

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Tedder Hall, Manby Park, Louth on Wednesday, 12th October, 2022 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

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

Councillors Terry Aldridge, Claire Arnold, Tom Ashton, Richard Avison, Stan Avison, Adrian Benjamin, Danny Brookes, Jimmy Brookes, Graham Cullen, Richard Cunnington, Mark Dannatt, Sarah Devereux, Carleen Dickinson, Dick Edginton, Stephen Evans, Martin Foster, Richard Fry, William Gray, Adam Grist, Will Grover, Alex Hall, David Hall, Sandra Harrison, George Horton, Tony Howard, Rosalind Jackson, Neil Jones, Thomas Kemp, Steve Kirk, Terry Knowles, Andrew Leonard, Craig Leyland, Jill Makinson-Sanders, David Mangion, Graham Marsh, Steve McMillan, Daniel McNally, Edward Mossop, Sarah Parkin, Julie Platt, Paul Rickett, Phyll Smith, Terry Taylor and Graham Williams.

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrews, Bowkett, Burnham, Campbell-Wardman, Davie, Dennis, Eyre, Martin and Billy Brookes.

24. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

At this point in the Meeting, Members were invited to declare any relevant interests, no such declarations were made.

25. MINUTES:

The open and exempt Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 12th May 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

26. ACTION SHEETS:

The Actions were noted as complete.

27. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

It was with great sadness, that the Chairman noted the passing of former District and Town Councillor Fran Treanor who would be sadly missed.

The Chairman then presented a framed photograph to Councillor Sarah Devereux in recognition of her Civic Year 2021/22.

The Chairman had attended several events since the previous Council meeting, including the English National Bowling Championship at Skegness, the Louth Choral Society Concert and the Mablethorpe Carnival.

The Chairman also expressed her thanks to Councillor Green for supporting her as Vice Chairman and particularly for attending the Sibsey Lancaster Memorial Service of Remembrance.

Finally, the Chairman extended best wishes to Joanne Paterson, Democratic Services Officer who was leaving the authority to take up a new position with North East Lincolnshire Council.

28. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC:

A question had been received from Louth Town Councillor Lynne Cooney, following which a written response had been provided in line with Council Procedure Rule 10.9.

Question	Lynne Cooney
Subject	Charles Street, Louth
Response by	Councillor Fry, Portfolio Holder for Finance

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

29. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

An updated report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Following which, questions were asked:

Economic Growth – Councillor Jackson was pleased to note the positive points in the report and asked for an assurance on delivery capacity.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board advised that teams were dealing with recruitment as required. The Portfolio Holder for Planning highlighted that irrespective of challenges, the Council remained one of the best performing planning authorities in the country.

Partnership Bid to the Cultural Development Fund for Magna Vitae – Councillor Smith expressed his disappointment that the phrase culture house was used repeatedly in the report as this was the name of a local arts business who were against the use of this title, which was an infringement of their name.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board understood that the term was a generic one, but would consult with officers.

Lincolnshire Wolds Outdoor Festival – Councillor Makinson-Sanders asked for attendance numbers and if there were plans to repeat this event.

In response, the Chairman of Executive Board advised that the event would be repeated and he would provide the attendance figures following the meeting.

Appointment to Executive Board - Councillor Makinson-Sanders congratulated Councillor Devereux on her appointment to the Executive

Board as the new Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and asked for clarification regarding the responsibilities of Councillors Devereux and Marsh.

Furthermore, Councillor Makinson-Sanders highlighted that Council Procedure Rule 8.5 stated that the Monitoring Officer would keep a written record of the appointment of an Executive Councillor and that the Leader would report the appointment of an Executive Member and their Portfolio to Council at the earliest opportunity.

In response the Chairman of the Executive Board directed Councillor Makinson-Sanders to the website for responsibilities of Portfolio Holders and would be pleased to explain further outside of the meeting if required. With regard to the appointment of Councillor Devereux, if this required further formalisation Councillor Leyland would do so.

30. 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(s) 1, 2 & 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

31. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY PORTFOLIO 005:

An Exempt Report was presented.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the recommendations in the Exempt Report be supported;
- 2) That the public and press be invited to re-join the meeting.

32. GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2021/22:

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report that set out the provisional outturn position for East Lindsey District Council for 2021/22 subject to final audit and provided information on the implications for the Council's balances and reserves including the capital position for the year.

During his introduction the Portfolio Holder advised that since the start of the pandemic the Council had seen various impacts on its finances, such as increased expenditure in the short term dealing with the response to the situation, including the dispersal of significant government grants to businesses/individuals and longer-term effects on its income, finances generally and a significant impact on commercial activities. It was noted that the Council had been extremely successful in bidding for additional funding in

a variety of service areas which were reflected in the outturn position for 2021/22, particularly the capital programme.

It had been a significant year for the Council with the transition taking place within the financial year, from the Strategic Alliance to the S&ELCP (South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership) which was also a feature of this year's outturn.

Further reference was made to the quarterly monitoring reports provided throughout the year to forecast the expected year end outturn against the budget and the report provided a summary on the provisional full year outturn at 31st March 2022, in the attached Appendix for the following areas:

- The General Fund Revenue Budget,
- The General Fund Reserves Position,
- The Capital Outturn for 2021/22, and
- High level Treasury Management Performance for the year.

