

# MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 21 JANUARY 2016

2.00 PM



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## PRESENT

Councillor Ray Wootten Chairman

Councillor Bob Adams  
Councillor Duncan Ashwell  
Councillor Ashley Baxter  
Councillor Mrs Pam Bosworth  
Councillor Robert Broughton  
Councillor Katherine Brown  
Councillor Teri Bryant  
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright  
Councillor George Chivers  
Councillor Michael Cook  
Councillor Kelham Cooke  
Councillor Lynda Coutts  
Councillor Nick Craft  
Councillor Felicity Cunningham  
Councillor Phil Dilks  
Councillor Damian Evans  
Councillor Mike Exton  
Councillor Tracey Forman  
Councillor Helen Goral  
Councillor Breda Griffin  
Councillor Graham Jeal  
Councillor Michael King

Councillor Ms Jane Kingman  
Councillor Matthew Lee  
Councillor Nikki Manterfield  
Councillor Charmaine Morgan  
Councillor Nick Neilson  
Councillor Helen Powell  
Councillor Nick Robins  
Councillor Bob Russell  
Councillor Bob Sampson  
Councillor Ian Selby  
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith  
Councillor Jacky Smith  
Councillor Peter Stephens  
Councillor Judy Stevens  
Councillor Mrs Sarah Stokes  
Councillor Brian Sumner  
Councillor Mrs Brenda Sumner  
Councillor Hannah Westropp  
Councillor Paul Wood  
Councillor Rosemary H Woolley  
Councillor Mrs Linda Wootten

## OFFICERS

Chief Executive (Beverly Agass)  
Strategic Director (Tracey Blackwell,  
Steve Ingram)  
Executive Manager, Corporate (Lucy  
Youles)

## OFFICERS

Corporate Finance Manager (Richard  
Wyles)  
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

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*Your council working for you*

*Prior to the business listed on the Council agenda, Councillors remembered Sandy Kavanagh, a former officer of the Council who had recently passed away in a minute's silence.*

*The Chairman welcomed Councillor Hannah Westropp to the meeting who was the candidate elected in the by-election for Belvoir Ward on 3 December 2015.*

**51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Johnson, Mrs. Kaberry-Brown, Mapp, Dr. Moseley, Reid, Adam Stokes, Ian Stokes, Turner, Ward, Webster and Wilkins.

**52. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

No interests were disclosed.

**53. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2015**

A comment was made that the minutes of the last meeting did not include a question and its answer about why, following the passing of a motion by Council on 10 September 2015, prayers was not included as a substantive item on the agenda. The Monitoring Officer explained that prayers was included on the summons to the meeting and took place within the meeting. It had not been intended that prayers would be included as an agenda item that could be debated or motions put forward. Instead of requesting a revision to the minutes of the meeting of 12 November 2015, the member who raised the point asked that the question and response be recorded in the minutes of this meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2015 were proposed, seconded and agreed as a correct record.

**54. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS)**

The Chairman began by confirming that a number of briefing sessions on the preparation of the new Local Plan had been arranged for Councillors. A list had been circulated to all Councillors and the Chairman encouraged as many members as possible to attend.

The Council noted the Chairman's engagements. The Chairman thanked the Vice-chairman for attending those engagements that he had been unable to attend. He also drew members' attention to his use of the Chairman's car, which had only been used to transport him to one civic engagement.

One of the engagements that the Chairman had attended was for the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Mid and South Lincolnshire Showman's Guild, which had made former Councillor, Jeff Thompson, an honorary member.

The Chairman passed on his congratulations to Mr. Thompson, who then made

a brief presentation to the Council about the origins of the South Kesteven District Council's crest, the components each representing one of the five Council's that were combined to form South Kesteven District Council under the Local Government Act 1972. The Chairman thanked Mr. Thompson for his presentation.

## **55. PRINCE WILLIAM OF GLOUCESTER BARRACKS**

The Chairman welcomed Major Gary Pugh from Prince William of Gloucester Barracks in Grantham. Major Pugh provided a brief overview of the range of facilities that were available at the barracks, particularly drawing members' attention to the quantity of accommodation and welfare, and training equipment and facilities that were available.

