

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chambers, the Hub, Mareham Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6PH on Wednesday, 28th January, 2026 at 2.00 pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor Terry Taylor (Chairman)  
Councillor Neil Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Terry Aldridge, Richard Avison, Wendy Bowkett, Stef Bristow, Billy Brookes, Danny Brookes, Jimmy Brookes, Sandra Campbell-Wardman, Richard Cunnington, Mark Dannatt, Colin Davie, Roger Dawson, Sarah Devereux, Carleen Dickinson, Stephen Eyre, Martin Foster, Richard Fry, William Gray, Alex Hall, David Hall, Travis Hesketh, Darren Hobson, Rosalind Jackson, Sam Kemp, Thomas Kemp, James Knowles, Andrew Leonard, Craig Leyland, Stephen Lyons, Steve McMillan, Carl Macey, Jill Makinson-Sanders, Kate Marnoch, Ellie Marsh, Graham Marsh, Edward Mossop, Daniel Simpson, Paul Sutton, Robert Watson and Ruchira Yarsley.

**57. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claire Arnold, Tom Ashton, Graham Cullen, Carl Drury, Dick Edginton, Adam Grist, Will Grover, George Horton, Steve Kirk, Terry Knowles, Daniel McNally, Fiona Martin and Paul Rickett.

**58. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):**

At this point in the Meeting, Members were invited to declare any relevant interests.

Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders asked it be noted that she was on the Board of Directors for PSPS Limited.

**59. MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**60. ACTION SHEETS:**

The Actions from the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were confirmed as complete.

**61. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Paul Sutton to his first meeting of the Council since he was elected as a District Councillor for the Chapel St Leonards Ward in November 2025.

Members noted that two Parish Orders had been published as follows:

In pursuance of Section S91 of the Local Government Act 1972, East Lindsey District Council has appointed District Councillors Daniel McNally, Paul Rickett, Edward Mossop and Steve McMillan to South Somercotes Parish Council,

and,

District Councillors Martin Foster and Fiona Martin had been appointed to Mareham Le Fen Parish Council in order that the Parish Councils' meetings were able to convene.

The Chairman advised that he had attended the following events:

- HRH The Princess Royal visiting the National Coastwatch Station, Sea View Car Park, in Mablethorpe – October 2025
- Louth Choral Society - Concert 'Mary, Sacred Rose – music for Advent' at St James Church, Louth - November 2025.

## **62. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC:**

No questions by the public were received.

## **63. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:**

The Leader of the Council presented Members with his report, pages 41 to 46 of the Agenda refer.

Following which, Members were invited to put their questions and comments forward.

### Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

The Leader of the Council advised that an all-Member briefing would be held in early February 2026.

### Homelessness Pods in Skegness now operational

A Member reported concerns raised by local homeless individuals regarding the temporary accommodation pods and advised that one person had stated the pods were damp and prone to significant condensation. He further noted that a homeless gentleman who had recently moved from Mablethorpe to Skegness had expressed feeling vulnerable at the current location, as its visibility made residents easily identifiable, and issues such as car park misuse by 'boy racers' contributed to a sense of insecurity.

In relation to the pods and their location, the Leader of the Council explained that the current site was not the location originally preferred by East Lindsey District Council and that a compromise had been required. He assured Members that the pods and their operation were supported by a comprehensive team providing assistance to some of the most vulnerable individuals in the community. He noted that, while some negative comments had been reported, the feedback he had received indicated that the pods had generally been well received.

A Member raised further concerns regarding the pods, stating that the provision of a pod alone was not sufficient support for individuals experiencing homelessness. She emphasised the need to consider whether any of the homeless accommodation was warden-controlled and how the availability of warden-supported spaces could be increased and highlighted that support was essential not only in providing accommodation but also in helping individuals to live safely within it, ensuring they had someone to speak to and access to assistance with any issues that might otherwise lead to vulnerability.

In relation to the pods, the Leader of the Council suggested that a Member briefing may be beneficial to provide a fuller understanding of the wide-ranging support offered to some of the Council's most vulnerable residents. He noted that significant officer time, financial investment and partnership working were dedicated to this area. He stated that, while recent comments might imply otherwise, he wished to assure Members that extensive work was being undertaken within the Portfolio Holder for Housing Communities and Better Ageing and the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships to support vulnerable individuals.

#### A National Plan to end Homelessness

A Member referred to the Homelessness Scrutiny and the national plan to end homelessness, and queried whether a review could be undertaken to consider how much of the grant funding received from central government could be allocated towards providing warden-supported accommodation for homeless individuals.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised Members that the Council would look into the provision of warden-supported accommodation. He confirmed that the Council already provided substantial support to vulnerable homeless individuals and continued to work closely with a wide range of partners to ensure that support was as effective as possible.

A Member highlighted that while the national plan to end homelessness was welcomed, its effectiveness was being significantly undermined by the continued freeze on Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which was a key driver of homelessness locally. He further highlighted that the LHA had been frozen since April 2024, with no indication that it would be unfrozen before April 2026, and that this was negatively impacting homelessness-prevention efforts. He reported that only a small proportion of properties were affordable

to those in receipt of housing benefits, resulting in increased reliance on temporary accommodation and creating severe financial insecurity for low-income households who were forced to bridge the gap between benefit levels and rent costs. He further noted that the freeze reduced landlord willingness to rent to tenants receiving benefits and risked undermining wider anti-poverty measures. He stated that, although the Council had achieved some success in alleviating homelessness locally, lifting the freeze would materially support the work of the rough-sleeping teams, and urged the Leader to use his influence to press for this change.

In response, the Leader of the Council stated that he was willing to examine the implications of the Local Housing Allowance freeze and to consider whether it would be appropriate for the Council to make representations to the Government seeking a change. He emphasised that the Council already undertook substantial work to support its most vulnerable residents and reiterated his commitment to reviewing the matter and the potential impact of issuing such a letter.

#### Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant Funding confirmed until 2029

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group asked the Leader of the Council to explain the implications of the Homelessness Prevention Grant being incorporated into the Revenue Support Grant, noting that the brief reference provided had not made the consequences clear.

#### UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

A Member referred to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the likelihood of it ending during the year. He noted the valuable support it had provided to grassroots programmes, including several projects within his ward, and expressed his appreciation for the positive outcomes achieved. He asked whether there was any indication of how future funding streams might be sourced to replace those currently available, and whether the District Council would consider allocating additional resources, particularly in the light of reduced external funding and the transition towards Local Government Reorganisation to utilise some of its surplus for community benefit. He was further appreciative that the Councillor Community Grants were being maintained.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the UKSPF had been highly successful and had delivered significant investment in Louth, which had been welcomed. He advised that additional funding had already been made available through the East Lindsey Investment Fund and that, subject to budget capacity, the intention was to continue this approach and allocate a substantial sum to ensure that the positive work supported by the Fund could continue. He emphasised that throughout the Local Government Reorganisation process, the Council had been committed to remaining fully effective and high-performing, and that its strong financial management would

continue to ensure that communities and residents benefited from its resources.

