

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chambers at the Hub, Mareham Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6PH on Wednesday, 16th July, 2025 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Terry Taylor (Chairman)
Councillor Neil Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Terry Aldridge, Claire Arnold, Tom Ashton, Richard Avison, Stef Bristow, Danny Brookes, Jimmy Brookes, Sandra Campbell-Wardman, Graham Cullen, Richard Cunnington, Mark Dannatt, Colin Davie, Roger Dawson, Sarah Devereux, Carleen Dickinson, Dick Edginton, Stephen Eyre, Martin Foster, Richard Fry, William Gray, Adam Grist, David Hall, Travis Hesketh, Darren Hobson, George Horton, Rosalind Jackson, Sam Kemp, Steve Kirk, Andrew Leonard, Craig Leyland, Steve McMillan, Daniel McNally, Carl Macey, Jill Makinson-Sanders, Kate Marnoch, Ellie Marsh, Graham Marsh, Fiona Martin, M.B.E., Edward Mossop, Paul Rickett, Daniel Simpson, Robert Watson and Ruchira Yarsley.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Wendy Bowkett, Billy Brookes, Carl Drury, Stephen Evans, Will Grover, Alex Hall, Tom Kemp, James Knowles and Terry Knowles.

22. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

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

- Councillor Claire Arnold asked it be noted that she worked at the Campus for Future Living, Item No. 7 'Report of the Chairman of Executive Board' refers.
- Councillor George Horton asked it be noted that a family member was employed by the Council, Item No. 18 'To implement a pay structure and associated job evaluation scheme for officers in shared Partnership roles within the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership' refers.
- Councillor George Horton further asked it be noted that he was a Magistrate, Item No. 15 'Questions' refers.
- Councillor Colin Davie asked it be noted that he was a director and trustee of the Renewable Energy Foundation, Item No. 13 'Motions on Notice' refers.

- Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders asked it be noted that she was a Director of PSPS Limited.

23. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 21 May 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

24. ACTION SHEETS:

The Actions of the Annual Meeting held on 21 May 2025 were confirmed as complete.

25. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

The Chairman advised of an item for noting as follows:

In pursuance of Section S91 of the Local Government Act 1972, East Lindsey District Council had appointed District Councillors Daniel McNally, Edward Mossop and Paul Rickett to South Somercotes Parish Council so that the Parish Council meetings were able to convene.

Members were advised that the General Licensing Committee programmed for Monday 21 July had been cancelled due to the lack of substantive business.

The Chairman had attended the following Civic Events:

- Spilsby Town Council - Recognition Award event at Franklin Hall in Spilsby.
- Louth Male Voice Choir - Mid Summer Musical Evening Concert at St. James Church, Louth.
- Grand Opening of the Seathorne Bank Railway Station, Skegness.

26. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public for this meeting.

27. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

The Leader of the Council presented Members with his report, pages 23 to 24 of the Agenda refer. In addition to the report, the Leader provided Members with a verbal update as follows:

'On Thursday 10th July we had the media launch of our LGR our Greater Lincolnshire for All proposal. It went very well. You will have all been sent the supporting briefing documents and social media links.

We need to be bold and ambitious and our engagement will be county wide and seek the views of residents, partners and town and parish councils.

We believe our proposal is the most sensible and will deliver for our residents and communities. We believe our proposal best fits the government criteria

The other potential proposal that will most likely be considered is the LCC continuity model. Like ours, a 2-council solution but with a significant imbalance of population.

Currently that would be 795000 and 329000 and by 2042 the population would be 865000 and 326000. Our model accords with the population criteria of circa 500K.

That is better for the democratic relationship between resident and councillor and also means we can provide services of the highest quality across adult and children's services and also on other areas of provision.

Of course, change is not always welcomed and be very clear we did not seek this. Effectively government have said to us 'engage positively or we will make this happen'.

We have chosen to engage positively. We will make sure this council is fully briefed throughout the process prior to submitting our completed proposal in November'.

'A year ago, National Grid held their Stage 1 Consultation on the early proposals for their Grimsby to Walpole project.

We are now nearing the end of their Stage 2 Consultation which has run from 11th June and will close at midnight on Wednesday 6th August 2025. If Councillors or residents have not made their submissions, I encourage them to do so. ELDC as the Local Planning Authority will be making a detailed technical submission.

Tonight, I speak as a concerned community and Council Leader. Our residents, communities and affected ward Councillors are still grappling with the potential unwanted intrusion of this 400KV overhead transmission line across our district.

As I've stated before this will scar and destroy vistas that have existed for millennia and are valued by residents now and will be into the future.

This will undoubtedly affect a tourism industry worth £874 million in 2024 employing 6500 residents in the sector.

It will also alter the balance of economics for many operating farms across Lincolnshire who may be tempted to move away from food production to energy generation as nationally we ignore the necessity of food security. It

will also drive tenant farmers off the land and threaten compulsory purchase on those landowners who resist the move away from traditional agriculture.

And all this is being assisted by changes this Labour government is making to the planning regime that will see compulsory purchase of land to facilitate solar farms and a change in the threshold of who makes decisions on large renewable energy applications. More applications will be considered as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects decided by the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State.

This scheme is being presented to us as a means of taking energy from where it is being produced to where it is needed in the south of England. Seemingly all well and good, but the reality I fear is somewhat different.

There are a number of questions that have not as yet been fully answered.

Why is there not an alternative to this proposed route? Surely it would make more sense to have an undersea link straight to the Thames Estuary?

Why are there 2 proposed substations near Alford?

The answers to these questions lie in the nature of what National Grid is. It is a publicly traded company whose shares can be purchased on the stock market. Its motivation is therefore not necessarily the interests of those that are affected by its transmission lines but rather its shareholders. And while I'm happy to say I'm a capitalist, sometimes the interest of capital is not always benign.

This link is not just a transmission line north to south, it is an open door to future large scale solar and onshore renewable generation along its whole length. If allowed, this district will be the generating and storage hub for the southeast of England with little or no benefit to our residents.

Alford has two substations because one is not enough to connect all the anticipated connections that will be driven by multiple solar farms along its route. We already know energy companies are lining up to purchase land.

It will decimate our tourism industry, it will distort our agricultural heritage into a grotesque sea of sterile solar panels and make institutions and companies with no connection to Lincolnshire very rich. All to the detriment of what we value locally.

I don't believe National Grid has provided full costings for other routes including the seabed option. This information must be detailed and made public. They have arbitrarily determined that pylons are the best option without providing the detailed evidence.

The previous position of LCC under Conservative Control was that a legal challenge would be funded against National Grid forcing them to provide such information.

While I read this morning that LCC will spend £750K on planning consultants I would urge you Cllr Brooks, that if the Reform party are serious about stopping the pylons you must make sure your Executive agree to use such a legal challenge.

We must disrupt the onslaught of this monstrosity across our district.

Again, I say to residents affected, please make your submission on the consultation before the 6th of August'.

