

# MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 31 JANUARY 2019

2.00 PM



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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## PRESENT

Councillor George Chivers Chairman

Councillor Bob Adams  
Councillor Duncan Ashwell  
Councillor Ashley Baxter  
Councillor Stephen Benn  
Councillor Mrs Pam Bosworth  
Councillor Robert Broughton  
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright  
Councillor Michael Cook  
Councillor Kelham Cooke  
Councillor Felicity Cunningham  
Councillor Phil Dilks  
Councillor Barry Dobson  
Councillor Damian Evans  
Councillor Mike Exton  
Councillor Helen Goral  
Councillor Breda Griffin  
Councillor Graham Jeal  
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown  
Councillor Michael King  
Councillor Nikki Manterfield  
Councillor David Mapp

Councillor Dr Peter Moseley  
Councillor Nick Neilson  
Councillor Helen Powell  
Councillor Robert Reid  
Councillor Nick Robins  
Councillor Bob Russell  
Councillor Bob Sampson  
Councillor Ian Selby  
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith  
Councillor Jacky Smith  
Councillor Peter Stephens  
Councillor Adam Stokes  
Councillor Brian Sumner  
Councillor David Taylor  
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew  
Councillor Dean Ward  
Councillor Hannah Westropp  
Councillor Paul Wood  
Councillor Linda Wootten  
Councillor Ray Wootten

## OFFICERS

Chief Executive (Aidan Rave)  
Strategic Directors (Debbie Muddimer,  
Gary Smith, Paul Thomas)  
Assistant Chief Executives (Ken Lyon,  
Lee Sirdifield)

## OFFICERS

Assistant Director, Resources (Richard  
Wyles)  
Head of Governance (Ben Bix)  
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

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## 58. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

### Question 1

From: Philip Gadd, Grantham

To: Councillor Matthew Lee, the Leader of the Council

*Riverside Flats, Grantham is an SKDC maintained housing complex. Its residents are mainly elderly, infirm or vulnerable people. They are not the sort of people who would complain about issues within the complex.*

*In the summer of 2016, the heating system was replaced by heat exchangers. Within weeks of its completion problems became apparent because of lack of hot water and heating. Many complaints were made to both SKDC and Liberty Gas in the run up to winter 2016.*

*A complaint made on 1st December 2016 resulted in this statement from SKDC to Grantham Matters.*

*“We are aware of issues at the Riverside complex and will be on site on December 2<sup>nd</sup> to make further assessment and repairs as necessary” That was 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec ---2016! Mr Boles MP was asked for help on the 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017 and St Wulfram’s Ward Cllr Mr Wootten was also asked to raise the issue in the summer of 2017. All of these requests for help have achieved little. Recently Cllr Smith was also contacted because the heating and water issues at the complex had reached a crisis point for some of the elderly.*

*I also understand the warden has continually logged the residents’ complaints and passed them on during this period.*

*Could you please explain WHY we are in the **THIRD** winter of problems and permanent repairs have still not been completed by SKDC and Liberty Gas. Could he also consider a compensation payment for the years of hardship the residents have had to put up with regarding the lack of hot water and heating.*

The question was referred to the Cabinet Member for Housing who provided historical context on the installation of the heating system and stated that the action taken in 2016 in response to the issue were being investigated, including finding evidence of any risk assessments that were undertaken at that time. He provided assurance that the Council was now moving towards a programme of planned preventative maintenance with the piping system scheduled for replacement in April 2019. It was noted that it was possible that some of the pipes in individual flats may need replacing.

The Cabinet Member apologised for errors made in 2016 and gave assurance that measures were being put in place to resolve the issues that had occurred. As an interim measure temporary heating was being provided to all residents, service

charges had been waived and residents would be refunded for all reasonable costs for the use of electricity.

The Deputy Leader also apologised about the situation and the amount of time it was taking to get the matter resolved. He added that residents were being provided with contact details for senior officers and reiterated that no resident would be financially worse off as a result of the situation.