#### District Council's Network (DCN)

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group commented on the recent period of heavy rainfall and emphasised the value demonstrated by the Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) in managing the local landscape. Having attended a Drainage Board meeting earlier that day, she highlighted the complexity of their work and expressed hope that the District Council's Network would help ensure that their importance was recognised nationally.

In relation to the IDBs, the Leader reiterated the Council's recognition of the vital work it undertook and noted the efforts made in partnership with the Local Government Association and relevant special interest groups to raise awareness of the funding pressures placed on local authorities as a result of the IDB levies. He emphasised that this work was not intended to undermine the IDBs but to ensure their essential functions were fully acknowledged. He added that the Council had consistently argued that IDBs were often better placed than the Environment Agency to maintain river courses, particularly given the challenges currently faced by the Agency, and that the Council was happy to continue making this case.

#### Campus for Future Living (CfL)

Further to the update provided, the Portfolio Holder for Housing Communities and Better Ageing advised Members that the Campus Team had worked closely with the NHS Trusts, Estates and Legal teams and had followed a rigorous programme process to enable the Campus site to accommodate additional NHS services. He was pleased to report that Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) would shortly be joining the Campus to deliver community mental health services, taking all consultation room space within the main building. This represented a significant step and demonstrated the long-term commitment to the Campus and the coastal area, particularly in addressing difficulties in accessing local mental health services. He added that this development aligned with the new NHS ten-year strategy, and that with neighbourhood teams, social prescribers and community connectors operating from the Campus, the authority was well placed to support these services.

The Portfolio Holder further stated that the Campus was proving to be an exemplar model in tackling health inequalities. He reported that the Europa team, representing clinicians across Europe who worked in inland, coastal and island communities had visited the Campus the previous year and had expressed strong interest in continued collaboration, using the project as an exemplar across Europe. He noted that significant progress had been made within the first six months and that the increasing number of partners based at the Campus reflected this success. He emphasised that such outcomes had only been possible due to the sustained hard work of the Council's core officer team working closely with the ACIS team to facilitate the programme.

He concluded by reminding Members of the forthcoming Reserve Members' Day on 9 February 2026, which would focus on the Campus and provide an update on current developments. The Health and Communities Team, together with the ACIS team would present progress to date. He further advised that, should Members wish, a dedicated visit to the Campus could be arranged later in the year to enable Members to see the facilities and meet partner organisations, and that the team would be pleased to facilitate this.

*N.B. Councillor Jimmy Brookes joined the Meeting at 2.22pm.*

A Member commented that he was pleased for the opportunity to receive briefings on Towns Fund projects and requested that future updates included progress on the Sutton on Sea Colonnade project. Further to a previous question to Council, and a written response still outstanding, clarification on the strategy for the Colonnade and confirmation of the intended future operator was requested.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that work on the Colonnade project was ongoing and that an equally vibrant future was anticipated, comparable to the Campus for Future Living. He noted that the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy would no doubt apologise for the delay in providing a written update and offered to brief the Member outside the meeting due to the remaining commercial sensitivities. He added that while the Colonnade was being used, the Council still needed to secure an operator capable of ensuring year-round activity, and that this work would continue.

A Ward Member for Mablethorpe reported that having been involved with the Campus project from its inception through to its official opening, she was pleased to see the level of use and the number of partner organisations now based there. However, she expressed disappointment that the facility was not being used for its original purpose as a national and international research centre of excellence. She noted that the recently approved ancillary building had been intended to house incoming researchers, and that a world-class laboratory had been constructed on site. To the best of her knowledge, the laboratory remained unused since the initial tour at the opening. She stated that it was regrettable that funding allocated for the intended research function had not resulted in the outcomes originally envisaged and asked why this had been the case.

In response, the Leader of the Council reported that the Campus for Future Living was being well used and that the increasing involvement of the National Health Service represented a significant step towards realising the Campus's intended purpose. He added that the Lincoln Institute for Rural and Coastal Health (LIRCH) continued to play an important role in its development.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Communities and Better Ageing added that the Campus continued to be used for research, which remained central to its purpose. He acknowledged that the original business plan had referenced laboratory provision, but emphasised that research undertaken by

organisations such as LIRCH had allowed the Campus to focus on work that most directly benefited residents along the coastal strip. He confirmed that should a laboratory be required in future, the designated space on the first floor currently being used for temporary storage due to the number of partner organisations now operating within the building had been retained and remained available for that purpose.

The Leader of the Reform UK Group thanked the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing Communities and Better Ageing for their thorough reports.

#### **64. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026/27:**

A report was presented to determine the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2026/27. This report sought Council approval of the Executive Board decision on the final proposals for the 2026/27 Local Council Tax Support scheme.

During his introduction, the Portfolio Holder for Finance referred to the background to the report, the 2026/27 Scheme Consultation and the 2026/27 Scheme Post-Consultation Considerations as set out at Sections 1 to 3 of the report, pages 48 to 50 of the Agenda refer. The full consultation report was shown at Appendix 1, pages 55 to 60 of the Agenda refers.

The recommendation was duly Proposed and Seconded.

A Member expressed general support for the proposal but suggested that if the Council was to seek public views, greater effort should be made to secure a higher level of engagement. They noted that while the feedback received had been insightful, the total of 58 responses was statistically insignificant, particularly given the detailed four-page analysis that had followed. They considered that improved promotion would help strengthen the Council's evidence base and assist in informing and educating the community about the aims of such initiatives and encouraged the Council to explore ways to increase participation in future consultation exercises.

A Member, referring to comments regarding the low number of consultation responses, asked whether it would be possible to enclose a questionnaire with the forthcoming Council Tax bills. They noted that residents were more likely to read their Council Tax documentation and that this could help raise awareness of available support. They added that, while various engagement methods had been used, there remained a reliance on social media which many Council Tax payers did not use.

A further comment was made on the number of consultation responses, highlighting that public engagement was consistently low in similar exercises, including the Local Government Reorganisation consultation, which had attracted fewer than 500 responses across three authorities. The Member stated that from her marketing background, the 58 responses received were

typical, reflecting general public apathy and a perception that participation brought little personal benefit or influence.

The Leader of the Council acknowledged that response rates to consultations were consistently challenging, noting that surveys such as the budget consultation also typically attracted low engagement. He accepted the point that the Council should consider alternative or more innovative methods to improve participation, but reiterated that historically response levels had not been strong.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Finance acknowledged the 58 consultation responses and stated that while wider engagement would always enhance the evidence base for decision-making, the Council must act on the information available and emphasised that the Council was in the fortunate financial position to support those most in need.

A Member expressed full support for retaining the 85% Council Tax Support relief for working-age claimants. They referred to the example on page 59 on the Agenda, highlighting a Universal Credit claimant paying 57% of their monthly income on housing costs, and noted that such figures were typical and in some cases even lower than reality, in areas such as Louth. They emphasised that high private rental costs were a major contributor to the current cost-of-living pressures faced by residents and stated that resisting housebuilding risked perpetuating these challenges, thereby leaving many residents in ongoing financial difficulty. While acknowledging the value of the proposed Council Tax support, they stressed that the most important action the Council could take was to prioritise the delivery of new housing across the district, which they regarded as essential.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group concurred with comments made and offered her support for the paper. She acknowledged that poverty remained widespread and noted that the Council recognised its responsibility to support those in need, doing so within its means and without wasting public funds.