Following which, questions and comments were put forward as follows:

The Leader of the Council passed his thanks to Councillor Devereux, Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and the team for the very successful funding fair held on 9 July 2025 and commented that it was very well received by Parish councillors and all those attended.

In response, a Member echoed the Leader's thanks to Councillor Devereux and was pleased to see so many local organisations looking to secure funding to make a difference in their communities.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group suggested that the funding fair should be held at other locations across the district.

Campus for Future Living

The Leader of the Council informed Members that he, along with Councillor William Gray, Portfolio Holder for Better Ageing and Housing Communities had attended the official launch event at the Campus on 16 June 2025. He described the day as a great success and was pleased to see strong attendance from the Council's partners and the local MP.

He then invited the Portfolio Holder for Better Ageing and Housing Communities to provide Members with a briefing on the Council's planned activities at the Campus and the anticipated benefits for Mablethorpe and the surrounding communities.

IMPACT Managers Development Programme

The Leader of the Council was supportive of the programme and pleased that this had added to the enhancement of officers' skills and people joining the workforce.

A Member commented that she had taken part in the programme and that it was encouraging to see internal officer development taken seriously.

Age Friendly

The Leader of the Council stated that as an employer it was important to support the campaign, and he was very pleased that the Council was engaging with this.

Corporate Inductions

The Leader of the Council expressed his satisfaction that the corporate induction programme had successfully engaged staff and helped them gain a clear understanding of the organisation's operations.

Vintage on Sea

The Leader of the Council was pleased to hear that the Vintage on Sea event had been a huge success enjoyed by so many visitors and local people and highlighted that Sutton on Sea was a fantastic setting for this to be held.

The Leader of the Labour Group stated that she was grateful for the support that Sutton on Sea received for hosting the event. It was highlighted that residents had queried who made the decisions on where to place the stalls, for example beer was being sold from barrels outside a public house and an ice cream van was parked next door to a local ice cream seller.

In response, Councillor Robert Watson, Ward Member for Sutton on Sea and a representative of the Sutton Events Group, acknowledged what he regarded as fair criticisms. He recognised that the organisational aspects of the event were not flawless and committed to reviewing these points for improvement in next year's event. He also praised the efforts of officers in helping the Seaview Colonnade reach its potential and highlighted the vintage cinema set-up in Merridale Hall as a standout example of successful collaboration between the Council and local residents, to the benefit of all involved.

In response, the Leader of the Council reiterated the success of the event and hoped that the issues highlighted could be reconciled with Councillor Watson for future events. The Leader thanked Councillor Watson for his constructive comments and wished him well with future events.

Culture Conference

The Leader of the Council expressed satisfaction that the Culture Conference had been a vibrant and successful event, sparking continued interest in the concept that heritage and culture positively contribute to both wellbeing and the local economy.

Update on National Grid

The Leader of the Labour Group expressed disappointment with the Councillor briefing, stating that she felt Members were not given a genuine opportunity to share their views, as submitted questions appeared to be subject to vetting. She encouraged Members to actively participate in the consultation process and to ensure their residents were aware of it before it

closed on 6 August 2025. She also expressed her anticipation that Councillors Danny and Jimmy Brookes, in their new roles as Lincolnshire County Councillors, would serve as strong advocates for the district and hold Lincolnshire County Council to its commitments.

Councillor Danny Brookes, Leader of the Reform UK Group, thanked the Leader for his update on the National Grid and expressed agreement that the proposed pylons would have a detrimental impact on Lincolnshire. He warned that their installation could pave the way for widespread development of solar panels and wind turbines across the area. Speaking in his capacity as a Lincolnshire County Councillor, he confirmed that the County Council had not altered its stance on the issue and remained committed to opposing the pylons. He also noted that nationally, 110 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) had been approved since 2010, with 25 of those located in Lincolnshire, each determined by central government.

In response, the Leader of the Council welcomed the comments made but expressed concern about the high number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) located in Lincolnshire. He referred to his earlier verbal update, noting that land was already being acquired by prospective energy companies in anticipation of connecting to the potential coastal grid. The Leader reiterated his appreciation for Councillor Danny Brookes' remarks and expressed hope that any forthcoming proposals would be subject to legal challenge, based on the evidence provided, and that these issues would be raised during the inquiry process in due course.

A Member referred to a recent presentation by Andrew Roberts, a former adviser and consultant to LCC who was advising on the NSIP projects throughout Lincolnshire and suggested that a full Member briefing be arranged to explore the development implications associated with the proposed pylon infrastructure. They highlighted the technical aspects discussed, such as AC/DC voltage, data centres, artificial intelligence, and large-scale data projects which were particularly insightful. Concern was raised about the significant water usage associated with such facilities, which could have implications for the district. The Member emphasised the importance of Members being well-informed in order to respond effectively to the consultation, which closed on 6 August 2025.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised Members that he had spoken with Andrew Roberts and found his insights highly informative. He expressed willingness to arrange a Member briefing, while acknowledging the limited time available. The Leader also commented on the significant planning changes underway, suggesting these were not coincidental given the emerging proposals for local government reorganisation and he raised concerns about the increasing distance between residents and decision-makers.

A Member expressed agreement with the Leader's remarks during his update and commented that the National Grid appeared to prioritise the interests of

its shareholders, demonstrating a short-sighted approach that came at the expense of the people of Lincolnshire.

In response, the Leader of the Council thanked the Member for her support and stated that he was happy to discuss any further issues outside of the meeting.

A Member commented that he was pleased the Council had taken the lead on this, however was disappointed that the consultation run over the busy summer period as many rural area parish councils broke during these months.

In response, the Leader of the Council explained that the timing of the consultation was beyond the Council's control. However, he assured Members that every effort would be made to promote the consultation as widely as possible, acknowledging the communication challenges posed by the summer period.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group commented that the pylons would be the greatest change to the district's landscape since the Ice Age resulting in the industrialisation of a once beautiful rural area. It was further highlighted that Lincolnshire produced 29% of the country's food and concerns were also raised on tourism and the inland areas.

In response, the Leader of the Council acknowledged the concerns raised regarding the industrialisation of both the district and the wider county and agreed that the issue of food security was a significant and pressing matter.

A Member asked whether it would be possible to overlay the proposed pylon route maps with existing flood risk maps, noting that the overhead infrastructure appeared to avoid designated flood zones.

They expressed concern that this might lead to a concentration of solar panels and battery storage units along the coastline itself.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that he would refer the query to the Portfolio Holder for Planning to ensure the Council had a clear understanding of how the flood risk maps intersect with the proposed infrastructure routes and the implications for the potential siting of renewable energy installations.

A Member noted the frequent references to the importance of tourism to the district, particularly along the coast, and asked whether any work was planned to assess the potential negative impact on the tourism sector should pylons and substations be constructed, especially in preparation for a potential public inquiry.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that a technical report was being developed as part of the planning response which would include an assessment of the impact on tourism. He assured Members that, if

necessary, additional advice from consultants would be sought to support this work.

Update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

A Member queried how the response to the proposal had been received to date and whether there had been a satisfactory amount of engagement.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised that the engagement would be a continuing process and as feedback was received from stakeholders this would help shape the proposal so that it made perfect sense to everyone across the county.