A number of regiments were based at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, combining regular army personnel and reservists: members were given a summary of the kinds of roles that each of the regiments carried out. Among the regiments stationed at the barracks were those that specialised in training, including the Army School of Physical Training, catering and operational support. Logistics support and supply squadron were also based at the barracks.

The Major summarised the activity that had taken place in the last 12 months and of changes to the regiments that were resident. The changes that had taken place were designed to help the army achieve its vision, which was to be regarded as a confident, valued and adaptable institution with clearly understood utility and productivity.

In explaining the future development of the army, reference was made to increased recruitment of reservists and how they could support regular soldiers. With specific regard to Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, it was aimed that it would become even busier and that the relationship with the people of Grantham would continue to grow.

A brief question and answer session took place, during which the valuable contribution of reservists was recognised and members established that the key selling point for reservists was the promise of adventure. A pop-up recruitment centre would be opened in Grantham to try and attract new reservists. Reference was also made to the centenary of the site, which would be celebrated in 2016.

The Chairman thanked Major Pugh for his presentation and answering members' questions.

## **56. GRANTHAM CANAL - AN UPDATE**

Jason Leach, the Midlands Enterprise and Restoration Manager for the Canal and River Trust was welcomed by the Chairman. He gave a presentation on Grantham Canal Restoration. The presentation began with examples of successful restoration projects elsewhere in the country and highlighted some

of the benefits that had been experienced in those areas as a result.

Members' attention was then drawn specifically to the project that was underway to restore Grantham canal. Early work on the project had begun with the restoration of two locks. The restoration was being delivered by a team of volunteers who had been specially trained to complete the project; approximately 500 volunteer days had been recorded, which equated to an approximate value of £50,000. Work was also being undertaken with Grantham College to provide learning and skills development opportunities for its students.

Mr Leach reported that a key action in the progression of the project was the setting of a vision and producing a plan of how that would be achieved. In setting a vision, thought would need to be given to the destination of the canal and potential opportunities for the development of leisure and community facilities. Aspirations around the destination would need to complement and where necessary be considered in the development of the Council's new local plan. Part of the project would also look at the preservation of the Thames Link Route and ensuring that the water supply throughout the length of the canal remained viable.

A consultation exercise on a vision and aspirations was underway, with a final plan completed by autumn 2016. Members established that part of the consultation was to determine the destination of the canal, with the two proposals being to the west of the A1 or restoring the canal basin closer to the town centre.

During questions, members asked about the total number of locks and bridges that needed to be re-established in addition to locks 14 and 15 near Woolsthorpe-by-Belvoir. There were approximately a dozen more locks and 14 further bridges. Members also asked about opportunities to engage and work with local communities in the development of the canal area. Mr Leach stated that while the current consultation was not being undertaken with local residents, there would be opportunities to engage the communities in the delivery of the project.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Leach for his presentation and answering the questions raised by members.

## **57. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS**

### **Decision:**

- 1. That Councillor Hannah Westropp be appointed to fill the vacant Conservative seats on the Engagement Policy Development Group and the Resources Policy Development Group**
- 2. That Councillor Ray Wootten be appointed to fill the vacant Conservative seat on the Scrutiny Committee**

The Chairman introduced report number LDS164, which stated that the Conservative Group needed to nominate an additional member to the Engagement and Resources Policy Development Groups to comply with political balance requirements and a member to fill the vacant Conservative seat on the Scrutiny Committee. The Leader nominated Councillor Hannah Westropp to fill the vacant seats on the two PDGs and Councillor Ray Wootten to fill the vacancy on the Scrutiny Committee. The proposition was seconded and on being put to the vote, duly agreed.