In summary, the Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked Members for their supportive comments. He acknowledged the points raised regarding development and the prevalence of poverty and stated that it was widely recognised that the Council sought to do whatever it could within its remit, to support those in need.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Executive Board recommendation for continuation of the current Council Tax Support scheme, providing a maximum level of support of 85% for households with children and 75% for other households, uprated in line with DWP's annual update of allowances and premiums for 2026/27 be approved.

**65. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES:**

A report was presented on the proposed amendments to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

During his introduction of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised Members that the Audit & Governance Committee considered the proposed amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules at its meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and recommended them for adoption by the Council, Minute No. 50 refers. Following which, Executive Board approved the Delegation to Officers at Appendix 2 on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025, subject to the Contract Procedure Rules being approved at Council, Minute No. 142 refers. The Executive also recommended that the draft revised Contract Procedure Rules at Appendix 1a be adopted by the Council.

The background and detail to the report was highlighted to Members, as set out at Section 1, pages 62 to 63 of the Agenda refer.

Following which the recommendation was duly Proposed and Seconded.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee reported that the matter had been reviewed by the Constitutional Working Group prior to its consideration by the Committee. This had resulted in amendments, including clarification of VAT and non-VAT thresholds. She confirmed that the issue had been thoroughly discussed and that she was satisfied with the proposals.

*N.B. Councillor Andrew Leonard joined the Meeting at 3.17pm.*

A Member queried the reference to the current Procurement Act threshold, page 76 of the Agenda refers and requested confirmation of the applicable amount. They observed that the document was substantial and could be perceived as a deterrent to bidding, and asked what proportion of the total project cost was allocated at the point the contract was awarded, and how much was spent on procurement compared with how much was spent on delivering the actual work and whether that proportion was appropriate. The Member also asked whether a local employment assessment could be incorporated to encourage community benefit.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance responded that the document had undergone rigorous scrutiny and had been thoroughly reviewed, with amendments made where appropriate. In relation to the concern about deterring bids, he explained that the detailed processes reflected the legislative requirements the Council was obliged to follow, which were more extensive than those typically applied in the private sector.

He confirmed that consideration was given to local employment and community benefit, although such matters were subject to specific rules and

regulations. Regarding the proportion of project costs attributable to procurement, he advised that he was unable to provide a precise percentage at the meeting but undertook to obtain the information.

RESOLVED

That the revised Contract Procedure Rules at Appendix 1a to this report be adopted.

## **66. REVIEW OF HR POLICIES:**

A report was presented to seek Council's approval for the revised HR policy (Pensions and Pensions Discretions Policy).

During his introduction of the report, the Leader of the Council explained that HR policies required regular review to ensure they were within the legal framework and reflected best practice. This report brought forward the Pensions & Pensions Discretions Policy for review (attached at Appendix A). The Policy had been developed by Public Sector Partnership Services, as the Councils' HR provider; with input from a Readers' Panel consisting of officers and Trade Union Representatives (Local and Regional). The Readers' Panel had confirmed that operationally the policy was practical to implement.

Members were further advised that the policy had been reviewed by the Overview Committee which was supportive of the policy.

The background and detail to the report was highlighted to Members, as set out at Sections 1 to 3, pages 124 to 130 of the Agenda refer.

Following which the recommendation was duly Proposed and Seconded.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group asked whether the number of people applying for their pension early had increased following the advent of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

The Leader of the Council responded that he was unable to provide an answer at that time. He noted, however, that the Council was fully aware of the potential pressures arising from Local Government Reorganisation and advised Members that senior officers were actively ensuring staff across the Partnership received appropriate briefings. He confirmed that he would investigate the matter further.

RESOLVED

That the HR policy (Pensions & Pensions Discretion Policy) attached at Appendix A to this report be approved.

## **67. 2025/26 MID-TERM TREASURY REPORT:**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the Mid Term Treasury Report 2025/26 as at 30 September 2025 (attached at Appendix A) to provide Members with an update on Treasury Management performance and activity to ensure best practice was maintained.

During his introduction of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance outlined the background to the report and referred Members to Appendix 1 detailed at pages 159 to 174 relating to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy which covered the following areas:

- An economic update for the first half of the 2025/26 financial year;
- The outlook for the remainder of the financial year along with interest rate forecasts;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Council's capital expenditure, as set out in the Capital Strategy, and prudential indicators;
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2025/26;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2025/26;
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2025/26.

Key information was highlighted as follows:

- The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure on 30/9/25 increased to £11.6m, page 164 of the Agenda refers.
- On 30/9/25 investments totalled £51.2m and loans to Invest East Lindsey £3.7m, pages 169 and 170 of the Agenda refer.
- In addition, the Council had investments in property funds totalling £19.3m at cost. The fair value of these funds on 30/9/25 based on net asset value was £17.2m, page 172 of the Agenda refers.
- Bank Base Rate started the year at 4.50% and had reduced to 4.00% by the end of September 2025.
- The overall rate of return achieved on investments during the first half of the financial year was 4.085%, page 173 of the Agenda refers.

Positively, at Quarter 2 investment income, less management fees and interest payable showed net income of £1.805m compared to the original budget of £1.067k, a favourable variance of £738k. The outturn for the year was predicted to be £3.101m against a budget of £2.128m, a favourable variance of £973k, Table – Section 10 page 174 of the Agenda refers. The liquidation distributions of £260k from the M&G property fund which were included in these figures would be used to finance a corresponding Minimum Revenue Position charge.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

A Member thanked officers for the report and stated that from what they had seen, the Council appeared to be well managed and financially sound, which they considered a credit both to the Council and to the finance team. The Member referred to the loss on property fund investments noted on page 171 of the Agenda referred and commented that it highlighted the importance of investing only in areas that were well understood.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group commented that it was interesting to see how the Council's funds were invested and paid tribute to the quality of reports produced by the Treasury and Investments Manager (PSPS) Limited, noting that they were clear, informative and readable. The Member expressed particular interest in the investment of £2 million with the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, remarking that they had been unaware that such investments were possible. They noted that only local authorities were permitted to invest in other local authorities and that these were considered secure investments. The Member concluded by stating that the reports were always valuable in showing financial movements and projections.

The Leader of the Council responded and considered that the report provided a valuable overview of the Council's financial position and the wider external factors influencing it. He thanked Members for their supportive comments and noted that the Council had a long-standing track record of strong financial management. He added that this continued to be supported by effective Portfolio Holders, the Section 151 Officer and the wider officer team.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report attached at Appendix A to the report referred be noted.

**68. COMMITTEE SEATS REVIEW:**

A report was presented to review committee seat allocations to political groups in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and confirm appointments to committees.

