

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2019

1.00 PM



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councillor Jacky Smith Chairman

Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Chris Benn
Councillor Mrs Pam Bosworth
Councillor Robert Broughton
Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Louise Clack
Councillor Kelham Cooke
Councillor John Cottier
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor John Dawson
Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Mike Exton
Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Helen Goral
Councillor Breda Griffin
Councillor Jan Hansen
Councillor Graham Jeal
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown
Councillor Anna Kelly
Councillor Ms Jane Kingman
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Matthew Lee
Councillor Nikki Manterfield

Councillor Annie Mason
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Charmaine Morgan
Councillor Dr Peter Moseley
Councillor Robert Reid
Councillor Nick Robins
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith
Councillor Lee Steptoe
Councillor Judy Stevens
Councillor Adam Stokes
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Jill Thomas
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Hannah Westropp
Councillor Hilary Westropp
Councillor Amanda Wheeler
Councillor Mark Whittington
Councillor Jane Wood
Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Linda Wootten
Councillor Ray Wootten

OFFICERS

Interim Chief Executive (Paul Thomas)
Strategic Director (Gary Smith)
Director of Finance (Richard Wyles)

OFFICERS

Interim Strategic Director (Ken Lyon)
Interim Head of Legal (Shahin Ismail)
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

Council stood to observe a few moments silence in memory of Councillors Graham Wheat and Ray Auger who had recently passed away.

41. Public Open Forum

Statement

The public open forum began with a statement made by Jon Stephenson that related to the notice of motion submitted by Councillor Moran on the Belvoir Hunt. In his statement, Mr. Stephenson asked the Council to distance itself from the Belvoir Hunt. Whilst a supporter of legal hunting, he expressed concerns about criminal activity undertaken by employees of the Belvoir Hunt, from whom the Belvoir Hunt did not distance itself. He also stated that the two people who were attacked were citizens who were legally observing hunt activities.

He felt that the motion reflected the views of local people; he had undertaken some canvassing activity in the village in which he resided. He reported that all the residents he spoke to, bar one, supported the motion.

Mr Stephenson concluded by referring to Members' role in representing the views of the public and called on Councillors to support Councillor Moran's motion, requesting that a recorded vote be taken.

Question 1

From: Chris Noon, Grantham

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

"In January this year I asked questions to Councillor Cooke at a full council meeting, I have to this day not been given a reasonable answer. Even after a meeting with Councillor Cooke and Mr Aidan Rave, my points and proof were ignored after assurances they would be dealt with. Given the convictions against the Belvoir Hunt employees, the very public pay out which hit all the major news outlets nationally (Online, TV, Radio and newspapers), the hound killed on the A1, the fox in the shed scandal, the hound knocked down on the high street and now proof of the clear and obvious help by some members of SKDC to accommodate the Belvoir Hunt no matter what, even at the tax payers' expense or reputational damage to our district. I find myself having to ask Councillor Cooke the same question

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 Peter's 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 Peter's Hill and so was moved.

Let's return to Councillor Cooke's statement 'it's better for the horses, the hounds and the members of the public'. A return to St Peter's Hill would be a return to a more dangerous environment given the statement above. Are you prepared to guarantee the safety of all visitors?'

The Deputy Leader responded by stating that any application for an event on Council land required the organisers to submit an event management plan and risk assessment. The event management plan and risk assessment submitted in 2018 were considered by the Lincolnshire Safety Advisor Group, which asked questions and set out requirements of the hunt's representatives so that the event was in the best possible position to be carried out safely. The form also required the event organisers to provide evidence of their public liability insurance. He concluded by stating that it was the Council's role to ensure event organisers went through the right processes, with advice from experts, so that the event can be staged in a safe environment.

Mr. Noon said that he felt the run-up to the event in the paddock was farcical, referring to the withdrawal of support from the Mayor of Grantham, and the submission of an application in the name of the Friends of the Belvoir Hunt. He suggested that the liability insurance, which was a prerequisite for the event would be invalid as the organiser had changed and that he had identified 13 anomalies in the risk assessment that had been submitted. Referring to the event, he stated that there were no visible first aiders or hand washing facilities for children who had petted animals. He added that there were public order incidents conducted by hunt supporters and referred to the loading and unloading of vehicles. He concluded by saying that there were some matters that should have been seen and dealt with on the day.

The Deputy Leader stated that he was happy to meet with Mr. Noon to discuss his concerns.

Question 2

From: Chris Noon, Grantham

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

"On Boxing Day 2018 a road sweeper (LN17 VWS) was filmed and photographed sweeping the road down to and around the paddock. The driver was wearing SKDC PPE, details were taken and given to Councillor Cooke and Aidan Rave who stated he did not believe it was an SKDC truck but would find out if it was. Nothing came back from him. Given the history of road sweepers, SKDC and the Boxing Day event (for the record it was stated by SKDC there was no road sweeper at the 2017 event, despite a full liveried SKDC road sweeper was on standby sat on Avenue Road and was filmed sweeping the horse manure and dog faeces up) we thought we would check up. The truck LN17 VWS was seen multiple times on the roads of Grantham in the early period of 2019 and photographed in the Alexandra Road SKDC compound next to a liveried SKDC truck many months AFTER Boxing Day. It would certainly seem SKDC have had the use of the road sweeper LN17 VWS. Yet on the 19th of

February 2019 there was a denial by Councillor and Mayor Adam Stokes that SKDC did any cleaning after the hunt.

Either you have an SKDC employee engaging in TWOC (Taking Without Owners Consent) or someone is not telling me the truth. It certainly appears to be another instance of tax payers' money being abused, misused and the Belvoir Hunt given special treatment.

Can I ask that you, (in line with your new transparent style of council) have an internal review, get to the bottom of this, charge the Belvoir hunt accordingly, deal with the SKDC employees involved."

The Deputy Leader responded that any event staged in the district would require an element of post-event clean-up, including the meeting of the Belvoir Hunt on Boxing Day 2018. It had been agreed with hunt representatives before Boxing Day, that they would meet all costs associated with the event. Following the vacation of the paddock, hunt staff cleared the whole area, leaving it in the same condition in which it was handed over to them. The roadsweepers, which were mobilised in anticipation that they may be needed were therefore not required, therefore they carried out routine cleaning of roads in the area, therefore no further review was required. The Deputy Leader added that hunt organisers had since offered to meet the full cost and an invoice had been issued.

