Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview Committee at held the Hub, Mareham Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6PH on Tuesday, 20th January, 2026 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillor Fiona M. Martin, M.B.E. (Chairman)
Councillor Carleen Dickinson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Claire Arnold, Dick Edginton, Alex Hall, Travis Hesketh, Neil Jones, James Knowles, Jill Makinson-Sanders, Robert Watson and Ruchira Yarsley.

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Tom Ashton	-	Portfolio Holder for Planning
Councillor William Gray	-	Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing
Councillor Thomas Kemp	-	Portfolio Holder for Finance
Councillor Craig Leyland	-	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Councillor Graham Marsh	-	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Leisure and Culture, and Carbon Reduction
Councillor Stef Bristow	-	East Lindsey District Council (Virtual)
Councillor Rosalind Jackson	-	East Lindsey District Council (Virtual)
Councillor Edward Mossop	-	East Lindsey District Council
Councillor Daniel Simpson	-	East Lindsey District Council
Councillor Terry Taylor	-	East Lindsey District Council (Virtual)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Russell Stone	-	Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer
James Gilbert	-	Assistant Director, Corporate
Rebecca James	-	Scrutiny and Policy Officer
Stuart Leafe	-	Head of Finance Delivery (ELDC)
Angela Posey	-	HR Projects and Transformation Officer, PSPS
Ramesh Prashar	-	Finance Consultant (Virtual)
Richard Steele	-	Group Manager for Information Governance and Data Protection Officer
Aileen Whatmore	-	Head of HR & Organisational Development (Virtual)
Laura Allen	-	Democratic Services Officer

86. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sarah Devereux, Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services.

87. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

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

In relation to Agenda Item 5, declarations were made as follows:

Councillors Claire Arnold, Dick Edginton, Jill Makinson-Sanders, Fiona Martin and Ru Yarsley asked that it be noted that they were all Members of Internal Drainage Boards.

88. ANNUAL BUDGET REPORT 2026/27:

N.B. This item was brought forward at the discretion of the Chairman.

The Chairman welcomed Russell Stone, Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer to the Meeting.

The report highlighted to Members details of the 2026/27 budget and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) from 2026/27 to 2030/31 which included the recommended level of Council Tax for 2026/27 when considering budgetary pressures, pages 1 to 14 of the Supplementary Agenda refer.

Members received a presentation that provided an overview of budget progress which included highlighting significant changes following the provisional local government finance settlement, budget pressures, savings and efficiencies, a summary of the provisional draft budget by account and the key dates for reports being presented to the Executive Board and Full Council.

A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix A to the Minutes.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- The Chairman asked that it be noted that all Councillors that were Members of Internal Drainage Boards declared an interest. Declarations were made for Councillors Claire Arnold, Dick Edginton, Jill Makinson-Sanders, Fiona Martin and Ru Yarsley.

- In relation to fairer funding, a Member queried whether a greater emphasis on the deprivation of a district resulted in a greater increase in funding support. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer advised Members that weightings were applied on where funding was distributed and that this formed part of a targeted approach to provide funding to areas that needed to address specific issues.

- The Chairman queried who was responsible for assessing the level of deprivation in an area. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer advised Members that the assessment of

deprivation in an area was a national decision which used the latest data available from the index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) datasets.

- A Member queried whether Council Tax would increase by 4.7% and whether a requirement for building new houses and revenue generation had been included in the budget. In response, Councillor Tom Ashton as Portfolio Holder for Planning advised Members that in terms of planning, there was not yet any information available regarding the governments requirements for building new houses. In follow-up, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer assured Members that Council Tax assumptions were not significantly different to historic rates due to referendum limits remaining in place.

- A Member queried the reasons that ELDC did not utilise Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in place of Section 106 Agreements. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Planning explained to Members that Section 106 Agreements enabled greater levels of funding to be provided to benefit local communities. Members were advised that further discussion would be undertaken by the Planning Policy Committee when work on the review of the Local Plan progressed.

- In reference to the slide on the Summary of Budget Pressures, at the indulgence of the Chairman Councillor Stef Bristow, queried whether the projected reduction in Neighbourhoods from £486k in 2026/27 to £138k in 2027/28 was as a result of the transition to food waste. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer confirmed to Members that a large proportion of that figure was related to the preparation and transition to food waste and that new vehicles would come into operation mid-2026.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Stef Bristow further queried whether the decline from £281k in 2026/27 to £44k in 2027/28, reducing to £38k in 2028/29 in Planning and Strategic Infrastructure related to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained to Members that the figure of £281k for 2026/27 related to temporary staffing arrangements which included maternity cover and staffing requirements for key pieces of work that were short term in nature.

- In follow-up, the Portfolio Holder for Planning advised Members that additional staffing requirements had been necessary to undertake work in relation to flood risk and progressing the Local Plan.