During his introduction of the report, the Chief Executive advised Members that the purpose of the report was to set out a revised allocation of seats and associated appointments for committees following a review undertaken in response to a recent change in political group membership.

Members were referred to Appendix A 'Allocation of Committee seats', pages 181 to 182 of the Agenda refer and a revised Appendix B tabled at the meeting.

The Chief Executive read out a statement as follows:

*'Since the publication of the Council Agenda, Councillor Makinson-Sanders as Group Leader for the East Lindsey Independent Group has confirmed that Councillors George Horton and Andrew Leonard will remain on the General Licensing and Licensing Act 2003 Committees.*

*(Councillor Darren Hobson stands down but will substitute at the General Licensing Committee as required).'*

N.B. A copy of the updated Appendix B is attached to the Minutes.

The Recommendation was duly Proposed and Seconded.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee expressed thanks to Councillor Darren Hobson for his valuable contribution and hard work during his time on the Committee and welcomed the new Member joining the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the revised allocation of seats to political groups as detailed in Appendix A to the report referred and appointments to committees as detailed in the updated Appendix B to the report referred be approved.

**69. EXEMPT INFORMATION:**

RESOLVED

That under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item on the grounds that, if they were present, there could be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

*N.B. Councillor James Knowles left the Meeting at 3.10pm and re-joined the Meeting at 3.11pm.*

**70. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:**

Members received the Open and Exempt Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 19 November 2025 and the draft Open Minutes from the Audit and Governance Committee Meeting held on 14 January 2026 for noting.

*N.B. Councillor Colin Davie left the Meeting at 3.11pm and rejoined the Meeting at 3.14pm.*

The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee drew attention to the Open Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2025, noting that the Committee had held a constructive discussion on Local Government

Reorganisation, focusing on governance and processes rather than operational matters. She reported that no specific red flags had arisen from the meeting held a fortnight earlier, although significant concerns had previously been raised regarding the identification and monitoring of savings, Minute No 47 refers. She was pleased to note that improvements had been made and although full details had not yet been provided; a comprehensive update was expected at year end.

The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee further advised that an extraordinary meeting of the Committee would be held on 18 February 2026. Although the meeting would be brief, it would be followed by extended training on fraud and risk, including recent legislative changes introducing a new duty on councils relating to the prevention of fraud. All Councillors, in particular nominated substitutes were encouraged to attend.

The Vice-Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee reported that a recent joint meeting of the Overview Committee and the Audit Committee to consider the budget had been innovative and had worked well. She noted that although fewer Audit Committee members had attended in person, several had joined remotely via Teams, and considered the arrangement a useful addition to the Committee's ways of working.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

A Member referred to the Audit and Governance Committee minutes, and asked whether the Committee's work programme included consideration of the Council's use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the preparation of reports. The Member queried whether any attention had been given to the risks associated with AI, including the reliability of information generated, and expressed the view that this represented an area of risk that should be examined.

In response, the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee stated that the use of artificial intelligence was a particular concern of hers and that related issues, particularly cyber risks, were already reflected within the Committee's risk reports. Although AI was not currently listed as a standalone item, she confirmed that the Committee would continue to monitor the matter, recognising the risks it posed not only to the accuracy of reports but also to wider processes.

#### RESOLVED

- That the Open and Exempt Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee Meeting held on 19 November 2025 and the draft Open Minutes from the Audit and Governance Committee Meeting on 14 January 2026 be noted.

*N.B. Councillor Terry Aldridge left the Meeting at 3.15pm and rejoined the Meeting at 3.20pm.*

**71. QUESTIONS:**

Question 1	Councillor Hesketh
Subject	Capital projects in 2026 budget exceeding £20k
Response by	Councillor Thomas Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Supplementary	Can you detail the process, assessment criteria, and expected return on investment for major capital spending clearly set out and ensure that such documentation be made available following budget approval and for future cycles?
Response:	As discussed previously, this is an area we are actively working on and the concerns you have raised will be fully taken into account. The formal documentation setting out the process, assessment criteria and associated financial information is currently being drafted, therefore no specific figures are available at this stage. However, as this work progresses, I will ensure that the relevant details are provided so that the methodology behind our capital decision-making is transparent. The Council remains committed to openness and to demonstrating strong value for money for residents. Both the Executive and the wider organisation continue to place emphasis on sound financial management. While our financial position is comparatively strong, we have no intention of becoming complacent. Once the budget is approved, the documentation you refer to will be made available, and we will continue to develop and refine this information for future budget cycles.
Question 2	Councillor Stef Bristow
Subject	Doubled Council Tax Charges
Response by	Councillor Thomas Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Supplementary	I welcome the additional detail but as a parish clerk and town councillor, please can you provide clarification on the share allocated to parishes and town councils including how the distribution will be made between the precepting bodies and whether parish and town councils have been included?
Response	The Portfolio Holder stated that he and Councillor Bristow had already discussed the matter and confirmed that he would provide her with the relevant details in due course.
Question 3	Councillor Ellie Marsh
Subject	Spilsby Buttercross Car Park
Response by	Councillor Adam Grist, Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and the Rural Economy/Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services

Supplementary	None
Question 4	Councillor Ellie Marsh
Subject	Traders on Spilsby Market
Response by	Councillor Adam Grist, Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and the Rural Economy
Supplementary	None
Question 5	Councillor Ellie Marsh
Subject	Public Toilets across the district
Response by	Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services
Supplementary	None
Question 6	Councillor Ellie Marsh
Subject	Grassroots sports
Response by	Councillor Graham Marsh, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Leisure and Culture and Carbon Reduction
Supplementary	Please could you provide clarification on the number of towns over which the £100,000 per year, over two years, will be distributed?
Response	The funding total was £110,000 over two years and this will be distributed across seven market towns. The allocation was intended specifically for market towns and larger settlements that did not contain Magna Vitae assets.
Question 7	Councillor Ellie Marsh
Subject	Councillor Community Grant Money
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 8	Councillor Ellie Marsh
Subject	Dog Fouling
Response by	Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services
Supplementary	86 fixed penalty notices over two years does not represent a successful response to the scale of dog fouling – are there any plans in place to improve the rate of enforcement?
Response	Much of the dog fouling occurs during the early hours of the morning, often in winter months and in darkness, which presents challenges for enforcement activity at those times. Enforcement officers are deployed regularly and the instruction to them has been to follow the ‘three Es’: to engage with the public, to educate in

	the first instance, and to enforce only where necessary. I think the level of fixed penalty notices issued reflects the effectiveness of engagement and education in encouraging compliance.
Question 9	Councillor Travis Hesketh
Subject	Unused beach huts in Sutton on Sea
Response by	Councillor Steve Kirk, Portfolio Holder for the Coastal Economy
Supplementary	Can a plan be developed for the beach huts, for example to be used, sold, or otherwise utilised to generate income rather than remaining unused?
Response	A response to be provided by the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy.
Question 10	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Volunteering Policy
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 11	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Sutton on Sea Colonnade
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	Why would you have to submit a health and safety risk to actually be allowed to go out on the balcony for people to go out and enjoy the view from this beautiful building? Why are we spending all these millions on a building that you can't go outside and enjoy the sea air and look at the vista - how are we going to solve this problem?
Response	There is no health and safety issue with the barrier at the edge of the balcony; the matter simply requires appropriate management. Once a site operator is in place the area can be used safely, provided it is properly supervised and I anticipate that this issue will then be resolved.
Question 12	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Attracting NHS Professionals to East Lindsey
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 13	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Mayor of Lincolnshire visit to East Lindsey
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