It was highlighted that in the report to the Council at Quarter 3, a full release of the covid Loss of Income Contingency took place of £589,000, offsetting losses in income across a variety of headings. A covid grant of £974,000 was also received, which had significantly assisted the revenue account. It should be noted that if these one-off funds had not been available, the position at the year-end would have been £1.563m worse off. At that time, the forecast surplus as a result of the application of this support was £189,000. Also received in 2021/22 was a covid income grant of £608,000 in respect of the first three months of the year where the Council was able to claim for loss of income.

The changes since then, which due to the uncertainty of this period could have been a worsening or an improvement in a variety of areas, had been overall a further improvement, although some service areas also had reductions in income as follows:

- Improvement in investment income from that expected due to rate rises;
- Overachievement of car parking income from that anticipated;
- Reductions in income – Building Control;
- Salary savings due to vacancies in certain areas;
- The impact of year-end adjustments – reduction in bad debt provision for overpayments
- Efficiencies due to acceleration of digitalisation - Elections

In total, these further adjustments totalled £868K and as stated, the overall favourable position was mainly due to the receipt and use of one-off grants and reserves to smooth covid impacts.

Considering the pressures anticipated ahead in 2022/23 and onwards, it was proposed (at recommendations 2 and 3) to use these resources to fund future transformation initiatives throughout the Council. This would assist services to

make changes in a post-pandemic landscape and to fund 'Invest to Save' initiatives which would ultimately realise savings. Delegated authority was also requested to enable use of this reserve during the year by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development) in consultation with the finance portfolio holder, this would also include support for budget pressures in 2022/23.

Other services areas had access to specific reserves to assist in developing new opportunities, the transformation reserve had reduced over time and needed further funds to assist the Council looking ahead.

The recommendations were duly Proposed and Seconded.

During discussion an Amendment was Proposed and Seconded in respect of recommendation a). to enable greater flexibility by transferring the provisional revenue surplus (currently estimated to be £867,723) to the General Fund. Councillor Jackson in proposing the amendment, highlighted the need to support those facing cost of living pressures, to be mindful of a staff wage increase and considered that budget prudence over the next few years was of little comfort to those struggling to feed themselves currently. Therefore, the council needed to be much more flexible on how this amount was spent and hold back on invest to save projects.

'That recommendation a) be amended as follows:

- a) (*Approves the transfer of the provisional revenue surplus (currently estimated to be £867,723) to the ~~Transformation Reserve to fund future projects which will help realise future revenue savings, efficiencies and service improvements~~ General Reserve to enable greater flexibility on how this is spent)*)

In response to the amendment, the Portfolio Holder for Finance set out the reasons why he could not support the amendment. In considering the volatile circumstances the Council required the resilience that had been alluded to earlier.

Pressures were noted as:

- A potential significant increase in the Internal Drainage Board precept;
- A justified but unbudgeted increase in staff costs;
- Extra unbudgeted contributions to vital Town Funds Projects

The Portfolio Holder was sure that Members would support those projects already engaged in that were designed to mitigate financial distress for residents. Clearly by making a one-off intervention, Council would be negating its ability to fund invest to save initiatives designed to support the General Fund and would frustrate its own desire to provide cover for

future budget pressures, therefore the Portfolio Holder would prefer to provide a continuous level of support in partnership with other agencies, rather than a single intervention.

In support of the amendment, Councillor Smith stressed that the amendment proposed greater flexibility to support people during the forthcoming winter, which was vital due to the extremely serious circumstances, and although an alternative solution to fight the cost of living crisis would be preferable, being as flexible as possible was the best solution.

In response to comments, Councillor Jackson as proposer of the amendment highlighted that this was about investing in people and their survival through this crisis.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost.

Debate returned to the original proposition.

During discussion, Councillor Leonard asked where the Portfolio Holder for Finance saw the main risk going forward.

The Chairman of Executive Board wished to acknowledge the work undertaken, including work by the Audit and Governance Committee, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the S151 Officer in managing the budget. The Council had many ambitious plans and he advocated that now was the time to be prudent and manage the budget to deliver for residents in the future.

In summing up, the Portfolio Holder for Finance referred to the pressures mentioned in respect of a deserved but unbudgeted staff wage increase, a likely increase in the IDB precept and higher interest rates, although this also meant a greater return on investments. He reiterated it was difficult to predict the forthcoming situation in these circumstances, but confirmed that he would keep Members informed.

RESOLVED

- a. That the transfer of the provisional revenue surplus (currently estimated to be £867,723) to the Transformation Reserve to fund future projects which will help realise future revenue savings, efficiencies and service improvements be approved;
- b. That delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance to use this amount for 'Invest to Save' projects and to cover any budget pressures which may arise during 2022/23;
- c. That the transfer of £4,866,072 to the Business Rates Volatility Reserve to fund the 2022/23 budget, this being the excess

Section 31 grant allocated to the Council in 2021/22 but to be utilised in 2022/23 be approved;

d. That the return of £1,000,000 to the Investments Volatility Reserve which was the amount withdrawn to cover fluctuations in Property fund asset valuations during the pandemic be approved;

e. That the carry forward of Capital Budget of £18.62m as detailed in Appendix A -Table 7 be approved.

