

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Board held in The Hub, Mareham Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6PH on Wednesday, 18th September, 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Craig Leyland (Chairman)

Councillors Martin Foster, William Gray, Adam Grist, Thomas Kemp and Steve Kirk.

Councillor Rosalind Jackson attended the Meeting as an Observer.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert Barlow	- Joint Chief Executive
Christine Marshall	- Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development) and S151 Officer (Virtual)
John Leach	- Deputy Chief Executive, Communities
Adrian Sibley	- Deputy Chief Executive, Programme Delivery and SIRO
James Gilbert	- Assistant Director - Corporate
Lydia Rusling	- Assistant Director - Economic Growth
Emily Spicer	- Assistant Director, Wellbeing and Community Leadership
Matthew Hogan	- Assistant Director, Strategic Growth and Development
Sharon Hammond	- Head of Revenue and Benefits
Carl Holland	- Head of Finance (Client) (Virtual)
Stuart Leafe	- Strategic Finance Manager (Virtual)
Jameela Rawlinson	- Environmental Enforcement Liaison Officer
Ann Good	- Democratic Services Manager
Elaine Speed	- Senior Democratic Services Officer and Civic Officer

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom Ashton, Sarah Devereux and Graham Marsh.

17. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

No disclosures of interest were received.

18. MINUTES:

The Open and Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th July 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

19. ACTIONS:

There were no Actions from the meeting held on 9th July 2024.

20. EAST LINDSEY INVESTMENT FUND:

A report was presented to seek approval of the East Lindsey Investment Fund Plan.

As set out in the report, the Plan provided the principles for investment and the themes for the allocation of funding. The programme would focus on delivery, build capacity and committed to an inclusive and collaborative approach that would benefit the whole District and work in partnership with communities, town and parish councils and local businesses.

The East Lindsey Investment Fund Plan had been developed to support the delivery of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Growth and Prosperity Plan, and in accordance with the Corporate Priorities Reserve areas of focus.

During his introduction of the report, the Leader of the Council stated that he was very pleased to present a paper that would change the lives of residents and communities and passed his thanks to the Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and Rural Economy and the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy for their support and work on the plan.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that this was a significant amount of investment with £10m of funding from the corporate priorities reserve looking to making ELDC's places welcoming, supporting events and markets that people enjoyed, attracting visitors, community development, supporting business growth and development for the benefit of all communities.

The Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and Rural Economy stated that he was delighted to part present the paper and that significant funding was being allocated to the entire district to have as much impact in the inland areas in the market towns, the same way towns funding projects had made on the coast. Furthermore, it was important to support communities and the small community groups and those small villages and hamlets that made up large areas of East Lindsey. The Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and Rural Economy added that he was pleased to see the establishment of a Market and Inland Towns Group 'the Connected Wolds' to support engagement with businesses, local communities and town/parish councils and to learn lessons from the Connected Coast Board on what worked well to feed into the new group so that some momentum could be got behind this as quickly as possible.

The Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy highlighted that since the inception of the Council and in its landmark 50th year, he was not aware that this amount of investment had ever been made in the market towns. He commented that this was down to the careful management of the Council's

funds and hoped that the new Market and Inland Towns Group would be successful in securing a large amount of external funding. He added that East Lindsey was a special area, with its heritage, traditions and people that should be celebrated and was very happy to support the paper.

In summary, the Leader of the Council highlighted that this plan affected all communities, not just those identified in the report and pointed out that an uplift to a hamlet would be entirely different to that of a large town and it was important to recognise that this was now an opportunity for those communities. He agreed that it was also important to reflect on lessons learned from the experiences the Council had had with the Connected Coast Board and UK Shared Prosperity Fund and as a result of this, the Council had been able to put its own money into promoting and processing a large number of schemes even further.

Further to a discussion on the commitment and effort involved, Members' thanks were passed to the officers involved in the tireless work it had taken to get to this stage.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing stated that the investment was a tremendous opportunity and would help those market towns and inland communities who may consider they had missed out when looking what had been achieved along the coastal strip over recent years and offered his thanks for an exciting opportunity.

