

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the the Council Chamber, Tedder Hall, Manby Park, Louth on Wednesday, 14th December, 2022 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Helen Matthews (Chairman)
Councillor Chris Green (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Terry Aldridge, David Andrews, Tom Ashton, Richard Avison, Stan Avison, Adrian Benjamin, Sandra Campbell-Wardman, Richard Cunnington, Mark Dannatt, Sid Dennis, Sarah Devereux, Carleen Dickinson, Martin Foster, Richard Fry, William Gray, Will Grover, Alex Hall, David Hall, Sandra Harrison, George Horton, Tony Howard, Rosalind Jackson, Thomas Kemp, Steve Kirk, Andrew Leonard, Craig Leyland, Steve McMillan, Daniel McNally, Jill Makinson-Sanders, David Mangion, Graham Marsh, Fiona Martin, M.B.E., Edward Mossop, Sarah Parkin, Julie Platt and Terry Taylor.

The Chairman wished to reflect that this would be the last Council Meeting held in Tedder Hall after almost 50 years, ahead of the move to the Hub in mid-January 2023. Many important decisions had been taken in the Chambers over the years and the building had served the Council well.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rickett, Davie, Williams, Eyre, Arnold, Cullen, Smith, Danny Brookes, Billy Brookes, Jimmy Brookes, Burnham, Jones, Grist, Harrison, Grover, Edginton and Knowles.

45. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

At this point in the Meeting, Members were invited to declare any relevant interests. Declarations were made as follows:

- Councillors Adrian Benjamin and Tony Howard asked it be noted that they were Members of the Connected Coast Board, Minute No. 53 refers.

46. MINUTES:

The Open and Exempt Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 October 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

47. ACTION SHEETS:

The Actions were noted as complete.

48. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

The Chairman had attended several events since the previous Council meeting, including Civic Services for the Chairman of South Holland District Council and the Chairman of Lincolnshire County Council. She also attended the Royal British Legion Services of Remembrance at Mablethorpe, Sutton on Sea and the RNLI.

The Chairman advised Members that the Reserved Member Day on Friday 16 December 2022 had been cancelled. The next RMD would take place remotely on Tuesday 17 January 2023 at 10am and the confirmed agenda items were as follows:

- Primary Care Trusts
- The Partnership Enviro-Crime Enforcement Contract

Finally, the Chairman extended her best wishes to all for a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

49. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

50. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Ahead of presenting his report, the Leader of the Council reflected that the meeting would be the last one held in Tedder Hall ahead of the move to the purpose-built Hub in Horncastle and highlighted that many important and notable moments had been shared in the Council Chambers.

The Chairman of Executive Board presented his report as circulated in the Supplementary Agenda, pages 1 to 6 refer.

Councillor Jackson expressed her disappointment that further to the Invest to Save projects initiative detailed at the previous meeting, there had been no further information on these projects, Council Minute No. 32 refers.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board advised Members that the Invest to Save projects initiative was still live and was therefore work in progress.

Green Homes Grants

Councillor Howard was pleased to note the positive points in the report, however highlighted that the Council needed to prioritise and promote to move away from what was standard building practices at the moment in relation to carbon burning and refurbishment of old properties.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board stated that he understood the challenges of housing, particularly as there was a very large stock of old housing across the district and acknowledged that new housing must be built to the best standard possible, however highlighted that the

decision-making process relating to housing standards was not a matter for the Council.

In response to Councillor Cunnington's comments about the late receipt of reports, the Chairman of Executive Board apologised to Members for the lateness of his report and assured Members that he would do better in future.

Enviro-crime Enforcement Contract

Further to the information provided, Councillor Mossop raised his concern that communities were not receiving feedback from reported enforcement cases and emphasised that communication was very important to encourage other people to work with them.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board advised Members that the principle of the Enviro-crime Enforcement Contract roll-out would be to engage, educate and enforce and assured Members that this would be adhered to.

Cost of Living Support

Councillor Makinson-Sanders asked that her thanks be conveyed from the people in Louth for the warm spaces provided in the town.

In response to Councillor Howard's comment with regards to food banks and warm spaces being an indication of a failure of society, the Chairman of Executive Board responded that there were many outside factors that made it very difficult, including the cost of living crisis and praised the work of housing officers and those that dealt with the public going through difficulties on a daily basis.