Mr. Noon was given the opportunity to put a supplementary question. He stated that he had correspondence that indicated that a sweeper had not been used. He made comments regarding the misuse of public funds, citing the purchase of Christmas refreshments for the Belvoir hunt, including Brandy in an 'alcohol free zone', grant funding of £200 made to Knipton cricket club (which was located outside the district), the low charge for the use of barriers and the labour and transport costs of transporting them. He also referred to the money collected for charity during the hunt meeting, challenging whether the collection receptacles complied with legal requirements. He asked whether there would be an investigation as to how such occurrences had recurred each year, stating that he was happy to engage and disclose the information that he held.

The Deputy Leader reiterated that he was happy to meet with Mr. Noon with the Chief Executive to discuss any matters that related to South Kesteven District Council, but did note that some of the comments made related to the Grantham Charter Trustees.

Statement

A statement was made by Kit Henson, who spoke on behalf of the Belvoir Hunt. He stated that he wished to correct some of the statements that Councillors had heard, both inside the meeting and through correspondence received outside the meeting.

Mr. Henson stated that the Belvoir Hunt continued to operate within the law following passing of the 2004 Hunting Act. He also gave examples of other events arranged by

the Belvoir Hunt, which included dog shows, social evenings and clay pigeon shoots. He added that the hunt remained an important part of the fabric of rural life and that the Belvoir Hunt continued to operate to the highest standards as an employer and in respect to its animal husbandry.

Mr. Henson proceeded to state that the Hunt had not been prosecuted for any offences, nor were there any matters pending. The animal cruelty case to which reference had been made had not related to an employee of the Belvoir Hunt. Only one employee of the Belvoir Hunt had been convicted for criminal activity having pleaded guilty to ABH under joint venture; that individual no longer worked for the Belvoir Hunt.

He confirmed that the cost of the road sweeper on Boxing Day had now been dealt with and all other invoices settled. He stated that monies raised through the street collection were donated to charity, however the amount raised had been lower in 2018 than previous years.

Mr. Henson concluded by stating that the hunt meet was a tradition enjoyed by large numbers of people and that it should not be stopped because of the action of one individual. Finally, reference was made to protesters who attended the 2018 hunt meet, whom Mr. Henson stated were not local.

Statement

The public open forum concluded with a statement made by Val Harvey, who spoke on the declaration of a climate emergency, set out in both agenda item 11 and the notice of motion proposed by Councillor Baxter.

She provided some historical context about steps taken nationally in respect of climate change, referring to a speech made by Margaret Thatcher to the UN in 1989 and the 2000 Nottingham Declaration. She believed that the Council appointed an officer to look at fleet and building emissions following the Nottingham Declaration.

Ms Harvey also spoke about local activity that had taken place in Stamford, including creation of community allotments, thermal imaging and draft-busting. All of this work had been carried out prior to the increased profile of climate change generated by Sir David Attenborough and Greta Thunberg, and from which the group Extinction Rebellion was born. The group had three key objectives: to tell the truth about climate change, to act now and that action should be taken forward through a citizens' assembly. Ms Harvey suggested that, to help advance action, school sixth forms could be tasked to consider what could be done.

The Chairman closed the public open forum.

42. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Bellamy, Bisnauthsing, Selby, Stevens, Ward and Woolley.

43. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were disclosed.

44. Statement by Councillor Matthew Lee

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Article 4.11.4 of the Council's Constitution, which restricted the maximum amount of time a Member can speak to five minutes, be suspended during consideration of this item only.

Councillor Lee said that he believed that there was no limit to what a council could achieve if it had a firm vision and referred to the advantages that were enjoyed by South Kesteven, including its schools, industries and the countryside. He felt that making the most of those strengths would give the Council the opportunity to change lives and help those in society who needed it the most.

Councillor Lee spoke about the potential the Council had when he became Leader and how it had been his ambition to get the Council to challenge itself to think big and make things happen. He talked about some of the projects that had been delivered during his tenure as Leader, including the new cinema in Grantham, the new public realm and the new standard for cleanliness. He also referred to the increased support that had been given to local charities and good causes, the creation of Member grants and the support that had been provided to food banks.

He also spoke about the inception of InvestSK and how it had changed the relationship with businesses and the investment community and how each of the Council's market towns now had its own festival. He thanked Steve Bowyer and the InvestSK team for the work it was doing on the Council's behalf in support of local business, driving economic regeneration, arts, culture and the visitor economy.

Specific reference was made to the purchase of the former Cummins site in Stamford, which Councillor Lee stated was decisive action to protect jobs in Stamford.

He also spoke about how the Council had gone from being officer-led to Member-led and its increased profile, having attracted companies like Ernst Young to work with it. Reference was made to measures that had been introduced that were designed to increase openness and transparency, including the formation of an all-party Employment Committee, inviting all members to attend Cabinet meetings and have input, and the replacement of electronic voting with voting by a show of hands.

Reference was made to the economic challenges that the Council faced and the need to generate more income within the district and growing the economy, including the companies that had been set up by the Council. He spoke about the Council's strong financial position, which would enable it to borrow and invest in assets to drive economic growth and generate additional income, which could in turn be used to enhance council services.

Comments were made about the steps that had been taken to address the shortage of council and affordable housing, so that young people would be able to afford to live in the district.

He stated that he believed Councillors were elected to deliver, and while he considered that huge progress had been made, there was still more to do. He spoke about difficult conversations that the Council would need to have about what it was and was not prepared to do. His view had been that addressing economic development was the answer, but his stepping down indicated that others did not share the same view.

The statement included comments on a recent re-emergence of suggestions about the creation of a unitary council for Lincolnshire and how the item had previously been strongly rejected.

In concluding, Councillor Lee stated that there were some people to whom he wished to express his gratitude for their support and loyalty. Finally, he wished Councillor Cooke every success, anticipating that he would be the next Leader.

On the conclusion of Councillor Lee's speech, he was met with the applause of members from across the Chamber.

The Chairman thanked the former Leader for all the work he had done when he was in post, adding that she hoped the agenda he began, which promoted the towns and villages in the district, would continue to progress.