- In reference to the Summary of Budget Pressures, a Member queried which category included funding for economic development. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer confirmed that economic development was not included in the

pressures list as it was reflected in the efficiencies list due to generating a small level of savings.

- Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs, highlighted to Members that the Council was very fortunate to be able to redirect funds to regeneration and culture.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Ros Jackson queried whether the £4,453m efficiencies required for 2026/27 was the same as the £7m net financing need highlighted at the last Audit and Governance Committee Meeting (Minute No. 62, page 43 of the Agenda from the Audit and Governance Committee Meeting on 14th January 2026 refers). In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer clarified to Members that Audit and Governance Committee had been presented with the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) which highlighted the shift in the Council's underlying borrowing need which differed to the figure being referred to as efficiencies required.

- The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer highlighted to Members that the net cost of services for 2025/26 was £31,613k and that the efficiencies line was expected to turn positive in 2026/27. Members were further assured that a surplus forecast position on the budget was a positive position for the Council to be in.

- The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer further advised Members of the key dates for Overview Committee's comments to be provided to the Executive Board for consideration.

- Councillor Tom Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance commented in support of the work undertaken by the Section 151 Officer and the Finance team which had placed the Council in a strong position.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Ros Jackson expressed a preference for the budget report to include the Council's reserve positions.

- Councillor Ros Jackson further highlighted that the Household Support Fund scheme was ending in March 2026, and that confirmation of Household Support Grants was essential for ensuring that vulnerable people were supported. In follow-up, Councillor William Gray Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing confirmed to Members that the Household Support Fund was part of Councillor Sarah Devereux's portfolio.

- The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs highlighted to Members that the government had been responsible for many of the challenges in relation to funding, and that he would

actively follow-up on the need to secure further funding to continue protecting the district's most vulnerable residents.

- In reference to Table 5 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026 – 2031 by Account, at the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Stef Bristow requested clarification on the large reduction in figures between 2025/26 and 2026/27 onwards for 'Direct Revenue Financing of Capital Expenditure' and 'Capital Charges Contra Entry', page 10 of the Supplementary Agenda refers.

  In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained to Members that the Contra Entry was as a result of the Council needing to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and to operate and prepare budgets and accounts in the same way as a company, and where this would include applying a depreciation charge to reduce the amount of tax paid. Members were further advised in the case of a local authority; the taxpayer had already funded that expenditure and that the contra charge was applied to avoid funds being paid twice.

  In reference to the Direct Revenue Financing of Capital Expenditure, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained to Members that the line in the budget referred to where the Council had committed to capital costs within the capital programme and which were funded from revenue sources.

- In reference to Table 6 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026 – 2031 By Service, a Member queried the nature of the costs that were contained within the financing service area for increases between 2025/26 and 2026/27 of approximately 10%, page 11 of the Supplementary Agenda refers. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer advised Members that the costs included various factors such as the PSPS contract price, elements of Revenues and Benefits spend, corporate financing and other technical adjustments that sat with financing.

- A Member further queried the reasoning for the 10% increase, when spending was being constrained across other service areas. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer confirmed that the largest element for the increase related to the PSPS contract price which had included factors such as the increase in pension costs. Members were further assured that it was expected that the rate of increase for the PSPS contract price was expected to reduce significantly by the final position of the budget.

- In reference to paragraph 5.10 – Pay Award, a Member queried the reasons for the assumption of a wage rise 1% above inflation, page 8 of the Supplementary Agenda refers. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained to Members that the figure was considered a reasonable estimate and that various factors were taken into consideration.

- The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer further advised that the 3% Pay Award assumption had also considered factors from the impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) which was likely to affect senior officers and supported that a large degree of uncertainty remained.

- A Member commented on the expectations of retaining and promoting staff.

- A Member further queried how the disposal of assets would occur in relation to LGR and the impact it would have on the Council's finances. In response, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs explained to Members that the financial implications of LGR were currently unclear and that a further LGR briefing with all Councillors was expected to take place in February 2026 to ensure that all implications were carefully considered.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Edward Mossop queried whether there was a paper trail to evidence the process undertaken for the Star Chamber. In response, Councillor William Gray as Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing advised Members that despite his apprehension to the Star Chamber process, it had brought a number of savings to his portfolio area.

- The Chairman queried whether there was a formal record of the Star Chamber process and suggested whether a recommendation could be considered for future years to ensure the process was formally documented. In follow-up, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs assured Members that the process which had been implemented by the previous Section 151 Officer was rigorous and that it had not been seen as cost effective to take up officer's time to produce formal minutes.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Edward Mossop further emphasised the value of recording meetings and producing notes to ensure consistency across all sectors of the Council's budget. In response, the Assistant Director (Corporate) assured Members of the robustness of the Star Chamber process, emphasising that there was a clear audit trail of documents which could be provided to internal and external audit. Members were further advised that each Assistant Director had been given clear targets to identify any savings or pressures, and that this had formed part of the discussion with Portfolio Holders which had been presented to the Director of Finance and Chief Executive and would be fed into final budget proposals.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Edward Mossop queried whether participation from Portfolio Holders had been consistent during the Star Chamber process. In response, the Assistant Director (Corporate) assured Members that full

attendance and engagement by Portfolio Holders was a key expectation. In follow-up, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs further highlighted that Executive Board Members attended Briefings every two weeks and that wider discussions regularly took place to provide visibility of the work undertaken by the Executive Board.

