

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 8 April 2024 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Stephen Bunney (Chairman)
Councillor Matthew Boles (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Emma Bailey	Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Eve Bennett	Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Trevor Bridgwood	Councillor Liz Clews
Councillor Frazer Brown	Councillor Karen Carless
Councillor Christopher Darcel	Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Jacob Flear	Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Paul Key	Councillor Paul Lee
Councillor Jeanette McGhee	Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Lynda Mullally	Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Pilgrim	Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings	Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Jim Snee	Councillor Paul Swift
Councillor Baptiste Velan	Councillor Trevor Young

In Attendance:

Ian Knowles	Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Lisa Langdon	Assistant Director People and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
Katie Storr	Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager

Apologies

Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor Sabastian Hague
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence
Councillor Roger Patterson
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee
Councillor Moira Westley

72 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman highlighted to the meeting two typographical amendments contained within the Minutes.

The first being the word "be" missing from Minute 66, Matters Arising. The second being within Minute 67, Announcements by Chairman, where reference to Wold Pines in paragraph three, should have read Wild Pines.

The meeting's consent was sought and received that these amendments be made to the published record.

Having been proposed and seconded, it was: -

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 4 March, be confirmed, approved and signed as a correct record, subject to the typographical amendments detailed above being made.

73 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this point in the meeting. The Chairman reminded Members that they could make a declaration at any point in the meeting should they feel it necessary to do so.

74 MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman introduced the report advising Members that it would be taken "as read" unless Members had any questions that they wished to raise.

With no comments or questions, and with no requirement to vote, the matters arising were **DULY NOTED**.

75 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman

The Chairman addressed the Council, referencing briefly some of the events in which he had been involved and attended since Council last met.

Starting with supporting fellow Councillor, Councillor Darcel, at an Environment Agency meeting to further some work Councillor Darcel had been undertaking with regards to potential flood protection or alleviation schemes in the south of the county. The Chairman had found it extremely interesting and thanked Councillor Darcel for the opportunity.

The Chairman, in his civic capacity had visited the His Church in Binbrook, a charity which collects surplus food and other items from supermarkets and other sources before re-distributing it to those in need, both in this country and internationally. He spoke of the incredible work undertaken at the site and of the operation's national and international recognition. The visit had left an impression, had been worthwhile and the Chairman indicated he looked forward to learning more about their work.

It had been a pleasure to attend at the fifth Annual Illuminate event in Gainsborough which

had been a great success once again. Thanks were expressed to all Officers and Members involved in delivering the event which had been most enjoyable and had seen large numbers gathering in and around the Marketplace due to it being combined with the food market which had been welcomed. Those who the Chairman had spoken with had enjoyed the event and he hoped that similar festivals could be held, both in Gainsborough and around the District.

The Chairman had raised a flag for Commonwealth Day, filming the event and making this available via the Authority's social media accounts on this occasion.

It had been a pleasure to attend at the Lincolnshire Carers' Awards, an event the District Council had sponsored and played a role in the judging of some award categories. He spoke of the amazing and under-celebrated work of Carers and the evening had provided opportunity for them to be celebrated and honoured.

The Chairman had attended the Civic Dinner of the Mayor of Kirton Lindsey. The Mayor, who was also a Clerk to a Parish Council within West Lindsey, had complimented the Authority on its facilities fund from which her Parish had received a grant for play equipment, she had asked that personal thanks be shared with elected Members.

Over the Easter weekend the Chairman had had the pleasure in attending and sponsoring a number of guests at the Market Rasen Racecourse, in celebration of its 100th anniversary, hosted by the Jockey Club. It had been a most successful day, despite the cool weather, and expected traffic issues.

The Saturday of the Easter weekend had seen the inaugural Antiques Market in Gainsborough and markets in both Market Rasen and Caistor, with the Chairman visiting them all. It had been a pleasure to see the marketplaces experiencing increased footfall, and people enjoying their experiences.

The second Antiques Market in Gainsborough had built on its experience from the previous week, with an increased number of stalls again and higher footfall, the Chairman hoped that these sorts of activities could be continued in the marketplaces, and the spaces used and enjoyed by the District's residents.

Leader

The Leader made the following address to Council: -

"Welcome Members - as a Council our work in trying to secure the agreement around the use of the former RAF Scampton site continues and I was pleased to secure a meeting with Minister Tom Pursglove two weeks ago in London, where we hoped to make progress in our discussions around the site. Later that afternoon, the Government laid the SDO, the Special Development Order, in Parliament, a procedure which is a mechanism for bypassing the local planning authority's planning permission process.

As with other applications, once the application has been made, any stop notices should be lifted as it is seen as the applicant is attempting to regularise the permissions on the development. The talks were very productive with the

Minister who recognised what we are trying to achieve in terms of allowing our £300 million project plan for the site to develop. He attempted to reassure us that the numbers would reduce by 800 on the site to a further 300, with a further 300 to be allowed in emergency situations, though it's unclear, as we know, what might constitute an emergency. Those discussions will continue, the Minister was very supportive and offered Councillors from West Lindsey an opportunity to visit Bibi Stockholm barge and the Weatherby site to get a better idea of the way large asylum centres are now working. We are keen to arrange these visits as soon as we can and to protect the site, enabling the development, whilst working to ensure the disruption to local communities is minimised, that is our key priority.

I also attended the District Council Network conference, which provided opportunity to work with other Councils and look at what they were doing, to consider alternative ways and to be forward thinking in our approaches here at West Lindsey.