33. SUTTON ON SEA BROADWAY CAR PARK SURFACING:

It was noted that following a Scrutiny Review this item had been withdrawn from the Agenda and would be considered at a later date.

34. SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REPORT:

The Leader of the Council presented a report that set out the further progress of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership since the last update on 12th May 2022. During his introduction the Chairman of Executive Board referred to the progress made and noted the Councils had made good progress and joint working had provided significant benefits.

Members noted that the South & East Lincolnshire Council's Partnership (Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council) was launched on 1st October 2021.

The business case for the Partnership identified and established four stages for building the Partnership, namely:

- Setting the foundations
- Set up
- Accelerate, and
- Embed

The report presented the following points for noting.

- The progress of Phase 2 of the Partnership (section 2)
- The peer review update (section 3)
- The Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) update (section 4)
- The updates from the Priority Partnerships (section 5)
- The update on the joint Scrutiny work (section 6)

35. SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY:

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety presented a report that set out the duties placed on local authorities and other named statutory agencies in relation to crime and disorder (Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder

Act 1998). The report outlined the current Community Safety Partnership (CSP) arrangements across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (S&ELCP), and in Lincolnshire as a whole.

A Community Safety Strategy had been produced to demonstrate the work of the South and East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership (SELCSP) currently working collaboratively with the County Safer Lincolnshire Partnership (SLP), as they sought to address crime and disorder at a local, sub-regional and County level. Full Council was asked to support the recommendation to adopt the strategy for the period April 2022 to March 2025.

The background to the report, included at paragraphs 1.1 – 2.5 detailed the requirements duty to work in co-operation with other bodies for example, Registered Social Landlords and Parish Councils. Paragraphs 5.1 - 5.6 of the report detailed the priority areas identified as:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Hate Crime
- Safer Streets & Night Time Economy
- Safety of Women and Girls
- Vulnerability & Safeguarding

Agreement of the recommendations would demonstrate and confirm the commitment of the South and East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership in working with the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership (SLP) to meet the statutory duties set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and to address crime and disorder at a local level.

The recommendations were duly Proposed and Seconded

During discussion, Councillor Danny Brookes, as Leader of the Skegness Urban District Society (SUDS) whilst acknowledging it was not the Partnership's role to turn street lighting back on, highlighted the need for lighting to improve safety in respect of safer streets and the night time economy.

Councillor David Hall considered it would be helpful to signpost to the public matters that the council could assist with.

Councillor Howard, as Leader of the Labour Group was disappointed that a recommendation had not been included on the partnership lobbying central government for more money to be invested in all areas dealing with crime prevention, as this had long been underfunded.

Following which, Councillor Howard proposed a further recommendation:

'That the Partnership takes every opportunity to lobby for more money to be put into crime prevention and safer streets''

The Amendment was duly seconded.

During discussion on the amendment the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety advised that the County Council had a county wide partnership that lobbied government.

A Member asked for evidence that this system was working.

A further Member highlighted that the purpose of the recommendation was to approve a strategy and that lobbying was not part of that process.

The Chairman of Executive Board advised that he was happy to write to Lincolnshire County Council regarding any concerns raised on Street Lighting.

The Portfolio Holder for Coastal Communities pointed out that recommendation c) referred to the development of a Community Safety Action Plan and highlighted that the Action Plan should refer to lobbying, rather than the strategy.

Councillor Howard in moving the Amendment considered that this was an ideal opportunity to raise funding with national government and for the Partnership to show its strength.

Upon being put the vote the Amendment was declared lost.

Debate returned to the original proposal.

During discussion, a Member agreed that lobbying should be as a result of the Action Plan, including ensuring that East Lindsey received its fair share of funding.

A Member considered that reference should be made in the Strategy that most abuse, neglect and vulnerability happened in a domestic setting and in addition contain a specific reference to specific vulnerability of children.

A Member proposed a further Amendment:

'To lobby Lincolnshire County Council that the street lights be turned back on'.

In support of the further Amendment it was highlighted that the County Council exemption policy stated certain street lights should be turned on in certain areas and that this was not being adhered to.

The Chief Executive highlighted the offer made by the Chairman of Executive Board to write on behalf of the Council and informed Members it would also be possible to ask the Portfolio Holder of the report to work towards the wording in the amendment.

The Amendment was duly seconded.

Councillor Danny Brookes, as Leader of the Skegness Urban District Society supported the Amendment, as he considered that the County Council should be held to account.

A further Member supported the amendment as she considered the County Council was not doing enough in respect of footpaths and lighting in the development of new Care Homes.

Councillor Ashton, as Portfolio Holder for Planning highlighted that it was not for East Lindsey District Council to make an amendment and that there were other routes to achieve these matters by.

Councillor Brookes, as a point of order highlighted that Skegness Town Council had asked the County Council to turn the street lights back on, but the cost and no written contract was prohibitive.

Councillor Smith considered that many Councillors had raised this issue on repeated occasions and given that, he argued there must be some way to mediate on those areas of most concern.

Councillor Cunnington as mover of the Amendment stressed that the County Council was breaking its own policy and hoped that Councillors would support the Amendment. The wording of the further amendment was confirmed as:

'To lobby Lincolnshire County Council, to re-instate the street lights across the district/partnership.'