- The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer advised Members that feedback and assurance was also demonstrated from responses to internal audit reports, providing an example of the findings of the identification and monitoring of savings audit report which had been presented to the Audit and Governance Committee.

- Councillor Graham Marsh, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Leisure and Culture, and Carbon Reduction further clarified to the Committee the impracticability of producing notes for Portfolio Holder meetings.

N.B Councillor Claire Arnold left the Meeting at 11.16am.

- The Chairman concluded that there was a need to maintain a balance of information that was made available to Members and supported that there was many opportunities including Reserved Members' Days for Members to be kept informed.

N.B Councillor Claire Arnold returned to the Meeting at 11.18am.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Ros Jackson advised Members that the follow-up audit was being reported to Audit and Governance Committee in Quarter 4.

- In relation to the provisional finance settlement 2026-27, a Member queried whether the Council was satisfied that it would receive the maximum funds from the government. In response, the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained to Members the effects of the two-tier system of funding floors implemented by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and highlighted that Internal Drainage Board funding was welcomed but would not be sufficient in the long term.

- The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer further advised Members that collection fund accounting was another area of focus to try and maximise any potential gain and that the government was increasing the level of business rate income protection available to authorities in 2026-27 by increasing the safety net threshold to 100%.

- A Member commented that she was unaware that the Council received any funding for domestic abuse and considered whether this was included in the Council's safeguarding duties.

- A Member highlighted the need to support people with managing debt in addition to providing financial support through initiatives such as the Household Support Fund. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing advised Members that the Council provided core grants to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to help provide debt advice and that a top-up from the Council's Homelessness Grants was provided for housing relating enquiries.

- A Member expressed disappointment in the effectiveness of the CAB in assisting citizens. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing advised Members that the Group Manager, Healthy Communities worked closely with the CAB and that greater budget flexibility would enable more work to be undertaken.

- The Chairman queried the processes and support in place for people who experienced domestic abuse. In response, Councillor William Gray, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing advised Members that domestic abuse was covered by Councillor Sarah Devereux's portfolio and confirmed that the query would be passed to her for a response.

- The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs further advised Members that the Council had worked with partner organisations to establish a new safety Hub at Mablethorpe, and that the focus of the Hub was to address domestic abuse that occurred during the holiday season.

- The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs assured Members that the Council had been very successful in securing funds to help support those in the East Lindsey district that were vulnerable and experiencing deprivation.

- In follow-up, the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing highlighted that the Council was also part of the White Ribbon initiative to stand united to end violence against women and girls.

- A Member commented in appreciation of the Executive Board Members being in attendance at today's meeting. In response, the Chairman confirmed that the successful format of the new annual budget process would continue in future years.

- Councillor Graham Marsh, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Leisure and Culture, and Carbon Reduction advised Members that the Council was actively seeking more sites for astroturf and that Councillors were being encouraged to notify the Council of anyone in their wards that would be interested.

- The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing commented on his appreciation for the work that had been undertaken by the Finance team in relation to the homelessness budgets and providing funding for emergency accommodation. Members were further advised that the homelessness and rough sleeping grants had been ring fenced and that the Councill had participated in match-funding for 12 homes to help people who were vulnerable.

- Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning commented in support of the sound financial management of the Council and being in a strong position to meet any future challenges. Members were further advised that the government was currently consulting on its latest iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework and that a new Local Plan for East Lindsey District would follow.

- The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs spokes in further support of positive work being undertaken and that he had a great deal of confidence in the LGR proposals that had been submitted on behalf of the Partnership.

- At the indulgence of the Chairman, Councillor Ros Jackson thanked the Overview Committee for inviting Members of Audit and Governance Committee to attend and participate in scrutiny of the budget.

No further comments or questions were received.

The Chairman thanked Russell Stone, Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the report.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

89. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 9 December 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

90. ACTIONS:

Members noted that the following Actions were now complete.

Actions from the Meeting held on 9 December 2025
Action No. 73 (a), 77, 78, 81, 83 and 84 – completed.

Actions from the Meeting held 14 October 2025
Action No. 57 and 63– completed.

Actions from the Meeting held on 2 September 2025
Action No. 39 and 47 – completed.

Actions from the Meeting held on 22 July 2026
Action No. 22, 27 and 28 – completed.