Emergency Accommodation for Asylum Seekers

Several comments were received from Members that raised concerns, including asylum seekers arriving in Britain who were only allowed to work after they had been waiting for a decision after one year. It was highlighted that this was out of step with other developed nations and considered that the Council should be campaigning against this so that the 12 months wait should be reduced in line with these to promote integration and to reduce harm to the local economy.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board acknowledged that vulnerable people were involved, however was also aware that there were people coming over to the UK to exploit criminality and it was important to be able to distinguish between those two groups. It was noted that the points were well made and reference was also made to the number of safe groups coming through from Hong Kong and Ukraine, including those evacuated from the collapse of their country's regime, all capable people who were willing to contribute to society. It was highlighted that there had been difficulty dealing with large numbers whilst at the same time

having to react very quickly. The Chairman of Executive Board also stated that he understood the concerns of those residents affected and potentially of those concerns to businesses. It was a challenging situation and one that the Council hoped to see remedied over a period of time.

Councillor Tony Howard, a Member on the East Midlands Council's Migration Board expressed his disappointment in relation to the inconsistent attendance by Home Office personnel at the meetings which resulted in poor feedback and prevented issues from being progressed.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board stated that Councillor Richard Wright, North Kesteven District Council was the district representative and considered that he put forward the Council's case well.

Towns Fund Update

Councillor Tony Howard raised a concern that the Council was having to put more money into the projects in deprived areas whilst the money from government remained the same.

Councillor Makinson-Sanders stated that she was pleased to see the progress on the Towns Fund projects as without this the Council may not get the opportunity for funding into the district.

Pride in East Lindsey

Councillor Jackson highlighted that she was pleased to see this come forward following a campaign by the Labour Group in previous budget submissions.

Twin Stream Recycling

Councillor Jackson was disappointed to learn that there had been very poor feedback from Louth residents following the roll-out of the purple lidded bin and highlighted lessons had not been learned from the Boston Borough Council roll-out. It was considered that another approach should be taken to tackle the communication issues that were present.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board advised Members that in reality there had been difficulties in terms of transition in a large number of locations and was confident that this would settle down.

With regards to communication, there had been a very early notification to all residents and this was ongoing. Members were advised that Councillor Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services would take up the cause of the issues with Lincolnshire County Council. It was acknowledged that there had undoubtedly been difficulties and an underestimation of the size of district and impact of that in the distribution of bins and the roll-out has not been as smooth as it should have been.

Councillor Makinson-Sanders further requested that the issue of the monthly recycling sack collection be raised as this was disadvantaging residents.

Councillor Mossop queried when the unsightly bottle banks around the villages being used by commercial businesses would be removed.

In response to a query on whether the Council would receive money back from the paper mill due to the high quality of cardboard now being recycled, the Chairman of Executive Board advised Members that the Council was currently in the process of understanding what the benefit of this would be to the district and would know more when targets were reviewed and what share there may be for ELDC.

The Hub Project

In response to a query on what the actual completion date was going to be and when Willow house would be ready for use, the Chairman advised that he would seek a response after the meeting.

Further to a query raised by Councillor Makinson-Sanders on rumours that Tedder Hall was going to become an open prison or asylum centre following its sale, the Chairman of Executive Board responded that he could not comment on the new owner's intentions, however had not heard anything to that affect.

Councillor Makinson-Sanders considered that it would be nice to register the Council's thanks to those people from long ago in the purchase of Tedder Hall as it had been a good investment for both the Council and its ratepayers.

Furthermore, Councillor Makinson-Sanders sent her best wishes on behalf of the Independent Group for a Happy Christmas to all of the district's Ukrainian visitors, particularly due to the ongoing situation in their homeland and to all staff for their help and also to fellow Members.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board acknowledged that this would be a challenging Christmas for many people and as community representatives asked Members to keep an eye out for the vulnerable, following which he wished all Members a very Happy Christmas.

51. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY AND POLICY PANELS:

(A) JOINT SCRUTINY OF THE SOUTH & EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP:

Councillor Edward Mossop, Chairman of the Joint Scrutiny of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Scrutiny Panel presented the report to Council for noting.