A Member remarked that any future model of governance in Lincolnshire would necessitate a new-style Local Plan to reflect the revised geography. They sought reassurance that this was not contributing to the delay in the review of the East Lindsey Local Plan. The Member also questioned whether the Executive Board had provided any input or commentary on the current consultation regarding reforms to planning committees and delegated powers, and whether the Executive's views aligned with those of the wider Council membership. It was further noted that the consultation was open until 23 July 2025, and Members were strongly encouraged to submit their responses.

N.B. Councillor Graham Cullen left the Meeting at 7.07pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.09pm.

A Member asked whether training would be provided for those Members supporting the proposal, enabling them to act as advocates within their parishes and the wider community.

In response, the Leader of the Council thanked the Member for their positive comments regarding the funding event and welcomed the suggestion of having well-informed Councillors serve as Ambassadors for the Council's bid. He confirmed that he would liaise with officers to ensure that appropriate briefing materials were made available in a timely manner, equipping District Councillors to engage effectively with their communities and clearly articulate the objectives of the bid.

N.B. Councillor Terry Aldridge left the Meeting at 7.10pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.13pm.

A further question was raised regarding how town and parish councils would continue to operate following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and whether this might involve the establishment of area committees. It was suggested that a briefing note be prepared for Members to take to meetings along with a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

In response, the Leader of the Council acknowledged the importance of keeping information current and accessible. He noted that the FAQs and website content would need to remain flexible and evolve over time, but

confirmed his commitment to ensuring that the Council did everything possible to keep Members and the public well-informed.

A Member referred to the update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and expressed concern over proposed government recommendations, particularly one suggesting a reduction in the number of councillors from over 400 to just over 100 and highlighted this as an indication of how disconnected the government appeared to be from local realities.

The Leader acknowledged the concerns regarding the proposed reduction in councillor numbers and advised that the Council was actively working with town and parish councils, as well as the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC), to explore how best to ensure effective local representation. This included understanding what powers parishes might need in the future, and what responsibilities they would be willing to take on. He noted that this could lead to an enhanced role for town and parish councils, potentially including changes to allowances, and recognised that this would be a significant and complex piece of work requiring careful consideration.

A Member raised a query regarding the £175,000 for consultants. They questioned the source of this funding and whether East Lindsey District Council Members would have an opportunity to vote on the matter at any stage.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised that Executive Board had agreed for £175k to be used from the various reserves to undertake the consultation work in the run up to the Council's submission. Members were advised that the decision to submit the proposal would be Executive decision, and the Executive would bring every stage of the consultation back to ensure a comprehensive understanding within the Council.

A Member referred to the ongoing consultation on the reform of flood funding, which was due to conclude on 29 July 2025 and asked whether the Council had submitted any input.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised that he would ask the Portfolio Holder for Planning to contact the Member directly to provide an update on the Council's involvement in the consultation.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group commented that she would like to see the district's market towns included more regularly in the Leader's report, including details of investment and good news stories.

In response, the Leader of the Council stated that he would happily update on market towns in future reports and assured Members that money was being invested in market towns with various schemes and grants.

28. 2024/25 DRAFT OUTTURN FINANCE UPDATE:

The 2024/25 Draft Outturn Finance Update was presented which set out a summary of the draft outturn position for the Council covering the year to 31st March 2025 for Members' consideration to ensure the Council's draft outturn financial position for 2024/25 was considered and related decisions approved. It was important that Full Council was aware of the financial position of the General Fund to ensure that it could make informed decisions that were affordable and financially sustainable for the Council.

On behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, during his introduction of the report the Leader of the Council highlighted the following key areas:

- The General Fund Revenue Budget
- The General Fund Reserves Position
- The Capital Programme for 2024/25, and
- The Treasury Management Performance for the year

Full details were set out at Sections 1 and Appendix A of the Agenda, pages 25 to 48 refer.

The recommendations were duly Proposed and Seconded.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

The Leader of the Council explained that due to the detail in the report he would defer to the Chief Executive to respond, or an answer would be provided to the relevant Member(s) after the meeting.

A Member referred to Table 1b – 2024/25 budgeted efficiency target Outturn, page 31 of the Agenda refers and queried why the Solar PV line at £171k was listed as a budget omission. In response, the Chief Executive stated that he would ensure a response was provided after the meeting.

A further comment was raised regarding the third recommendation, noting that it involved more than just capital slippage into the following financial year. Specifically, it included an internal borrowing amount of £552,000, which Council was being asked to approve, as outlined in Table 4c – Capital Programme Revised 2025/26. Clarification on this point was requested.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that a detailed response would be provided following the meeting.

A Member sought reassurance from the Portfolio Holder for Finance that he was fully up to date with aspects of his portfolio as he had been notably absent from Audit and Governance Committee Meetings as well as today's Council Meeting.

In response, the Leader of the Council acknowledged the concerns raised, and assured Members that Councillor Tom Kemp was a very diligent portfolio holder, however he held a full-time job that took him across the country so asked for understanding of this.

A Member referred to the Carbon Reduction Reserve, page 34 of the Agenda refers and asked for clarification why the Council's Use of Reserve had been allocated as follows 'Climate Change Fund for Boston Borough Council (BBC) and South Holland District Council (SHDC)'. In response, the Chief Executive explained that ELDC was the accountable body for the scheme and clarified that there was no expense incurred by the Council for BBC and SHDC.

A Member highlighted Table 4a – 2024/25 Capital Programme and Outturn, page 35 of the Agenda refers and noted that whilst £3.758m had been approved for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) the actual outturn was £2.709m and queried whether this was due to slippage. A concern was raised and an historical example provided in relation to how quickly DFGs were being applied for and the time it took to complete the works.

In response, the Chief Executive explained that it was normal to have a budget increase as the year went on which meant that there often was not time to respond and expend the money before the end of the year. However, there would be a certain amount of money committed that was work in progress.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group (ELIG) referred to the Council's investments and queried how the Council would ensure that under Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) that the Council's reserves and investments did not pass over to other more profligate areas.

The Leader of the ELIG raised the following queries as follows:

Section 2.1 – Section 2.1 – Key Financial Issues in Quarter 4 of 2024/25 – 'The Council's 2024/25 net budget for investment income is £2.745m, the outturn for investment income is £3.817m, contributing to an overachievement of £1.071m after allocating £168k to S106 Long Term Liabilities', page 29 of the Agenda refers. A fuller explanation was requested on what the S106 Long Term Liabilities were.

In response, the Chief Executive stated that he would ensure a response was provided after the meeting.

Section 2.2 – Revenue Budget – General Fund Assets 'Management Fee payable to Invest East Lindsey (IEL) offset by BP Pulse income ...'. Clarification was sought on what BP Pulse income was, page 30 of the Agenda refers.

In response, the Chief Executive explained that this related to the EV charging provision that the Council had installed in some of its car parks.