Upon voting the Amendment was declared lost.

Debate returned to the original proposal. During discussion the Portfolio Holder for Planning highlighted the strategy was evidence of the partnership working well. It was noted that the Safer Streets Fund, on the back of the work conducted by the Portfolio Holder and his team had brought £400k to the partnership. In terms of Skegness, work on the safe walking routes work would begin in November with 150 new cameras.

Councillor Makinson-Sanders, as Leader of the Independent Group highlighted the shortage of police in Louth and the impact of this on the reporting of crime. It was highlighted further, that attacks on the gay community and men also were an omission in the detail.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety thanked all for their comments and advised that:

- In respect of funding, the CCTV upgrade was going ahead and a successful bid for cameras would cover designated areas throughout the night;
- Page 4 of the report referred to covered badly lit or poor street lighting and had been picked up and would be addressed;

- Any concerns were raised with the County Council;
- Information and signposting were included in the Newsletter and residents could sign up for updates and Councillors should pass back information too;
- Lobbying central Government, continued regarding our fair share;
- Lobbying took place on the number of police officers through the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel;
- Vulnerability and Safeguarding were taken very seriously and linked with the County Council Domestic Abuse Partnership;
- Hate Crime does cover the gay community and was referenced;
- Whilst comments on street lights were acknowledged, it should also be noted that lights should not be turned back on unless strictly necessary due to the carbon impact.

RESOLVED

- a) That the contents of the report and the work of partners in addressing crime and disorder in South and East Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire as a whole be noted;
- b) That the adoption and endorsement of the Community Safety Strategy be agreed and priorities for the SELCSP for the period 2022-25 be identified.
- c) That agreement be given to provide delegated authority for the Deputy Chief Executive (Communities) to finalise with the relevant Portfolio Holders a programme for the development of a Community Safety Action Plan.

36. OVERVIEW COMMITTEE ANNUAL UPDATE TO COUNCIL 2022:

The Vice Chairman of Overview Committee presented the Annual Overview Committee update to Council for noting. During his introduction, Councillor Mossop referred to the involvement of more Councillors next year, as on some occasions there was a lack of commitment in terms of volunteering and committee attendance. It was highlighted that the recent excellent training on financial and budget matters was a prime example of a poorly attended session. Councillor Martin, as Chairman of Overview Committee had also expressed her disappointment regarding attendance.

Notwithstanding that, a recent scrutiny panel on caravan licensing and enforcement had been oversubscribed and Overview Committee looked forward to its recommendations in due course.

In terms of the effectiveness of scrutiny, it was highlighted that item 11 on the agenda, Sutton on Sea Broadway Car Park Resurfacing had been withdrawn as a result of a scrutiny review questioning the car park income for further consideration prior to consideration at the December Council Meeting.

Finally, Councillor Mossop extended his thanks to all officers and councillors involved in the scrutiny process.

The Chairman of Executive Board extended his thanks for the update and was pleased to also acknowledge the work undertaken in scrutiny and noted that 81% of scrutiny recommendations were accepted.

The meeting adjourned for a comfort break at 9:00pm.

37. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY AND POLICY PANELS:

37. HOW ELDC CAN RESPOND TO THE POST-COVID IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITIES:

Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders, Chairman of the Post-Covid Impact on our communities Scrutiny Panel presented the report to Council for noting.

During her introduction, Councillor Makinson-Sanders reminded all that this topic had been a year-long exercise and extended her thanks to officers involved and to the dedicated Councillors for their service. The recommendations were detailed at page 109 of the Agenda pack.

Councillor Gray, as Portfolio Holder for Better Ageing, expressed his thanks to Councillor Makinson-Sanders and the Panel for a very thorough report which he would discuss with colleagues across the portfolio areas prior to a response to Overview Committee.

37. HOW CAN EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL HELP TO IMPROVE DESIGN, CHOICE, AND QUALITY OF NEW AND EXISTING HOUSING IN THE DISTRICT:

Councillor Phyll Smith, Chair of the scrutiny panel, How can East Lindsey District Council help to improve design, choice, and quality of new and existing housing in the district presented the report and recommendations of the panel.

During his introduction, Councillor Smith expressed his thanks to all involved in the scrutiny, including the previous topic that this particular exercise had rolled on from. The recommendations were detailed at pages 138/139 of the Agenda pack. It was highlighted that these loosely categorised into two groups:

- Firstly, some real concerns around housing stock being built and our ability to enforce the standards required.
- Secondly, support for neighbourhood development plans, recognising the limitations of officer time, an approach through a peer support network.

Finally, Councillor Smith was happy to take questions arising from the report now or after the meeting and also wished to endorse the point made by Councillor Mossop earlier on scrutiny membership as he

considered scrutiny to be one of the most rewarding parts of being a ward councillor and recommended to all.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Councillor Ashton expressed his thanks to Councillor Smith and the Panel for their work and recommendations. This was highlighted as a strident academic report with some audacious and ambitious recommendations. Councillor Ashton advised that he was keen to take forward the broad thrust of the recommendations. The Council must be mindful of targets set by government, but the Portfolio Holder was keen to explore design and standards as much as possible. He looked forward to debating some of these through the Local Plan Review. The recommendations would be fully considered prior to responding to Overview Committee.