Cllr Mossop referred to the Peer Review undertaken with Boston Borough Council that had further extended to South Holland District Council when the Partnership was formed. Councillor Mossop expressed his disappointment that the Peer review had not been published at that time the scrutiny was underway as there were similar themes running through in many ways to the recommendations that came from the recent publication of the Partnership Peer Review.

Councillor Mossop provided Members with a detailed overview of the report and its associated appendices, pages 9 to 40 of the Agenda refer. The recommendations to the report were detailed at pages 11 to 12 of the Agenda pack.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member highlighted that following the formation of the Partnership in October 2021, there was still a difference in pay and conditions between the three sovereign councils and also that of Members' allowances, following which it was queried why the scrutiny panel had made no recommendations to make this fair and equal.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Councillors' Allowances were set after review by the Independent Remuneration Panel for each individual council.

- Councillor Makinson-Sanders stated that she attended the Peer Review Feedback Session held at Boston Borough Council and one of the findings of the Peer Support Group was that PSPS Limited played a major part in what the Partnership was trying to achieve and would have liked to see them included in the review. Following which it was considered that recommendation No. 7 should be followed up at an early stage.

Councillor Craig Leyland, as Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs, expressed his thanks to Councillor Mossop and the Panel and welcomed this very thorough report. Members were advised that he would discuss with colleagues across the portfolio areas prior to a response to Overview Committee.

52. APPOINTMENT TO AN OUTSIDE BODY - HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE (SUBSTITUTE MEMBER):

The Chief Executive presented a report that considered the appointment of a reserve member to the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire for the remainder of the 2022/23 Municipal Year. Members were asked to note that any nominations must also be an appointed member of the Council's Overview Committee.

It was Proposed and Seconded that Councillor David Mangion be appointed as reserve member to the Health Scrutiny Committee.

It was Proposed and Seconded that Councillor Claire Arnold be appointed as reserve member to the Health Scrutiny Committee.

It was Proposed and Seconded that Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders be appointed as reserve member to the Health Scrutiny Committee.

Following a show of hands for each nomination, it was carried that Councillor David Mangion be appointed as reserve member to the Health Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor David Mangion be appointed as reserve member to the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/23.

53. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING FOR MABLETHORPE AND SKEGNESS TOWNS FUNDS SUBMISSIONS:

The Chairman of Executive Board presented a report that enabled consideration of committing a further maximum amount of £3.5m to the six Towns Fund projects managed by the Council.

The background to the report was highlighted to Members, as set out at Paragraph 1, pages 42 to 43 of the Agenda refer.

It was noted that following the successful approval of the Towns Investment Plans, the Government offered a Town Deal to the value of £23.9m for Mablethorpe and £24.5m for Skegness to fund 13 different schemes. Six of these projects were managed by the Council with capital cost of £35m. Now that the cost submissions had been received and reviewed with the Council's respective contractors, there was a requirement to commit a further maximum amount of £3.5m to these projects from the Council's reserves. This represented an uplift of around 10% and was largely due to inflationary pressures.

The funds would be set aside on a contingency basis and would be funded from the Growth Reserve and/or the returned Property Fund Debt.

Following which the recommendations were duly Proposed and Seconded.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member voiced concerns that the government was not providing further funding to bridge inflationary cost pressures. It was however acknowledged that the Towns Fund projects were massively important and significant to the business economy and the way the Council operated with the potential for generating income in the future.

Following which, Councillor Jackson proposed that an amendment be made to put forward to government that it would increase its contribution by 10% to account for inflation. The form of working was confirmed as follows:

'ELDC will ask the government to increase their contribution to Skegness and Mablethorpe towns fund by 10% to account for inflation'.

Councillor Howard, Leader of the Labour Group seconded the proposal.

The Leader of the Labour Group requested that the Leader of the Council engaged with the Chair of the Connected Coast Board to set negotiation into operation as soon as possible to ensure that the Council was in a position to deliver these projects as they were very worthy and hopefully in years to come would be seen as a pivotable moment for the coastal area.

In response, the Leader of the Council agreed that the inflationary pressures were unfair and a challenge to the Council. However, it was important to note that the Council had received £50m direct funding from the government to invest in coastal communities and also significant amounts of approximately £40m brought in from various partners in terms of direct match funding.

