

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2016

2.00 PM



PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Judy Smith Chairman

Councillor Bob Adams
Councillor Duncan Ashwell
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Mrs Pam Bosworth
Councillor Teri Bryant
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Michael Cook
Councillor Kelham Cooke
Councillor Lynda Coutts
Councillor Nick Craft
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Mike Exton
Councillor Breda Griffin
Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Michael King
Councillor David Mapp
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Dr Peter Moseley

Councillor Helen Powell
Councillor Robert Reid
Councillor Nick Robins
Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Bob Sampson
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Jacky Smith
Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Judy Stevens
Councillor Adam Stokes
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Brian Sumner
Councillor Mrs Brenda Sumner
Councillor Frank Turner
Councillor Dean Ward
Councillor Mrs Andrea Webster
Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Rosemary H Woolley
Councillor Mrs Linda Wootten
Councillor Ray Wootten

OFFICERS

Chief Executive (Beverly Agass)
Strategic Directors (Tracey Blackwell,
Steve Ingram, Daren Turner)
Executive Manager, Corporate (Lucy
Youles)
Corporate Finance Manager (Richard
Wyles)

OFFICERS

Business Manager, Spatial & Economic
Growth (Roger Ranson)
Business Manager, Neighbourhoods
(Mark Jones)
Elections and Democratic Services Team
Leader (Julie Edwards)
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

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The meeting began with a period of silent reflection in memory of former Councillor Doris Kennedy, who had recently passed away. Tribute was also paid to former Councillor Reg Lovelock MBE.

51. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Two questions had been submitted for the public open forum; both questions were put by Mr. Stephen Hewerdine of Norton Street, Grantham.

Question 1

Mr. Hewerdine's first question was asked of the Executive Member, Environment:

"I understand that there are limited funds, but how much time is allocated to each street also what number of streets are cleaned in a day?"

The Executive Member, Environment stated that the Council faced a lot of funding pressures but had invested more money in street cleansing. He stated that over 3,000 streets and footpaths were cleaned each year and that the frequency of cleaning was determined by location and the volume of footfall.

He added that in the Norton Street area the crews cleaned between 14 and 22 streets a day at set frequencies. Daily litter-picking also took place, with a second visit later in the day to collect any further rubbish that had been deposited. He added that the road was swept every six weeks but that could prove challenging because of parking on the street. Finally he added that everyone had their part to play in helping to keep the streets clean.

Question 2

The second of Mr. Hewerdine's questions was addressed to Councillor Ray Wootten

"Can Councillor Ray Wootten reassure me that in St. Wulfram's Ward Norton Street is represented by him and he will take up our issue of better street cleaning for local residents of his Ward."

In responding to the question, Councillor Wootten explained that he had received a telephone message from Mr. Hewerdine on 30 October 2016 about rubbish in the Norton Street area. He added that although he was not the Ward Councillor for Norton Street, he had e-mailed one of the Councillors for St. Vincent's Ward, who immediately reported the complaint. Waste crews were sent to Norton Street on three occasions and could find no rubbish or waste. A further check was carried out on 2 November when, again, no rubbish was found.

Mr. Hewerdine stated that he had enquired and been advised that Norton Street fell within St. Wulfram's Ward. So that Mr. Hewerdine would know who the Councillors were for Norton Street, members who represented St. Vincent's Ward made themselves known, one of whom added that she was having separate meetings with officers about how street cleaning could be improved in that area.

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Benn, Broughton, Brown, Cunningham, Evans, Forman, Goral, Mrs. Kaberry-Brown, Lee, Manterfield, Neilson, Mrs. Stokes, Westropp and Wilkins.

53. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No interests were disclosed.

54. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2016 AND 24 OCTOBER 2016

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 September 2016 and 24 October 2016 were proposed, seconded and agreed as a correct record.

55. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS)

The Council noted the Chairman's engagements.

56. GO GRANTHAM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Decision:

That authority is given to the Leader of the Council to complete the postal ballot votes received in respect of each of the Council's business properties within the Business Improvement District area.

The Leader, as the Executive Member for Growth introduced report number SEG23, explaining that Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) were now nationally widespread and acknowledged as a positive way to support the growth and development of an area's economy. In Grantham the proposals had been put together by Go Grantham Limited, which was a business-led partnership, and were focussed on enhancing the economic wellbeing of the town. He explained that the Council was being asked to consider whether or not it supported the Grantham BID as a business rate payer in the BID area. He added that if the BID was successful, the Council would be required to pay a 1.5% levy of approximately £11,000. Councillors would need to judge whether the potential benefits of the BID would outweigh the additional costs. In moving the recommendations, he explained that members would have the opportunity to cast their individual vote in order to determine how the Council should vote in

the ballot, explaining that as it was a secret ballot, each member would be invited to cast their vote privately. If the vote of the Council was made in public, it could potentially influence how other businesses in the area vote. He also proposed the recommendation that would give authority to the Leader of the Council to complete the postal ballot votes received in respect of each of the Council's business properties within the BID area. This was seconded.