Several Members from across the Council were given the opportunity to say a few words about Councillor Lee's contribution as Leader. Two thanked Councillor Lee for his respect and friendship, with one recognising the mark he had left on the Council and thanked him for the steps he had taken to include the Labour group where it would not otherwise have been entitled to seats on some of the Council's committees. Support was also expressed for some of the programmes that he brought in, including access to Cabinet meetings and plans for social housing. Tribute was also paid to Councillor Lee's passion and he was wished well in whatever he chose to do next.

Another group leader reiterated the sentiments about being treated with courtesy but did highlight a number of policy points, some where their views complemented one another, including building new Council housing and others on which they differed, specifically the creation of InvestSK. Some concern was expressed about what the leader of the Labour group saw as the ongoing lack of seats on committees for her group.

The Conservative group's acting leader remembered when he had first met Councillor Lee, stating it had been an honour and privilege to serve as his Deputy Leader, and thanked him for his friendship. He added that he looked forward to continuing to deliver what had been started under Councillor Lee's leadership.

Finally, he expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Conservative group for everything that Councillor Lee had done for the Council.

There was further applause from Members across the chamber.

45. Election of the Leader of the Council

A proposal was made that Councillor Cooke be elected as the Leader of the Council. In proposing Councillor Cooke, reference was made to everything he had learned from serving as Deputy Leader. The proposer also felt he was the right person to bring parties together from across the chamber so that the Council could best help residents and take action to support their needs.

Councillor Cooke's nomination was seconded and comments made about how he had risen through the ranks, having served as a back-bencher, Cabinet Member and Deputy Leader. Reference was made to the activities in which he had engaged as a young councillor and his attendance at the Local Government Association's Leadership Academy. The seconder said that he found Councillor Cooke's leadership style to be fair, transparent and honest.

One Member stated that things needed to change, which she could not envisage were Councillor Cooke to be elected as Leader. She therefore made a further nomination, proposing Councillor Paul Wood as Leader of the Council. His proposer expressed her belief that Councillor Wood would be willing and able to implement the changes the Council needed to be democratically representative and work cross-party. It was felt that he would bring a strong, collaborative approach that she didn't feel had been met by Councillor Cooke.

In seconding the proposal, the speaker stated that collaboration would end the atmosphere that had governed meetings since May. Reference was also made to the performance of independent candidates in the May 2019 elections, which the seconder saw as an indication that the people of South Kesteven wanted independent Councillors to take a greater role. The speaker also stated that he felt the performance of the independents should be reflected in positions that receive special responsibility allowances as well as seats on committees. While he stated he recognised the difficulties for a new Leader to take a view on proportionality, he suggested a commitment could be made about ensuring management positions on committees were distributed on a proportional basis within a given period.

The Chairman invited both candidates to make a brief statement explaining what they would bring to the role.

Councillor Cooke highlighted the level of support he enjoyed as he carried the recommendation of the Conservative Group. He said that he wanted to be more open and transparent in the Council's operations and he would not be offering positions in the chamber to 'buy' votes.

Councillor Wood referred to his years of service as both an officer and Member of the Council. He stated that he had wanted to reach a deal with Councillor Cooke that would reflect the performance of independent candidates in the local elections, requesting that the group be awarded a chairmanship, two vice-chairmanships and the vice-chairmanship of the Council. No agreement had been reached.

The two nominees were put to the vote and Councillor Cooke was elected as the Leader of South Kesteven District Council.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to suspend Article. 4.11.4 of the Council's Constitution, restricting the maximum amount of time a Member can speak to five minutes, for this item only.

The Leader expressed his pride at being elected, having lived and been educated in the district and with his family and friends also living in South Kesteven. He spoke about a common goal of all Members to deliver quality services for residents in the district.

Reference was made to achievements of the previous administration under the leadership of Councillor Lee and how it had led to a dramatic shift in the direction of the Council. The Leader also referred to a comment that had been made by a Council member in the local media, which stated that as Leader, Councillor Lee had many good ideas.

The speech also acknowledged the challenges that the Council faced in respect of its funding and how it was responding to those challenges. He referred to how the level of reserves, helped by the Council and a prudent approach that had been taken, to manage volatility. The next key financial challenge was expected in 2021/22. Preparations were underway to meet this challenge, when robust business cases and spending plans would be key.

Members' attention was drawn to the positive findings of the Council's finances by External Audit both in respect of its accounts and the value for money statement. Whilst it was noted that External Audit had requested a short extension, which was not something that had been experienced by South Kesteven District Council before, it was not an unusual request and indicated the robustness of the audit.

The new Leader indicated that there would not be a change in direction, as he believed the Council was on the right track.

Reference was made to the Council's decision-making arrangements, including the formation of the new Companies Committee, which was being considered later in the meeting, and the appointment of a new Scrutiny Officer who would provide an additional resource to support the chairmen of the overview and scrutiny committees in providing challenge. Recruitment for a Head of Governance was also underway. He made a commitment to ensure openness and transparency which would include filming, recording and streaming meetings of the Council and its committees.

The Leader's attention then turned to the council's staff, whom, he said had undergone a challenging time over the previous two years, which had also created uncertainty. He made a commitment to continue undertaking the staff surveys, which had been reintroduced in 2017. He also stated that over the next four years, the focus needed to be on stability whilst continuing to deliver and keep moving forward. He also spoke about the importance of recruiting the best staff and developing talent from within the Council, citing the adage that the Council should train people well enough so that they could leave but treating them well enough so that they would not want to.

The speech recognised technological changes within society and the need to embrace these as part of the delivery of council services to meet modern values and expectations.

The Leader stated that he wanted South Kesteven to be a green council, referring to initiatives that were already in progress including replacing conventional streetlights with LEDs, looking at the use of food waste and having gone to tender for electric vehicle charging points in the market towns. He also spoke about work that had been undertaken in partnership with the Woodland Trust to develop a tree charter for local government.

Reference was made to the range of services that the Council provided, and projects that were in progress including the aim to build 500 new council homes over the next 7 years, a focus on development, a commitment to leisure, reducing the Council's carbon footprint and promoting sustainable growth in the villages and towns across the district so that they could thrive and retain vital facilities. Mention was made to a successful bid by InvestSK which led to Grantham becoming a high street heritage action zone. He highlighted the link between growth, which created jobs and in turn funded better community facilities and services. Members' attention was also drawn to the formation of DeliverSK, which would be incorporated before the end of the year. Its first project would be the regeneration of the former Cummins site in Stamford as part of the St. Martin's Park development.