Comments were received as follows:

Action No. 77 (a) – 'Revised Housing Allocations Policy BBC/ELDC' from the Meeting held on 9th December 2025, page 27 of the Agenda refers.

- In reference to Appendix A1, a Member perceived that conflicting information had been provided on the 5-year qualification rule for armed forces personnel in social housing and sought further clarification on whether the 5-year rule still applied, page 35 of the Agenda refers. In response, the Chairman confirmed that a further response would be obtained from the Housing and Homelessness Manager.

Action No. 81 (a) – 'Quarter 2 25/26 Performance Report' – In reference to the performance indicators for Healthy Lives – Disabled Facilities Grants from the Meeting held on 9th December 2025, page 27 of the Agenda refers.

- In reference to the response provided on timescales for the days to completion for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's), Members queried whether there were targets that needed to be achieved and whether there were specific reasons for the delays. In response, Councillor William Gray, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing advised Members that it was believed that the delays were related to the processes undertaken by occupational therapists.

- In follow-up, the Chairman queried whether lobbying higher-level authorities would assist with reducing the timescales for completion. In response, the Outside Body Appointee explained to Members that issues had increased due to challenges with recruiting occupational therapies, particularly towards the coast and that she would seek clarification on who was responsible for recruiting occupational therapists from the Health Scrutiny Officer at Lincolnshire County Council.

- The Chairman supported that delays with DFG's were well recognised.

Action No. 84 (a) – 'Overview Committee Work Programme' – In reference to information Trees and Hedges policies for East Lindsey District Council from the Meeting held on 9th December 2025, page 28 of the Agenda refers.

- A Member commented on the duplication of reports where ELDC as a sovereign Council already had a policy in place.

- A Member further queried the reason that the website link provided related to ELDC as a sovereign Council rather than the Partnership of Councils. In response, the Assistant Director (Corporate) clarified to Members that the Tree and Hedgerow Strategy and Action Plan that was presented at the December 2025 Meeting differed to the policy that was being presented to South Holland District and Boston Borough Council for adoption.

Action No. 56 – 'Conservation Area Appraisals update' from the Meeting held on 14th October 2025, page 29 of the Agenda refers.

- The Chairman highlighted to Members that the Conservation Area Appraisals update was being presented to the Committee in February 2026 following conclusion of the consultation.

- A Member commented on expectations for the Annual Consultant Report being presented to the Committee later in the year.

Action No. 57 (b) – 'Towns Fund Projects Update' from the Meeting held on 14th October 2025, page 29 of the Agenda refers.

- In reference to the response provided for the number of staff on zero hours contracts, a Member considered the accuracy of the information that Magna Vitae employed 4 casual staff for work on government holiday activities.

Action No. 58 (b) – 'East Lindsey Investment Fund' from the Meeting held on 14th October 2025, page 30 of the Agenda refers.

- In reference to the events officer posts, a Member queried whether utilising volunteers would have been more cost effective for the Council. In response, the Chairman advised Members that events officers assisted volunteers in organising a variety of events including the Horncastle Christmas Market. In follow-up, Councillor William Gray, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing confirmed to Members that there were three full time events officers, and that in his experience, the events officers were extremely hardworking and on hand at all hours to provide assistance for events and to support volunteers.

- A Member further queried whether the Markets team could assist with events in place of employing events officers. In response, a Member clarified that the roles of the markets and events officer teams were entirely separate, where the markets team focused on the marketing of places rather than organising and operating events.

- In follow up, the Chairman encouraged Members to make contact with the events officers for support and assistance with local events.

Action No. 39 (d) – 'Update on Cultural and Town Boards' from the Meeting held on 2nd September 2025, page 31 of the Agenda refers.

- In reference to the Vital and Viable action plans, a Member commented on the lack of engagement with elected representatives, particularly in relation to what was happing in Members' wards. In response, the Chairman supported the need for better communication between officers and elected Members, highlighting that this was a reoccurring topic of discussion at the Car Parking in East Lindsey scrutiny panel meetings. The Chairman confirmed that the Committee's concerns would be noted as an action.

Action No. 6 (b) – 'Action No. 96 – Section 106 Agreements Update' from the Meeting held on 17th June 2025, page 33 of the Agenda refers.

- The Chairman spoke in support of the upcoming meeting where the current Chief Executive of the NHS was expected to be in attendance and asked that all Members of the Council be invited. In response, the Democratic Services Officer confirmed that invitations would be circulated.

91. TERMS AND CONDITIONS ALIGNMENT - NEXT PHASE:

The Chairman welcomed Aileen Whatmore, Head of HR and Organisational Development (PSPS) to the Meeting to present the Terms and Conditions alignment – next phase, pages 15 to 28 of the Supplementary Agenda refer.