Supplementary	I don't think my original question has been answered. I wanted to know how many times the Mayor had visited East Lindsey specifically to view the area and discuss what support would be provided. I was referring to visits 'on the ground' rather than attendance at meetings elsewhere, please can you provide a more definite response?
Response	I am unable to provide an answer regarding the number of times the Mayor has visited East Lindsey. Discussions have taken place with the Mayor's office on issues such as flood defences, skills and transport, but I cannot say whether the Mayor has undertaken any detailed visits to the district.
Question 14	Councillor Andrew Leonard
Subject	Enforcement of fine issued in Skegness
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 15	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Rubbish on Louth Bypass
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	Although the County Council has recently cut the grass, this had exposed significant amounts of litter along the roadsides - why do residents have to endure such poor environmental conditions?
Response	The Council is aware of the issue and is actively addressing it. The time of year has not been ideal for undertaking this type of work, but as daylight hours increase the Council will commence its usual spring-cleaning programme, both inland and along the coast.
Question 16	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Scrutiny Recommendations from 'To review the running of Invest East Lindsey Limited – with a particular focus on Kingfisher Caravan Park (KCP)' Scrutiny Panel
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 17	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Shortfall in revenue on KCP
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	I do not consider my earlier question to have been answered. They referred to the 725 pitches, of which

	only around 400 were currently in use, when will the remaining pitches be brought back into operation? It is in the Council's interest to ensure all pitches are usable through appropriate investment in infrastructure repairs - have those repairs been completed, or are they likely to be completed, before Local Government Reorganisation?
Response	This issue remains a continuing focus for the Council and for the operator, and there are wider challenges currently faced by the coastal caravan industry, where other operators are also experiencing difficulty in selling pitches. I will provide a detailed response from officers regarding the position on the infrastructure improvements and repairs.
Question 18	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Sale of Invest East Lindsey properties
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 19	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Invest East Lindsey projects
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 20	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Issues with planning portal
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Supplementary	None
Question 21	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Latest position on East Lindsey Local Plan
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Supplementary	None
Question 22	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Progress of Local Plan Development
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Supplementary	None
Question 23	Councillor Daniel Simpson
Subject	Timeframes for reports to inform Local Plan Development
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Supplementary	None

A full copy of the questions is attached at **Appendix 1** to these Minutes.

*N.B. Councillor Richard Fry left the meeting at 3.24pm and rejoined the Meeting at 3.26pm.*

*N.B. Councillor Alex Hall left the Meeting at 3.26pm and rejoined the Meeting at 3.28pm.*

*N.B. Councillor Richard Fry left the Meeting at 3.37pm.*

**72. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

The programmed date for the next Meeting of the Council was noted as Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The meeting closed at 3.38 pm.

## Appendix B

### APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

(Appointments are subject to Council agreeing Appendix A –Allocation of committee seats to political groups)  
Audit and Governance Committee – Two Independent Co-opted Members are not reflected in the proportionality.

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>East Lindsey Independent Group</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Reform</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat /Independent</b>	<b>East Lindsey Progressives</b>	<b>Non – Aligned Member</b>
<b>Planning (13)</b>	<b>6</b> Dick Edginton Alex Hall Neil Jones Daniel McNally Sam Kemp Terry Taylor	<b>3</b> Stephen Eyre Steve McMillan Richard Cunnington	<b>2</b> David Hall Kate Marnoch	<b>1</b> Terry Knowles	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b> Robert Watson	<b>0</b>
<b>Planning Policy (11)</b>	<b>6</b> Tom Ashton Daniel McNally Alex Hall Paul Rickett Terry Taylor Ru Yarsley	<b>2</b> Terry Aldridge Daniel Simpson	<b>2</b> David Hall Roger Dawson	<b>1</b> Mark Dannatt	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Licensing (11)</b>	<b>5</b> Richard Avison Ru Yarsley Neil Jones Carl Macey Terry Taylor	<b>2</b> George Horton Andrew Leonard	<b>1</b> Graham Cullen	<b>2</b> Jimmy Brookes Paul Sutton	<b>1</b> Sandra Campbell-Wardman	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## Appendix B

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>East Lindsey Independent Group</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Reform</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat /Independent</b>	<b>East Lindsey Progressives</b>	<b>Non – Aligned Member</b>
<b>Overview (11)</b>	<b>5</b> Dick Edginton Alex Hall Neil Jones James Knowles Ru Yarsley	<b>2</b> Jill Makinson-Sanders Travis Hesketh	<b>1</b> Claire Arnold	<b>1</b> Carleen Dickinson	<b>1</b> Fiona Martin	<b>1</b> Robert Watson	<b>0</b>
<b>Audit &amp; Governance Committee (9)</b>	<b>4</b> Neil Jones Will Grover Sam Kemp James Knowles	<b>2</b> Jill Makinson-Sanders Edward Mossop	<b>1</b> Ros Jackson	<b>1</b> Danny Brookes	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b> Stef Bristow	<b>0</b>
<b>Employment Committee (9)</b>	<b>4</b> Dick Edginton Richard Fry Neil Jones Terry Taylor	<b>2</b> Jill Makinson-Sanders Edward Mossop	<b>1</b> Ros Jackson	<b>1</b> Danny Brookes	<b>1</b> Sandra Campbell-Wardman	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Chief Officer Employment Panel (3)</b>	<b>2</b> Sarah Devereux Richard Fry	<b>1</b> Jill Makinson-Sanders	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Chief Officer Employment Appeals Panel (3)</b>	<b>1</b> William Gray	<b>1</b> Edward Mossop	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b> Danny Brookes	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

N/B. In accordance with the Terms of Reference at least 1 Executive Board Member must be appointed to both the Chief Officers Employment Panel and Employment Appeals Panel.

