

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held in the MS Teams on Thursday, 27 November 2025 commencing at 4.00 pm.

Members: Councillor Paul Key (Chairman)
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor Moira Westley

**Staff
Representatives:** James Deacon (Vice Chairman)
Brad Bishell
Tom Duffield

In attendance: Lynne Thomsett, People Services Manager
Molly Spencer, Democratic & Civic Officer

Apologies: Lisa Langdon, Assistant Director – People & Democratic Services

26 **MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

27 **MINUTES**

It was noted that the date stated on the agenda had been incorrect; however, the minutes attached for approval were confirmed as being the accurate record of the previous meeting.

With no further comments, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on Thursday, 23 October 2025, be confirmed as an accurate record.

28 **MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Matters Arising Schedule was **DULY NOTED**.

29 **PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT: MANAGING PERFORMANCE AND CAPABILITY PROCEDURE**

The People Services Manager reported that two new Human Resources

procedures had been presented for consideration and recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee. Background information was provided regarding an audit of the appraisal process by the Governance and Audit Committee, which had highlighted inconsistencies across the organisation.

A revised approach was proposed, focusing on regular six-weekly check-ins rather than annual appraisals, with discussions centred on well-being, resilience, performance, professional development, and the employee-manager relationship. Staff engagement sessions had been undertaken, and feedback was noted as positive. A new process for approving training requests throughout the year was also outlined, alongside a refreshed capability procedure designed to ensure compliance with employment law while offering greater support to employees.

It was further noted that a new HR and payroll system would be introduced in February, enabling check-ins to be requested via the People First app, supporting a more modern and dynamic approach aligned with organisational values.

The Chairman thanked the People Services Manager for her report and opened for discussion.

Concerns were raised about the effectiveness of appraisal systems and the importance of equipping managers with the skills needed to carry them out successfully. Members highlighted that the proposed approach aligned with good management practice and stressed that appropriate training would be critical to its success. Assurance was given that, if approved, all line managers would receive face-to-face training designed to build positive relationships and support meaningful conversations.

Further comments focused on the challenges of remote working and the need for managers to have sufficient time for regular check-ins. It was clarified that brief records of these check-ins would be maintained within the new HR system to reduce time pressures, and reporting functionality would allow monitoring of both frequency and staff feedback on quality.

Positive feedback was noted, with comments highlighting that the proposed changes represented a significant improvement on the previous appraisal system, which had been considered outdated and ineffective. The benefits of more frequent check-ins were recognised, including the ability to identify issues earlier and maintain engagement throughout the year.

Questions were raised regarding the proposed six-weekly frequency, and it was explained that this recommendation had been based on advice from East Midlands Councils and supported by staff feedback. It was confirmed that the new HR system would facilitate the recording of check-ins and

enable monitoring of compliance and staff satisfaction. Emphasis was placed on the need for senior management to allocate sufficient time for managers to undertake these conversations effectively.

A request was made for a follow-up report to be presented to the committee within six months to review progress and assess whether the new procedures were operating as intended.

With no further comments, it was

RESOLVED that the Joint Staff Consultative Committee consider two new employment procedures:

- Workforce Development (replacing the previous appraisal process)
- Capability Procedure

For consideration and recommendation by the Joint Staff Consultative Committee and for approval by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

30 **STAFF SURVEY 2025**

It was reported that the annual staff survey had been conducted during October using the same approach as previous years, with the addition of an optional field for staff to indicate their job role or department. A total of 123 responses had been received, compared to 146 in the previous year. Of the 16 main questions, 14 had shown improvement, while two remained unchanged, relating to the office environment and car parking. Free-text comments indicated that staff felt valued and frequently praised, but concerns were raised regarding office layout, the desk booking system, car parking costs, and behaviours within the open-plan office. It was confirmed that these issues had been shared with the Chief Executive and management team for further consideration. The results had been communicated to all staff, and follow-up work would be undertaken to address areas for improvement.

The Chairman thanked the People Services Manager for her update and opened for comment.

Questions were raised regarding the reduction in response numbers, and it was noted that no clear reason had been identified despite similar promotion methods to the 2024 survey being used. Comments highlighted the challenge of maintaining anonymity while encouraging participation, and suggestions were made that managers could allocate designated time for staff to complete the survey during the open period to improve response rates.

Further comments were made regarding the challenges of remote working and its impact on staff engagement and survey participation. It was acknowledged that despite reminders and promotional efforts, the reason for the reduced number of responses remained unclear. Possible factors such as retirements, sickness absence, or local government reorganisation were considered. It was suggested that the reduction might reflect overall staff satisfaction, as individuals were less likely to respond if they had no concerns. The importance of addressing issues raised in the survey and continuing to improve staff engagement was emphasised. Appreciation was expressed for the work undertaken in preparing the policies and managing the survey process.

With no further comments, it was

RESOLVED that the Joint Staff Consultative Committee note the results of the 2025 Staff Survey and consider any opportunities for interventions where needed. The results to be shared with staff and any follow up actions agreed.

31 **WORK PLAN**

With no comments the work plan was **DULY NOTED**.

32 **TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman expressed seasonal greetings to all present and extended best wishes for the festive period on behalf of the Council.

The date of the next meeting of the Joint Staff Committee was **DULY NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 4.43 pm.

Chairman