Members were further advised that on the back of discussion of the Partnership, since the levelling up funding had been announced and the work around levelling up bids the Council was waiting for the outcome and clarity on the following:

- Two levelling up bids for £8.1m. The Council had received UK Shared Prosperity Funding for £4.1m.
- It was awaiting the outcome for a Rural Prosperity bid of £1.7m.
- The Council had received £2m across the Partnership from the Arts Council - £657k of this was coming to ELDC.
- The Council was positively awaiting an outcome of £5m Cultural Development Fund.
- The Arts Council had granted £30k to support various local arts and cultural events.
- £3.65m had been received for Sustainable Warmth Grants, £2.2m for Green Homes Grants (Phase 1) and £1.1 m Green Homes Grants (Phase 2) plus £10k allocated for orchards.

The Leader of the Council further highlighted to Members that a request from government for an uplift in respect of the inflationary pressures had been made and refused and considered that it was important that the

positive relationship the Council currently had with the government with regards to the Towns Fund Projects was retained.

The Leader of the Council advised that he could not support the proposed amendment.

N.B. At this point in the Meeting, Councillors Adrian Benjamin and Tony Howard asked it be noted that they were Members of the Connected Coast Board.

Further discussion ensued and the following points were made by Members:

- A Member highlighted that the Council should be looking at how its partners were affected by the Towns Fund deal procedure, for example the National Trust and British Rail and queried what financial contribution they would be making to the projects. A further Member strongly considered that the Council was not subsidising but investing in the projects and more investment at this stage would result in a better result in the long term.
- The Portfolio Holder for Planning commented that significant towns funding would make a huge transformation to the communities where it would be spent. Although in a difficult time, the Towns Funding money had been secured, the Council had a sound financial administration and had the reserves available at the present time to ensure that the projects happened.
- In relation to the comments made with regards to inflation, a Member highlighted that the current high rate of inflation was not a government problem and had spread worldwide as a result of the war in Ukraine and the repercussions of Covid.

Upon putting to the vote, the Amendment detailed below (in bold text) was declared lost.

'ELDC will ask the government to increase their contribution to Skegness and Mablethorpe towns fund by 10% to account for inflation'.

Debate returned to the substantive proposition.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised Members that the Council was in a position to allocate the £3.5m from reserves to support the Towns Fund Projects and encouraged Members to vote for this.

In response to the significant issue raised related to Internal Drainage Board levies, the Leader of the Council acknowledged that this would have to be addressed for the future and advised Members that senior officers at the Council were already in contact with government and local MPs working on this.

N.B. Councillor Campbell-Wardman left the Meeting at 3:38pm and re-joined the Meeting at 3:42pm.

A Member raised a number of queries in relation to the allocation of the towns funding, the experiences of cost pressures from other towns that had received this funding and whether the schemes could be adapted to fall within budget. In response, the Leader of the Council stated that he was aware that there were concerns from other towns in relation to inflationary pressures and confirmed that officers were in contact with them. With regards to the projects, a commitment had been made to deliver these and it was stressed that the Council should progress with these as these would not just benefit the coast but would impact on all communities.

The Leader of the Council highlighted recent worries with the changes at the top of central government and fears that changes on funding might lead to the loss of the Towns Fund ambition. However, he was content that the Council could support this and would face the challenges and if these projects could be delivered it would deal with deprivation, education skills and economic development issues that had challenged the council for years.

Following which, the proposal set out within the recommendation was carried.

RESOLVED

- That up to £3.5m be allocated from reserves to support the Towns Fund Projects. The final amounts would be subject to agreement with the Council's Section 151 Officer, The Lead Member for Finance, the Chief Executive, and the Leader of the Council.

N.B. Councillor Devereux left the Meeting at 3:47pm and re-joined the Meeting at 3:52pm.

N.B. Councillors Martin and Alex Hall left the Meeting at 3:47pm and re-joined the Meeting at 3:56pm.

54. SUTTON ON SEA COLONNADE - SECTION 30 AGREEMENT:

The Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy presented a report that sought Full Council approval to enter into a Section 30 Agreement with the Environment Agency in relation to the title deed of land impacted by the redevelopment of the Colonnade project site in Sutton on Sea.

The final copy of the Agreement (attached at Appendix A) followed a lengthy and detailed process of negotiation with the Environment Agency which had also informed additional amendments to the final site layout. The recommendations had been considered and endorsed by the Council's

Executive Board (Executive Board Minute No. 50 refers) to proceed to Full Council for formal agreement and resolution.