Members were advised that in line with the South & East Lincolnshire Council's Partnership Business Case and Alignment and Delivery Plan, the Partnership Councils had undertaken a phased programme of work to align workforce terms and conditions of employment.

The Head of HR and Organisational Development (PSPS) highlighted a correction to the report and clarified to Members that Paragraph 2.2, Ref 3 – Employer and Employee Notice Period should state 12 years continuous service or more instead of 12 weeks continuous service, page 17 of the Supplementary Agenda refers.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- In reference to First Aid Payments, a Member queried whether training needed to be updated every three years. In response, the Head of HR and Organisational Development (PSPS) explained to Members that the payment referred to qualified First Aiders,

confirming that the First Aid Qualification included a requirement to be updated at three-year intervals.

- A Member queried whether the alignment of policies had been in the best interest of employees. In response, the Head of HR and Organisational Development (PSPS) confirmed that a selection of the best terms and conditions has been put forward from all three Councils for alignment.

- In reference to probation notice which remained at one week, a Member queried whether this did not apply to employees changing roles within local authorities, page 17 of the Supplementary Agenda refers. In response, the Head of HR and Organisational Development (PSPS) confirmed that the information would be amended and that any changes would not affect any existing employees.

- In reference to Paragraph 2.2, Ref 8 – Mobility Clause, a Member highlighted that employees should not be disadvantaged because they did not have access to their own transport, page 18 of the Agenda refers. In response, the Assistant Director (Corporate) advised Members that all East Lindsey District Council employees had access to carpool cars and were encouraged to use them.

- A Member further queried the impact for employees who did not drive. In response the Head of Organisational Development and HR (PSPS) explained to Members that travel needs were dependent on the individual requirements of specific roles.

- A Member queried whether the same terms and conditions would apply to PSPS. In response the Head of Organisational Development and HR (PSPS) advised Members that PSPS had its own terms and conditions of employment.

- A Member queried whether the terms and conditions alignment was compliant with the Employment Rights Act 2025. In response the Head of Organisational Development and HR (PSPS) explained to Members that employment legislation was progressing through a phased implementation.

- A Member queried the ways in which Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) would affect employee terms and conditions. In response, the Head of Organisational Development and HR (PSPS) assured Members that change would not occur immediately and that uncertainty would remain until the proposals submitted to government has been decided.

- A Member queried the reasons that refuse workers were graded lower in pay grades that officers higher up the scale. In response the Head of Organisational Development and HR (PSPS) explained

to Members that ELDC applied higher grading in recognition of the increased pressure of different roles.

- A Member queried whether PSPS had examined the terms and conditions of other local authorities that were likely to become united in future through LGR. In response the Head of Organisational Development and HR (PSPS) advised Members that other local authorities had not been included in the current exercise to align terms and conditions as this had been focused on aligning to the best of the terms and conditions from each council across the Partnership. Members were further assured that staff and unions would be consulted regarding any proposed changes.

- A Member commented on whether consideration should be given to aligning Member allowances across the Partnership.

No further comments or questions were received.

The Chairman thanked Aileen Whatmore, Head of HR and Organisational Development for the report.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

N.B. Aileen Whatmore, Head of HR and Organisational Development (PSPS), Angela Posey, HR Projects and Transformation Officer, PSPS and Councillor William Gray, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing left the Meeting at 12.30pm.

92. DATA PROTECTION POLICY AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY:

The Chairman welcomed Richard Steele, Group Information Manager and Data Protection Officer to the Meeting to present the Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy, pages 39 to 58 of the Agenda refer.

Members were advised that the Council's Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy has been reviewed to ensure the Council's compliance with the latest statutory requirements, including the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and the new Data Use and Access Act 2025 (DUAA), and to align the policies across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP).

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member queried whether a rating out of 10 could be given for Members and officers adhering to the Data Protection and Records Management policies. In response, the Group Information Manager

and Data Protection Officer advised Members that the correct position was to comply fully with the policy, while acknowledging the challenges with implementation.

- A Member requested clarification on the timescales for the data protection and records management policies being brought back to the Committee for review. In response, the Group Information Manager and Data Protection Officer advised Members that he would seek clarification for the review period which applied to ELDC.

No further comments or questions were received.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy be noted and recommended to the Executive Board for approval at its Meeting on 19th February 2026.

N.B. Councillor Alex Hall and Richard Steele, Group Information Manager and Data Protection Officer left the Meeting at 12.50pm.

93. HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE - UPDATE:

The Chairman referred Members to the briefing papers from Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders, the Outside Body Appointee to the Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) for Lincolnshire following its Meetings held on 17th December 2025, pages 59 to 62 of the Agenda refer.

The Outside Body Appointee commented that the HSC was chaired effectively and that Committee Members were always afforded the opportunity to raise local concerns.

The Chair expressed concern that representatives from other local authorities had failed to attend Health Scrutiny Committee meetings and remarked that substitutes could attend when appointed Members were unavailable.