A suggestion was made by Councillor Makinson-Sanders to include housing design on a future Reserved Member Day and Councillor Makinson-Sanders would be pleased to provide contact details.

38. APPOINTMENT TO AN OUTSIDE BODY - GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP LTD:

A report was presented by the Chief Executive on the appointment of a Member as a Corporate Member of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd (GLLEP). Members noted that the appointment was separate from that which Councillor Leyland, Leader of the Council had been appointed to act as the representative of the Lincolnshire District Councils on the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board of Directors. The GLLEP had advised that under the Company's Articles of Association, Councillor Leyland could not be appointed as both a director of the Company and as the Council's Corporate Member representative.

Following which, it was Proposed and Seconded that Councillor Terry Taylor be appointed as a Corporate Member of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership Limited.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Terry Taylor be appointed to represent the Council as a Corporate Member of the Greater Lincolnshire Partnership Limited for the remainder of the municipal year 2022/23.

39. AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE ITEMS:

The Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee presented for noting the following Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee:

- 12th May 2022
- 6th July 2022
- 5th October 2022 (Draft)

During his introduction Councillor Grover referred to the support of the Christine Marshall as S151 Officer, Councillor Fry as Portfolio Holder for Finance and all officers involved.

Members also noted the Audit and Governance Committee's Annual Report 2021/22 and the ELDC Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme 2022/23.

During discussion a Member welcomed the annual report and asked for confirmation that this would continue and also if the Planning Policy Committee would consider an annual report.

The Chairman of Audit & Governance Committee confirmed that an Annual report would continue to be provided for Audit and Governance Committee.

40. MOTIONS ON NOTICE:

In accordance with Motions on Notice under Council Procedure Rule 12 a Motion relating to the Cost of Living Crisis was received:

Proposed by Councillor Ros Jackson

Seconded by Councillor Phyll Smith

In her introduction, Councillor Jackson referred to the worsening situation since she had drafted the motion in August. It was noted that inflation was currently running at 9.9% with a prediction of 13% from the Bank of England later this year. Reference was made to fuel costs for households on typical fuel usage which without Government assistance would lead to further economic pain that would hit harder in East Lindsey than other areas due to the following factors:

- Long distances between settlements and facilities meant residents paid more for fuel;
- The state of housing repair in East Lindsey meant higher fuel costs;
- Property fuel efficiency ratings were poorer than the average in England;
- 14% of households were not on the gas grid.
- An older population and those not working had fewer chances to make up extra costs;
- Health inequalities had worsened over the past 10 years, as evidenced in the Covid Recovery Scrutiny;
- Low Pay;
- A vulnerable economy, with a greater reliance on tourism affected by less disposable income

It was highlighted that East Lindsey was not awash with cash, indeed it was a poorer district overall, and therefore it was necessary to look for windfall amounts to bolster its funds and to ensure that any returns that

were better than expected were considered for the locally administered Household Support Fund for 2022/23, to be reviewed in 6 months.

In support of the Motion, Councillor Smith pointed out that many residents fell through support gaps not being in receipt of benefits but were still struggling and targeting these for assistance would come down to discretionary funds.

The Chairman of Executive Board read his response to the motion as follows:

'This administration, this council, it's officers and teams across all its endeavours are very aware of the financial pressures many of our residents are facing.

And specifically Councillor Gray, Councillor Devereux and Councillor Marsh, who's portfolio responsibilities covered Communities and Better Ageing, Health and Well-being and Community Safety are working closely with our Deputy Chief Executive Communities (John Leach) , Assistant Director for Well-being and Community Leadership (Emily Spicer) and the Strategic Lead for Prosperous Communities (Roxanne Warwick) to make sure our intelligence and responses to this challenge are as targeted as they can be and that we are as flexible as we can be in reacting to government initiatives and our own local understanding of issues.

And of course Cllr Fry has oversight on all our finances and the challenges we face as a council.

In my Leaders report, I outlined the schemes we have delivered and adapted locally as needed by supporting the many valued community groups that have direct access to some of our most vulnerable residents. This is significant work and our teams and PSPS colleagues have done incredible work to direct the various monies and support to those eligible and most in need. And thank you too to our local community groups and charities who do such valued work in our communities.

Yesterday I signed an urgent decision notice to release a further £342,000 for our most vulnerable residents via the Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme.

I am also aware Victoria Atkins, MP is hosting a Winter support Summit this Friday in Louth to highlight the work community groups and partners are engaged on to support our most vulnerable residents.

I will of course write to all of our MPs to highlight the challenges and the work we are doing to address those challenges. And of course the Chancellor will be copied into that correspondence.

We need to be flexible and reactive to the challenges we face. We also need to be aware of challenges this council will be facing over the coming months. We are delivering on significant uplift projects that will make a very real difference to our residents lives. From the Campus for Future Living in

Mablethorpe to the Expansion of Skegness college and the delivery of a new leisure centre with opportunities for skills delivery, all the levelling up work ongoing and planned for in our market towns, these are significant projects that will also be potentially impacted by cost of living crisis.

With all this in mind, we will support the continued good work of our officers and portfolio holders in delivering the schemes we are engaged in. We will also be adaptive to future needs and further government support schemes but to specifically ringfence funds for this will not be supported.'