260128

**Questions to Council Under Rule 11 of the Constitution –  
Council 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Q1. Councillor Travis Hesketh to Councillor Tom Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance**

**Please provide a schedule of all capital projects within the 2026 budget exceeding £20,000. For each project, please set out the expected return on investment, including quantified financial impacts and anticipated community outcomes, along with the relevant delivery milestones and timescales over which benefits are expected to be realised.**

- A. I thank Councillor Hesketh for notice of his question, the draft capital programme for 26/27 is being finalised as part of the annual budget setting process that I am leading with officers.*

*That draft will be presented to the Executive Board at its meeting on 19 February and will be published in advance. Rather than try to go through line by line today, I will ensure officers provide the information you have requested.*

**Q2. Councillor Stef Bristow to Councillor Tom Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance**

**I would like to see a breakdown of the additional revenue the doubled council tax charges has brought in, and how these additional funds are being shared out with town/parish councils, county council and the Police. How is ELDC using its share of the doubled charge?**

**Secondly, what benefits has this doubling brought to our district? In Sutton on Sea, it has led to a glut of properties for sale which has affected property prices but in no way have they come down to prices that would be considered "affordable", nor has it led to an increase in the rental properties we desperately need. Hence, I am very curious to know what benefits it has brought elsewhere in the district.**

- A. At 31 December 2025 there are 1,277 dwellings in ELDC which are occupied periodically, are substantially furnished but do not have a permanent resident. Commonly referred to as 'second homes'.*

*The total premium being charged is £1,852,927.*

*Of this East Lindsey DC retain £215,495, The Police & Crime Commissioner £266,451 and Lincolnshire County Council £1,370,981.*

*At the start of the year, there were 1,380 dwellings, with premium totalling £2,458,918.*

*This means that over the 9 months to December, there has been a reduction of 103 dwellings.*

*The income is administered through the collection fund and reflected in the annual budget setting process. As such the income generated goes towards maintaining services and investing in Council priorities.*

*Noting your comment regarding the increase in properties for sale and the impact on property prices. Whilst we are keen to support the provision of Housing which is affordable, a significant or rapid decline in property prices would impact all homeowners in the area and as such is something we would need to be mindful of.*

*It is not possible to say with certainty what has caused the decline in the number of 'second homes' and it is too early to know whether this will be a trend which continues, but we can see that the number of second homes has reduced which I am pleased to say will help with local housing supply.*

**Q3. Councillor Ellie Marsh to Councillor Adam Grist, Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and the Rural Economy and Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services**

**Spilsby Buttercross Car Park - On a Monday no car parking is allowed due to the auction taking place. When the auction is not on why can't we allow parking in this car park? Spilsby is a market town yet one of its car parks sits abandoned and unused for 2 months of the year when the auction is not on. Surely this is not good use of the space? Apparently, the traffic restriction cannot be lifted on these occasions, surely we can tell the third-party enforcement agency the dates when not to ticket people? It is hampering business growth and is a ridiculous rule.**

*A. I thank Councillor Marsh for notice of her question, the matter she raises poses a genuine challenge and I am happy to work with her, Councillor Foster and our officers to see how we might reach a more optimal solution.*

**Q4. Councillor Ellie Marsh to Councillor Adam Grist, Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and the Rural Economy**

**When are we going to stop wasting money on markets that do not work? The Monday market in Spilsby is down to 2/3 traders each week. Is this really good value for money? Surely, we should invest money into our high streets and improve what is there rather than trying to push a market that is poorly attended and is not representative of current market and shopping trends.**

*A. The re launch of the Spilsby Market in March 2025, is an investment in the revitalisation of the town centre offer, rebuilding trader confidence in the Town, with 7–10 traders, trading throughout the warmer months. The market saw traders selling fresh fruit and veg, fresh fish, baked goods, cakes, locally produced oils, locally grown plants and flowers and the market also provided a space for charities, and a local school to engage with visitors.*

*These numbers hadn't previously been seen for several years, and all 12 gazebos were frequently in use until October, showing the market's potential under*

*favourable conditions. January is traditionally the quietest month for outdoor markets nationally. Traders often take annual leave, weather reduces footfall, and many casuals pause trading. This is a seasonal dip, not a deterioration in the underlying trend. Looking ahead, the auctioneer is set to return in February, and in March other local traders are also due back to Spilsby.*

*To support the development of our markets, a new East Lindsey Markets Facebook page and a new Instagram presence have been established, significantly expanding reach and engagement. The Markets Team will run paid Facebook advertising through 2026, for all Louth, Horncastle and Spilsby Markets, repeating the promotional push that helped refill pitches in 2025.*

**Q5. Councillor Ellie Marsh to Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services**

**When are the market towns getting their improved toilets? It is nearly 2 years since we did the scrutiny work, even by local government standards this is a ridiculous time scale, and I am getting bored of giving Spilsby residents the same worthless answer. Will this work still be outstanding when LGR takes place?**

**A.** *I thank Councillor Marsh for notification of her question; as she will recall, the budget to enable the refurbishment six sets of public conveniences and the replacement of a seventh was only agreed by Full Council on 8 October last year; with the forecast completion dates being:*

- *Spa Road PC's, Woodhall Spa – 14/08/2026*
- *St. Lawrence Street PC's, Horncastle – 10/09/2026*
- *Market Place, Wragby – 07/10/2026*
- *High Street PC's, Spilsby – 21/07/2026*
- *Pullover PC's, Anderby Creek – 01/06/2026*
- *Brooks Walk PC's, Wainfleet All Saints – 25/06/2026*
- *Castle Lane PC's, Coningsby – 16/11/2026*

**Q6. Councillor Ellie Marsh to Councillor Graham Marsh, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Leisure and Culture and Carbon Reduction.**

**What are the Council doing to improve grassroots sports in areas such as Spilsby? What financial investment is taking place in these areas to encourage residents to take part in sporting activity?**

**A.** *The Council is strengthening grassroots sport in Spilsby through a combination of facility investment and expanded community programming. Working with Magna Vitae and local clubs, the Council supported the major improvements at Spilsby Playing Fields, including a £10,000 investment to advance the pavilion redevelopment to planning stage, work supported by the FA and Football Foundation, who contributed a substantial external funding once designs were completed.*

*Alongside facility development, the Council has commissioned Magna Vitae to deliver the Inland Conurbation Project across several towns and villages, including Spilsby, with £100,000 per year for two years dedicated to co-producing new sports and activity opportunities with local young people and clubs. In Spilsby, programmes already delivered, such as the School's Out holiday activities and sports sessions at the Youth Club, have provided football, cricket, gymnastics, and structured youth activities, helping to increase participation and strengthen grassroots sport provision in the town.*

**Q7. Councillor Ellie Marsh to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**If there is any Councillor Grant money left over can this not be put into one pot? Councillors could then apply for the leftovers, and it go to areas that need a little bit extra rather than just going back centrally.**

- A. Thank you for the question. In 2025/26 the base budget (£55k) for the Councillors' Community Grants Scheme was significantly uplifted by a further £165k of reserves to benefit all communities across the entire District. It is likely that much of this funding will be committed this financial year, however the Executive Board is considering options to fund the Scheme in 2026/27 and will bring forward proposals as part of the 2026/27 budget.*

**Q8. Councillor Ellie Marsh to Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services.**

**What is being done to tackle dog fouling?**

- A. There is a Public Space Protection Order in place covering the whole district and the beaches that we are responsible for. This makes it an offence not to clear up after a dog has fouled in a public space. The PSPO also requires dog owners to be in possession of a means to clear up after their dog at all times.*

*There are signs provided throughout the district and in key public locations informing residents and visitors of this requirement and we have enforcement officers that conduct routine patrols to both deter, inform and advise dog owners. Information is available on our website, and the public can report incidents of fouling which will be followed up by our enforcement officers and/or our cleansing teams. We also post regularly on our social media channels to raise awareness and discourage irresponsible dog owners. We also rely on our communities to report issues to us.*