Section 2.2 – Income – Table 2 Trading Income Budgets. A comment was made that it was disappointing to see the markets performing badly, with the market income attributed to the effects of poor weather, however hoped to see this improve, page 32 of the Agenda refers.

Section 2.3.1 – Specific and General Reserves – Wellbeing Reserve. A comment was made that the Lincolnshire Community Voluntary Service (LCVS) had been allocated £31k and queried why they could not source their own funding.

In response, the Chief Executive explained that LCVS would be part of the Council's capacity funding that would enable LCVS to do that work for fundraising for other organisations.

RESOLVED

1. That the General Fund draft outturn position for 2024/25 being an underspend of £874k as detailed in Table 1 of Appendix A to the report referred be noted and that the transfer of the surplus to the Investment Volatility Reserve be approved.
2. That the reserves transactions and balances as set out in Appendix A - Table 3 of the report referred for 2024/25 be approved.
3. That the capital phasing from 2024/25 to 2025/26 presented in Appendix A - Table 4c of the report referred along with the capital additions for 2025/26 be approved.

29. 2024/25 ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT:

On behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the Leader of the Council presented a report to consider approval of the Annual Treasury Report 2024/25 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management to ensure best practice was maintained.

During his introduction of the report, Members were referred to Appendix 1 to the Agenda, pages 55 to 68 refer which detailed the Council's activities and actual prudential and treasury indicators for the following areas:

- An economic update for the 2024/25 financial year;
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2024/25;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2024/25;
- Debt position;
- Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Indicators.

The report also referred to a key element of the Council's Governance Framework and represented an important contribution to the evidence trail in support of the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.

Following which the recommendation was duly Proposed and Seconded.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group highlighted that some of Invest East Lindsey's (IEL) loans were not due to mature until 2042 and queried what happened to the repayment of the loans once ELDC had ceased to exist following LGR.

N.B. Councillor Claire Arnold left the room at 7.28pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.30pm.

Discussion ensued, following which a Member raised a query regarding the potential collapse of IEL as a company. They asked what mechanisms would be in place to recover the assets in such a scenario and whether any provisions existed to bridge the relationship between the Council and the outstanding loan, particularly in the context of a future new authority.

In response, the Leader of the Council explained that in the event of the Council ceasing to exist, any associated debts and loans would become part of the broader financial considerations to be addressed by central government as part of the Local Government Review. He noted that East Lindsey District Council was in a fortunate position, having managed its finances prudently and avoiding significant debt or loan issues.

The Chief Executive added that the process was straightforward and advised that all assets and liabilities held by the Council would transfer to the successor authority.

Raising a Point of Order, a Member highlighted that under company law, the obligations of IEL could change depending on its corporate structure once ELDC no longer existed as the monitoring authority. They questioned what safeguards would be in place to prevent the company from disposing of its assets or liquidating once oversight by ELDC had ended.

In response, the Chief Executive clarified that IEL was wholly owned by the Council. Upon Local Government Reorganisation, ownership of the company would transfer to the new authority. As such, the governance framework and operational parameters of the company would remain unchanged.

RESOLVED

That the Treasury Annual Report 2024/25 at Appendix 1 to the report referred, as required by the Local Government Act 2003 following scrutiny by the Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 26 June 2025 be approved.

30. ANNUAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL 2025:

Councillor Fiona Martin, Chairman of Overview Committee presented the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report to Council 2025 for noting, pages 69 to 74 of the Agenda refer.

During her introduction, Councillor Martin asked that her thanks be passed to all members of the Overview Committee and all Members who had engaged with the scrutiny process over the last 12 months.

N.B. Councillors Richard Fry and Ru Yarsley left the room at 7.31pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.33pm .

Thanks were also passed to the Vice Chairman, the Outside Body Appointee to the Health Scrutiny Committee, the Scrutiny and Policy Officer and Democratic Services Officer for their support. Thanks were further extended to Councillor Graham Marsh, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Leisure and Culture and Carbon Reduction for his regular attendance at the meetings.

Councillor Martin referred to the topics covered by the Committee and Scrutiny Panels during the year and encouraged Members to put forward topic submissions for consideration and highlighted the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) as a worthy subject.

N.B. Councillor Paul Rickett left the room at 7.35pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.37pm.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

A Member referred to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and agreed that the topic warranted scrutiny. They further suggested that in light of the forthcoming Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), the Overview Committee should play a key role in monitoring and tracking the Executive Board's actions, particularly in relation to safeguarding the Council's reserves and the transfer of assets to any future authority, with specific attention to assets delivered through the Towns Fund.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group proposed the establishment of a scrutiny panel to examine the legacy the Council would leave behind as part of the local government reform process. In response, Councillor Martin encouraged Members to submit a scrutiny topic suggestion form for the Committee's consideration.

The Leader of the Council acknowledged the valuable work of the Overview Committee under Councillor Martin's leadership and welcomed the Committee's role in providing challenge. He recognised the concerns raised regarding LGR and affirmed that the Overview Committee served as a consistent and important mechanism for monitoring developments, a role that was fully supported by the Executive Board.

Councillor Ros Jackson, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, thanked Councillor Martin for her contributions to the Overview Committee and highlighted the collaborative approach taken between the two committees.

In response, Councillor Martin expressed appreciation for the supportive comments and noted that the Audit and Governance Committee already had a standing item on its work programme relating to LGR. She confirmed that she would liaise with Councillor Jackson to ensure that any future work on the topic would be coordinated to avoid duplication.

No further comments or questions were received.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report to Council 2025 be noted.

31. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY AND POLICY PANELS:

(a) Scrutiny Panel Report - Review of support for Towns and Parishes across East Lindsey:

A Scrutiny Panel report was presented on the Review of support for Towns and Parishes across East Lindsey. Members were requested to note the Panel's report and recommendations.

N.B. Councillor Stef Bristow left the room at 7.45pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.48pm.

During her introduction, Councillor Ruchira Yarsley, Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel extended her thanks to the Clerks and Parish Councillors, officers involved and to the dedicated Panel Members for their time and input.

Full details were set out in the report, attached at Appendix 1, pages 79 to 104 of the Agenda refer.

Members were further referred to the recommendations detailed at pages 91 to 93 of the Agenda pack.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

A Member requested clarification on who currently held the role of Town and Parish Liaison Officer (TPLO). The Leader of the Labour Group, who also served on the scrutiny panel informed Members that she had met the TPLO at several meetings he had organised but understood that the officer was no longer in post. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel added that the TPLO role was not a dedicated position, rather it formed part of a broader remit which also included responsibilities in Mablethorpe, Alford, and Louth.

A Member then referred to Recommendation 4b under Section B (Support), which proposed: *"Implement partnership working with ELDC, LALC, and town and parish councils to help develop proposals for future representation and delivery of responsibilities at this level of local government."* The Member queried how and when this would be implemented, stressing that engagement

with local councils should begin immediately rather than waiting for the formal engagement process to conclude. They also suggested that district councillors should be empowered to take the lead informally within their wards. In response, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel agreed that the foundations for area committees should be laid informally and noted that the panel's recommendations reflected the need for a measured, district-wide approach.