It was noted that the Agreement placed a future financial liability on the Council to contribute up to a maximum of £750,000 over a fifty-year period towards future sea defence enhancement works where the Council's new investment into the Colonnade facilities could be proven by the EA to have directly resulted in an uplift in costs for the Agency to improve the adjacent sea defence structures.

The recommendations were duly proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED

That the Chief Executive, S151 Officer or Deputy Chief Executive (Programme Delivery) be authorised to enter into the Section 30 Agreement on behalf of the Council with the Environment Agency, as provided at Appendix A.

55. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PEER REVIEW REPORT AND ACTION PLAN:

The Chairman of Executive Board presented a report to note the findings of the LGA Peer Review that was undertaken in October 2022. It was noted that a report had been provided which detailed the findings and an Action Plan had been developed in response to the recommendations.

The Chairman of Executive Board added that the Peer Review had provided the Council with an independent external assessment of the Partnership and that it tied in well with the Joint Scrutiny of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership that was presented at Item 8(a) and was pleased to see that the recommendations mirrored the Scrutiny Panel report.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

A Member highlighted the first key recommendation referred to developing and communicating widely a collective understanding of the Partnership's purpose, future direction and timescales for delivery, Paragraph 2.1, page 82 of the Agenda refers and further to that the second recommendation at Paragraph 2.3 in relation to defining long term strategic place shaping ambitions across the Partnership and queried whether it was appropriate to committing to one shared set of priorities.

It was highlighted that it was important to ensure that the place shaping came from the bottom up and was concerned that as the strategy was influenced from the top down how local communities would recognise their identity within the Partnership and how their voices would be heard to form that strategic view going forward.

In response, the Leader of the Council understood the Member's concerns and stressed that communication was key and added that it wasn't entirely about place. In discussion with Executive Board colleagues, a common theme coming forward was how those benefits were brought to the district's residents and communities. An example was provided of funding received for Green Homes Grants that had been collectively applied for, and it was highlighted that information needed to be drawn down quickly for the Council to be able to say that because of the Partnership, the Council had been able to achieve this for its residents.

RESOLVED

That the LGA Peer Review Report and Action Plan be noted.

56. MID TERM TREASURY REPORT 2022-2023:

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the Mid Term Treasury Management Report 2022/23.

Members were referred to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy detailed at Appendix A, pages 113 to 132 of the Agenda refer.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance referred to the Council's Investment Policy and Strategy. It was noted that the Council had a higher level of surplus funds available for investment following the receipt of New Towns Funding and that there were less counterparties currently available to the Council. As a result, it was becoming increasingly difficult to invest short-term funds for longer durations at higher rates.

The recommendations were duly proposed and seconded

Member were asked to consider the recommendation that the Sovereign Country Limit be increased from £5m to £10m (excluding the UK which had no limit). The bank group or individual limit would remain at £5m.

This recommendation was considered at Audit and Governance Committee on 23 November 2022, Minute No. 33 refers and agreed that it be recommended to Council that the Sovereign Investment Limit be increased from £5 to £10m, however the Committee decision was not unanimous.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

Councillor Jackson, a Member of the Audit and Governance Committee highlighted that one of the discussions at Committee was centred around risk and she considered that an increase from £5m to £10m was a potential large risk and was concerned as the policy did not take into consideration countries of different sizes when making an investment. Current factors such as the crypto currency crisis and crash, the energy

crisis related to the war in Ukraine and the property market in China were further highlighted and together with ongoing huge financial volatility this was a further concern and potential risk.

Councillor Jackson further highlighted the ecological, social and governance factors (ESG) that were not incorporated within treasury management procedures relating to investment. Furthermore, it was considered that ESG factors should be given weight in the Council's treasury investment decisions.

Following which, Councillor Jackson proposed that two amendments be made to and included within the treasury management strategy as follows:

- That whilst the Council increased the sovereign country rate to £10m, countries with a population of below 3 million should remain at a sovereign country limit of £5m.
- That ESG factors should be given weight in the Council's treasury investment decisions.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor Tony Howard.

In response to Councillor Jackson's proposals, the Leader of the Council considered that the matter relating to the sovereign country limits was a matter for the Audit and Governance Committee and asked that clarity be provided on this matter.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the responsibility for this report rested with Full Council so it was for Council Members to decide on the content.