Councillor Howard, as Leader of the Labour Group expressed his thanks to Councillor Leyland for his thoughtful response. However, should an opportunity come forth through a windfall, Councillor Howard considered this should be considered.

Councillor Makinson-Sanders as Leader of the Independent Group was heartened at some of the responses and wished to highlight the difference that volunteers made to the community, and the part to be played in supporting vulnerable residents throughout the winter.

Councillor Jackson thanked all for their comments and wished to highlight that this was about ring fencing windfall money and the ability to be reactive in a changing situation.

Following which on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

That the Motion be not supported.

41. HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND:

The Leader of the Council presented a report for noting to outline his Leader Decision taken on 5th August 2022 to accept Lincolnshire County Councils proposal regarding the local administration of the Household Support Fund (second phase), a report was presented for noting outlined details and urgency of the decision taken outside of the Council's budgetary framework.

42. QUESTIONS:

Question 1	Councillor Jackson
Subject	Sustrans – Feasibility of a Multi-user path
Response by	Councillor Grist
Supplementary	You are extremely vague on timescales and my question is when?
Response:	The scheme is being costed up at £15m and not something that the council could deliver this unilaterally but it's really about funding and partnership working.

Question 2	Councillor Howard
Subject	Community Orchards
Response by	Councillor Marsh
Question 3	Councillor Mossop
Subject	Cost of holding Council Meetings
Response by	Councillor Leyland
Supplementary	What is the cost of the Executive Board in terms of allowances, now that it has increased in number by one. Has the cost increased in this financial year as opposed to the last?
Response	I will provide in writing after the meeting.
Question 4	Councillor Jackson
Subject	Enviro-crime Enforcement Services
Response by	Councillor Foster
Supplementary	The response doesn't answer how funds and be reinvested into the service for the future.
Response	The savings shown on the previous in-house situation was £100k and in regard to the in-house operations, we plan to reuse existing staff enviro-team and members of that team to provide additional service in an area that hasn't been covered in the past. Many questions have been asked about our current level of enforcement of caravan licensing on the coast, and this will give additional staff with the benefit that all of those caravan sites are inspected regularly and any enforcement action necessary taken. There will be a saving of the £100k and that we will utilise our existing staff to cover an area that hasn't been covered in the past.

Question 5	Councillor Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Freedom of information
Response by	Councillor Leyland
Supplementary	The officer in question is a former S151 officer and can he reassure me that all estimates are correct and double checked.
Response	Indeed, the issue you raise is important. Given the amount of work this council undertakes I can understand that mistakes are made occasionally, this is why the matter wasn't pursued through Council and the correct process was to defer the matter to a later meeting. In terms of the process it shows that the correct action has now been taken.
Question 6	Councillor Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Proposed Rave on Louth Industrial Estate
Response by	Councillor Fry
Supplementary	None
Question 7	Councillor Horton
Subject	Equipment at the Meridian Leisure Centre
Response by	Councillor Marsh
Supplementary	None
Question 8	Councillor Horton
Subject	Equipment transferred to Horncastle Hub
Response by	Councillor Fry
Supplementary	None
Question 9	Councillor Horton
Subject	3g Pitch
Response by	Councillor Marsh
Supplementary	None
Question 10	Councillor Horton
Subject	Play parks
Response by	Councillor Foster
Supplementary	None
Question 11	Councillor Leonard
Subject	Potential for things to go wrong
Response by	Councillor Leyland
Supplementary	None
Question 12	Councillor Leyland
Subject	Parklets, Mercer Row, Louth
Response by	Councillor Grist

Supplementary	Whilst grateful for his support on the parklets in Mercer Row, my worry is that they may reappear in a different form.
Response	I will continue to help in any way I can to get the best outcome for Louth.
Question 13	Councillor Leonard
Subject	Appearance of Louth
Response by	Councillor Foster
Supplementary	None

A full copy of the questions is attached at Appendix 2 to these minutes.

43. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The programmed date for the next Meeting of the Council was noted as Wednesday 14th December 2022 at 2.00pm.

The meeting closed at 10.18 pm.

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Appendix 1

**QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC FOR COUNCIL UNDER RULE 10 OF THE
COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES – COUNCIL 121022**

**1.Question by Lynne Cooney to Councillor Richard Fry, Portfolio Holder
for Finance**

- Q.** I wish to ask what the plans are for Charles Street.
Why has this not been open to consultation with the people of Louth?
Is the pond to be filled in?
Has the environmental and social/health and well-being been considered in any way?
Would East Lindsey be open to community groups being involved to save the area and regenerate it?
Kindest regards Lynne Cooney Councillor for trinity ward.
- A.** I thank Town Councillor Cooney for notice of her question; I can confirm that no plans or decisions about the area have been taken by the Council. The Council is always pleased to hear ideas from community groups and I can confirm that discussions remain open and ongoing about its future.

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**Questions to Council Under Rule 11 of the Constitution –
Council 12 October 2022**

1 Councillor Ros Jackson to Councillor Adam Grist, Portfolio Holder for Market Towns & Rural Economy

In December 2016 ELDC commissioned Sustrans to research the feasibility of a Multi-User Path, and the public response was favourable. What is the current status of this project?

A Initial feasibility work has been undertaken. The total cost of this project is significant and could not be delivered without collaboration between multi government agencies. We will continue to explore possible funding opportunities and look to move this project forward as soon as practically possible.