RESOLVED:

1. That the principles in the East Lindsey Investment Fund Plan, as detailed in this report to guide the allocation of funding and resources be approved.
2. That the allocation of the East Lindsey Investment Fund for each theme – Pride in Place; Tourism and Events; Community Development; Business Growth and Development be approved.
3. That the Assistant Director theme lead in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder be delegated authority to utilise the Investment Fund to support enabling activity, including the procurement and appointment of consultants/contractors, provide staffing resource and delivery of pilot projects to support the development of action plans relevant to each theme.
4. That an allocation of up to 5% of the Investment Fund to support the enabling activity be approved.
5. That the Director for Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Market Towns and the Rural Economy be delegated authority to support the establishment, administration and Terms of Reference for a Market and Inland Towns Group – the

Connected Wolds – to support engagement with businesses, local communities and town/parish councils.

6. That an allocation of up to 2% of the Investment Fund to resource and support the Groups (Connected Wolds and Connected Coast), which will include, but not be limited to, enabling engagement with businesses, local communities and town/parish councils, and supporting the establishment of a new Market and Inland Towns Group be approved.

Reasons

1. **Guidance for Resource Allocation:** Establishing clear principles in the East Lindsey Investment Fund Plan is essential to ensure that funding is allocated efficiently and in alignment with strategic priorities, such as enhancing pride in place, tourism, community, and business development.
2. **Themed Funding Allocation:** Allocating funds across key themes like "Pride in Place," "Tourism and Events," "Community Development," and "Business Growth" ensures that resources are strategically distributed to address the most important areas for local growth and improvement.
3. **Delegated Authority for Action:** Granting delegated authority to the Assistant Director, in consultation with portfolio holders, facilitates effective decision-making and flexibility in hiring consultants, procuring services, and implementing pilot projects to quickly develop action plans for each theme.
4. **Support for Enabling Activities:** Allocating up to 5% of the fund for enabling activities provides a dedicated budget for essential preparatory work such as staffing, consultation, and early-stage projects, ensuring proper planning and development.
5. **Engagement with Local Communities:** Creating a "Market and Inland Towns Group" (Connected Wolds) allows for effective engagement with businesses, local communities, and town/parish councils, fostering collaboration and alignment of local priorities with the Growth and Prosperity Plan and the Corporate Priorities Reserve areas of focus.
6. **Resourcing the Groups:** Allocating up to 2% of the fund to support the establishment and operation of the Connected Wolds group ensures that there are adequate resources for business and community engagement, helping the group to effectively promote and support local market towns and rural areas.

Other Options

Option 1: Proceed as per the recommendations of this Report, which will focus on delivery, build capacity and commit to an inclusive and collaborative approach that will benefit the whole District.

Option 2: Do nothing, which would result in the recommendations not being taken forward, with the opportunity to deliver a programme of investment not actioned and the wider benefits of the report detailed below will also not be realised.

21. QUARTER 1- 24/25 PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT:

A report was presented that brought together information relating to the Council's Performance and Risk at the end of Quarter 1, 2024/25 (as at the end of June 2024).

Members noted that a performance management framework was agreed across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership for 2024/25 to support the delivery of services. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been agreed to capture performance against the strategic priorities of the Partnership and the individual Councils.

In total there were 114 KPIs for East Lindsey District Council. These were set out by priority in Appendices 1 and 2 following the adoption of the Sub-regional Strategy.

There were 41 targeted indicators where performance was within the direct control of the Council, with past data or comparisons available on which to base those targets. Indicators were developed to stretch performance in teams. Commentary was provided in Appendix 1, pages 47 to 60 of the Agenda refers.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED

That the performance and risk information contained within the report and appendices be noted.

Reasons

To monitor delivery of performance and governance objectives and to support future planning and decision making within the Council.

Other Options

Alternative reporting arrangements.

22. ACCOUNTABLE BODY FOR ALIGNMENT OF CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ACROSS THE SOUTH & EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP:

A report was presented to seek agreement for East Lindsey District Council to be the financially accountable body for the implementation of a common Case Management System across the Partnership to realise efficiency savings through the alignment of teams and technology.

This report sought to move forward the alignment of multiple Case Management Systems across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership to the Uniform system currently being deployed at East Lindsey District Council. This would release efficiency savings to the Partnership by reducing systems and facilitating the alignment of teams.