As well as working with the private sector, the Leader wanted to build further relations with the third sector. Statistical information on the number of Lottery SK tickets sold and good causes that had been supported during its first year of existence.

The Leader stated that prevention would be a golden thread running through all of the Council's activities so that it was supporting and helping the most vulnerable improve the quality of their lives. To do this, he said that it was incumbent on working in partnership with public and private sector organisations.

He concluded by saying that he was looking forward to the next four years, working together, looking towards the future and delivering for everyone.

The Member, who was referred to in the Leader's speech as expressing support for the ideas of the previous Leader clarified that the quote had been taken out of

context, and had related to an article that raised concerns regarding the economic climate, Brexit and a lack of arrangements about local government funding from central government.

46. Announcement on the size and membership of the Cabinet and the allocation of Cabinet Members' remits

The Leader set out who the members of his Cabinet would be, together with their remits:

- Councillor Kelham Cooke - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Property and Democratic Services
- Councillor Barry Dobson – Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing
- Councillor Helen Goral – Cabinet Member for Growth
- Councillor Nick Robins – Cabinet Member for Planning
- Councillor Hannah Westropp – Cabinet Member for Communications and Engagement
- Councillor Robert Reid – Cabinet Member for Communities and HR
- Councillor Adam Stokes – Cabinet Member for Finance
- Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew – Cabinet Member for Culture
- Councillor Dr. Peter Moseley – Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations

47. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 were proposed, seconded and agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- Page 10, minute number 34: insertion of the word “not” – *He concluded by saying the minutes did not capture a comment he made about the Lincolnshire fair share campaign not carrying the same clout as the national campaign...*
- Page 12: correction of a typographical error – *“One member also asked about what lessons had been learned”*
- Page 13, question 2: *“Councillor Morgan also asked about the impact of Brexit on funding.”* to be added to the end of the first paragraph
- Page 14: correction of a typographical error – *“The Cabinet Member for Growth stated that some comments she had received...”*

Councillor Dilks had requested that it be recorded that the Chairman turned off his microphone during a statement he was making under minute item 36 because it was an exceptional occurrence that had been picked up by the local media. Council rejected this addition in the first instance, believing that the microphone had ceased to work because of a technical failure. Following the vote on the item, Councillor Dilks found an e-mail confirming that his microphone had been turned off because he had not ceded to the Chairman when she stood. Members agreed to add an addendum after the minutes to reflect the microphone being turned off, rather than it being the

result of a technical failure. An apology was also made about attributing the incident to the technical failure.

48. Communications (including Chairman's Announcements)

The Council noted the Chairman's engagements.

49. Appointments to committees including the appointment of their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

The Leader summarised the changes that the Conservative group proposed to make to its committee memberships and chairmanships:

- Planning Committee – Councillor Chris Benn to come off the committee and the committee to carry a vacancy until the next meeting of Council
- Governance and Audit Committee, replacement of Councillor Chris Benn as vice-chairman with Councillor Paul Wood
- Employment Committee – Councillor Lee to be replaced by Councillor Dobson
- Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Chris Benn to replace Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew as Chairman and Councillor Manterfield to replace Councillor Chivers
- Chairman of overview and scrutiny committee chairmen – Councillor Graham Jeal

These nominations were seconded.

The Independent Group also wished to change its representative on the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, replacing Councillor Jan Hansen with Councillor Penny Milnes.

Several opposition members reiterated the points made earlier in the meeting about the support independent candidates received during the May 2019 elections, stating that they felt that special responsibility appointments should reflect the political proportionality of the Council. They suggested that this would help develop greater openness and transparency and expressed a belief that the roles should be appointed on the basis of skill and experience and not patronage.

One member referred to the process for agenda setting at overview and scrutiny committees and the barriers that he had faced trying to get items added to the committee's work programme. He also stated that there were times when he had requested information that had not been provided; this meant that he had to resort to submitting Freedom of Information requests. He stated that he hoped that there would be a more collaborative approach under the committee's new chairman, and that he felt that there were some chairmen who did not appreciate the responsibility of their roles.

The concern about a lack seats on committees for the Labour group was also reiterated. Some reassurance was provided by the Leader in his summing up, when

he stated that the Constitution Committee was undertaking a review of the Council's Constitution, which could include a review of the size of the Council's Committees.

In his summing up speech, the Leader also stated that the new Scrutiny Officer, who was due to start on 1 October 2019, would help add more openness. He referred to other steps to improve openness including open questions at council meetings, having Cabinet minutes on the agenda for Council meetings, and putting arrangements in place for all members to speak at Cabinet and committee meetings.

The Leader also stated that if Members were finding it difficult to get items added to committee agendas, then they should raise the matter with the Chief Executive. He added that there should be no need for Councillors to submit Freedom of Information requests in order to obtain information, which he would pick up with the Chief Executive. He stated that some of the matters that had been raised during debate would be picked up as part of the review of the Council's Constitution. He concluded by saying that he had full confidence in all the individuals he had appointed to roles that attract special responsibility payments.

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

- **Remove Councillor Benn from the Planning Committee and carry the vacancy until the next meeting of Council**
- **Appoint Councillor P Wood as the Vice-Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee**
- **Replace Councillor Lee with Councillor Dobson on the Employment Committee**
- **Appoint Councillor Benn as the Chairman of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Replace Councillor Chivers with Councillor Manterfield on the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Replace Councillor Hansen with Councillor Milnes on the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

50. Appointment of representatives to outside bodies

The Leader proposed consequential amendments to the Council's representation on outside bodies that had arisen from changes in the membership of the Cabinet and chairmanship of committees:

- Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership – the Leader of the Council (substitute: the Deputy Leader of the Council)
- Heritage Lincolnshire – Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
- Lincolnshire County Council Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Chris Benn

The proposals were seconded.

Some members attempted to challenge the appointment of Councillor Ray Wootten as the Council's representative on the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel but the Chairman clarified that the only positions that were up for consideration were those consequential amendments proposed by the Leader.