Councillor Wootten raised a point of personal explanation as he had been named in Mr. Gadd's question. He stated that any time a resident contacted him or his fellow Ward Councillor, they had taken immediate action.

## **Question 2**

From: Chris Noon, Grantham

To: Councillor Kelham Cooke, the Deputy Leader of the Council

*I am sure you are more than aware myself and other concerned citizens of SKDC looked at the way the boxing day meets in Grantham are being organised and at what cost to the tax payer of SKDC. What we found was a shambolic dereliction of duty of care for the people of SKDC and Grantham, there being almost no attempt at ensuring the event management required BY SKDC council was adhered to. We also suspect that last year's meet was incorrectly organised and should have never gone ahead, we will return to that later this year.*

*At last year's Boxing Day meet during an interview with Councillor Kelham Cooke on BBC TV he stated 'So, it used to happen on St Peters Hill, I think the decision was taken this year by the organisers that it would be better to organise it here (that being The Paddock). It's a better environment for the horses and the hounds and the members of the public that want to come and see'. That statement was not entirely correct, due to laws being politely explained by members of the public to SKDC it became apparent the meet could not legitimately happen on St Peters Hill and so was moved.*

*Let's return to Cllr Cooke's statement 'it's better for the horses, the hounds and the members of the public'. Given the position of Mr Cooke and the gravitas that comes along with that position can we now take it as read that SKDC will no longer allow these 'events' on St Peters Hill?*

Councillor Cooke responded, stating that every application for events held on St. Peter's Hill was considered at the time of receipt and on its own merits. He added that the Council required the submission of a comprehensive risk assessment and details of public liability insurance.

The speaker referred to the risk assessment, of which he had been given a copy, and stated that he did not consider it to be fit for purpose.

### **Question 3**

From: Chris Noon, Grantham

To: Councillor Kelham Cooke, the Deputy Leader of the Council

*On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December a risk assessment was submitted by the Belvoir Hunt Ltd for the event on Boxing Day being organised by The Belvoir Hunt and the Grantham Charter Trustees, this was rejected on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December.*

*On the 18<sup>th</sup> of December I received an email from Aidan Rave, Chief executive of SDKC stating a completed Risk Assessment had not yet been received from the Belvoir Hunt Ltd, at this point the Grantham Charter Trustees had pulled out of organising the event.*

*On the 24<sup>th</sup> of December a risk assessment was submitted from 'The friends of the Belvoir Hunt' who were not one of the original event organisers and until that Risk Assessment arrived were completely unmentioned by SKDC when a request for the event organisers was requested.*

*Who in SKDC do I need to talk to receive a copy of the event notice and failed risk assessment provided by the Belvoir Hunt Ltd on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December and a separate event notice with accompanying risk assessment from 'The friends of the Belvoir Hunt'. Can I also request written assurances that the 'friends of the Belvoir Hunt' provided all the correct and agreed paperwork, signed off by the relevant SKDC employees. Omissions to satisfy GDPR (names and addresses) withstanding are perfectly acceptable.*

The Deputy Leader stated that he was happy to look into Mr. Noon's concerns and would meet with him to discuss them in detail. He stated that a redacted copy of the application had been e-mailed to Mr. Noon on 24 December 2018; an acceptance letter had been sent out the same day, which rendered void those documents that had been submitted previously. Mr. Noon stated that he had not received the updated application. Councillor Cooke apologised that Mr. Noon had not received the documents and agreed to share them with him at their meeting.

### **Question 4**

From: Peter Moisey, Bourne and Deeping Hockey Club

To: Councillor Matthew Lee, the Leader of the Council

*As chairman of Bourne and Deeping Hockey Club I wish to ask what the council have planned for the facilities within Bourne and the Deepings for artificial surfaces suitable for hockey.*

*Having failed to oversee that those responsible ensure maintenance of the facility at Deepings Leisure Centre, its continual neglect and under investment has rendered the pitch condemned as to use for anything other than the basic of standards.*

*As a result the decline of Bourne Hockey Club est1926 and Deeping Hockey Club left them with no alternative but to merge.*

