

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 24 February 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Jeanette McGhee (Chairman)
Councillor Stephen Bunney
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Jacob Flear
Councillor Peter Morris
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Pilgrim
Councillor Mrs Mandy Snee

In Attendance:

Nova Roberts Director of Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services
Molly Spencer Democratic & Civic Officer
Sarah Elvin Homes, Health & Wellbeing Team Manager
Cara Markham Commercial, Cultural and Leisure Development Manager
Adam Newman-Pring (External) Boston Borough Council

40 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

With no comments or questions, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday, 29 January 2026 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

41 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

42 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The Democratic and Civic Officer informed the Committee that, at the previous meeting, an item had been scheduled for confirmation regarding the attendance of the Acting Chief Superintendent. It was noted that the Acting Chief Superintendent had not been present; however, all Members had received the circulated correspondence between himself and West Lindsey District Council, which brought the matter to a close.

In relation to the Matters Arising Schedule, the Democratic and Civic Officer reported that the item concerning the Progress and Delivery Working Group had been marked as complete, and there were no further updates.

With no further comments or questions the Matters Arising Schedule was **DULY NOTED**.

43 GOOD HOMES ALLIANCE

The Homes and Health Team Manager introduced the report and advised that the paper had been presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable an in-depth review of the work undertaken by the Good Home Alliance since its commencement almost two years previously. It was explained that the report provided detailed information on the activity delivered to-date and the evaluation being completed in partnership with London School of Economics.

The Committee had received an update from Mr Adam Newman-Pring, the Healthy and Accessible Homes Lead for Lincolnshire and the Lead for the Good Home Alliance Project, regarding the Good Home Alliance project and the evaluation undertaken by the London School of Economics. It was noted that funding had been in place until June 2026, with the final evaluation due shortly after the pilot concluded. The project had been designed to support owner-occupiers experiencing housing issues that did not meet the threshold for statutory services. Increased living costs had resulted in higher demand, and referrals had exceeded 400, with significant peaks during the winter months.

The service had provided both open-access online advice and intensive casework. The Lincolnshire Connect to Support platform had hosted extensive guidance, and a Healthy Homes Assessment tool had been developed to assist residents in identifying issues within their homes. The team had offered practical support where individuals had been unable to act independently, including assistance in sourcing contractors, clearing homes, and accessing specialist funding.

It was reported that strong multi-agency partnerships had been established across health, fire and rescue, children's services, and trading standards. These included referral pathways for asthma practitioners, fire safety advocates, and family hubs. The service had been regarded as uniquely positioned across the housing, health, and social care sectors, with an emphasis on "homes" rather than tenure-based housing functions.

Funding for the continuation of the project to March 2028 had been expected to total £33,000, reflecting a reduced requirement.

Members of the committee discussed the continuation and future development of the Good Home Alliance project. Questions were raised regarding the commitment of all Lincolnshire districts, the implications should any authority withdraw, and the impact this would have on the viability of the casework team. It had been explained that officer support remained strong across the districts, although formal decisions had not yet been taken. The need for early clarity to retain experienced staff had been emphasised.

Committee Members considered the accessibility of the service, particularly in rural areas and among digitally excluded households. Concerns were expressed that awareness remained limited and that vulnerable residents might not yet be benefiting from the scheme. Officers acknowledged these challenges and highlighted ongoing efforts to expand communications, outreach, and engagement through community events, printed materials, professional networks, and existing referral partners.

Discussion took place regarding the needs of private owner-occupiers and the extent to which the project could support households experiencing damp, mould, structural deterioration, or multiple vulnerabilities. It had been confirmed that while the project did not administer grants, it assisted residents to understand available schemes, apply for funding, and receive casework support where necessary. The importance of the caseworkers in enabling residents to act on advice had been strongly recognised by Members.

Members of the committee also noted that financial barriers remained the principal obstacle to essential home improvements, and reference was made to potential alternative funding mechanisms that could be explored nationally. Broader issues within the private rented sector and the possible role of selective licensing were mentioned.

Further discussion had taken place regarding the limitations of the existing grant-based system. It had been recognised that many residents were unable to undertake essential works even where grant support had been available, however did not cover the entire cost of the required works. Members had explored alternative funding models that could assist homeowners more effectively. This included reference to approaches used elsewhere, where property-linked finance rather than personal borrowing had been utilised to support home improvements.

The Committee had acknowledged the value of the project, the strong partnership working across agencies, and the significance of the independent evaluation in shaping future improvements.

With no further comments or questions, it was

RESOLVED that

- a) Members had considered the content of the report on the Good Home Alliance (GHA) pilot activities, performance and outcomes to-date, which had informed the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee's consideration of continued funding for the GHA Advice and Casework service for a further 21 months from 1 July 2026 to 31 March 2028.
- b) Members had supported further work by West Lindsey District Council officers and the Good Home Alliance (GHA) on opportunities to lobby for change and seek additional funding to support the climate agenda through retrofitting

energy-efficiency measures in households, beyond those available through the Warm Homes Local Grants.

- c) Members had championed an increase in communications to highlight the positive work of the Good Home Alliance (GHA) and the unique opportunity the service had provided within Lincolnshire.

44 FORWARD PLAN

With no comments or questions the Forward Plan was **DULY NOTED**.

45 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

With no comments or questions the Committee Workplan was **DULY NOTED**.

46 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Note: The meeting entered closed session at 7.29pm.

47 CLOSED SESSION: PREPARATION FOR EVERYONE ACTIVE PRESENTATION

Members of the committee discussed a range of matters in preparation for the forthcoming presentation from Everyone Active and identified a list of questions to raise with them at the 14 April 2026 committee meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8.08 pm.

Chairman