A Louth Ward Member commented that Louth had previously operated an area committee, which had proved ineffective and functioned largely as a 'talking shop.' They also expressed concern that Louth Town Council lacked meaningful liaison with ELDC and called for a discussion between the two bodies regarding the future of local ELDC assets in light of local government reform.

In response, the Leader of the Council acknowledged that previous area committees had not achieved their intended impact, though not for lack of effort. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that any new neighbourhood area committees proposed by government were designed to function effectively.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel added that feedback gathered during the scrutiny process revealed mixed views on the effectiveness of area committees. However, given the government's apparent preference for this model as part of the LGR process it was something that would need to be taken seriously.

The Leader of the Labour Group, reflecting on her involvement in the scrutiny panel confirmed that robust discussions had taken place regarding the roles of town, parish, and district councillors.

N.B. Councillor Robert Watson left the room at 7.51pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.53pm.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Chairman of the Panel for the report and acknowledged that several of the recommendations would be valuable. Regarding the discussion on reinstating area committees, he urged caution, emphasising the need to clearly define their purpose and powers. He considered it premature to establish such structures or begin formal engagement with parish councils at this stage, given the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the transition to a new governance structure. He stressed the importance of understanding the broader implications of these changes across the evolving geography of the area.

Following a recent meeting with the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC), the Chief Executive and the Leader of South Holland District Council, a key concern raised was how town and parish councils would engage in the process. Specifically, there were questions about what powers they would require and how they would understand their evolving roles, particularly as these responsibilities could become burdensome for individuals who had

originally volunteered for their positions. As a result, an agreement was reached with LALC to maintain ongoing dialogue throughout the process.

The Leader concluded by emphasising that engagement around LGR must be approached carefully to ensure that any resulting structures were effective and delivered meaningful outcomes for parish councils and their communities.

N.B. Councillor Colin Davie left the room at 7.53 pm and re-joined the Meeting at 7.58pm.

N.B. Councillor Sandra Campbell-Wardman left the room at 7.58pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.00pm.

N.B. Councillor Steve Kirk left the room at 7.58pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.02pm.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group thanked the Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel for a detailed report and considered that it was poor communication between the town and district councils that was at the root of the problem.

A Member raised the issue of exploring consolidation through Community Governance Reviews, noting that this had not been included in the recommendations, specifically referencing page 89 of the Agenda. They emphasised the importance of this approach, particularly in light of the report's reference to 163 parishes which was considered unmanageable. However, it was acknowledged that current government guidance advised against conducting Community Governance Reviews concurrently with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). A concern was also raised as to whether the Council currently had the resources required to undertake such a review.

The Chairman of Overview Committee thanked Councillor Yarsley and the scrutiny panel for the excellent report and acknowledged that it was a large piece of work to undertake, particularly communicating with the town and parish councils whose feedback had largely informed the recommendations.

A Member expressed the view that parish councils were often treated as the 'poor relation', and attributed this to a lack of effective communication. They noted that this concern had been clearly reflected in feedback gathered through surveys conducted with town and parish councils. It was also highlighted that the information available on the ELDC website needed to be clearer and more accessible.

No further comments or questions were received.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

32. COMMITTEE SEATS REVIEW:

A report was presented to review committee seat allocations to political groups in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and confirm appointments to committees. This followed a change to political group membership.

During his introduction of the report, the Chief Executive advised Members that the purpose of the report was to set out a revised allocation of seats and associated appointments for committees and panels following a review which was undertaken in response to a recent change in political group membership.

Members were referred to Appendix A 'Allocation of Committee seats' and Appendix B 'Appointments to Committees, pages 111 to 114 of the Agenda refer.

The Chief Executive advised Members that the following committee seats had been exchanged, which retained a current proportionality:

The seat allocated to the Reform UK Group on Overview Committee was now allocated to the East Lindsey Progressives Group and would be taken by Councillor Robert Watson. The seat allocated to the East Lindsey Progressives Group on the Employment Committee was now allocated to the Reform UK Group and would be taken by Councillor Danny Brookes.

An update to Appendix B where the appointments were to be confirmed were as follows:

The three seats allocated to the East Lindsey Independent Group on Planning Committee would be taken by Councillors Stephen Eyre, Steve McMillan and Ru Yarsley.

Following which the proposal, together with the amendments as set out was duly Proposed and Seconded.

N.B. Councillor Sarah Devereux left the room at 8.05pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.07pm.

N.B. Councillor Paul Rickett left the room at 8.06pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.08pm.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group expressed disappointment that the Reform UK Group had relinquished its seat on the Overview Committee, whose primary role was to hold the Executive to account in favour of a seat on the Employment Committee which had not convened since 2017.

In response, Councillor Danny Brookes, Leader of the Reform UK Group explained that every member of his group had been allocated a committee seat, unlike some other political groups. He highlighted that all members of his group were in full-time employment which made attendance at daytime meetings particularly challenging. However, he indicated a willingness to support meetings being held in the evening.

Several Members agreed that the predominance of daytime meetings created difficulties for working councillors.

A long-serving Member observed that meetings had traditionally been held during the day, but over time a more flexible, hybrid approach had developed. They acknowledged the importance of making meetings accessible to Members who worked during the day.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning added that a request to hold Planning Policy meetings in the evenings had been approved in 2022 and had been well received by those affected.

RESOLVED

That the revised allocation of seats to political groups as detailed in Appendix A to the report referred and appointments to committees as detailed in Appendix B to the report referred be approved with the following amendments:

- The seat allocated to the Reform UK Group on Overview Committee be allocated to the East Lindsey Progressives Group and be taken by Councillor Robert Watson. The seat allocated to the East Lindsey Progressives Group on the Employment Committee be allocated to the Reform UK Group and be taken by Councillor Danny Brookes.
- The three seats allocated to the East Lindsey Independent Group on Planning Committee be taken by Councillors Stephen Eyre, Steve McMillan and Ru Yarsley.

33. MOTIONS ON NOTICE:

The following Motions were received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12:

Motion 1

“This Council requests that the Executive endeavours that only peat-free compost is used for all horticultural purposes undertaken by the Council, including activities carried out by contractors on behalf of the Council and specify that all organisations receiving grants from the council must not use peat in any form.”

Proposer: Robert Watson
Seconder: Graham Marsh

In his introduction, Councillor Watson informed Members that during the filling of planters around the newly refurbished paddling pool in Sutton on Sea, he discovered that 100% Irish Moss peat compost had been used, sourced by the subcontractor. Upon further investigation, he was disappointed to conclude that cost was likely the determining factor. He noted that while the Council's procurement strategy included a section on sustainable procurement, it did not specifically address the use of peat.

N.B. Councillor Terry Aldridge left the room at 8.15pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.18pm.

Councillor Watson explained that peatlands were a unique and vital ecosystem, home to a diverse range of plant and animal species found nowhere else. He emphasised that these areas stored significant amounts of carbon and that the extraction of peat resulted in the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In conclusion, he noted that major DIY retailers and garden centres had already taken proactive steps to phase out peat-based compost ahead of legislation banning its sale. He urged Members to support the Motion as a positive step towards eliminating the use of peat and promoting more sustainable practices.