*Now our club with 6 men's teams, 3 ladies' teams and a thriving junior section proudly representing Bourne and the Deepings has no alternative but to train and play its matches at amvc in Cambridgeshire.*

*Is it not time that the council seriously met the needs of its residents in the south of the county in provision of suitable playing surface along with the much required complimentary facilities to support the keenly followed sport of hockey in this area?*

The Deputy Leader confirmed that Cabinet would be receiving a report on leisure provision within the district on 7 March 2019, which would cover new and refurbished facilities. He explained that demand at each of the four leisure centre sites had been assessed. He added that there was recognition that the leisure centres needed further investment with the replacement of some facilities.

Mr. Moisey put a supplementary question, which asked how SKDC was going to support secondary sports. He referred to the facilities that were currently available for hockey, as the new pitches that were being developed were below standard size. The Deputy Leader stated that the Council had just appointed a Sports Development Officer, whom he would put in touch with Mr. Moisey. He added that it was the Administration's wish to support all sports and stated that the Council would work with the hockey club to find suitable facilities.

## **Question 5**

From: Kathleen Burris, Grantham  
To: Councillor Linda Wootten

*My question is one of the 'reputational damage of Grantham.' Given the 2 court cases in which the Belvoir Hunt found themselves involved with, and found guilty of in 2018. A quick recap of these offences being, 2 men were found guilty in the court of Leicestershire, one being an employee and member of the Belvoir Hunt. Both men were found guilty of GBH, ABH, theft and criminal damage.*

*Also in 2018 the head gamekeeper of the Buckminster estate was found guilty of animal cruelty in the court of Lincolnshire; by keeping a fox captive, the fox was kept captive for the purpose of releasing for the Belvoir Hunt hounds to shred to pieces, a clear violation of the Hunting Act 2004.*

*Over the Christmas period Grantham was on the map.....for all the wrong reasons. Councillor Wootten gave an interview to the BBC defending the invitation of the notorious Belvoir Hunt to parade themselves on Boxing Day!*

*Councillor Linda Wootten – Did you ever consider the reputational damage caused to Grantham town by inviting and defending the Belvoir Hunt?*

Councillor Wootten acknowledged that many different views were held on the Belvoir Hunt but she identified it as a long-standing ceremonial event that in previous years had been enjoyed by many people and had been well-attended. She stated that the reputation of Grantham continued to grow through events and festivals, such as the Gravity Fields Festival, and the ongoing regeneration of the town, with which she was proud to be associated.

Ms. Burris asked how Councillor Linda Wootten could be proud of inviting criminals into the town to parade on Boxing Day and said that she did not feel that it was something that they deserved to be allowed to do and added that someone should have told them that. Councillor Linda Wootten responded to the supplementary question saying that she was not proud of what had happened in another county, stating that if somebody had done something unlawful then they should be held to account by the appropriate authorities. She clarified that her pride was in the events that were taking place in the town and its regeneration.

#### **Question 6**

From: Kathleen Burris, Grantham

To: Councillor Adam Stokes

*The Belvoir Hunt were collecting money for themselves and for the Mayor's charities on Boxing Day 2018. Exactly how much did they raise for the Mayor's charity? And exactly how much did it really cost to host the Belvoir Hunt?*

Councillor Stokes stated that the return submitted by Belvoir Hunt stated that £177.63 had been raised for the Mayor's charities and that no costs were paid to them. He added that the hunt paid for the barriers and a complete clean of the area following the event, so there were no additional costs for the Council.

Ms. Burris referred to a number of Freedom of Information requests that had been submitted that had indicated that SKDC had paid for cleaning-up after the hunt. Councillor Stokes responded that the information that he had been given stated that the Belvoir Hunt had paid for the clean-up of the area and stated that he would provide Ms. Burris with the evidence of this.

#### **59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Coutts, Craft, Forman, Kingman, Lee, I. Stokes, S. Stokes, Brenda Sumner, Turner, Webster and Wilkins.

