair of this Committee to finalise the contract and to complete the Development Agreement (NB: this decision remains subject to the conclusion of the public procurement exercise.); and
- c) the use of £475,000 from the Investment and Growth Reserve be approved in order to support future work on the site; and
- d) the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee receive financial updates through the quarterly capital monitoring reports and a full annual update on progress of the delivery of the Development Agreement.

The meeting concluded at 8.43 pm.

Chairman