Councillor Graham Marsh seconded the Motion.

A Member expressed support for the intention behind the Motion and acknowledged its rationale, however raised concerns about the practicality of monitoring its implementation.

In response, the Leader of the Labour Group disagreed, stating that the Council had a clear responsibility to address its carbon footprint and expressed full support for the Motion.

Speaking to the Motion, another Member pointed out an inconsistency in the wording. They noted that while the Motion stated the Council should 'endeavour' to use only peat-free compost for its horticultural activities, it also stated that organisations receiving Council grants 'must not' use peat in any form. The Member suggested that the phrase 'must not' be replaced with 'endeavour' for consistency.

In response, the Leader of the Reform UK Group expressed support for the Motion and agreed with the proposed change in wording. He also raised concerns about how the non-use of peat-based compost would be enforced and the potential impact on floral displays along the coastal areas.

N.B. Councillor Fiona Martin left the room at 8.21pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.25pm.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that his group was supportive of the Motion and agreed with the proposed amendment to the wording. He emphasised that the Motion reflected the Council's intent and commitment, and noted that given the introduction of relevant legislation there was no justification for the Council not to act on this issue.

Speaking as the Seconder to the Motion, Councillor Marsh expressed his support for the change in wording from *'must not'* to *'endeavour.'* He voiced disappointment at the negative comments received and stressed that Members had a leadership role within their communities. He added that even small individual actions could collectively make a significant impact on reducing the carbon footprint and viewed the Motion as an important first step and a clear demonstration of leadership by the Council.

In summing up, Councillor Watson confirmed his agreement with the revised wording and reiterated that, wherever possible, the Council should make its position clear that the use of peat was not acceptable.

Following which a vote was taken on the Motion

RESOLVED:

That the Motion be supported.

Motion 2

"Council welcomes the end to the threat of a nuclear waste dump in our area and, in order to mitigate our residents from any similar threat, recommends to the Executive that the authority joins the Nuclear Free Local Authorities group and appoints an elected member representative to serve on the Steering Committee of the NFLAs."

Proposer: Robert Watson

Seconder: Stef Bristow

In his introduction, Councillor Watson reminded Members that in March 2025, the Council had unanimously voted to oppose the construction of a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for nuclear waste in Lincolnshire and had urged Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to adopt a similar stance, which it did several months later. He emphasised that it was the residents of East Lindsey who had borne the greatest impact, experiencing stress and disruption as a result of the proposed project. Councillor Watson stated that the defeat of the GDF proposal clearly demonstrated local opposition to nuclear power and urged the Council to continue signalling its resistance to future nuclear developments within the district and across Lincolnshire.

He proposed that the Council reinforced its position by joining the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Group (NFLA), an organisation that for over 40 years had represented councils opposed to civil nuclear power. The group had

played a significant role in shaping national policy on radioactive waste management, nuclear power station development, and emergency planning.

Councillor Watson also highlighted the government's growing interest in small modular nuclear reactors, particularly along coastal areas. He suggested that declaring the district and county nuclear-free could influence decisions around future installations and shared examples of similar initiatives from other parts of the country.

In closing, Councillor Watson urged Members to support the Motion as a proactive step towards promoting public safety, protecting the environment, and safeguarding the wellbeing of local communities.

Councillor Stef Bristow seconded the Motion.

N.B. Councillor Jimmy Brookes left the room at 8.33pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.35pm.

Speaking in support of the Motion, the Leader of the Labour Group expressed her full endorsement, particularly as someone who had witnessed first-hand the impact and fear experienced by individuals directly affected by the proposed Geological Disposal Facility (GDF).

The Leader of the Council acknowledged the concerns raised by residents regarding the GDF proposal. However, he stated that following the Council's decision not to proceed with the project he would not be supporting the Motion. He emphasised that the Council could not yet fully anticipate its future energy requirements and argued that if nuclear energy could be delivered safely, it should remain a consideration. He noted that while renewable energy sources were becoming more viable and balanced, a reliable backup supply was still necessary. For this reason, he believed it would be premature and potentially limiting for the Council to join the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Group (NFLA).

N.B. Councillor Darren Hobson left the room at 8.35pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.37pm.

The Leader of the Council noted that the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Group (NFLA) was a membership-based organisation, meaning that individual councillors, as well as town and parish councils, could choose to join independently.

A Member asked whether it was possible for the Council to appoint a representative to the NFLA, what the associated costs would be, and whether the Council could withdraw its membership at a later date if needed. In response, another Member shared that they had contacted the group and confirmed the cost for an individual councillor to join was £20.

One Member expressed concern that the wording of the Motion was overly prescriptive and stated that they would not be supporting it. They noted that

while NFLA membership was widespread, they did not believe there was any tangible benefit for the Council in joining. The Member agreed that the Council should remain open to future energy options and respond to emerging challenges with the same determination shown during the GDF proposal.

Another Member pointed out that the debate around nuclear energy was unlikely to disappear, and that all major political parties, with the Exception of the Green Party currently supported nuclear power as part of the future energy mix. They added that a broader conversation was needed about how future energy demands would be met and suggested that embracing new technologies may be necessary to avoid widespread development of pylons, onshore wind farms, and solar installations across the landscape.

N.B. Councillor Richard Cunnington left the room at 8.45pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.48pm.

N.B. Councillor Claire Arnold left the room at 8.45pm and re-joined the Meeting at 8.50pm.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning remarked that there was no ideal 'green utopia' or perfect solution that would deliver a completely carbon-free environment. He noted that while it may be easy to reject nuclear power, residents were also strongly opposed to the installation of pylons across Lincolnshire. He argued that nuclear energy could help preserve the landscape and mitigate broader environmental harm. He further questioned whether the public would have been as enthusiastic about committing to net zero targets had they fully understood the implications for local communities. He stressed that achieving these targets must be approached in a balanced and pragmatic way, keeping all energy options open. High energy costs would negatively impact residents and threaten the viability of local businesses.

Speaking as the Seconder to the Motion, Councillor Bristow expressed disappointment that some Members strongly opposed the National Grid pylons while appearing to welcome the prospect of nuclear reactors, particularly given the Council's previous rejection of the nuclear waste proposal. She noted that both ELDC and LCC had withdrawn from the GDF siting process and considered it inconsistent and uncomfortable for the Council to now support the development of nuclear energy facilities within the district.

Councillor Bristow added that as ELDC approached the end of its existence, it was essential to consider the long-term impact on its communities. She urged Members to support the Motion and reject the nuclearization of the district, positioning the Council as a leader for others in Lincolnshire to follow.

In summing up, Councillor Watson acknowledged the uncertainty surrounding future energy needs and strongly advocated for increased investment in renewable energy. He highlighted alternative sources such as tidal energy, which was not dependent on weather conditions, and called for support to

reduce the production of toxic waste for future generations. He emphasised the importance of giving residents confidence that the Council stood with them against future threats.