The Chairman referred to the requirement that Councillors attend one meeting in a 6-month period or they automatically cease to be a Member of the authority unless

their non-attendance was for a reason approved by the Council. He therefore proposed that the Council approve the absences of Councillors Coutts and Turner until the end of their term of office (7 May 2019) because of ill health. The proposition was seconded and, on being put to the vote, the Council **AGREED**:

**To approve Councillors Coutts and Turner's absence until the end of their term of office on 7 May 2019 because of ill health.**

## **60. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

No interests were disclosed.

## **61. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2018 were proposed, seconded and agreed as a correct record.

## **62. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS)**

The Council noted the Chairman's engagements, which had been circulated in the agenda pack. The Chairman also drew Members' attention to the Rotary Club Swimathon that was taking place on Friday 1 February 2019. He stated that a team of Councillors, (Councillors Goral, K. Cooke, Robins and Dr. Moseley), had entered a team. He encouraged Members to support the team and stated that a sponsorship form was being circulated.

## **63. DESIGNATION OF MONITORING OFFICER**

*14:30 - The Assistant Chief Executive, Transformation and Change left the meeting during discussion of the following item*

The Chairman of the Employment Committee presented report number LDS348. In doing so he explained that the Council's former Monitoring Officer had left the local authority in December 2018 and at its last meeting the Employment Committee considered options for the designation of to the role of Monitoring Officer. He added that all Councils were statutorily required to have a Monitoring Officer and it was the recommendation of the Chief Executive that Lee Sirdifield, the Assistant Chief Executive, Transformation and Change be appointed as the interim Monitoring Officer until a permanent arrangement for provision of the role had been identified. The Employment Committee had supported the nomination but had agreed that there should be a time limit attached to the appointment to provide momentum in identifying a permanent arrangement. He proposed the recommendation as written in the report with an addition that the designation should be "for a period of up to 12 months."

In the seconding of the proposal, recognition was made to the service of the previous Monitoring Officer, Lucy Youles. Members expressed their gratitude and commended

Mrs. Youles for 30 years of exemplary service to the Council and commented how they had always found her to be an able advocate for the Council.

During debate on the proposition, one Member suggested that attaching a time limit to the designation was beneficial to both the authority and Mr. Sirdifield and would fit within the context of a wider review of Legal and Democratic Services. Following the review, the Employment Committee would be presented with recommendations for provision of this function. Reference was also made to the meeting of the Employment Committee held on Wednesday 9 January. One Member stated that he had abstained from voting at that meeting as he had been concerned about the legal aspect of the post, however he now felt happy to support the proposal.

Reference was also made to one of the functions of the Monitoring Officer, which was the maintenance of the Council's Constitution. A suggestion was made that it may be an appropriate time to conduct a review of the Constitution. Reassurance was given that a review of the Constitution was planned; the review would be undertaken by the Constitution Committee, which would then make recommendations to Council.

On being put to the vote, the Council **AGREED**:

**To appoint the Assistant Chief Executive, Transformation and Change, Lee Sirdifield, as the Council's Monitoring Officer for a period of up to 12 months.**

*14:38 - The Assistant Chief Executive, Transformation and Change returned to the meeting*

#### **64. CHANGES TO BUDGET FRAMEWORK 2018/19**

The Cabinet Member for Finance proposed the recommendations in report number CFM484, which contained proposed changes to the Budget framework that was approved by Council on 1 March 2018. He added that in accordance with the Constitution, Council approval was required to amend the Budget framework.

The Cabinet Member explained that the report detailed the projected income of £1.95m that the Council would receive as part of the 2018/19 business rate pilot for Lincolnshire. The report set out proposals for the use of this additional income, which included balancing the revenue budget, funding new priority growth projects, funding of one-off urgent items arising in 2018/19, the formation of a property maintenance reserve to fund emergency repairs arising during the financial year and the remainder being set aside in a specific reserve to finance future growth and regeneration projects.

He explained that the opportunity had been taken to review the Council's earmarked reserves as part of the preparatory works for the development of the 2019/20 Budget proposals to ensure that the funds were earmarked in line with priorities and to consolidate reserves where appropriate.

