

**Questions to Council Under Rule 11 of the Constitution –
Council 17 July 2024**

Q1. Councillor Hesketh to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

In the Department for Business, Energy & industrial Strategy Document (2018) "Implementing Geological Disposal – Working With Communities" section 6.45 it states that "In the event that the relevant principal local authorities do not agree on whether to invoke the Right of Withdrawal or move to the Test of Public Support, RWM could fund independent mediation to ensure concerns are heard, understood and attempts made to address them" – this means that ELDC can request Withdrawal or request a move to a Test of Public Support and remain part of the Community Partnership even if LCC disagree, until a final decision is made. What is your understanding of this guidance?

- A.** *All relevant principal local authorities on the Community Partnership must agree before the Right of Withdrawal can be invoked or the Test of Public Support can take place. Therefore, in an area such as ours with two tiers of local government, and where both relevant principal local authorities are on the Community Partnership, then they must both agree to invoke the Right of Withdrawal or to carry out the Test of Public Support.*

Q2. Councillor Danny Brookes to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

Is Skegness getting any illuminations this year?

- A.** *Skegness and Mablethorpe will both be receiving seasonal illuminations as normal in 2024. The lighting contractor is installing illumination hardware at various locations currently with a view to the normal switch on times being available for both locations.*

Officers from the Council's Property Team are working closely with the contractor to make sure that festoon lighting and other lighting features are fully working at both locations.

Q3. Councillor Danny Brookes to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

How much is spent promoting Skegness each year?

- A.** *Promotion of Skegness had been part of the remit of the Skegness Business Improvement District (BID). Since the BID ceased ELDC has supported the promotion, but without any of the infrastructure behind it. In 2022/2023 there was limited promotion of the coast as a whole with a reliance on existing promotional work that was already planned by the County Council ([The Lincolnshire Coast - Visit Lincolnshire](#)).*

In order to address and remedy the situation, Destination Lincolnshire were awarded UK Shared Prosperity Funding to create a new coastal destination website to aid promotion. This new site covers the whole of the East Lindsey

coastal area including Skegness. The website was launched in May of this year (<https://visitlincscoast.co.uk/>). The award from UKSPF to Destination Lincolnshire was £60,000. This is a one-off award to create the website with ongoing financial support currently under discussion with Destination Lincolnshire which would include promotion and web access.

At present the Place Team does not have a specific budget for Skegness, although it does not have a specific budget for any other location but instead seeks to bring together opportunities for best effect and promote these. Given that this work was previously the remit of the BID, over time the investment in promotion of Skegness specifically will increase.

In parallel, there are a number of projects that are benefiting Skegness that will lead to its promotion:

- The granting of Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) status to Destination Lincolnshire will ensure that the coast plays a prominent role in the county's promotion.
- The £24.5m investment in Skegness as part of the Town Deal (of the seven projects, two are delivered with the remaining five in delivery – including the Learning Campus, the railway station works, Embassy Theatre works and the Foreshore project. There has also been a town centre improvement project which remains ongoing, all designed to make improvements for visitors).
- £20m over 10 years through the Long-Term Plan for Towns, currently undergoing final works before submission following public consultation on what improvements are desired.

Q4. Councillor Danny Brookes to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

Do we have a dedicated team for promoting the coast?

- A.** Promotion of Skegness had been part of the remit of the Business Improvement District (BID). Since the BID ceased, ELDC has supported the promotion of the coast, but without any of the infrastructure previously funded and managed by the BID or owned and operated by Lincolnshire County Council (Visit Lincolnshire).

The Place Team, within the Economic Growth Directorate, provide place making and place shaping support for locations across East Lindsey including promotion of the Visitor Economy. No single officer is responsible for promoting the coast, but the team works together to identify opportunities and promote these as appropriate, be that independently or with/through partners.

ELDC has had a Service Level Agreement (SLA)/Partnership Agreement in place with Destination Lincolnshire to deliver Visitor Economy activities on its behalf, including in 2023/2024 promotion and marketing activities. The current contract for 2024/2025 is under discussion and includes access to the new coastal website that Destination Lincolnshire have produced, launched in May of this year (<https://visitlincscoast.co.uk/>).

Officers from the Place Team, as well as through Grants4Growth and the Economic Development Team, have been promoting the opportunities for businesses to create profiles on the new website to help promote their business wherever possible.

Q5. Councillor Watson to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

May we have an update on the progress of the Lincolnshire 2100+ partnership set up by the Environment Agency, please?

I have seen evidence of the work being carried out by the Fens 2100+ partnership and the Humber 2100+ partnership but nothing on our stretch of coastline. With no strategic plans for coastal defences in place from next year onwards, I am alarmed that unless a strategic case for investment is formulated urgently, we are putting our large population of elderly residents who live on the coast (predominantly in single floor accommodation) in great danger.

A. *Thank you for your question. I share your concerns and agree.*

Work is ongoing in respect of the Lincs 2100+ Project. Our officers continue to engage with partners, including the EA, LCC and IDBs. We hope to be in a position to provide a more detailed update shortly.

Q6. Councillor Leonard to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

Remedial work was undertaken last September on the car park and now this June resurfacing work has also been carried out.

Given the short time since the original completion of the site in its entirety, why has follow up work been necessary?