Councillor Watson concluded by stating that joining the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Group (NFLA) would serve as a symbolic commitment to future generations and urged Members to support the Motion.

Following which a vote was taken on the Motion

RESOLVED:

That the Motion be not supported.

N.B. Councillors Richard Avison, Richard Fry and Adam Grist left the Meeting at 8.53pm.

N.B. The Meeting adjourned for a break at 8.53pm and reconvened at 9.04pm.

N.B. Councillors Andrew Leonard and Roger Dawson re-joined the Meeting at 9.05pm.

Motion 3

"This council recognises that, according to the Local Government Association, supporting the local development of community energy projects has positive impacts on equality, social cohesion and economic opportunity.

Council asks the Leader to investigate opportunities for wind power in the district ready for any changes at government level, to consult with potential community energy partners, to bring forward options for council investment and to work towards renewable energy schemes that can bring direct benefit to the residents of East Lindsey.

Also, to report back on how we will make best use of the "£600m in funding for local authorities and up to £400 million in low-interest loans each year for communities" promised by the government as part of its "Local Power Plan".

Proposer: Robert Watson

Seconder: Stef Bristow

In his introduction, Councillor Watson expressed his view that nuclear power generation involved substantial financial costs and left behind a legacy of toxic waste that could persist for thousands of years, posing a serious risk to human health. He argued that this reinforced the need to invest in and expand renewable energy alternatives.

Councillor Watson went on to suggest that councils had an opportunity to act as social investors, delivering meaningful value for local taxpayers and

making a positive impact on their communities. He believed the time was right for the Council to seriously explore community energy initiatives and cited examples of successful projects from across the county. He acknowledged that such initiatives were complex and did not develop organically, with challenges including the creation of viable business models and navigating planning processes. He also noted that many communities in East Lindsey, particularly along the coast faced disadvantages and marginalisation that made participation more difficult.

In conclusion, Councillor Watson urged Members to support the Motion, stating that community energy enterprises could play a vital role in building local skills and knowledge, while advancing strategic goals such as achieving net zero, addressing the climate emergency, promoting local economic development, encouraging social engagement, and reducing fuel poverty.

Councillor Stef Bristow seconded the Motion.

N.B. Councillor Sandra Campbell-Wardman left the Meeting at 9.10pm.

In speaking to the Motion, one Member expressed that while he found the proposal appealing, he remained firmly opposed to nuclear energy, believing it would never offer good value for money. He stated he would strongly resist any plans to place nuclear reactors along the coastline, citing concerns about the negative impact on the visitor economy. However, he welcomed the concept of community energy schemes and supported small-scale solar initiatives where appropriate, such as installations on industrial estates or unused land.

Another Member agreed with these sentiments, emphasising the importance of protecting farmland and confirmed his support for the Motion.

A further Member also endorsed the previous comments and suggested that the topic would be well-suited for scrutiny as it could help establish an evidence base necessary for future progress.

Addressing the Motion, the Leader of the Council informed Members that he had provided the Proposer and Seconder with revised wording for the second paragraph, enabling his group to support the Motion. He explained that the updated wording preserved the original intent while broadening the Council's scope to consider a wider range of energy options, rather than focusing on a single solution. Members were directed to the revised second paragraph as follows:

'Council asks the Leader to investigate opportunities for off-grid energy options that, with consultation with potential community energy partners and council investment, can deliver local renewable energy schemes for the benefit of residents and business in East Lindsey.'

The proposed amendment to the second paragraph of the Motion was presented to the Proposer and Seconder, both of whom confirmed their agreement to the change. Council subsequently gave its consent.

Discussion then continued on the Motion incorporating the revised wording.

The Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy expressed his support for the Motion, noting that sustainable communities required sustainable energy sources. He highlighted that businesses along the Lincolnshire coast often lacked the energy infrastructure needed for growth and investment, and that villages face similar challenges with development and connectivity. He emphasised the wide range of available energy generation options and stated that the Council had a responsibility to explore and invest in solutions for communities currently lacking sustainable energy.

A Member raised concerns regarding the figures referenced and questioned whether the Council had the capacity to undertake the work, given that no officers were currently assigned to the task. It was suggested that should the Motion be approved, an action plan be developed to ensure progress remained on track.

Another Member voiced her support for the Motion as amended, noting the significant amount of commercial space available in East Lindsey that could be utilised for the types of schemes outlined in the Motion.

The Leader of the Reform UK Group expressed opposition to wind power and associated infrastructure such as pylons and onshore turbines, citing disappointment that promised reductions in electricity costs had not materialised. Nonetheless, he supported the amended Motion, particularly the potential for solar installations on rooftops and commercial buildings.

The Leader of the East Lindsey Independent Group referenced the Renaissance Market Towns Panel established by Yorkshire Forward, which had created centres of excellence. They proposed that the Council select one of East Lindsey's market towns to pilot such an initiative, potentially in collaboration with the University, aligning with the skills agenda and encouraging youth engagement.

Responding to earlier comments, a Member stressed the importance of establishing a clear methodology at the outset, including identifying key stakeholders, assessing benefits and challenges, and determining the most efficient delivery mechanisms. He emphasised the need to review local planning systems and policies, advocating for a simplified process to facilitate solar installations on rooftops and commercial properties.

In response, the Leader of the Council acknowledged the validity of the points raised and agreed that they aligned with the Council's strategic priorities. He noted, however, that the officer team responsible for carbon reduction and home insulation schemes was already under considerable pressure. He expressed appreciation for the support of relevant Portfolio Holders and

affirmed his commitment to embedding this work into the Council's strategic planning. He further supported the development of an action plan to guide implementation, ensure understanding, and deliver meaningful change.

Speaking as Secunder to the Motion, Councillor Bristow thanked Members for their contributions and noted the timeliness of the Motion, referencing a recent Met Office warning that extreme weather events, such as flooding, heatwaves, and drought were becoming a permanent feature of the climate due to ongoing greenhouse gas emissions.

Councillor Bristow also highlighted compelling data presented by Councillor Watson and pointed to neighbouring authorities in the north of the county that were already benefiting from community energy generation, both in terms of reduced carbon emissions and financial savings.

Councillor Bristow stressed that energy security must be accompanied by food security, clarifying that the proposal did not involve placing solar panels on farmland but rather on rooftops and areas already covered in concrete spaces with no other practical use. She strongly advocated for the protection of agricultural land and welcomed suggestions to ease planning regulations to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.

In conclusion, Councillor Bristow emphasised that the Motion was about legacy and impact. She believed that the Council could implement programmes with minimal effort and hoped that funding could be made available to support these initiatives, even for households that currently fell outside income or energy efficiency thresholds and urged the Council to act swiftly, noting its commitment to achieving net zero by 2040 and a 45% reduction in carbon emissions by 2027, particularly in light of the anticipated dissolution of the Council.

Following which a vote was taken on the Motion

RESOLVED:

That the Motion with the amendment to Paragraph 2, as set out below be supported.