2 Councillor Tony Howard to Councillor Graham Marsh, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Partnerships

(N.B Because the July council meeting was cancelled, I was unable to receive an answer to the following question and an interested resident has been left patiently waiting for information).

Back in February an announcement was made that several community orchards were to be planted across the S & EL Partnership area with several sites in East Lindsey included. Could you provide an update on the progress of this scheme and especially each of the individual sites in East Lindsey that were named?

A 140 trees were planted across the S&ELCP area in February 2022. Sites in East Lindsey were: Fulletby; Wainfleet All Saints; Post Office Lane, Spilsby; Marisco Medical Centre, Mablethorpe; Harveys Way, Louth; Conlie Close, Alford; South Ormsby. Two sites at Belchford and Wainfleet St Mary were also expanded. Following the planting a training workshop for volunteers was held at Westgate Fields in Louth with a local orchard expert giving guidance on maintenance and pruning. Events are also being held in conjunction with Platform Housing and volunteers again this autumn to build engagement in the community orchards.

Councillor Howard has seemingly let his resident down as he could have received an immediate answer to his question by directly contacting the officer or portfolio holder at any time. It's alarming he's not supported his resident in favour of waiting several months to ask an operational question at Council.

Questions to Council under Rule 11

3 Councillor Edward Mossop to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council

What is the cost of holding a Council Meeting in our Council Chamber?

A The cost of a Council meeting will vary from meeting to meeting depending on factors such as whether the meeting is held during the day/evening, attendance, size of agenda, duration of meeting etc.

As a guide it's estimated that a 3 hour evening meeting of the Full Council could cost in the region of £1,500.

4 Councillor Ros Jackson to Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services

On the procurement of Enviro-Crime Enforcement services, what figures justify outsourcing this service rather than providing it in-house or through a joint in-house operation by SELCP? If a private company takes the contract and profits must go to company shareholders, how can we ensure that our residents get the best value and that sufficient funds are reinvested into the service?

A The enviro-crime enforcement contract is being procured on behalf of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership. The contract will include two elements, foot patrols to detect and directly take action against offenders and overt surveillance capability to deter and detect fly tipping at hotspots.

The contract specification being procured to the market requires delivery of service at nil cost to the Council with potential for income sharing. This service model provides enforcement resources on the ground, as a partnership, and delivers £100k savings from previous in-house operations. These savings will be reinvested towards improving our enforcement service on caravan sites, an area that has had little resource applied in the past.

Procurement is in accordance with our Constitution, contract procedure rules and financial regulations. This ensures fair competition and best value can be secured from the market for the benefit of our communities. The new contract will deliver income for the Council, the exact sum has yet to be agreed, and investment of these funds will be considered by the Council in our budget setting arrangements for 2023/24.

Questions to Council under Rule 11

5 Councillor Jill Makinson Sanders to Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council

At a recent Scrutiny group looking at the Sutton car park members were provided with a detailed report supplied by a former councillor using figures provide by this council following a Freedom of Information enquiry. However, two council officers maintained that the figures provided were not correct and submitted a different set of numbers. This has cast doubt on our Freedom of Information service and is a risk to the reputation of this council and is probably contrary to the law. What reassurance can the Leader give to our residents that when they make an enquiry in future the correct information will be given and that an enquiry will be undertaken to establish why the former councillor was misled?

A I can confirm that the Freedom of Information process was correctly followed, and that members' can be reassured that the correct information was given.

I understand that one of the officers in question has contacted you directly and explained that the error was on their behalf and that they mistakenly quoted an incorrect figure from a separately produced report. As a result, we are looking to re-examine the Broadway Car Park Re-Surfacing report on tonight's agenda and bring it back when this work has been completed rather than present it tonight.

I understand that the officer explained that this was a genuine error that they both made independently of each other and that the officer has apologised for their mistake and any inconvenience that this has caused.

On a positive note, it does show that on this occasion the Scrutiny review process has worked successfully in that it has highlighted an inconsistency and that this will be reflected in a future revised report.

6 Councillor Jill Makinson Sanders to Councillor Fry, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Over the past few days I have been contacted by businesses on the Louth Industrial Estate who are extremely worried about a proposed Rave to be held at Fairfield to celebrate Halloween. Whilst local businesses do not wish to stop young people having fun, many of the plots on the estate are covered by covenants which do not allow such activities and their planning permissions prevent usage other than that applied for. There are four partly built properties nearby which cannot be not covered by insurance, another business near the proposed site stores gas cylinders. Businesses are concerned that by allowing one such event to go forward this will set a precedent for further such events on the estate which was never designed to accommodate such activities. How can this council ensure that the reputation of this very important employment location, necessary for the Prime

Questions to Council under Rule 11

Minister's mission to promote growth, is not compromised and what steps are the council taking to ensure such events are held in the appropriate location both now and in future? What input has the council had into the required Safety Plan covering this Halloween event?

A The technicalities of this mean that officers have little option but to support, however I fully understand the concerns raised and share many of them.

7 Councillor Horton to Councillor Graham Marsh, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Partnerships.

MV, quite rightly, are making good press over the refurbishment of the equipment at Louth Meridian Centre. We paid for the last batch of equipment; what return did this authority get for the old equipment?