*In the two calendar years 2023 to 2025, 86 FPNs have been issued for dog fouling and/or not having means to pick up dog fouling.*

**Q9. Councillor Travis Hesketh to Councillor Steve Kirk, Portfolio Holder for the Coastal Economy.**

**A number of beach huts were built as part of a project (for example one in the shape of a gin and tonic) along the Mablethorpe and Sutton foreshore. They**

**seem to have been left unused for many years. What is the plan to bring these back into use?**

- A. *I thank Councillor Hesketh for notice of his question, there are currently only two 'Bathing Beauties' chalets left along our coast; all of the others built as part of the project have long since been removed. The two that remain are structurally sound and in fair condition but are not in use as they were designed as pieces of art that could be accessed periodically as opposed to functional beach huts for year-round use with there being no plans to put the two remaining structures into day-to-day operation.*

**Q10. Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**PS2 has a very different volunteering policy from this council. I have been asked by members of staff to ask if we can review our policy and base it on the more community supportive model our LATCO follows successfully. What is your opinion, please?**

- A. *I'm pleased to confirm that the Council recently reviewed and updated its Volunteer Policy in August 2025. As part of that review, we introduced a new entitlement for staff to take **up to two days of paid volunteering leave per year**, subject to approval and alignment with the Partnership's Sub-Regional Strategy. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to enabling staff to contribute to their communities, while ensuring the arrangements remain fair, consistent and manageable across all service areas.*

*We recognise, however, that the success of any policy depends on awareness and uptake. I therefore welcome the point raised, and we will ensure that the updated volunteering provision is **more actively promoted**—including through Annual Reviews, our wider communication of Employee Benefits, and ongoing engagement with managers and teams across the Council and wider Partnership.*

*In summary, the Council has strengthened its policy, we are committed to encouraging volunteering as part of our wider social responsibility, and we will continue to keep the policy under review as organisational needs develop.*

**Q11. Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**I am taking up an issue which became apparent at Overview, but no meaningful answer was supplied. When the Colonnade building at Sutton-on-Sea was designed the architects included an attractive viewing platform to enhance the sensory experience of land meeting the sea. But now we are told this is a health and safety risk and cannot be experienced as the architect intended. Given this was such an important design feature of this multi-million-pound development, why did the professional, who we paid handsomely for his vision, make such a basic mistake? Is there no-one on the staff at the council who has the expertise to scrutinise the design process effectively to avoid such embarrassing outcomes?**

- A. *I thank Councillor Makinson Sanders for notice of her question and can confirm to her that the balcony itself presents absolutely no health and safety risks; it is safe, guarded and built exactly to specification.*

*What Councillor Makinson-Sanders may be aware of is the necessity for any potential hirer to provide us with a full description of any proposed use of the balcony and proportionate risk assessment in relation to that use so we can be assured that no health and safety issues may be introduced.*

*From an operational perspective, when there are no events running, Councillor Makinson Sanders may also be aware the whole of the top floor can be closed to the public simply because there is no oversight or supervision of the space, hence our focussed, ongoing work to contract an operator to maximise use and access of what is undeniably a fantastic, iconic asset for Sutton on Sea.*

**Q12. Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**The east coast and our rural hinterland are frequently described as being a desert as far as health provision is concerned. We lack sufficient GPs, Dentists, Health Visitors, District nurses, Occupational Therapists and mental health professionals to adequately address the needs of our residents. The NHS often provides what are classed as golden handshakes but how is this council working in partnership with other organisations to attract professionals to East Lindsey - examples please.**

- A. *The Connected Coast's Towns Fund Investment recognised the local gap in recruitment and retention of health and social care workforce and the need to make our District a more attractive place for professionals to live, study and work.*

*The Campus for Future Living in Mablethorpe has established a modern, university linked health campus to attract trainees and researchers whilst providing professional development and support.*

*The project is aligned to Lincolnshire System for recruiting and retaining talent and the 'grow locally stay locally' model; for example, Lincolnshire Training Hub are using the facilities for pharmacy students to offer drop-in 'health checks' for the Community.*

*Furthermore, the South and East Lincolnshire Healthy Living Board provides a sub-regional platform for health, local government, other responsible authorities and third sector organisations to come together to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes in South and East Lincolnshire. The terms of the Board include promoting a joined-up approach with other strategic partners that include better outcomes for all. This would include understanding system gaps and how collectively we may understand and assist in influencing change. For example, at the last Board meeting in December a presentation and discussion were led by the Integrated Care Board to understand the significant structural changes moving to a cluster organisation in order to increase efficiency.*

*In addition to the above health-focused activities, ELDC is represented at the GLCCA's Employment and skills board, which will set future direction on skills investment and sectoral development, including the health sector more broadly. We use our seat on this board to lobby for investment in areas of local interest. Our officer team are also actively involved in the preparation of the Local Skills Investment Plan (LSIP), which is designed to capture the skills needs of our key sectors, and influence how the devolved Adult Education Budget will be invested by the GLCCA from August 2026 (when the funds are devolved to combined authorities).*

**Q13. Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**The Mayor of Lincolnshire has been in post for nine months now. How many times has she been to East Lindsey to look at working in partnership with this council and what are the outcomes so far?**

- A.** *There are 4 non-constituent seats on the GLCCA. These are held by district council leaders and ELDC has one of those places.*

*The GLCCA also operates a number of boards where most of the business of the authority is undertaken.*

*These include the Transport Board, Employment and Skills Board and the Business and Infrastructure Board. As leader of ELDC I sit on those boards as needed and in cooperation with other district leader colleagues as agenda items dictate.*

*There have been allocations of monies that will potentially benefit this area supporting infrastructure and skills. I will ask the GLCCA to provide an update of those schemes and works.*

*I have met with the Mayor to discuss our challenges regarding transport, flood defence and our determination to tackle deprivation. As a non-constituent member we have only limited voting powers.*

**Q14. Councillor Andrew Leonard to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**I noted in the national media generally and on the BBC " have I got news for you " programme the fine issued in Skegness to the man who spat out a leaf. How are we as a council dealing with the fine enforcement that was issued and has a refund been issued by us or the operator.**

- A.** *Thank you for the question.*

*The incident occurred some 12 months ago on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025. The fixed penalty notice was paid within the prescribed time period, discharging liability for the offence.*

*The recent media attention following a Facebook post by a Skegness resident does not alter that fact.*

**Q15. Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**Please could you update me how discussions are going with LCC about the unsightly rubbish blowing around on Louth bypass. My colleagues in the Independent Group report similar unsightly litter along roadsides too. Why is it so bad and what is the answer to making our district look cleaner and tidier before the start of the tourist season?**

- A.** *Roadside litter is more visible at this time of year due to the grass and shrub growth becoming dormant through the back end of autumn, winter and early spring.*

*In September 2025, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) conducted extensive shrub and tree management night works, on the Louth by-pass, over 3 nights, uncovering swathes of litter. However, their maintenance operations do not include litter picking, as part of their works.*

