

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 30 May 2023 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings (Chairman)
Councillor Trevor Young (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Emma Bailey (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Frazer Brown
Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers

In Attendance:

Sally Grindrod-Smith	Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Ady Selby	Director - Operational & Commercial Services
Claire Bailey	Change, Projects and Performance Officer
Ele Snow	Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

1 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to what was the first meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee, not only of the current Civic Year, but also the first of the new term of office, following the elections in May. She expressed thanks for those Councillors who had been involved previously in the Committee and welcomed all those involved at present, both new and returning.

2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held on 7 March, 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the Matters Arising Schedule, giving Members of the Committee a brief summary of the purpose of the schedule and how they could expect it to be used to track actions arising from each meeting. It was explained that the document was for noting only, however Members could pass comment or ask questions of Officers should they seek additional information.

With no comments, questions or requirement for a vote, the Matters Arising schedule was **DULY NOTED**.

5 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

6 UPDATE TO CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Director of Planning Regeneration and Communities introduced the report and explained that it set out an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (CLJSPC).

It was explained that the aim of the MOU was to ensure the smooth operation of the CLJSPC as it oversaw the production and adoption of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The background to the formation of the CLJSPC, its responsibilities, membership and governance were outlined. It was emphasised that each of the four authorities remain individually responsible for other planning functions such as development management and neighbourhood planning. The CLJSPC had responsibility for the preparation, submission and adoption of the Local Plan.

It was noted that the MOU had not been reviewed since 2009 and the proposed changes detailed in the report to bring the document up to date to reflect the current operation of the partnership were outlined. The proposed changes had all been agreed between officers of each of the partner authorities and also each democratic services team. Therefore, officers were happy that the proposed changes were appropriate and reflective of the activity and approach taken by Central Lincolnshire and the partnership of authorities.

The recommended changes were detailed and the Committee was requested to consider and approve the changes, and that the Director of Planning Regeneration and Communities be authorised to sign the MOU on behalf of West Lindsey District Council.

A Member of the Committee thanked Officers for the work on the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and suggested it was a long running and well proven project and that it was important to keep the MOU under continuous review.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and, on being put to the vote, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the new Memorandum of Understanding, as shown in Appendix 1 to the report, between the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee and Partner Authorities, which includes West Lindsey District Council (WLDC), be approved, and the Director of Planning Regeneration and Communities be authorised to sign the MOU on behalf of WLDC.

7 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY QUARTER FOUR REPORT AND SUMMARY OF YEAR END PERFORMANCE 2022/23

The Committee heard from the Change, Projects and Performance Officer who provided an overview of performance reporting in general, to set the scene for the report, which would be regularly presented to the Committee.

It was explained that the report was brought for discussion by Members of the Committee due to the links to services and strategies that were set within those services for which the Committee was constitutionally responsible. It was highlighted that the report was publicly available and, following approval by both the Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committees, would be published on the Council website.

Members heard that each service had a collection of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For those whose performance was within the control of the Council, the target was allocated based on either baseline performance or statutory requirement (such as planning KPIs) . There were also KPIs where performance was outside of the Council's control (such as received planning applications) and for those KPIs there were no targets allocated.

Every year all measures and targets would be reviewed, with the involvement of Members, to ensure the KPIs continued to drive service improvement, remained aligned to the corporate/service priorities, the targets were relevant and stretched, and that they were helpful to Councillors in aiding understanding of service activity and performance.

It was explained that the data within the report to the policy committees was on an exception basis, meaning that only those KPIs whose performance returned as red or green were included. KPIs without targets were also included in the report. In addition, it was clarified that Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 reports were presented to the committees whilst Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 reports were circulated via the Members newsletter. The Committee heard there would be a review of the 2023/24 measures set later this year, which would involve working closely with Councillors via working groups, further details would follow in due course.

The Officer proceeded to detail the specifics contained within the report as follows.

Overall Summary of Council Performance. This section of the report provided an overview of KPI performance, with a breakdown of those exceeding, below or within the tolerance of their targets. Information was presented by Portfolio allowing for a clear overview of Council performance. Quarter four performance was looking positive with over 84% of all measures either exceeding or within agreed tolerance of their targets.

Corporate Health. The Corporate Health Section of the report included a suite of measures related to the overall health of the council, and, as such all measures were included, do not just reporting by exception.

It was highlighted that, due to the figures within the report being estimates, the following update on the financial figure and narrative included in this report was provided:

“COF03 - Overall Council budget forecast outturn (%) -3.72%. The end of quarter four reports a surplus of £564k underspend on the forecast budget, which equates to a -3.72% variance against the revised budget. The variance within this position includes pressures resulting from: £117k against salary budgets, £118k for fleet repairs and maintenance, £356k reduced car park income, and £54k increased cost of fuel. This is offset by savings: £398k interest receivable, £151k government grants received in final quarter, £118k reduction of the credit loss provision, £85k planning fee income above budget, £79k grounds maintenance contract, £51k review of earmarked reserves held within service budgets.”