As the alignment would be under East Lindsey District Council's existing contract, this report sought approval for East Lindsey District Council to be the financially accountable body for the implementation of the system, with the funding being provided by both Boston Borough Council and South Holland District Council (subject to decisions at both Councils).

The Assistant Director, Corporate welcomed the opportunity across the Partnership to align this piece of technology and confirmed that this would save money as the Council would benefit from some of the service review efficiencies generated and also by sharing its existing uniform licence cost with the other two authorities.

RESOLVED

- That approval be granted for East Lindsey District Council to become the financially accountable body for the implementation of the Uniform system into the partner Councils subject to the necessary funding approvals at both Boston Borough Council and South Holland District Council and the provision of £325,000 be made available in its Capital Programme for this purpose.

Reasons

- To allow the existing East Lindsey District Council contract to be used for the purposes of alignment.
- To deliver efficiency savings against current system costs.
- To facilitate the alignment of Planning and Regulatory Service Directorates to enable the services to achieve greater savings in their operating costs by working as 'one' across the Partnership.

Other Options

- Do nothing - this wouldn't enable savings to be realised or enable teams to be aligned.

- For the Partner Councils to procure their own standalone systems - this wouldn't enable savings to be realised.

N.B. James Gilbert, Assistant Director, Corporate left the Meeting at 6.22pm.

23. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR:

A report was presented to provide an overview of Voluntary and Community Sector work/activity that was being supported and further developed by the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) and to seek approval to delivering more sustainable and enhanced local services through the Voluntary and Community Sector that were operating within South and East Lincolnshire.

As sovereign councils and as the 'South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership' the Council recognised the important work of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). This included supporting the communities in South and East Lincolnshire to lead longer, safer, and healthier lives.

What made South and East Lincolnshire great, was its people and its communities. Notably, local communities played a significant part in respect to playing an active volunteering role in their localities. This may be for community or personal advantage, with volunteering showing positive physical and mental health benefits to participatory individuals.

The report provided an overview of activity that had taken place in the last year with the Voluntary and Community Sector. This included a summary of the SELCP 'Trusted Volunteer Scheme' funded through UK Shared Prosperity Funding, forming part of the Partnership's strategic approach to working with the VCS within the Sub-Region.

In addition, the report sought Member approval to consolidate the Council's position with the Voluntary and Community Sector through appropriate commissioning to third sector organisations to deliver community wellbeing related services.

During his introduction of the report, the Leader of the Council highlighted that it was important to recognise the great work that was done by the volunteer sector and all that the Council could do to enhance that role, and to assist to a degree and enhance to make it more efficient.

During discussion, the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy highlighted Recommendation No. 4 and fully supported the transition from grant giving and moving to a commissioned services model as this provided certainty with cash flow for the charity and would allow the voluntary groups to plan better.

The Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy further considered that the volunteers in the communities should be annually celebrated with an awards scheme as they worked extremely hard, above and beyond what was

expected of them and should be recognised. In response, Emily Spicer, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Community Leadership advised Members that a Community Awards Celebration 'Community Ambassador' was planned for November 2024. Nominations were currently open for the awards and closed on 4 October 2024.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing added that many of the services that residents came to expect would not happen without volunteers and highlighted the community hubs across the district whereby various Council teams supported them together with partner organisations.

RESOLVED

1. That the important role that the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) plays in supporting local communities/residents in enjoying healthy fulfilling lives within South and East Lincolnshire be noted.
2. That current progress made between the SELCP and VCS be noted. This includes the SELCP Trusted Volunteers Scheme.
3. That the proposed South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership 'Volunteer Charter' be agreed.
4. That a transition from grant giving to VCS organisations and move to a commissioned services model (where appropriate) that meet the aims and objectives of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership be approved.

Reasons

VCS organisations offer huge amounts to local areas, through the services they provide, the wealth they generate, and the people they connect, engage, and empower. At a time of rising pressure on services and tough financial constraints, it is more important than ever that councils can harness their local strengths and build successful partnerships with their local VCS.

Other Options

Do nothing – this option will not support additional benefits that working with our VCS provides.

24. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (CONSULTATION) 2025-26:

A report was presented to provide an update on the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme and sought Executive Board approval to consult on proposals for 2025/26.

The report provided an update on the current scheme and presented scheme modification options for the East Lindsey District Council working age Council Tax Support scheme to take forward to consultation with major preceptors

and the public, with a view to helping the Council decide its local scheme for 2025/26.

The Leader of the Council stated that he was happy to support the recommendations as the report was very well thought out and considered.

During discussion following a query on the costs of introducing a hardship fund, the Head of Revenue and Benefits advised that a hardship fund would only ever be considered as a back fall looking at exceptional cases of hardship and a criteria would need defining around this to deal with on a case by case basis. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy stated that it would make more sense for targeted interventions to be made earlier to avoid the situation of exceptional hardship.

Following which it was

RESOLVED

1. That noting the requirements of Establishing a Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 detailed at section 5 of the report and the modification options presented, consultation be approved on the options detailed at section 6 of the report;
2. That the Section 151 Officer in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Finance be delegated authority with oversight of the consultation approach.

Reasons

This will enable a period of consultation with major preceptors and the general public on Executive Board's preferred scheme option(s) for its 2025/26 Council Tax Support Scheme.

Following a consultation period, a report, including the consultation feedback, will come back to Executive Board to make its final recommendation to Full Council in respect of the scheme for 2025/26.

Other Options

Do nothing – This option is discounted as Executive Board has previously indicated its intention to carry out a more fundamental review of its scheme for 2025/26.

Replace the default, means tested scheme with an income banded scheme – this alternative approach has been discounted as part of the fundamental review process.

N.B. Sharon Hammond, Head of Revenue and Benefits, PSPS Limited left the Meeting at 6.40pm.

25. 2024/25 QUARTER ONE FINANCE UPDATE:

A report was presented that summarised the current financial position for the Council at the end of the first quarter of 2024/25 forecasting to the year end for consideration.

During his introduction the Portfolio Holder for Finance referred to key information as follows:

- Quarter one data provided a 3-month view on which the full year forecast was based. The full year outturn based on current projections and assumptions was a forecast net service surplus of £660k. The major variances related to continued staffing pressures within services, alongside reductions in planning, building control and land charges income, offset by increased investment income.
- An efficiency target of £1.496m was included in the 2024/25 budget. Saving opportunities were being monitored throughout the year, (detailed in Appendix A – Table 1b of the report). The forecast outturn position was now £1.496m being 100% of the efficiency target for 24/25. This position reflected the recent IDB funding support announcement and savings/income identified as part of the Q1 process.
- The financial pressure generated by the Internal Drainage Boards had now been supported by Government for 2024/25 to the sum of £834,000 as very recently announced. This was a really positive sign that the Government had taken note of the financial impact being felt by this Council.
- The total General Fund Capital Programme for 2024/25 was £55.110m, with the amendment proposed to Full Council to include the 2023/24 slippage, the revised capital programme for 2024/25 would be £76.882m, as detailed in Appendix A Table 4 & 4b. Actual capital expenditure for Q1 2024/25 was £7.966m.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the general fund forecast outturn position for 2024/25 being an underspend of £660k as detailed in Table 1 of Appendix A be noted.
- 2) That the amendment to the Capital Programme for 2024/25 as shown in Appendix A - Table 4 to take into account the changes proposed be recommended to Full Council.

Reasons

To ensure the Council's forecast financial position for 2024/25 is considered and related decisions approved. It is important that the Executive are aware of the financial position of the General Fund to ensure that they can make

informed decisions that are affordable and financially sustainable for the Council.

Other Options

To not approve the financial movements outlined.

26. DELIVERY OF THE ELDC TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME:

A report was presented to seek agreement and approval of the delivery of the ELDC Temporary Accommodation Programme Utilising the £1million funding allocated through the Council's Capital Programme and the award of DLUHC LAHF 3 funding for Temporary and Resettlement homes.

The report presented a headline business case for the purchase of properties on the open market suitable for temporary and re-settlement accommodation, utilising approved council funds and funds recently offered to the authority by government.