The Leader of the Council stated that he could not support the amendment given the nature of the banking markets and how countries were involved, irrelevant of the size of its population and stated that it was the safety of the organisation that was important.

Upon being put to the vote, the first Amendment detailed below (in bold text) was declared lost.

'Countries with a population of below 3 million should remain at a sovereign country limit of £5m'.

Further discussion ensued and in relation to investments in middle eastern countries, Councillor Howard considered that the Council was not doing anything to support regimes and that the Council needed to have not only a financial responsibility, but a moral responsibility and be more careful where it invested its money.

A further Member commented that from her experience as a County Councillor, the type of ethical issues referred had real depth and implication in terms of treasury management and funding and would urge

against a hasty decision and put forward that this could be an item for a Reserved Members' Day.

In response, the Leader of the Council acknowledged the valid points made during the discussion and stated that ESG factors would have to be considered carefully and following the debate today was hopeful that the profile of this issue was more prominent.

In response to the comments received Councillor Jackson acknowledged the points made but reiterated that there was no mention of ESG factors in treasury management documents and nothing to instruct officers that they could look at decisions for investment in other than security, yield and liquidity.

Upon being put to the vote, the second Amendment detailed below (in bold text) was declared lost.

'That Ecological, Social and Governance factors should be given weight in our treasury investment decisions'.

Debate returned to the substantive proposition.

Following confirmation from the Leader that the Council that the Council no longer placed investments in Qatar, a Member requested that a more up to date list be provided of where the Council currently invested its money. In response, the Leader of the Council stated that he was happy to provide this.

As a point of clarification in relation to how placing £10m into one bank fitted the Council's risk register, Members were advised that the issue raised was the country limit rather than bank limit, therefore £10m could be invested into two banks in one country. Members were further advised that in terms of figures involved for large numbers, the investment was only for a matter of months, making best use of the funds whilst retaining flexibility. Therefore, the risk increase was just in terms of flexibility of the particular bank.

Following which it was

RESOLVED

1. That the contents of the report attached at Appendix A be received and reviewed;
2. That the recommendation approved by the majority of the Audit & Governance Committee held on 23 November 2022, that the Sovereign Country Limit (excluding the UK which has no limit) be increased from £5m to £10m be approved.

The bank group or individual limit would remain at £5m. The current sovereign limit of £5m was recorded within the Treasury Management

Strategy Statement 2022/23 and formed part of the budget setting report which was approved by Council on 2 March 2022.

57. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES & FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES:

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report to consider the introduction of a new updated version of the Contract Procedure Rules and an amendment to the Financial Procedure Rules.

The purpose of this report was to present to the Council a revised draft set of Contract Procedure Rules with appropriate delegations that provided additional clarity around the procedures to be followed and reflected the Council's management structure. There was also a recommended change to the Financial Procedure Rules which would allow alignment with the new finance system used across all 3 councils when authorising payments.

The suggested amendments, set out in this report, were considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 23rd November 2022, and were recommended to the next available full Council for approval.

As a Member of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor Makinson-Sanders highlighted that the Committee had been concerned with the Council's procurement procedures for a long time and very much welcomed the report.

The recommendations were duly proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED

1. That the revised Contract Procedure Rules at **Appendix 1** to this report, be adopted by Council without amendment, as the Contract Procedure Rules (CPR);
2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary changes to update the Council's Constitution accordingly, including delegation to amend where inconsistencies arise, noting that the CPR will take primacy be agreed by Council;
3. That the revised financial procedure rule for Banking arrangement and cheques as detailed in Paragraph 1.12 of the report be approved by Council.

58. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

Members received the draft Open and Exempt Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 23 November 2022 for noting.

No comments were received.

RESOLVED

That the draft Open and Exempt Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 23 November 2022 be noted.

59. MOTIONS ON NOTICE:

The following Motion was received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12:

'Following the annual publication of the Heritage at Risk Register for the East Midlands when over half the Lincolnshire additions were buildings in this district, and in particular Louth Town Centre, we ask that an independent consultation is carried out into the efficacy of present planning, historic environment and enforcement systems in place at this council to enable a timeline to be put forward for remedial action and funding identified to ameliorate this worrying situation'.