## **58. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE**

### **Decision:**

**That the Council approves the following changes to the Constitution**

- 1 That the delegation to the Executive Manager, Environment in Article 14 of the Constitution be amended to include the following in the table of functions for the Executive Manager, Environment shown in the appendix to Article 14:**

<p><b>The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 made under the Energy Act 2011</b></p>	<p><b>To carry out all enforcement functions, including the service of compliance and penalty notices</b></p>
<p><b>The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2012 made under the Housing Act 2004</b></p>	<p><b>To carry out all enforcement functions, including the service of remedial and penalty charges notices.</b></p>

- 2 That the Constitution is amended as follows:**
- 2.1 Change all references made to Cabinet to read the Executive throughout the Constitution and all references from Portfolio Holders to Executive Members**
- 2.2 Change the portfolio names listed in Article 8, clause 8.2 as follows:**
- **Governance and Communications to “Governance”**
  - **Grow the Economy to “Growth”**
  - **Clean Green and Healthy to “Environment”**
  - **Good Housing to “Housing”**
  - **Arts and Leisure to “Culture”**
  - **Strategic Resources to “Resources”**
- 2.3 Amend Article 7 – Policy Development Groups (PDGs) as follows:**

- (i) The Council will constitute three Policy Development Groups (PDGs) called Resources, Growth and Communities. It will appoint to them nine or such number of members as it considers appropriate from time to time. Such groups may appoint working groups of their membership for a fixed period, on the expiry of which they shall cease to exist.**
- (ii) The PDGs will meet in public and private to make recommendations to the Executive on the development of policies.**

**2.4 Amend the remit of Resources PDG at clause 7.1.1 to read:**

**The remit of the Resources PDG will be to assist the Executive Members in ensuring that the Council is able to maintain a sustainable financial position, maximise the resources available to it and to channel those resources effectively to deliver positive outcomes in the community**

**2.5 Change the name of Engagement PDG at clause 7.1.2 to Growth PDG and amend its remit to read:**

**The remit of the Growth PDG will be to assist the Executive Members in shaping the plans that will guide the future growth and prosperity of the District by positively contributing to the development of the related strategies and initiatives which will deliver new homes, additional employment opportunities and the necessary supporting infrastructure**

**2.6 Amend the remit of the Communities PDG at clause 7.1.3 to read:**

**The Communities PDG will assist the Executive Members to help local people and those moving into the District by formulating environment, health, safety and cultural initiatives that will ensure the overall wellbeing of our communities**

**2.7 Amend the process for liaison between the Executive and the PDGs Executive and Policy Development Liaison in clause 7.18 as follows:**

**Liaison between the Executive Members and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the three Policy Development Groups will take the form of a briefing held on a quarterly basis. The briefing will be chaired by the Leader. All members of the Executive and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs will have voting rights.**

The Chairman introduced report number LDS166, which related to the recommendations of the Constitution Committee on changes in relation to the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 made under the Energy Act 2011 and the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide

Alarm (England) Regulations 2012 made under the Housing Act 2004 and proposed changes related to the Council's Executive function.

In seconding the recommendations, an amendment was moved and seconded that recommendation 1.2.1 should be amended to: "*Change all references made to Cabinet to read the Executive throughout the Constitution and all references from Portfolio Holders to Executive Members.*" Some discussion on the amendment ensued with those members in support of the proposition referring to references within legislation to the executive function and identifying the cabinet as the executive, together with the practices of other, neighbouring authorities. Those members who did not support the amendment expressed concerns about the potential for confusion with the Council's executive managers, who were officers. On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried and incorporated within the substantive motion.

An amendment was proposed that the issue of the nomenclature of the cabinet members should be referred back to the Constitution Committee for further consideration. Members who spoke in support of the amendment referred to the closeness of the vote on the previous amendment (19 for, 18 against and 6 abstentions), together with comments raised in the previous debate and creating a structure that members of the public without knowledge of the organisation could understand. Other members who spoke against the amendment suggested that the title of executive was more representative of the strategic role cabinet members played and that the change in title would improve consistency with legislation and the titles used in other local authorities. On being put to the vote, amendment was lost.

Members' attention turned to debate of the substantive motion where comments were made about a number of themes including the rationale for shortening the names of the areas of responsibility for members of the Executive, arrangements for the Cabinet/PDG liaison (briefing PDG chairmen and vice-chairmen on forthcoming work and assigning policies that required development to the relevant PDG), political composition of working groups, the number of scheduled public meetings and opportunities for members to meet to participate in detailed policy discussions during the early stages of policy development. Comments were also made on opportunities for members to participate in working groups and how they fed into the wider PDG and executive structure.

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

## **59. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 15:39.