N.B. Councillor Alex Hall returned to the Meeting at 12.52pm.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member queried whether the Integrated Care Board (ICB) was doing all it could to address the challenges facing the East Coast. In response, the Outside Body Appointee explained to Members that staffing shortages was the most significant difficulty for the ICB.

- Members discussed the difficulties of recruitment and retention, noting that career progression opportunities were often greater in larger urban areas compared to rural Lincolnshire.

- The Chairman acknowledged that many of the issues facing health services in Lincolnshire were not unique, referencing an example of long waiting times and pressures which were similarly experienced in London and elsewhere.

- Members discussed A&E pressures, GP capacity and funding arrangements and noted that GP funding had significantly reduced over recent years, a point previously highlighted by Dr Reid Baker during his presentation at the Reserved Members' Day on 10 December 2025.

- A Member queried the number of questions which had been submitted in advance of the February 2026 meeting when the Chief Executive of the ICB Cluster was due to attend. In response, the Democratic Services Officer confirmed that a series of questions had been received from Members and forwarded to the ICB. In follow-up the Chairman encouraged Members to prepare further questions in advance of the meeting.

- Members raised concerns about the increasing use of triage systems in GP surgeries, noting that waiting rooms often appeared empty and questioning whether patients were being seen face-to-face.

- A Member commented on the potential risks of over-reliance on telephone consultations, particularly for older residents and those without reliable phone access, or where symptoms might be misunderstood or under-reported.

- Members further discussed inconsistencies in current systems and whether there were plans to track graduates from Lincoln Medical School to establish whether they remained working within Lincolnshire or had left for opportunities elsewhere.

The Chairman thanked the Outside Body Appointee for her valuable contribution on reporting back from the HSC.

94. UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY AND POLICY PANELS INCLUDING QUALITY CHECKING OF FINAL REPORTS:

(a) Scrutiny Panel Update - Car Parking in East Lindsey:

Rebecca James, Scrutiny and Policy Officer referred Members to the briefing paper, pages 63 and 64 of the Agenda refer.

Members were advised that the Panel had met the previous evening, that a further meeting had been scheduled and that the final report was

expected to be presented to the Committee for quality checking in February or March 2026.

(b) Scrutiny Panel Update - Review of the ELDC Rough Sleeping Initiative:

Rebecca James, Scrutiny and Policy Officer referred Members to the briefing paper, pages 65 and 66 of the Agenda refer.

Members were advised that a meeting of the Panel was scheduled to take place later that evening and that the work of the Panel was progressing satisfactorily in line with expectations.

95. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER:

Members were referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker, pages 67 to 86 of the Agenda refer.

Members were invited to review the tracker and put their comments and questions forward.

To explore the issues surrounding caravan licensing and enforcement, pages 67 to 72 of the Agenda refer.

- The Chairman requested that the Enforcement Service Manager and Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning be invited to attend the Meeting on 31st March 2026 to provide an update.

To monitor the implementation of Magna Vitae's 5-year plan, including Key Performance Indicators (part 2), pages 73 and 74 of the Agenda refer.

- A Member commented in support of requesting an update to the Committee in the absence of Portfolio Holder meeting notes.

Public Convenience Provision in East Lindsey

Recommendation No 1 'The panel recommend that Parish and Town Councils should be offered the existing free to use public conveniences in their area via an asset transfer', page 75 to 77 of the Agenda refer.

- The Chairman referred to the January 2026 update which stated that all ELDC facilities had been refurbished. In response, the Scrutiny and Policy Officer explained to Members that an error of wording may have occurred as not all facilities had been completed.

- A Member stressed the need for further negotiation with town and parish councils for the refurbishment of facilities. In response, the Scrutiny and Policy Officer explained to Members that part of the funding for toilet provision had been released whilst discussions

were ongoing and that it had been necessary for the funding to be spent within set timescales.

- The Chairman highlighted that the facilities in Horncastle had remained closed. In response, the Scrutiny and Policy Officer confirmed to Members that the facilities in Horncastle had since reopened.

- A Member commented that the original approach was to offer public convenience facilities to town and parish councils and establish whether refurbishment could be covered at ELDC's expense.

- A Member further queried which public convenience facility had been demolished. In response, the Scrutiny and Policy Officer confirmed that the facilities in Coningsby had been demolished as they had not been fit for purpose.

Further to a discussion, it was agreed that an update on public conveniences be requested for the March 2026 Overview Committee Meeting.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments.

No further comments or questions were received.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker be noted.

96. EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN:

Members were presented with the Executive/Council Forward Plan 2025-26, pages 87 to 98 of the Agenda refer and were invited for their comments.