"This council recognises that, according to the Local Government Association, supporting the local development of community energy projects has positive impacts on equality, social cohesion and economic opportunity.

Council asks the Leader to investigate opportunities for off-grid energy options that, with consultation with potential community energy partners and council investment, can deliver local renewable energy schemes for the benefit of residents and business in East Lindsey.

Also, to report back on how we will make best use of the "£600m in funding for local authorities and up to £400 million in low-interest loans each year for communities" promised by the government as part of its "Local Power Plan".

N.B. Councillor Paul Rickett left the Meeting at 9.33pm.

34. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

Members received the draft Open and Exempt Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 26 June 2025 for noting.

Councillor Ros Jackson, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee highlighted key elements from the Minutes as follows:

- The Committee discussed local government reorganisation specifically from a governance perspective at its meeting held on 26 June 2025 and Councillor Jackson encouraged Members to look at the comments made, Audit and Governance Committee Minute No.8, pages 4 to 6 of the Supplementary Agenda refer.
- The Chairman of the Committee was delighted that the reports from the audit teams and the financial statements were being presented in a timely manner.
- The Council had received limited assurance for two audits (Insurance and Finance Systems – Bank Reconciliations) and reassurance had been received from the Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer that matters had been addressed and would continue to be closely monitored.
- External Audit had now commenced follow-up work relating to inappropriate governance arrangements over Invest East Lindsey Limited and the Committee continued to monitor the financial transparency.
- There was a new approach to budget preparation and a timetable was in place which would enable better consultation with Committee Members.
- All Committee Members and any Member wishing to substitute at a meeting were urged to attend upcoming mandatory training for the Committee

RESOLVED

That the draft Open and Exempt Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 26 June 2025 be noted.

N.B. Councillor Daniel Simpson left the Meeting at 9.34pm.

N.B. Councillors Colin Davie, Ellie Marsh and Carl Macey left the Meeting at 9.36pm.

N.B. It was Proposed, Seconded and agreed that Items 17 and 18 be brought forward to ensure Council remained quorate to vote on the recommendations.

35. 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 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

36. TO IMPLEMENT A PAY STRUCTURE AND ASSOCIATED JOB EVALUATION SCHEME FOR OFFICERS IN SHARED PARTNERSHIP ROLES WITHIN THE SOUTH & EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP:

An exempt report was presented to consider the implementation of a pay structure and associated Job Evaluation Scheme for Officers in shared Partnership roles within the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations contained within the exempt report be approved.

N.B. It was Proposed and Seconded that the Meeting move back into Open session.

37. QUESTIONS:

Question 1	Councillor Richard Cunnington
Subject	Funding opportunities to help improve poor health outcomes
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	One of the aims of this Council is to create jobs and some of the neighbourhood health centres have already been created in places like Blackpool, so I do not agree. Can't we recommend to those people named in the original questions that they be approached with the idea of using Skegness Hospital, which has previously been used for most of what's being proposed?
Response	I'm very sympathetic to the points that Councillor Cunnington raises and I'll happily progress that in the any way that I can.
Question 2	Councillor Richard Cunnington
Subject	Extra measures for safety of swimming in sea

Response by	Councillor Steve Kirk, Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy
Supplementary	As Portfolio Holder for Coastal Economy, what else can you put in place to ensure that we as a Council take our role serious when it comes to protecting people and could we do more?
Response	I think we can do more and I've been in touch with the RNLI to see if we can do more. Officers already do a lot of work leafleting people. I'm also working to see if we can have bigger signage across every single beach we've got, rather than just blue flag beaches. I would urge people to speak to their community leader and for anyone not to use an inflatable in the sea.
Question 3	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Response by	Councillor Thomas Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Supplementary	None
Question 4	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Use of Agency Labour in 2024/25
Response by	Councillor Thomas Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance/Councillor Martin Foster, Portfolio Holder for Operational Services
Supplementary	None
Question 5	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Removal of carpeting in social housing
Response by	Councillor William Gray, Portfolio Holder for Housing Communities and Better Ageing
Supplementary	None
Question 6	Councillor Jill Makinson-Sanders
Subject	Increase in housing development in Louth
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio for Planning
Supplementary	None
Question 7	Councillor Travis Hesketh
Subject	Summary of work to oppose the pylons, substations and converter stations in East Lindsey
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 8	Councillor Travis Hesketh
Subject	Estimate of additional annual business rates for National Grid proposals
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

Supplementary	Are we going to make any money out of the pylons if they get built and are you saying that its unlikely that we are going to get anything as an ongoing rate?
Response	I think this has to land and then they determine how this falls into whether it's a renewable application, or how it goes forward. At this point in time I can't provide a firm answer on that, it would be nice if it was because it would be a lot of money.
Question 9	Councillor Andrew Leonard
Subject	Planting layout outside the Hub
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 10	Councillor Andrew Leonard
Subject	Planting choices outside the Hub
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 11	Councillor Travis Hesketh
Subject	Community Benefit Funding from National Grid
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 12	Councillor George Horton
Subject	Safeguards relating to debt collection agencies
Response by	Councillor Thomas Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Supplementary	I refer to the last but one paragraph in addition to the legislation 'enforcement agents are managed through their contract with the Council and PSPS on behalf of the Council, meets regularly with enforcement agent managers to review performance. PSPS officers can also have access to the enforcement agent system to check cases to the customer, make a complaint or raise concern'. I am doing that and therefore, can I have a copy of the tape please?
Response	Referencing a specific instance, I think in this this case it would probably be better that you dealt with the officer concerned. I will happily contact you after the meeting to make sure that you're fully informed about what the issues are.
Question 13	Councillor Roger Dawson
Subject	Reinstatement of Area Forms (ref LGR)
Response by	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council and

	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs
Supplementary	None
Question 14	Councillor Roger Dawson
Subject	Legal status of Local Plan
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Supplementary	None
Question 15	Councillor Roger Dawson
Subject	Review of planning implications on the Council's proposed model for LGR
Response by	Councillor Tom Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Supplementary	None

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

A number of Councillors expressed concern that Member questions were consistently placed at the end of meetings, limiting time and attention, following which it was suggested to reconsider the agenda order.

N.B. Councillor Ru Yarsley left the room at 9.52pm and re-joined the Meeting at 9.55pm.

N.B. Councillors Graham Marsh, Daniel McNally, Sam Kemp and Jimmy Brookes left the Meeting at 9.53pm.

N.B. Councillor Claire Arnold left the room at 9.55pm and re-joined the Meeting at 9.56pm.

N.B. Councillor Kate Marnoch left the room at 9.56pm and re-joined the Meeting at 9.59pm.

N.B. Councillor Stef Bristow left the room at 10.01pm and re-joined the Meeting at 10.04pm.

N.B. Councillors Graham Cullen and Sarah Devereux left the room at 10.04pm and re-joined the Meeting at 10.06pm.

N.B. Councillor George Horton left the Meeting at 10.06pm.

38. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The programmed date for the next Meeting of the Council was noted as Wednesday 8 October 2025.

The meeting closed at 10.07 pm.