A. *All works to the car parking surface at the Hub have been undertaken to address post construction defects that have been identified by the Property Team as part of their routine inspection processes.*

All works have been undertaken during the defects liability period associated with the original construction and at no additional cost to the council.

Q7. Councillor Leonard to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

The April staff poll showed on average about 25% of the staff felt undervalued. Senior levels wanted to know more about what was happening and a cultural change to "empower and trust colleagues" was required to list but a few of the gripes.

What is being done about this and who is carrying the responsibility?

A. *Thank you for your question.*

You have mis-interpreted the information you've received. Whether we sufficiently empower and trust colleagues was a discussion point that came up at a manager's conference. It wasn't a workforce gripe as suggested.

74% of respondents to the quarterly staff survey said they felt valued.

We all – Councillors and Officers – have a responsibility for ensuring our Officers / colleagues feel valued at work.

90% of our workforce say they feel informed either all the time or some of the time.

Some highlights from the last survey include:

- The positive impact of the Future Leaders Programme, particularly in officers feeling valued, providing networking and development opportunities.*
- Recognition of the positive impact of Mental Health First Aiders.*
- Recognition of the positive impact of line managers, when well-equipped with guidance to support, and the positive impact of flexible working.*

Each Assistant Director fully considers the data received each quarter for their service from the survey and what action might be required to bring about improvements.

We accept that not everything is perfect all of the time, but our Council is a good place to work, and we have a passionate and committed workforce we should all be very proud of.

Q8. Councillor Leonard to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

At what point will the patchy collection of grasses outside the front door be restored or better still removed. If they must stay, then perhaps the weeds could be removed on a more regular basis as they seem to have a better survival rate than the formal planting.

What are your thoughts on this please?

- A.** *The landscaping at the hub was designed and planted as part of the initial construction project. Now the planting has established, the design will be reviewed to ensure the plants particularly around the front door are suitable and provide a welcoming entrance to visitors.*

Q9. Councillor Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning

When was the last tree survey conducted on council land and what were the outcomes? How is this addressed on the council's risk register? What is the likely cost to ameliorate any problems and how is your budget allocated?

- A.** *The Council has a Tree Risk Management Strategy. Trees are assessed based on the Strategy, rather than assessing them all every X number of years. The last active assessment carried out was in April 24 at Westgate Fields and no unacceptable risks requiring remedial work were found. The risk is managed in accordance with the Strategy. Costs of dealing with tree risk reduction vary according to circumstances such as weather conditions and tree health. There is an annual budget and where this is exceeded any remedial work is funded according to an assessment of its priority.*

Q10. Councillor Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services and Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning

According to recent national reports air quality is increasingly compromised by intensive chicken farming.

What has been the effect locally, especially in villages where there is a preponderance of this type of farming? How is the planning process kept up to date with such data to ensure public safety is addressed?

- A.** *From a planning perspective any application for such an installation would require various technical studies to determine whether there was an impact in terms of various matters, including pollution. Relevant conditions would also be attached to any planning permission. The Planning Department would routinely consult with specialist colleagues in Environmental Health/Public Protection to determine whether the impact was acceptable or not in coming to a recommendation/decision. Sites with more than 40,000 poultry places are required to hold an Environmental Permit from The Environment Agency. Of particular interest is paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states:*

"The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities."

ELDC manage a network of diffusion monitoring tubes for air quality which focusses on NOx from traffic. Currently there is no requirement under this regime to specifically monitor poultry farming sites.

The air quality regime is reviewed annually to determine what further work may be needed in order to maintain our current good standards or air quality. At this

time we have no indication that poultry farms within ELDC are adversely affecting air quality.

All air quality info for ELDC is on our website at [Air Quality in East Lindsey - East Lindsey District Council \(e-lindsey.gov.uk\)](http://Air Quality in East Lindsey - East Lindsey District Council (e-lindsey.gov.uk))

Q11. Councillor Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Leyland, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

Why are markets not under the umbrella of the Growth team? How many markets function across the Partnership and what guarantee can you give the people who stand Louth market there will be a professional there to listen to their concerns, to plan where market stalls are erected three days a week and work closely with elected members (who shop regularly on the market and have to listen to myriad complaints)?

- A.** *The decision to move the Markets service from Neighbourhoods to the Leisure & Culture Services was taken when East Lindsey District Council joined the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership in 2021. There are Council managed markets in Louth, Horncastle, Spilsby, Boston Spalding, Crowland, Holbeach and Long Sutton. Work is ongoing to develop the Markets Service across the Partnership and a permanent Markets Manager is currently being sought to support their continued operation and support.*

Q12. Councillor Makinson-Sanders to Councillor Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services

What do we have to do to make sure we cut the grass regularly in the Old Cemetery in Louth to a length where people can actually use the facility as a park, see where their dogs have pooped and remove the ridiculous sign which says it's a space run by the district council where you can even have a picnic? (Photos can be provided)

- A.** *The discouraging weather, this year, has proved a challenge for grass cutting across the district.*

If the weather continues to be adverse for weeks at a time, it may mean that a number of schedule cuts may be missed resulting in a poor overall standard of grass cutting.

We have been working closely with our grass cutting contractor, to understand the challenges this season and consider ways to improve standards, where possible.

An additional higher specification cut has been organised for w/c 15th, at St Mary's Old Cemetery, Louth – to improve the standard of cut at this particular site.

Ends.