Proposed by Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders.

Seconded by Councillor Edward Mossop.

In her introduction, Councillor Makinson-Sanders referred to the publication of the latest Historic England Buildings at Risk Register.

Reference was made to concerns from both her and Councillor Mossop due to the following factors:

- Within its borders, East Lindsey had more than half of its sites listed on the risk register.
- The challenge to put a positive plan together to address this growing problem.
- Consideration needed to be given to how current processes could be examined for officers and Members so this area of work could be more effective for the future.

In support of the Motion, Councillor Mossop pointed out that Members had a responsibility to highlight areas of concern within conservation areas.

In response, Councillor Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning stated that he was unable to support the Motion but highlighted the importance of the preservation of historic buildings.

Further to Councillor Mossop's comment, the Portfolio Holder for Planning explained that over half of the additions on the risk register were due to the Council asking for them to be registered as a proactive measure and the inclusion on the register was to monitor the sites to prevent further loss. In addition, this also opened up additional funding streams.

In response to the request within the Motion of employing an experienced historic consultant, the Portfolio Holder for Planning advised Members of the very high cost involved and could potentially duplicate. The Council employed its own Heritage Manager and it was evident that work undertaken in Louth, for example where Section 215 notices had been issued had resulted in massive improvement for some areas. It was further highlighted that the Council took strong proactive action wherever possible for prosecutions for non-compliance. Councillor Makinson-Sanders responded that she would hold the Portfolio Holder for Planning to account on this matter and would be pleased to have a discussion with him outside of the meeting in relation to buildings in Louth Town Centre.

Members were further advised that the Heritage Manager had surveyed 1000 listed buildings across East Lindsey, including those that were hard to access. Further work was also being undertaken on bringing forward an East Lindsey Risk Register to pick up Grade 2 listed buildings.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning advised Members that it was his intention to put forward an amendment, however on reflection this would have negated the motion.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning highlighted the option to update all Members through a Reserved Members' Day and that an update should also be reported to Overview Committee when invited.

Councillor David Mangion, ELDC's Heritage Champion advised Members that he had spent many hours involved with the list of East Lindsey sites on the risk register and was pleased to inform Members that reports had been commissioned for Alford, Horncastle and Spilsby. It was highlighted that it was difficult for the Council to enforce for non-compliance, however confirmed that processes for the review were in hand.

The Chairman of Executive Board responded to the motion to advise that Council Officers were working well with Historic England along with Councillor Mangion as Acting Heritage Champion for ELDC. Funding was drawn down for key significant historic assets and an Article 4 Direction Order was in place for Woodhall Spa and Wainfleet. Furthermore, an offer had been made to bring a Reserved Member Day topic to update all Members and to provide an update to Overview Committee.

Following which on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

That the Motion be not supported.

60. QUESTIONS:

Question 1	Councillor Jackson
Subject	Voter fraud
Response by	Councillor Leyland

Supplementary	Why do you think it's okay to disenfranchise 6% of the electorate for an issue when no evidence exists?
Response:	I'm not happy to disenfranchise anything, it is what it is.
Question 2	Councillor Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Air quality testing stations
Response by	Councillor Foster
Supplementary	None
Question 3	Councillor Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Louth Active Travel Scheme
Response by	Councillor Grist
Supplementary	We had asked that should the Portfolio Holder not be here that the Leader should answer the question. The local economy is not going to be bolstered by a light show and I would like to know what else he has planned. I will have a private conversation with him.
Response	None
Question 4	Councillor Horton
Subject	Temperature of swimming pools
Response by	Councillor Marsh
Supplementary	None
Question 5	Councillor Horton
Subject	Staff turnover
Response by	Councillor Leyland
Supplementary	It does concern me that ELDC lost these numbers of staff over the last 18 months. Do we have an exit interview process to explore for the benefit of future employees?
Response	We don't differ from other large organisations, but we are recruiting and recruitment is more attractive. Yes, we do have an existing procedure.
Question 6	Councillor Horton
Subject	Consultants' costs
Response by	Councillor Fry
Supplementary	I look forward to receiving a reply once the information is available

A full list of the questions is attached as Appendix 1.

61. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The programmed date for the next Meeting of the Council was noted as 1 March 2023 commencing at 2.00pm.

The meeting closed at 4.57 pm.