On being put to the vote, the proposition was carried and Council **AGREED**:

- 1. The appointment of the Leader of the Council as the Council's representative on the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership with the Deputy Leader of the Council as reserve**
- 2. The appointment of Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew to Heritage Lincolnshire**
- 3. The appointment of Councillor Chris Benn to the Lincolnshire County Council Flood and Drainage Management Committee**

15:18 to 15:44 – the meeting adjourned

51. Climate Emergency - changes to Budget and Policy Framework

The Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations presented the recommendations in his report, which were made by the Cabinet at its meeting on 10 September 2019 in respect of declaring a climate emergency. The recommendations were subsequently endorsed by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He said that the time had come for the Council to talk about its actions and the climate. There was acknowledgement that any action the Council undertook would not make an immediate impact however it did not mean that the Council should refrain from acting and reducing its carbon footprint. He outlined the ambition to reduce the Council's carbon footprint was in line with other organisations. He also recognised the need for the Council to act as a community leader by talking with residents, businesses and other public sector organisations. He hoped the Chief Executive's climate change action group would be set up as quickly as possible, incorporating both Members and officers, to steer the Council to the point it achieves a net zero carbon position. The proposition was seconded.

In concluding, the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations referred to cross-party conversations that had taken place following the preparation of the Council report that had led to the development of a collaborative amendment, which he urged Members to support.

The following amendment was proposed and seconded:

1. South Kesteven District Council declares a 'climate emergency'.
2. In response to this, that Council:
 - a. Confirms the political ambition to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030 and to endeavour to become net-zero

carbon by as soon as viable before 2050. This encompasses the Council's wholly owned companies.

- b. Recognises the importance of the much more far-reaching impact of the Council's community leadership role to reduce South Kesteven's carbon footprint (eg residents, businesses, other public sector organisations, visitors/commuters, etc).
- c. Requests the Interim Chief Executive to establish a 'Climate Change Action' task and finish group to:
 - i. identify how the Council's activities can work towards being net-zero carbon;
 - ii. consider the latest climate science and expert advice on solutions;
 - iii. consider systematically the climate change impact of each area of the Council's activities;
 - iv. propose relevant performance indicators to monitor progress towards net-zero carbon;
 - v. establish any budgetary implications; and
 - vi. liaise with the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and report initial findings to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in spring 2020.
- d. Allocate up to £50,000 to enable external advice and the recruitment of a Climate Change Officer straight away to drive forward the Council's ambition to be net-zero carbon, as supported by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

In proposing the amendment, reference was made to work in a previous term when the authority had begun to develop a Carbon Management Plan, which identified baseline emissions. Comments also referred to international progress that had been made in tackling climate change and how he would favour setting up a citizens' assembly. Climate change issues were being considered by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which had recently held a workshop on the subject. The Chief Executive's task and finish group was welcomed as a mechanism for identifying the Council's current position and where it wants to get to. The proposer of the amendment concluded by highlighting the differences between the recommendations made by Cabinet and the amendment he was proposing. The amendment was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations.

Members who spoke in support of the motion recognised that reducing carbon emissions would require lifestyle changes supported by improved infrastructure. Supporters also stated that the carbon reduction agenda was particularly important to young people and was necessary to safeguard children and future generations. There was recognition that the Council had to lead by example and the suggestion

that more should be done to promote greener development through the Council's Local Plan, specifically in terms of renewable energy and improving air quality. This was reiterated by another Member who suggested it could be possible to seek contributions from developers in support of the carbon reduction agenda or placing requirements on them as part of the planning approval process. One Member requested an update on the Council's Local Plan at its next meeting.

Reference was made to Lincolnshire County Council's progress in working towards achieving a net zero carbon position. It had achieved a reduction of 20% in its carbon footprint over 10 years. A dual-hatted Member stated that much of this had been achieved through the energy-proofing of its buildings, which made sense both environmentally and financially. Members were also told about a solar project that was being run by Warrington Borough Council. The Local Government Association had also declared a climate emergency at its annual conference and similar steps had been taken by over 280 councils.

Those members who spoke against the amendment stated that they did not feel that any steps made by the Council to reduce its carbon footprint would be meaningful, as the problem was worldwide. Some concern was also expressed about the allocation of up to £50,000 to support of this agenda. Those members who supported the investment of up to £50,000 said that the budget was key to ensuring that the Council could deliver what it would be pledging to do if either the substantive motion or the amendment were carried.

Other Members who spoke did not feel that the amendment went far enough, suggesting that the targets should be more challenging.

The Chairman of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee made a commitment to look at the feasibility of all ideas. If an idea was not currently feasible because the necessary technology was not available, it would be revisited in the future. Any suggestions would also be considered in the context of value for money.

In summing up on the amendment, the proposer of the original motion stated that the funding would not just buy consultancy but an officer to help oversee how the Council develops its profile and work in relation to carbon emissions. He acknowledged that the impact of any action taken by the Council would be negligible in the global context, a small effort by millions of organisations could make a large difference. He addressed the comments that had been made by those Members who did not feel the targets were sufficiently stretching, stating that it would be nearly impossible to achieve a net zero position by 2030 because the necessary infrastructure was not in place. He did say that part of the Council's response would be lobbying the government to push for innovation and infrastructure improvements. Specific reference was made to electric vehicle charging points and a national shortage. Members were advised that following a tender exercise, electric vehicle charging points would be put into the district council's car parks. South Kesteven was also the only council in Lincolnshire that had electric vehicles within its fleet. He also drew comparison between Lincolnshire County Council's 20% reduction in its carbon

footprint in ten years, compared to SKDC's target of reducing its carbon footprint by 30% over the same period.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion.

An amendment was proposed and seconded, which would reduce the organisation's carbon footprint to become net zero carbon by 2030.

The proposer and seconder of the amendment felt that the target set by the Council should be challenging. The seconder referred to fracking, and how the government policy contradicted the drive to reduce carbon in the environment. It was noted that there were experimental fracking sites in both Melton and the Vale of Belvoir; both were in close proximity to the district. The speakers also drew attention to the level of flood risk across the district and how the coastal areas could not cope with increases in the water level.

16:26 – as the meeting had been in progress for three hours, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that it be extended for a period of one hour.