Finally like you Chairman, the weekly Antiques Market started two weeks ago and it was great to see the number of traders who visited and the hundreds of people who came to support. We hope that this continues to be a big success in Gainsborough.”

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive addressed Council and started by echoing the Leader's comments in respect of the meeting with Minister Pursglove.

The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 21 March, had approved a list of 16 negotiation criteria for reaching an agreement, good progress had been made since that meeting. The Chief Executive further advised that he would be setting up an online Member briefing for Wednesday (10 April) at 7pm. Apologies were offered for the short notice with the Chief Executive indicating he wished to ensure that all Members were aware of the principles that were being put into place with the Home Office. He expressed his thanks to Sally Grindrod-Smith for getting the Council to this stage.

The Chief Executive further advised that all of the Authority's Council Tax and Business Rate bills had been sent and issued on time and before the end of March. The financial year-end had approached and the close-down of the accounts was progressing smoothly and in line as expected.

Finally, the Chief Executive also took the opportunity to comment on the introduction of the Antiques Market on the 30 March, commenting that the first market had gone well with the second week seeing more traders. He looked forward to seeing the offer grow over the coming weeks.

This brought announcements to a conclusion.

76 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

77 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9

The Chairman advised the meeting that no questions had been submitted by Members under Council Procedure Rule No.9.

78 MOTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

The Chairman advised the meeting that no motions had been submitted by Members under Council Procedure Rule No.10.

79 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEWS - SCHEME OF OFFICER DELEGATION

Members considered a report presented by the Chairman of Council which sought to update the Officer Delegation Scheme in respect of Neighbourhood Planning, in particular responsibilities in relation to Neighbourhood Plan Reviews, with a number expected to be conducted during 2024/2025.

The report primarily sought to grant delegated authority, to allow Officers to deal with minor reviews, and reaffirmed that more substantial reviews would remain the responsibility of Full Council to “make” following Public Examination.

The Chairman moved the recommendations en-bloc from the Chair before opening the matter for debate.

During brief discussion Members complimented the work of the Neighbourhood Planning Team and the support given to communities. Members believed the success of Neighbourhood Plans across the District was a testament to the support offered and the support was often commented on by Groups, when achieving “made and adopted” Plan status.

Neighbourhood planning was also seen as a real opportunity for communities to better understand the planning process and with reviews now coming around it was suggested by Members it may be opportune to hold an information session for those wishing to develop their Plans. Members considered West Lindsey had a real opportunity and role to play in increasing engagement, understanding and involvement in Neighbourhood Plan making.

Members from all sides of the Chamber were supportive of the sharing of workshops and seminars with Parish Councils being explored and encouraged.

Having been seconded, on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) the varying levels of Neighbourhood Plan Reviews which could be undertaken be noted;
- (b) delegated Authority be granted to the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities to approve minor (non-material) modifications to Neighbourhood Plans, following a review, and this be added to the Scheme of Officer Delegation;
- (c) Full Council continue to “make” all Neighbourhood Plans following a Neighbourhood Plan review which is deemed by the Examiner to contain material modifications; and
- (d) Where a Neighbourhood Plan Review results in a referendum, the Neighbourhood Planning Group / Parish Council be invited to present their Plan to Full Council as they were at its first “making”.

80 OUTCOME OF THE GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE DEVOLUTION DEAL CONSULTATION EXERCISE

Members considered a report, introduced by the Chief Executive which presented the findings of the Lincolnshire Devolution consultation exercise. The report also highlighted the proposed amendments to the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal, as a result of the consultation findings.

Section 3 had the overall findings arising from the consultation with the table at 3.5 showing West Lindsey specific responses.

It had been mentioned by the Chairman that one category question, relating to governance or the mayoral question, appeared to be missing from the table of West Lindsey specific data, apologies were offered, and the Chief Executive undertook to circulate this data to Members.

Based on the consultation, there were a few amendments the constituent members had sought and approved, and these were detailed in Section 4 of the report and highlighted and summarised to Members.

Debate ensued and whilst Members commented on apathy around the mayoral proposals, given the length of time discussion had been ongoing, with the consultation now complete and data presented it was proposed the report be accepted.

The Leader of the Council expressed concern in a general sense around apathy to consultations, using the Devolution consultation exercise as an example to highlight his concerns, noting that only circa 4,000 responses had been received throughout Greater Lincolnshire. Despite apathy towards Mayoral proposals, they remained within the proposal, something he considered further fed apathy towards completing consultations.

From a West Lindsey perspective, the Leader wanted to ensure all consultations in the future were engaging and meaningful and when people took time to respond their comments were taken on board.

Devolution in Lincolnshire had many consequences and had communities understood this better, it was suggested more would have engaged. The Leader was of the view that in years to come when communities understood the impact of the decision, the additional layers of Local Government it created and the cost, there would be public upset.

Bringing comments to a close, having previously highlighted a West Lindsey specific statistic having been omitted from the report, the Chairman advised the meeting that Lincolnshire-wide support for a Mayor had been 38%, West Lindsey specific that figure had been 40%. It was further clarified that that was 40% of those responding to the survey as opposed to 40% of all residents.

With no requirement to vote on recommendations one and two, Members **DULY NOTED** the findings of the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution consultation exercise and the proposed amendments to the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal, which had been approved by the three constituent authorities.

With recommendation three having been proposed and seconded, on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that West Lindsey District Council continue to engage with the implementation of devolution arrangements.

The meeting concluded at 7.34 pm.

Chairman