A small number of members spoke about feedback that they had received from some of the businesses and concerns about affordability of business rates with the additional levy. Despite these concerns, several members who spoke supported the principle of a BID as a mechanism to invest directly in the town and suggested that the extra investment was relatively small given the potential benefits for the whole community.

An electronic vote was taken on the delegation of authority to complete the postal ballots on behalf of the Council; this was carried.

In order to enable a secret ballot, the Chairman proposed the suspension of standing order 14.13.3 for this item only, replacing the use of the electronic voting system with a voting slip for each member. This was seconded and on being put to the vote, the suspension of standing order 14.13.3 was carried. Ballot papers were handed out to all Councillors, who were given a few moments to complete their ballot papers. The slips were then collected in a ballot box, which was sealed. Members were advised that they would be able to find out how the Council had voted once the ballot had been completed and the result announced.

57. GAMBLING POLICY

Decision

That the revised Statement of Principles Gambling Act 2005 be adopted for the period 2017 to 2020 as attached to report number CSL/102 and subject to the revision noted below.

The Executive Member, Environment proposed the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles for 2017 to 2020 as attached to report number CSL/102 subject to an amendment on page 35, relating to fee setting, where there should be a cross in each of the boxes, as any changes to fees would need to undergo the Council's fee-setting process. He explained that a majority of the additions and amendments to the Statement were the result of changes to legislation. He thanked the Licensing Team for the work that had gone into the preparation of the revised statement. The proposition was seconded.

One member asked a question about a specific category of gaming machine, including whether there were any within the district and about the Council's policy in relation to this category of machine. Members were advised that the Gambling Commission regulated the types of machine that were allowed and

any licence application made would be determined based on a case-by-case basis.

A question was also asked about the processes that would be followed if an application was received for a casino in the area. Any application would be required to go through the usual development control process, then specific legislation required full Council to determine applications for casino licences. Officers noted a typing error that was highlighted by one Councillor.

On being put to the vote, the proposition was carried.

58. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Decision

That Council approves the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2016/17 to 2020/21 as attached to report number CFM391

The Executive Member, Finance and IT presented report number CFM391. In so doing, he thanked the Chairman and members of the Resources PDG for the work that they had done and the recommendations they had made to shape the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). He also expressed his thanks to the officers who had been involved. He highlighted the contextual changes that had taken place since the last strategy was approved in November 2013, citing specifically promises of 100% business rate retention by the end of the current Parliament, the removal of Revenue Support Grant by 2019 and the four-year settlement arrangement offered by the Government to assist in forward planning. He also spoke about the Council's corporate plan, stating that the MTFS was one amongst a number of policies that were integral to achieving the best outcomes for the community and sending the message that South Kesteven is open for business and the Council is commercially and customer-focussed. The adoption of the revised MTFS was proposed and seconded.

One member, while in support of the MTFS, asked for clarification about the working balances and earmarked reserves. The 10% figure in the report related to the working balance, constituted of unallocated reserves only and not the totality of all reserves. One member expressed concern about the sustainability of a self-financing local government and highlighted a potential conflict between controlled, appropriate development and a desire to secure New Homes Bonus funding. This was followed-up with a question from another member about the Council's target for the delivery of new homes across the district; this was an annual target of 698.

One question related to the pooling arrangements for business rates. Members were advised that professional advice was sought annually about whether remaining part of the pool was in the best interests of the Council; recently the advice had always been that it had been. Officers also took on board

comments about the readability of the document.

In response to a question about the purpose of the strategy, it was explained that the MTFS provided the overarching principles about how the Council wanted to work and using as much of its resources as possible to deliver priorities.

The Executive Member, Finance and IT was given the opportunity to sum up, when he reiterated his thanks and emphasised the need for investment and how he believed that the Council was meeting the financial challenges with which it was presented.

On being put to the vote, the MTFS for 2016/17 to 2020/21 was approved.

59. EXTERNAL AUDIT PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Decision:

That the Council appoints External Audit through a national sector-led body, the Public Sector Audit Appointments.