Comments made against the amendment welcomed setting an ambitious target however, Members felt that there was sufficient flexibility in the wording of the substantive motion, with the intimation if it was possible to reach a net zero carbon position before 2050, then the Council should strive towards this.

The proposer of the original motion said that the national infrastructure was not sufficient to be able to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. He did, however, find the sentiment expressed by Members positive, as it indicated that there was an appetite to drive the carbon reduction agenda forward.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

The Chairman agreed to accommodate a request to separate voting on the substantive motion to give those members who did not support providing funding of £50,000 the chance to vote in favour of other aspects of the proposition.

A vote was taken on point 1, which was carried. A second vote was taken on points 2 a) to c), which was carried. A final vote was taken on recommendation 2 d), which was also carried. Council therefore **AGREED:**

- 1. South Kesteven District Council declares a 'climate emergency'.**
- 2. In response to this, that Council:**
 - a. Confirms the political ambition to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030 and to endeavour to become net-zero carbon as soon as viable before 2050. This encompasses the Council's wholly owned companies.**

- b. **Recognises the importance of the much more far-reaching impact of the Council’s community leadership role to reduce South Kesteven’s carbon footprint (eg residents, businesses, other public sector organisations, visitors/commuters, etc).**
- c. **Requests the Interim Chief Executive to establish a ‘Climate Change Action’ task and finish group to:**
 - i. **identify how the Council’s activities can work towards being net-zero carbon;**
 - ii. **consider the latest climate science and expert advice on solutions;**
 - iii. **consider systematically the climate change impact of each area of the Council’s activities;**
 - iv. **propose relevant performance indicators to monitor progress towards net-zero carbon;**
 - v. **establish any budgetary implications; and**
 - vi. **liaise with the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and report initial findings to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in spring 2020.**
- d. **Allocate up to £50,000 to enable external advice and the recruitment of a Climate Change Officer straight away to drive forward the Council’s ambition to be net-zero carbon, as supported by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.**

52. Amendment to Budget Framework

The Cabinet Member for Finance proposed the recommendations in his report, which asked the Council to approve an amendment to the Budget Framework to facilitate the Witham Sleas Blue/Green corridor project. The recommendations were seconded.

The Council had committed funding for the project in its 2019/20 Budget (£180,000 split over three financial years); further funding had also been contributed by other partners and the European Regional Development Fund. No further contribution was being sought but the amendment to the budget framework was required because the Council was the lead partner and funding body for the project.

The proposition was put to the vote and Council **AGREED** to:

Approve the change to the General Fund revenue programme of £1,056,615 in respect of the Witham Sleas Blue-Green corridor project. The financing of this project wholly consists of external funding as detailed in the report

53. Recommendations from the Constitution Committee

The Chairman of the Constitution Committee presented the recommendations that were made at its meeting on 9 September 2019 regarding the Terms of Reference and training requirements for the new Companies Committee. The Committee's recommendations were proposed and seconded.

The Leader nominated the Conservative members to the Committee:

- Councillor Graham Jeal (Chairman)
- Councillor John Dawson (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Mark Whittington
- Councillor Ian Stokes
- Councillor Chris Benn

The following nominations were also made by the Independent Group:

- Councillor Ashley Baxter
- Councillor Virginia Moran

Concern was expressed that the size of the committee and the requirement that its membership complied with Regulations regarding proportionality, meant that there would be no representative of the Labour group. An amendment was proposed and seconded that the number of members on the committee was reviewed and to request that there be at least one Labour representative.

The Leader suggested adding an additional seat to the Committee. The political balance was checked and the increase in number meant that the Labour group would be entitled to a seat. Councillor Louise Clack was nominated to fill that seat.

A vote was taken on recommendations one and two, which was carried. A further vote was taken on the appointment of members and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, which was also carried. The Council therefore **AGREED** to:

- 1. Approve the terms of reference for the Companies Committee as set out at Appendix 1 to the report of the Chairman of the Constitution Committee (subject to increasing the total number of members on the committee from 7 to 8) and agrees their inclusion at Article 12 of the Council's Constitution**
- 2. Amend Article 2.3 b) (v) of the Council's Constitution to state that training for members of the Companies Committee, members of the Cabinet and Directors of the companies should be mandatory**
- 3. Appoint Councillors Jeal, Dawson, Whittington, I Stokes, Benn, Moran, Baxter and Clack to the Committee**

4. Appoint Councillor Jeal as the Chairman of the Companies Committee and Councillor Dawson as the Vice-Chairman of the Companies Committee

A member requested that the agenda be re-ordered so that the Notices of Motion would be the next items to be considered. The request was made because there were members of the public who had waited all afternoon to hear them debated but the Chairman ruled that the order of business would be carried out as set out in the agenda

54. Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018/19

The Chairman of overview and scrutiny committee chairmen presented the 2018/19 Scrutiny Committee Annual Report. The report summarised the work that had been undertaken by each of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees. He thanked the Members who had participated in overview and scrutiny activities during the year, both as committee members and as chairmen and vice-chairmen. He looked forward to the arrival of the Scrutiny Officer and hoped it would lead to the preparation of robust annual work programmes, with any member of the committee being able to bring items forward. He hoped that this would lead to trust in scrutiny and enhance its value to the organisation.

Thanks were expressed to the chairman of overview and scrutiny committee chairmen for the way he had managed meetings during his tenure. Members also praised his methodical approach and robustness. The skills and chairing style of the 2019/20 chairman of chairmen were also heralded. Council noted the contents of the report.

55. Meetings of the Cabinet

Members were asked to note the Leader's report, which brought the approved minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 July 2019 before members of the Council.

56. Members' Open Questions

Question 1

Councillor Baxter asked the Cabinet Member for Growth for a progress update on the new Deepings Leisure Centre.

The Cabinet Member for Growth set out the wider leisure agenda before providing an update on leisure facilities for each of the district's four market towns. She explained that in the coming months, the Council would need to make decisions regarding its leisure provision for the current and future generations. The life of leisure facilities meant that it was important to get things right, so time would be taken to amend any plans as a result of feedback received. She added that the leisure facilities provided by the district council would need to complement the facilities that were available through both the private and voluntary sector, respecting each town's needs and

characteristics. A commitment was made that proposals should offer value for money. It was noted that a new Head of Leisure had been appointed. Architects had also been appointed.