A The return for the old equipment at the Meridian Leisure Centre, totalled £16,365. In line with the 5-year business plan agreed with the Council last December, Magna Vitae are repaying the Council, the total cost of the refurbishment over the next 7 years. The refurbishment has been a great success and to date has resulted in membership at the centre increasing by 3% in Quarter 1 and 8% in Quarter 2.

8 Councillor Horton to Councillor Fry, Portfolio Holder for Finance

We are now ending our life at Tedder Hall. As a consequence, how much of the equipment will be used at the new building to keep costs down? What is happening to the surplus and is it likely there will be any financial gain?

A I thank Councillor Horton for notice of his question. Little existing equipment or furniture from Tedder Hall is to be reused at the HUB as the HUB provides a fundamentally new way of working in comparison to Tedder Hall. For clarity, the majority of IT server equipment serving Tedder Hall is at or is approaching end of life and would need to have been replaced should we have remained in situ.

The new IT infrastructure at the HUB has been specifically designed to support our new ways or working model that was set out in the business cases supporting its development. In terms of fixtures and fittings, the HUB is being equipped with new furniture and storage provision to fit with its approved design that itself supports that new way of working model.

Surplus equipment from Tedder Hall, both furniture and IT equipment has been offered to staff, members and others to support home working; all residual furniture and equipment will be sold or recycled by a local contractor. Until all residual equipment has been sold or recycled, we will not however know whether there are any net proceeds to be returned to the Council.

Questions to Council under Rule 11

9 Councillor Horton to Councillor Marsh, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Partnerships.

It was agreed at a recent meeting should the proposal for a 3G pitch be built alongside the Meridian Centre go ahead where does this authority find replacements as this would be the final public pitch in the district? Louth has an over subscribed requirement for grass roots pitches but the council has never fulfilled the promise to the town to provide for the growing need. Why?

A The District Council is currently working in partnership with Magna Vitae, local clubs and the Football Foundation in order to meet future demands in the area, by significantly increasing the capacity of the Wood Lane pitch for grass roots football, through the proposed 3g pitch project. The project includes a free to access Multi Use Games Area.

The District Council also provides grass pitches at its London Road Pavilion site, and Magna Vitae have recently worked with a local school in order to bring a further grass pitch back into public use adjacent to the Meridian Leisure Centre.

10 Councillor Horton to Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services

How often are the play parks belonging to the council monitored and checked for broken glass, dog poo and broken equipment? Why is no seating provided for adults in these play parks?

A Council play parks are monitored on a regular basis – depending on location. This can be daily, but at least every three days. All play parks are inspected on a weekly basis for health and safety checks. The team also respond to ad hoc vandalism or littering requests as a matter of urgency.

Some seating is available in some areas. Unfortunately, some benches have been removed due to vandalism.

11 Councillor Leonard to Councillor Leyland, Leader of the Council

Given that the chancellor recently found it necessary to apologise for getting it wrong. Is there anything that you feel this council should apologise for, considering so many things are wrong in the country now. It would be an opportunity to come clean and confess as he did any historical or forthcoming disasters that will become apparent to this council.

A Yes. Given the challenges and pressures our residents and businesses face, I apologise for the time and money it has cost to respond to this question, which I don't believe serves a helpful purpose.

Questions to Council under Rule 11

12 Councillor Leonard to Councillor Grist, Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and the Rural Economy

I was delighted that you have supported Louth over the " Parklets " disaster on Mercer Row. Even though you have requested the removal of the offending items, do you think whilst they have the support of two blinkered county councillors the chances of that happening are slim?

AI was pleased to see that the Parklets were finally removed last night (October 11th) by the County Council. The Active Travel Fund Scheme is a national Government initiative where Highways authorities are encouraged to experiment with schemes like the one in Louth. This can unlock further funding to allow public realm improvements.

We still urge Lincolnshire County Council to focus its resource in the remaining trial period to develop the Cornmarket area and make better use of the space to benefit both residents and visitors. It is right that Councils should explore new initiatives and opportunities. But they should always listen, be pragmatic and amend plans when it is clear that a change of direction is required.

13 Councillor Leonard to Councillor Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services

Louth seems to look very dowdy and tired now, so how do you think we can solve this dilemma?

A Louth is one of our primary market towns in East Lindsey so we understand the importance of ensuring it looks welcoming to visitors and residents alike. We have spent £26k on improving the bus station. We have recently worked with a local landlord and volunteer groups to create window graphics for two long term empty town centre properties, while the landlord progresses with planning permission.

Our Heritage Manager is also targeting key retail and residential properties to encourage landlords to make necessary improvements. Members and the public can email Planning Enforcement to register a new case. Those raised by Cllrs and those in conservation area are prioritised.

We also allocated £25,000 to Louth Town Council from the Welcome Back Fund to make town centre improvements and encourage visitors back to the high street. The Town Council has done a fantastic job with additional planting, flags and bunting this year.

We have plans to use the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver shop front improvements and to provide better signage within the town centre. Alongside this we are working on better events and promotions to celebrate the town and will shortly be launching www.lovelouth.com to tie into our

Questions to Council under Rule 11

nationally focused brand Love Lincolnshire Wolds. Next year will also see a Louth Food and Drink Trail launched to encourage visitor footfall.

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