The report also proposed adjustments to the 2018/19 Budget in respect of the cinema development in Grantham. The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that the Council had been successful in its bid to the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership for £2m towards the delivery of a new Technology and Innovation Centre as part of the project in partnership with a higher education provider. The success of the funding bid would reduce the funding commitment from the Council's Capital Reserve. The project required a change to the Budget to reflect the costs of the fit out of the facility; there was also a requirement for one-off revenue funding for the first year and additional costs in respect of project management. The proposition was seconded.

Debate ensued, during which reference was made to the previously agreed and adjusted budgets in respect of the cinema project, including the Budget adjustment for the public realm works. The grant of funding from the Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership was welcomed, however one Member was concerned that Council would be asked again in the future to adjust the Budget in respect of the project. Members were reassured that there should not be any additional requirement to adjust this project. Members were also reminded that the grant funding from the Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership had the result of reducing the requirement for Council funding by £1.020m.

Members were interested in whether the cinema project was on schedule and when it was anticipated that the facility would be opened. A question was also asked about the process that was undertaken to select the operator. It was hoped that a date for the handover of the cinema shell to Savoy would be announced shortly, it would then be up to the operator to fit out the cinema and determine the date on which it would open. It was anticipated that the public realm works would be completed in June 2019.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Health, Wellbeing and Skills, within whose remit the project fell stated that public realm works had not formed part of the scheme that was inherited by the administration, so the costs for this work had not been included when the project was first brought to Council to agree Budget provision. She added that the revised plans included provision for A3 establishments so that coffee shops and restaurants could be incorporated within the development. The Council would benefit from the leasing of these.

Members spoke favourably of the Technology and Innovation Centre and how it would help people seeking higher education remain in Grantham and attract businesses to the town.

Some questions were asked about the property maintenance reserve and whether a condition survey of the Council's assets had been undertaken as there was some concern about whether the proposed £110k provision would be sufficient. An explanation was given about the anticipated uses of the property maintenance reserve, with an example of a dancing school in Stamford that had a leaking roof, and how it complemented a repairs allocation of £100k. Creation of the reserve would provide a fund for responding to issues like this in a timely manner. The

Deputy Leader, whose remit included the management of the Council's assets stated that he felt that the provision was sufficient and that it was right for any project that would cost more than this to be brought before a wider group of Members. Members were also advised that a repairs schedule was being prepared.

One Member asked about the maintenance of closed church yards, which was referred to in the list of priority expenditure items. While details could not be provided at the meeting, the Deputy Leader promised to supply a list of the closed churchyards for which the Council was responsible.

On being put to the vote, Members **AGREED** to:

- 1. Approve the allocation of the projected business rate financial growth as set out at paragraph 2.4 of report CFM484**
- 2. Approve the changes to earmarked reserves as set out at paragraph 2.7 of report CFM484**
- 3. Approve that the utilisation of the Invest to Save reserve be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Finance in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer**
- 4. Approve that the utilisation of the property maintenance reserve and the ICT reserve be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Commissioning in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer**
- 5. Approve the Budget change for the cinema development complex from £5.4m to £6.28m to include the fit out changes necessary for the Technology and Innovation Centre**
- 6. Approve the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership funding offer of £2m subject to agreement of the funding conditions to be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Health, Wellbeing and Skills**

## **65. THE LEADER'S REPORT ON URGENT DECISIONS**

The Deputy Leader introduced report number LDS342 which informed Council of a non-key decision that had been taken using the urgency provisions within the Council's Constitution. The decision related to taking on a lease in respect of the Maltings, Grantham following the cessation of the old lease. By surrendering the previous lease and taking on the new lease, the Council had saved approximately £18,000. Members noted the contents of the report.

## **66. MINUTES OF CABINET MEETINGS APPROVED SINCE 22 NOVEMBER 2018**

Members noted the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 1 November 2018 and 20 December 2018 as appended to report number LDS343 of the Leader of the Council.