- In reference to East Lindsey Age Friendly Community, a Member expressed concern regarding the focus and value for money of the Age Friendly Community initiative, stating that support should be prioritised towards younger age groups particularly those aged between 23 and 43 who were facing the greatest financial and life challenges, page 97 of the Agenda refers. In response, the Chairman confirmed to Members that the topic was being presented to Overview Committee at a future date. In follow-up the Democratic Services Officer confirmed that the Item had been added to the Work Programme for March 2026.

- A Member acknowledged the concerns raised but emphasised that the Council undertook a range of support activities across all age groups, including support for younger generations.

- A Member further supported the work undertaken by officers and the Portfolio Holder in delivering the Age Friendly Community initiative.

- A Member commented that the discussion had highlighted the importance of achieving balance across all age groups, noting that support needs existed among both younger and older residents.

- A Member further described a recent ward-based experience involving the Ageing Well Communities Team Leader and volunteers who had assessed local areas from the perspective of elderly and mobility-impaired residents.

- A Member spoke in further support of the work undertaken by the Ageing Well Communities Team Leader and her team, and the need to help empower residents to seek assistance.

- The Chairman acknowledged that the district had a higher-than-average elderly population.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

That the Executive/Council Forward Plan 2025-26 be noted.

97. OVERVIEW COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME:

Members were presented with the Overview Committee Work Programme 2025/26, pages 87 to 98 of the Agenda refer.

- Members discussed the schedule of meetings for 2026/27 and requested that a draft meetings programme be circulated as soon as possible, as limited forward planning made it difficult to arrange annual leave and other commitments.

- Councillor Travis Hesketh offered his apologies for the next Meeting of the Committee on 24th February 2026.

- A Member queried the current printing practices for Committee papers and asked whether colour documents could be printed in black and white to save ink costs. In response, the Assistant Director (Corporate) explained to Members that colour was necessary in certain circumstances to differentiate between different information and advised that the removal of colour coding could be considered should it be the Committee's preference.

Following which it was,

RESOLVED:

That the Overview Committee Work Programme 2025/26 be noted.

98. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee had been convened for 24th February 2026. The date for the next programmed Meeting of the Committee was confirmed as 31st March 2026.

The Meeting closed at 1.29 pm.

East Lindsey District Council

served by One Team

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Overview Committee 20th January 2026

2026/27 Budget

Agenda

- Role of Overview and Scrutiny
- Recap
  - Starting point & process
- Provisional Finance Settlement
  - Significant changes
- Pressures & Savings / Efficiencies
- Draft Budget position
- Consideration
- Timeline

Role of Overview and Scrutiny

- A key role in developing and shaping the budget
  - Review / challenge of the draft budgets
  - Providing an alternative perspective
  - Bringing new ideas

Journey to Date

- May - Budget process started.
- Initial efficiencies required for 2026/27
  - £3.771m (as per 2025/26 Budget Report)
- May- July 2025 – Services reviewed their Budgets:
  - Cost Pressures
  - Efficiencies
- August 2025 - Star Chamber Meetings
- September onwards – Services reviewing pressures and efficiency savings' proposals
- November – December 2025 – verify proposals

Provisional Local Government Finance(LGF) Settlement - 2026/27

- Majority released 17 December 2025.
- Includes illustrative figures to 2028/29
- Spending changes assessed against 2024/25
- More complicated
  - Lots of changes
  - Reflects the 2024 Autumn Budget & Spending Review, 2025 Budget and 20 November Policy Statement

Main Headlines

- **Fair Funding Review** – implemented
- **Core spending power** – includes Council Tax & rolled in grants
- **Business rates**
  - Full reset / redistribution of Growth,
  - Full revaluation of all property rates
  - Move to 5 multipliers (from 2)
  - Change to funding based on Gross rates payable
  - Pooling to cease for 2026/27
- **Council Tax** – referendum principles remain
- **Funding floor** – Two tier system – cash flat or -5%
  - Funding Floor Cost – could be an issue beyond 2028
- **Recovery grant** – the 2025/26 Recovery Grant will continue.
- **Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse grant**
  - Ringfenced & consolidated into settlement

ELDC - Core Spending Power Breakdown

Core Spending Power	2024-25	2025-26	Change		2026-27	Change		2027-28	Change		2028-29
	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	%	£ millions	£ millions	%	£ millions	£ millions	%	£ millions
Legacy Funding Assessment	18.613	17.971	-17.971	-100.00%							
Fair Funding Allocation			16.798		16.798	-1.891	-11.30%	14.907	-1.984	-13.30%	12.922
Council tax requirement	7.867	8.262	0.39	4.70%	8.653	0.409	4.70%	9.062	0.428	4.70%	9.489
Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse	1.022	1.115	0.008	0.70%	1.123	0.039	3.40%	1.162	0.034	2.90%	1.195
Total Transitional Protections						1.376		1.376	1.557	113.20%	2.932
Grants rolled in to Revenue Support Grant	0.375	0.476	-0.476	-100.00%							
Recovery Grant		0.586			0.586			0.586			0.586
Core Spending Power total	**27.876**	**28.41**	**-1.25**	**-4.40%**	**27.16**	**-0.068**	**-0.30%**	**27.092**	**0.034**	**0.10%**	**27.126**
Core Spending Power year-on-year change (£ millions)		0.5			-1.2			-0.1			0.0
Core Spending Power year-on-year change (%)		1.9%			-4.4%			-0.3%			-0.1%