In respect of Bourne, agreements were being finalised with the school and Lincolnshire County Council to enable the extension of the existing building with a full refurbishment. It was anticipated that work on this centre would be completed by the middle of 2022.

It was still the intention to build a new facility in the Deepings that offered an improvement to existing facilities and complemented the active sporting community that already existed in the area. The Council had been in negotiations with landowners to secure an appropriate site. The existing playing fields site had been selected for feasibility work and extensive consultation. This offer provided the opportunity to consolidate all leisure activity on a single site. Subject to planning and highways approval, it was anticipated that delivery would be completed within two years of securing the site. Initial meetings were already scheduled with the local community.

A business case for facilities in Stamford had yet to be finalised, which limited the information that could be shared. The overriding ambition was to ensure the money invested filled the void in the private sector provision, complementing what it had to offer and to enhance the family-friendly facility that already existed.

Consultation on proposals for Grantham would be delayed until the centre's busiest time in January 2020 to maximise public engagement. Proposals that would be considered included a smaller facility in the town centre, refurbishment of the existing facility or the construction of a new facility on the existing site.

It was anticipated that the first report on Bourne would be brought before the relevant overview and scrutiny committee in November 2019.

Question 2

Councillor Chivers asked the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations for an update on the water that had been running down Harrowby Hill.

The Cabinet Member stated that it was brought to his attention during the summer; whilst it was the driest on record, properties were being flooded. Relevant parties, including Anglian Water, met to discuss the matter. Since then, extensive work has been carried out, which identified leaks. Initial work showed that the leak had been plugged. Remedial works were also undertaken on Chatsworth Avenue, which had also subsided. It was noted that works would continue in the area because there were natural springs.

Question 3

Councillor Dilks referred to a recent public meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) that had been held in the Deepings. The meeting had been called following an unlawful encampment of travellers, who he described as wreaking havoc on the area. He said that Lincolnshire Police faced criticism for their lack of action but, at the meeting, the PCC admitted that the community had been let down and outlined lessons that had been learned. The Leader was asked whether he would join the public in thanking the PCC and Lincolnshire Police for their honesty and integrity. He went on to ask whether the Leader whether he would agree that admitting a mistake had been made and apologising was the best thing to do.

The Leader said that he would not re-cover old ground, but he did express his gratitude to the PCC and Lincolnshire Police.

Question 4

Councillor Steptoe referred to concerns that had been raised within his Ward about the future of Earlesfield Community Centre and its demolition and replacement with housing. He asked the Deputy Leader what the plans were for the centre.

The Deputy Leader said that he was not aware of any plans for the site but he would ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and HR to arrange a meeting and find out the position.

Question 5

Councillor Knowles referred to the question that he had asked at the previous Council meeting about non-disclosure agreements. The former Leader had committed to send a written answer to all Councillors, but no response had been received.

The Leader stated that he would ensure the answer to the question was circulated.

Question 6

Councillor Ray Wootten referred to the Healthy Conversation, which closes on 31 October 2019. He asked the Leader whether he supported local people, councillors and campaign groups in support of Grantham hospital's accident and emergency department being re-opened as a 24/7 facility without the need to call 111.

The Leader reaffirmed the Council's support, stating that it was vital that Grantham for Grantham to have a 24/7 service, especially when put in the context of the Council's growth ambitions and its proximity to the A1 and the East Coast Mainline.

Question 7

Councillor Linda Wootten also referred to the overnight closure of Grantham's Accident and Emergency Department. She stated that since that time 2,598 patients had attended Peterborough Hospital's A&E out of hours. She asked the Leader

whether he supported the Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee Chairman's decision to investigate that increase.

The Leader spoke positively about the decision to scrutinise and challenge.

Question 8

Councillor Morgan stated that the CCG and community services were undertaking a second review of their plans for Grantham A&E. She referred to a document that had 30,000 local comments and signatures and asked whether the Council had responded. The Leader stated that he was not sure whether a response had been submitted but he would find out and ensure that the Council did provide a response.

17:27 – It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the meeting be extended for an additional 30 minutes.

57. Notices of Motion given under Article 4.9:

(a) Councillor Ashley Baxter

In accordance with Article 4.9.2 of the Council's Constitution, Councillor Baxter submitted notice in writing stating that he wished to withdraw the motion of which he had given notice.

(b) Councillor Charmaine Morgan

Councillor Morgan proposed her notice of motion:

- 1. The Government has stated that the United Kingdom will leave the European Union on 31st October, 2019 with or without a deal.*

South Kesteven District Council needs to be able to demonstrate that it has taken appropriate action to prepare for the challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit.

- 2. Therefore, Council mandates the Leader, Chief Executive and Senior Management Team of the Council to produce an evidence-based Brexit impact assessment briefing for all Councillors.*

The impact assessment will enable informed decisions be made by Cabinet members, councillors and officers. It will be a useful tool for other affected parties. It will identify the scope of impact, scale and severity of impact and associated risks.

- 3. The briefing is to include:*

- a) *A summary of the forecast impacts of Brexit on South Kesteven District Council services (including Council owned enterprises);*
 - b) *An assessment of the likely risks and opportunities of the most likely Brexit scenarios;*
 - c) *Details of actions likely to be necessary or beneficial in light of Brexit*
 - d) *The likely additional costs to the District Council resulting from most likely Brexit Scenarios.*
4. *The briefing is to give full consideration to the likely impacts of Brexit on the following:*
- a) *all services provided by, or on behalf of, the Council (and its subsidiaries):*
 - b) *the Council's critical supply chain:*
 - c) *residents of South Kesteven*
 - d) *businesses within the District.*
5. *The briefing is to be produced at the earliest opportunity and before 11 October at the latest.
Updates will be provided to Councillors at appropriate intervals.*
6. *As far as possible the content of the briefing will be available within the public domain. Any information concerning sensitive information of a commercial and/or personal nature should be appended and clearly indicated as confidential.*
7. *Publication of the briefing should be followed by a short but meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders including Councillors, staff, residents, businesses and other organisations.*

In proposing her motion, Councillor Morgan referred to a statement made by the Minister for Exiting the EU, which indicated that whilst a deal would be preferable, there was a chance that there would not be a deal. She stated that she had repeatedly asked what impact a 'no deal Brexit' would have on the Council and that work that had been done to analyse the potential impact of the most likely exit scenarios. She illustrated her motion with an example concerning increased prices in food and whether that would have knock-on impacts that would directly affect the Council, for instance, residents not being able to afford their council tax or council rent. She stated that she was aware of work that had been undertaken across the county but wanted to understand the work that had been done to assess the possible impacts on South Kesteven.