Members were invited to ask questions in respect of the Cabinet minutes. The first question related to the report on leisure provision within the district, which was referred to in the Cabinet minutes as being scheduled for consideration on 7 February 2019. The Deputy Leader explained that the report on leisure provision across the district would be presented to Cabinet on 7 March 2019. This was because of the volume of work required to produce a full options appraisal and identify potential sites. He added that the report would include images of what the new facilities could look like and that work would be undertaken with residents to identify demand for different types of leisure provision, including accessing outdoor facilities.

The second question related to a strategic land acquisition within the district. A Member asked whether the Council was in a position to confirm the where and what the site was. The Deputy Leader stated that it was the Cummins Generator Technologies site in Stamford.

## **67. MEMBERS' OPEN QUESTIONS**

### Question 1

Councillor Ray Wootten asked the Deputy Leader whether he supported asking the Secretary of State to publish his report on Grantham Hospital and the call to open Grantham's Accident and Emergency Department 24/7 as soon as possible.

The Deputy Leader stated that he did support this. He said that since the reduction in Accident and Emergency provision in August 2016, United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust had continued to say that they wished to be honest and open about the hospital but he felt the Trust continued to hide its plans. He also suggested that, as the Chairman of the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it would be appropriate for Councillor Wootten to write a letter on behalf of the Committee asking why there had been such a delay.

### Question 2

Councillor Jeal asked a question of the Cabinet Member for Growth and Communications about fundraising activity by the Grantham Community Heritage Association and the reliance of Grantham Museum on such donations and the volunteers who ran it.

The Cabinet Member for Growth and Communications said that community-run organisations such as Grantham Museum were the life-blood of local communities and made a significant contribution to the district. She highlighted the museum's importance as a place for people to learn about and understand heritage and to provide somewhere for people to volunteer to gain experience and allow isolated members of the community to meet people. She stated that she had previously sat on the Museum's board as a volunteer and therefore had a first-hand appreciation of the commitment and dedication that went into keeping the building open. She added that without the funding project, the Museum would not be able to remain open. She

praised the team at the Museum and wished them success in making the project a reality.

### Question 3

Councillor Selby referred to a recent event at Wyndham Park in Grantham, where a new facility had been opened. He stated that the Mayor of Grantham had not been invited and that, while the Chairman had been present, the facility had been formally opened by a Member of the Cabinet. He asked who would be opening the cinema complex.

The Deputy Leader stated that the Mayor would be invited to the opening of the new cinema complex but that at this time no decision had been made as to who would cut the ribbon during the opening ceremony.

### Question 4

Councillor Baxter asked a question of the Chairman of the Employment Committee. He referred to a company that had provided HR consultancy services to the Council and one of the directors of that company. Councillor Baxter asked whether the Employment Committee was aware that the Council's Chief Executive was a Director of another company with the Director of that HR company and whether that had been disclosed in the officers' register of interests.

The Chairman of the Employment Committee stated that the issue had not been discussed but he was happy to include it on the agenda of a future meeting of the Committee.

### Question 5

Councillor Dilks referred to bank closures that had taken place in Market Deeping in recent years and the recently announced closure of the Market Deeping branch of Barclays bank. Given the Council's priority to invest, promote and build the economy, Councillor Dilks asked the Chairman of the Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee whether he would invite Barclays to attend a future meeting of the Committee to explain what they were doing and how the Council could work with them to reconsider their decision.

The Chairman of the Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to invite representatives to a future meeting of the Committee, although he could not guarantee their attendance.

### Question 6

Councillor Wood referred to the question that had been put by Mr. Gadd during the public open forum and asked what the Council was doing to rectify the matter. He asked whether any problems had been identified with other properties and how the Council was being proactive to prevent a recurrence in the future.

The Cabinet Member for Housing stated that there was a planned maintenance programme for all properties and that the Council had a planned property maintenance strategy. The Deputy Leader also added that a review of all dwellings would be undertaken to ensure that the same problem would not be experienced elsewhere.

During the session Councillor Robins drew Members' attention to a new South Kesteven Visitor Guide and thanked the Visitor Economy team for their work in producing the guide.

## **68. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 15:21.