*East Lindsey District Council is the responsible authority for litter removal from the public highway and roadside verges.*

*The A16 Louth bypass is a particularly high-risk area when it comes to working alongside the carriageway, due to the speed of the road, the narrow verges with encroaching shrubbery, and blind bends combined with steep hills and drops.*

*We have since contacted Lincolnshire County Council to discuss immediate options to support the service (ELDC Neighbourhood Services) to safely remove the litter from the A16 Louth by-pass, following their maintenance works.*

*LCC have provided authorisation for the service to conduct lane closure(s), during the day on: 1st February 2026 – from the Horncastle junction to Kenwick top. To remove the litter.*

*However, LCC have advised that the remainder of the by-pass is too dangerous to authorise day lane closures, solely for litter picking activity. Therefore, we are currently in communication with LCC to reach agreement for the service to join future night highway maintenance works, on the by-pass, to ensure that litter is removed, while LCC conduct their wider maintenance works. So not repeat the current issue with unsightly litter on the by-pass.*

*Regarding wider litter removal from roadside verges; due to the issue of short daylight hours and poor weather conditions, at this time of year. ELDC Neighbourhood Services begin districtwide annual highway litter picking tasks from late February through to late spring/start of summer, in areas that we have risk assessed as safe to conduct litter removal operations, without the need for lane closure, but with the correct roadside management Health and Safety safeguards, in place.*

**Q16. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**Following on from the Scrutiny panel 'To review the running of Invest East Lindsey Limited, with a particular focus on Kingfisher Caravan Park' what recommendations of that scrutiny have now been implemented?**

- A. Of the 15 supported recommendations, 9 of them have been completed. Two further recommendations are due for completion in February, pending further information requested by Overview. The final 4 recommendations are due for completion in March. All recommendations from scrutiny panels are tracked via the Overview Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker, which is on every Overview agenda for scrutiny by Committee Members.*

**Q17. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**The Kingfisher Caravan Park has 726 pitches At June 12th, 2024, the pitch fees per caravan were:**

**Standard pitch £2905.12 +20% Vat total fee £3486.20. Super pitch £3197.37 +20% Vat total fee £3836.84. Taking average of £3000 per pitch the yield for 726 pitches £2,176,000 or £2,613,600 Vat incl. Occupancy on the site was at around 426 pitches yielding £1,278,000 or £1,533,600 Vat incl. The identified shortfall (additional revenue opportunity) in pitch revenue was around: £1,275.824 or £1,530,988 Vat incl. Taking an average of £3000 per pitch. Revenue from 16 pitches were needed to cover business rates of £48,266.40. What steps have been taken to address the shortfall in revenue opportunity to restore the maximum income generation from pitch fees?**

- A. I thank Councillor Simpson for notice of his question; as relevant context to this question I would remind Council that the sole selling agency in respect of the Park is currently granted to Invest East Lindsey Limited; prior to which, it was contracted to a private sector provider.*

*Access to pitches on the park is and always has been concierged through the contracted Agent as it is the Agent who sells new and used caravans onto the Park, not the Council; it is however the Council who grant all licences.*

*A point to really note is that the number of licences granted by the Council over the last six years, whilst the Agency has been held by Invest, exceeds the number of licences granted over the previous six years under the previous Agency, six years which were not affected by Covid, global energy challenges and a national cost of living crisis.*

*To help our sole Agent at the Park further accelerate our granting of new licences, the Executive is due to review the Parks licence terms and sales criteria in the next quarter.*

**Q18. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**Have all the properties built by or on behalf of Invest East Lindsey been sold?**

- A. I thank Councillor Simpson for notification of his question and am pleased to clarify for him that all of the high-quality homes built by the Company at its Chapel St Leonards development scheme have been sold, with the last sale having completed on 12 December 2025.*

**Q19. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs.**

**What projects are Invest East Lindsey currently undertaking?**

- A. I thank Councillor Simpson for notification of his question; the Company propose its sole business focus for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29 to be on its caravan sales and hire fleet operations at Kingfisher Caravan Park.*

**Q20. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning.**

**Responders/ contributors to planning consultations are reporting that the Portal is not uploading or taking far too much time to be updated with submissions. What might be issues?**

- A. We are not aware of any specific technical issues with the portal, however if people are having difficulties then we need to know about them so we can get them fixed.*

*There are several ways in which representations can be made on planning applications, so it would be helpful for the service to hear directly from anyone experiencing issues, in order for us to understand and investigate the specifics.*

*If District Councillors receive complaints to this effect, please raise them with the Case Officer, or with Andy Booth, and CC me in on that correspondence so that I can follow up wherever necessary.*

**Q21. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning.**

**The Local Plan and its development generate interest across the district from various quarters. Can you update Members and the public as to the latest position?**

- A. Local Plan and its development are a very important strategic issue for the Council. We are awaiting the revisions to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for guidance on methodology for the revision of the Local Plan. In the meantime, we are working on key pieces of evidence base such as strategic flood risk assessment, Sport and Recreation/Open Space Study, Playing Pitches Strategy, Local Wildlife Site reviews, Conservation Area Appraisals and Design Guidance. Further scoping of the next phase of work is being undertaken and will be informed by the revised Government guidance.*

**Q22. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning.**

**Can you advise Members and the public how Local Government Reform is affecting the progress of Local Plan Development?**

- A. Similar to the previous question, we are awaiting the revisions to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for guidance on methodology for the revision of the Local Plan, and by the time we have this information from Government, the timetable for LGR will be much clearer.*

*It is no secret that the various components of MHCLG responsible for LGR and Local Planning seem to operate without much obvious cooperation. As we know from the experience of the last few years, revising a Local Plan within a stable national policy and political landscape is challenging enough, doing so while the Government changes the entire structure of both Local Government and the Planning system is unlikely make our Local Plan process any easier.*

*Whether there is enough time left for this Local Planning Authority to achieve a new Local Plan which accords with the Government's brave new world of planning is entirely in the hands of the Government.*

*Nonetheless, we will continue to work on the evidence base which will be necessary to progress a new plan as outlined in my answer to Question 21, until such time as the national policy position is fixed and we can progress. It is likely that one of the first pieces of work a new Unitary Authority would wish to embark upon is aligning Planning Policies and Plans across its geography, for which the evidence base and policy work which is currently ongoing will be every bit as essential as it is to any Plan which we would wish to write over the next couple of years.*

**Q23. Councillor Daniel Simpson to Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning.**

**What updates are there on timeframes for Reports commissioned or required from outside bodies to inform the Local Plan Development being available?**

- A. As mentioned in previous two responses, we are awaiting guidance on methodology. According to the Government announcements so far, Councils submitting plans under the new system must do so within a 30-month timeline.*

*Gateway 1 Approval will set out the work programme for the Local Plans preparation with 30-month process. The deadline for Gateway 1 is April 2027. We anticipate bringing the Gateway 1 process and work programme for approval by the Council later in Autumn this year.*

Ends.