Summary of Budget Pressures

	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000	2030/31 £'000
Pressures Included					
Corporate	104	115	112	124	128
Communities & Housing	8	8	8	9	9
Finance	2	8	2	9	2
General Fund Assets	160	70	0	0	0
Governance	33	40	46	53	53
Leisure & Local Services	86	83	0	0	0
Neighbourhoods	486	138	140	141	143
Planning & Strategic Infrastructure	281	44	38	38	38
Regulatory	10	10	10	10	10
Total	**1,170**	**516**	**356**	**384**	**384**

- Waste and transition to Food waste (inc. extended warranties) - £435k
- Establishment costs (temp) - £344k
- Various ITC costs - £96k
- Grounds Maintenance - Colonnade - £51k

Summary of Efficiency Proposals

	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000	2030/31 £'000
Savings Included					
Corporate	(76)	(59)	(59)	(59)	(59)
Communities & Housing Services	(93)	(110)	(115)	(118)	(120)
Finance	(99)	(99)	(100)	(101)	(101)
General Fund Assets	(211)	(217)	(222)	(228)	(233)
Neighbourhoods	(521)	(531)	(543)	(553)	(559)
Planning & Strategic Infrastructure	(100)	(103)	(105)	(108)	(110)
Regulatory	(136)	(67)	(70)	(73)	(76)
Culture & Regeneration	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)
Total	**(1,240)**	**(1,190)**	**(1,218)**	**(1,244)**	**(1,262)**

- Green Waste Income - £166k
- Planning & Building Control income – £139k
- Car Parking Income - £164k
- Finance (various) - £99k
- Building control Safety Levy - £71k
- ICT – Various - £59k

Provisional Draft Budget By Account

Area	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Employee Related Expenditure	21,853	22,051	22,388	21,957
Premises Related Expenditure	3,770	3,623	3,568	3,506
Transport Related Expenditure	1,268	1,651	1,344	1,352
Supplies & Services	7,900	7,403	7,278	7,137
Drainage Board Levies	5,391	5,661	5,944	6,241
Third Party Payments	12,635	13,203	13,548	13,128
Transfer Payments	30,631	22,614	18,215	14,783
Depreciation and Impairment Losses	(834)	(834)	(834)	(834)
Income	(63,663)	(56,760)	(48,941)	(43,581)
Investment Income	(2,348)	(1,555)	(1,057)	(950)
Efficiencies Required	**(2,296)**	**4,453**	**3,998**	**3,336**
COUNCIL SUB-TOTAL	**14,307**	**21,510**	**25,451**	**26,075**
Direct Revenue Financing of Capital Expenditure	5,929	985	217	95
Capital Charges Contra Entry	11,598	10,639	6,446	3,959
Minimum Revenue Provision	396	626	1,476	1,845
Voluntary Revenue Provision	(396)	(626)	(1,450)	0
Statutory Override	200	0	0	0
Interest on borrowing	10	10	10	10
Contributions to/(from) Reserves	(431)	(504)	50	324
NET COST OF SERVICES	**31,613**	**32,640**	**32,200**	**32,308**

Provisional Draft Budget By Account

Area	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Financing				
Net Retained Business rates	(13,673)	(12,018)	(12,258)	(12,503)
Section 31 Grant	(7,795)	0	0	0
less Pooling Levy returned to LCC	1,355	0	0	0
NNDR share of Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	173	(281)	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(1,441)	(10,892)	(8,865)	(6,759)
New Homes Bonus Grant	(635)	0	0	0
Specific Grants	(1,251)	(586)	(1,962)	(3,518)
Share of C Tax Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(84)	(139)	0	0
Council Tax	(8,262)	(8,724)	(9,116)	(9,528)
FUNDING	**(31,613)**	**(32,640)**	**(32,201)**	**(32,308)**
TAX BASE	**48,166**	**49,379**	**50,120**	**50,871**
EAST LINDSEY BAND D COUNCIL TAX	**172**	**177**	**182**	**187**
Total Council Tax	**8,262**	**8,724**	**9,116**	**9,528**

Key Dates 2026/27

- 19th February 2026 – Executive Board Meeting – Recommend Budget to Council

- 4th March 2026 – Full Council – Agree Budget and Set Council Tax

Consideration

Would the Panel want Cabinet to consider:

- Adding any additional items into the budget?

or

- Items to reduce costs or generate income?

Questions

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