In September 2023, Executive Board agreed to provide £1m to increase the Council's temporary accommodation (TA) stock. Subsequent to this decision, Full Council approved the amendment to the 2023/24 Capital Programme budget to include this provision.

More recently, the Council had been notified by DLUHC of the award of £1.067m grant in response to its Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 expression of interest for the delivery of further re-settlement homes and temporary accommodation units.

This report sought approval to take part in the LAHF Round 3 programme, accept the associated funds, agree a strategy for their spend, amend the council's capital programme, and seek delegation to officers to agree the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the authority and MHCLG in relation to the LAHF funding.

During his introduction, the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing provided detail into the background of the report and highlighted the following key information:

- Analysis had defined a need to bring about an increase in the supply of one bed self-contained temporary accommodation properties as a priority investment. Current figures showed that out of 1700 registered on the housing register, 826 of those required one bed accommodation;
- The options explored for the delivery of one bed temporary accommodation homes was:
 - (a) New Build Properties

- (b) Purchasing Existing Satisfactory Properties
- (c) Conversion of Bed and Breakfasts or Guest Houses
- (d) Conversion of Existing Properties

After exploring the options available option D was considered the most appropriate solution to meet the identified needs.

- Planning policy on flood risk may require a variation to the approach in Skegness where ground floor sleeping accommodation was not permitted; therefore alternative consideration would be given to the acquisition of smaller 2-bed properties with first floor sleeping accommodation.

During discussion, the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy commented that it was sensible for the Council to buy and operate its own stock rather than using bed and breakfast for temporary accommodation.

The Leader of the Council added that the reality and sensitivity of homelessness over recent months had highlighted that as a Council this was dealt with very well and passed his thanks to both the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing and the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships together with the officer team for how this had been handled.

RESOLVED

- i) That participation in the Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 programme be agreed, with a view to bringing 12 properties into the council's ownership to meet short, medium and long-term housing needs within the district.
- ii) That the approach to the spend of the funds, including type, priority location and delivery approach, as articulated within this report be approved.
- iii) That the Assistant Director of Strategic Growth & Development, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing be delegated authority to finalise and agree the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the LAHF Round 3 programme with DLUHC and:
- iv) That the 2024/25 capital programme, as set out in Appendix 2, be amended to reflect the LAHF 3 funds and recommended to Full Council.

That Council be recommended to approve;

- i) The Council's 2024/25 capital programme to be amended to include the £1.067m in Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 funds, taking the council's total capital budget for temporary accommodation investment to £2.067m.

Reasons

1. To deliver the programme to increase the supply of Council owned general fund temporary accommodation and re-settlement homes following the allocation of £1m Council funding and a further £1.067m grant towards the LAHF programme.
2. To meet short term needs of homeless households within East Lindsey district.
3. To increase the number of homes owned by the authority and enable the authority to directly deliver housing solutions to issues within the district.
4. To enable the authority to act swiftly to secure the acquisition of suitable properties identified to meet the needs of residents of the district.
5. Reduce the need to use costly bed and breakfast accommodation as temporary accommodation.

Other Options

Do nothing - In this event the authority would not proceed with the purchase of properties. As a consequence, the expected benefits set out in the Reasons for Recommendations section of this report would not be realised with no increase in housing supply in the district achieved to address need.

Alternative properties – Officers considered a range of options on the types of property that could be acquired to deliver temporary and resettlement homes. Following evaluation of these and taking account of cost, size, location, flexibility, management implications and general suitability, the preferred options set out in the report have been arrived at. The option to acquire new build homes for further Re-settlement homes and suitable second-hand properties on the market for conversion to 1-bed homes are considered the most appropriate way to deliver the programme.

N.B. Emily Spicer, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Community Leadership and Matthew Hogan, Assistant Director Strategic Growth and Development left the Meeting at 6.55pm.

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of Executive Board was noted as Wednesday 6th November 2024.

28. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS:

RESOLVED

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

29. UPDATE ON INVEST EAST LINDSEY LIMITED:

An Exempt Report was presented for consideration.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations contained within the exempt report be approved.

Reason

As contained within the Exempt Report.

Other options

As contained within the Exempt Report.

The meeting closed at 6.59 pm.