The Vice-Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee informed Councillors that report number CFM392 summarised changes to the arrangements for appointing external auditors following the closure of the Audit Commission and the end of transitional arrangements at the end of the 2017/18 audits. At its meeting on 23 September 2016, the Governance and Audit Committee had considered the three options summarised in the report and recommended the appointment of external audit through Public Sector Audit Appointments, which he proposed and was seconded.

On being put to the vote, the proposition was carried.

60. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

Decision:

- 1. That the Council approves the proposals setting out changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations as detailed at Appendix 1 of report number LDS195**
- 2. That the revised polling districts and polling places take effect from the re-publication of the Electoral Register on 1 February 2017**

The Executive Member, Governance proposed the Council approve the changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations detailed in report number LDS195 with effect from the re-publication of the electoral register on 1 February 2017. She added that the changes were required as a result of the review of the Lincolnshire County Council division boundaries and that the

proposed changes were designed to minimise, where possible, the effect on the voters. The recommendation was seconded.

A number of members thanked the officers who had conducted the review and were supportive of the proposed changes. One member asked for further detail on properties split between different polling districts in Market Deeping and Deeping St. James; this detailed information was to be supplied to the member outside the meeting. On being put to the vote, the proposals were approved.

61. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented its annual report for 2015/16, which was attached as an appendix to report number LDS194. The report summarised the topics that the Committee had scrutinised during the year. He informed Members that the reports and action notes from Scrutiny Committee meetings were published on the Council's website but if there were any specific topics on which Members required more information they should contact the officers that supported the Committee who would be able to provide further detail. He also thanked the Members who had served on the Committee during the year for their support and commitment.

One Member requested that the Committee look at the loss of wildlife habitat, particularly the loss of trees in towns and what the Council was doing to mitigate the impact. The Scrutiny Committee Chairman had noted the request for discussion by the Committee. Councillor Sampson was also thanked for his Chairmanship of the Committee.

62. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

Decision:

That Councillor Mike Exton be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Communities Policy Development Group

Report number LDS196 explained that since the last meeting of the Council, Councillor Hannah Westropp had resigned as the Vice-Chairman of the Communities Policy Development Group (PDG); she would however continue to sit as a member of the PDG. The Leader was asked to nominate a replacement Vice-Chairman. Councillor Mike Exton was proposed and seconded as the new Vice-Chairman of the Communities PDG. On being put to the vote, this was agreed. Councillor Exton thanked members of the Council for their support.

The Leader also clarified that Councillor Kelham Cooke had resigned as a member of the Executive, passing on his apologies to Councillor Cooke and other members that this had not been formerly announced at an earlier time. This would be updated in the Council's Constitution.

63. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Decision:

That Prayers are held in the Council Chamber at 1:55pm before the start of the Council meeting and that they are not part of the Council meeting agenda and therefore no change to the Constitution is required.

The Chairman of the Constitution Committee presented the considerations from the meeting of the Committee held on 26 September 2016 as detailed in report number LDS191. He thanked Councillor Mrs. Kaberry-Brown for chairing that meeting while he was indisposed. He stated that after consideration, the Committee had recommended unanimously that prayers should be held in the Council Chamber at 1.55pm before the start of the meeting and not as part of the agenda, requiring no amendment of the Constitution, which he so proposed. The proposition was seconded.

There was brief discussion where Members noted that the Religious Observance Act 2015 said that time may be included for prayers. It was suggested that any such proposal should, in future, be referred to the Constitution Committee for consideration to allow identification and full discussion of all relevant considerations, citing specifically an equality analysis.

On being put to the vote, this was carried.

64. DEVOLUTION UPDATE (IF REQUIRED)

The Leader explained that the Devolution update had been included as an agenda item in case any new information had arisen however the position of Government had not changed.

65. MEMBERS' OPEN QUESTIONS

Question 1

From: Councillor Ian Selby

To: Councillor Bob Adams

The extended night time closure of Grantham's Accident and Emergency Department until February 2017

Question 2

From: Councillor Paul Wood

To: Councillor Mrs. Linda Wootten

Ensuring Council tenants moving from towns to villages understand the difference between urban and rural living and the accessibility of services

Question 3

From: Councillor Charmaine Morgan

To: Councillor Bob Adams

How the Council plans to respond to the NHS England Sustainability Transformation Plans when they are released

Question 4

From: Councillor Jacky Smith

To Councillor Bob Adams

Ensuring the continued support of the hospice in the hospital in light of any details within the NHS England Sustainability Transformation Plans

Question 5

From: Councillor Adam Stokes

To: Councillor Teri Bryant

Use of Council resources and postage

Question 6

From: Councillor Helen Powell

To: Councillor Bob Adams

The position with the letting of units at Wherry's Lane, Bourne

66. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 15:30.