Performance Improvement Plan. Members heard that the Performance Improvement Plan included measures where performance had remained below target for two consecutive quarters or more. Additional information was provided by the Team Manager as to the reasons relating to the measure reporting below target, the impact this had had, the actions in place to improve performance and when it was expected to see the improvement following the action.

This was the part of the report which highlighted the measures that were under target with the plan adding further context and providing the extra level of assurance that Members had previously requested. This was then scrutinised alongside the P&D report by Management Team before being presented to the committees. This was introduced in October for Quarter two last year and had been well received.

There were eight measures included in the plan and these would remain going into 2023/24, with the exception of COF02 – Average time taken to pay invoices. This measure had been amended following approval at committee in February to reflect the contractual payment terms.

Service Performance Summaries. It was explained that each of the Portfolios had a summary of its performance. Team Managers provided commentary and analysis to explain quarter performance, particularly where performance was below target and where remedial action was required.

The first portfolio was Change Management, ICT and Regulatory Services. Out of a possible 18 measures, 16 were above target within the portfolio. The measure below target related to Local Land Charges Market Share, which was included within the Performance Improvement Plan.

All measures within the Finance, Business and Property Services Portfolio were within target. The Homes and Communities Portfolio saw one measure reporting below target which related to the average days taken to complete a Disabled Facilities Grant. Extra information had been included for DFGs this quarter to round up following inclusion within the performance improvement plan. It was an opportunity highlight the positive work and the impact this had had. The graph within the report detailed the measure compared with the number of referrals received, with the table highlighting the increase in referrals over the past six years.

The Operational and Commercial Services portfolio saw five of its measures reporting above target, with the measures below target relating to average number of market stalls on both a Tuesday and a Saturday, and the recycling weights, all of which were included within the Performance Improvement Plan.

The Planning and Regeneration Portfolio saw all the measures continue to report above target.

On concluding the presentation of the quarterly report, Members were referred to Appendix A, the Year End report. It was explained this was presented annually, in the same format as the quarterly reports, but detailed performance cumulatively over the year rather than the quarter.

Again, due to the figures contained within the report being estimates, the following update was provided:

“COF01 - Budget variance (£) -£564k. COF03 - Overall Council budget forecast outturn (%) - 3.72% - as per the earlier update. COF04 - The annual Statement of accounts - Auditors see the accounts in June so we won't get a decision until end of June possibly on whether qualified so no data available for this.”

The Committee was reminded that training was to be planned for all Councillors on performance management, with the plan to deliver this prior to the next P&D report coming to Committee. The Officer concluded her presentation and sought questions or comments.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for her clear and thorough presentation, recognising the importance of this information, especially for newly-elected Councillors.

Members of the Committee specifically referenced the targets for leisure provision, noting there had been some disappointing results detailed within the narrative and highlighting that action should be taken swiftly, rather than waiting for consecutive quarters of not meeting allocated targets. Additionally, it was commented that the recovery from the covid pandemic should now be considered as business as usual, rather than continuing to use those exceptional circumstances as an explanation for missed targets.

In relation to the market KPIs, it was requested that additional information be provided, as, in consideration of the three year action plan, it was to be assumed there was more work underway than the report indicated. It was recognised that it could be difficult to find the balance of information in the P&D reporting narratives, however, it was confirmed there could be additional information included. Officers also assured the Committee there was to be an annual report presented regarding the markets action plan specifically.

A Member of the Committee expressed support and praise for the crematorium, highlighting it as an asset to the Council and a service to be proud of. In seeking to recognise other areas that had not been discussed, the Councillor highlighted the work of the Planning and Development Management Team, the Trinity Arts Centre and the work of the Communities Team with the grant funding. He expressed his thanks and support to all Officers of the Council for their hard work and dedication.

The Chairman thanked all Members for their comments, and, as the recommendations in the

report had been proposed and seconded, she called the vote. It was therefore unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the Committee had assessed the performance of the Council's services through agreed performance measures and had indicated areas where improvements should be made, having had regard to the remedial measures set out in the report; and
- b) the Progress and Delivery Performance Improvement Plan for Quarter Two (January-March) 2022/23 be approved.

8 WORKPLAN

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the workplan, and, for the benefit of new Members, explained the purpose of the report and how it would shape the future agendas. It was highlighted that the workplan was to be noted only, although Councillors could comment or ask questions should they wish.

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

The Chairman thanked all present for their time and successful first meeting, and invited any members of the public watching via the webcast to attend in person in the future should they wish to, with further public engagement encouraged.

The meeting concluded at 7.08 pm.

Chairman