The motion was seconded. The seconder referred to the political manoeuvrings, and pros and cons debated nationally. He stated that this motion asked for an

understanding of what could happen within the next few weeks. He requested a report from senior officers by 11 October 2019. He drew an analogy with the fuel crisis of 1998 and the consequences that were experienced across the country. He added that the Yellowhammer contingency plan identified fuel crises and food shortages as potential consequences. He concluded by stating that if the Council was proactive, it should have a position before any of the potential scenarios were able to unfold.

The Leader stated that he supported the need for Members to have a greater understanding. He stated that to produce something with a high amount of detail would require significant resources. He provided reassurance that officers from SKDC were working with colleagues in the Local Resilience Forum to understand and mitigate potential impacts.

He proposed an amendment:

“Council mandates the Chief Executive, as lead Brexit officer for the authority to organise a Brexit briefing for all Councillors, before the 31st October, and a detailed report of the impact study and analysis by the 11th October so that they may be appraised of the work undertaken at county and district levels on the potential impacts of Brexit on the communities and businesses of South Kesteven.”

Councillor Morgan stated that she accepted the wording. A vote was taken and the Council **AGREED** to:

Mandate the Chief Executive, as lead Brexit officer for the authority to organise a Brexit briefing for all Councillors, before the 31st October, and a detailed report of the impact study and analysis by the 11th October so that they may be appraised of the work undertaken at county and district levels on the potential impacts of Brexit on the communities and businesses of South Kesteven.

(c) Councillor Virginia Moran

The Leader stated that a number of his group members had raised concerns for their safety; he stated that some of the Councillors within this group had been subjected to threats following the publication of the motion. So that they felt able to participate he proposed that the Council suspend procedure rules 4.13.3 and 4.13.4, which provided for voting by show of hands and by recorded votes be suspended for this item only, to enable voting by secret ballot. This proposition was seconded and, on being put to the vote, carried.

Councillor Moran stated that, following advice from Legal and Democratic Services, she had revised the wording of her motion. A copy of the updated wording had been circulated to Members. Councillor Moran proposed her motion:

Council resolves:

1. *To refuse permission for the use of SKDC assets for any activity connected with the Belvoir Hunt.*
2. *When considering any street collection licence application, the application form must specify the name of the registered charity that will benefit from the collection and guidance provided to set out the appropriate requirements of any such collection, e.g. ensuring appropriately marked collection receptacles are used.*
3. *To ensure that all costs associated with preparation, management or clearing up after activities connected with the Belvoir Hunt are recovered from the organisers.*
4. *To refuse and/or withhold any other non-statutory support for the Belvoir Hunt.*

Councillor Moran, in proposing her motion, stated that it was not about fox hunting; instead it was designed to demonstrate that the Council did not condone the actions of the Belvoir Hunt and to prevent bringing the Council's reputation into disrepute. She spoke about the support she had received since submitting the motion and the number of primary shares and comments that had been made on social media. Reference was made to a recent decision that had been made by Newark Town Council, which had banned the hunt meeting from the town. Nottinghamshire County Council had also banned any hunt activities taking place on their land.

Councillor Moran also addressed comments that had been made during the public speaking session, referring to the parade through town and those years that the Mayor had met the hunt and how the Belvoir Hunt insisted that it remained within the law. She referred to the practice of cubbing and said that the Council should not support criminal activity.

The motion was seconded. The seconder referred to criminal activities that were associated with individuals who were connected to individuals associated with the Belvoir Hunt. She stated that four men who were involved in the attack against hunt observers were never identified and brought to justice. She concluded by stating that the Council should not be connected to any organisation that had a disregard to the law.

Members who spoke in support of the motion commended the bravery of the proposed and condemned the threats that had been experienced by some Members. Reference was made to the £48,000 compensation that was paid by the Belvoir Hunt to the victims who were attacked which some Members linked with responsibility. Supporters of the motion did not feel that the Belvoir Hunt had fulfilled its duty as an employer by standing by an individual who was associated in the attack on hunt observers.

Members who spoke against the motion recognised the rural tradition that hunting represented and the hundred-year history of the Belvoir Hunt meeting in Grantham town centre. Some Members also raised concerns that voting in support of a decision

would lead to a decision that discriminated against a named group and could be challenged through Judicial Review. They outlined the role of the Council to provide services for all members of the community.

17:58 – It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the meeting be extended for 15 minutes

One Member spoke about their experience as Grantham Mayor in greeting the Belvoir Hunt and the reactions he had seen from the members of the public who had turned out to see the riders and hounds. He also spoke about threats he had received through social media from opponents to the hunt.

More comments were made by Members who supported the motion. Their comments referred to the use of public money to support an event operated by a limited company. One Member spoke about their experience of organising events in Bourne and the due diligence that was required. They stated that if the Belvoir Hunt continued to be allowed to meet in Grantham then the Council was beholden to ensure that the event operated safely because it was responsible for ensuring event management plans and risk assessments were robust. Another supporter of the motion recognised the role of tradition but stated that there were times that traditions had to change as society progressed.

There was recognition that, whilst most people enjoy the spectacle, they did not like the thought of a wild animal being attacked.

Opponents to the motion reiterated their view on the Council's role to provide services that do not discriminate against any individual or organisation.

The proposer of the motion was given the opportunity to sum up. She stated that she could not find evidence of another organisation or company that had held events in South Kesteven that had received the same level of assistance as the Belvoir Hunt. She stated that the last year was the first year that the Belvoir Hunt had been asked to produce a risk assessment and referred to the assistance the Hunt had had from the Charter Trustees in arranging road closures.

The motion was put to the ballot and the Council **AGREED:**

To not support the notice of motion submitted by Councillor Moran.

58. Close of meeting

The meeting was closed at 18:18.