

Present: Councillor Ric Metcalfe (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Donald Nannestad, Councillor Bob Bushell,
Councillor Rosanne Kirk and Councillor Neil Murray

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Chris Burke

74. Confirmation of Minutes - 25 November 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2019 be confirmed.

75. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

76. Living Wage Increase November 2019

Purpose of Report

To recommend the proposed increase to the Living Wage as announced by the Living Wage Foundation in November 2019.

Decision

That the implementation of the latest Living Wage uplift during April 2020 be approved.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

The Council was committed to maintaining its Living Wage accreditation and in order to do so the authority had six months to implement the Living Wage following the announcement of increase. In November 2019 it was announced that the Living Wage would increase from £9.00 an hour to £9.30 an hour.

The aim of implementing the Living Wage was to ensure that no employees were paid below the Living Wage hourly rate.

77. Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit - Council Tax

Purpose of Report

To report the estimated balance for the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund and the surplus or deficit to be declared for 2019/20.

Decision

That the action of the Chief Finance Officer in declaring a Council Tax surplus of £382,814 be approved.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

Prior to setting the Council Tax for 2020/21 the City Council was required to estimate whether there was to be a surplus or deficit on the Council Tax element of the collection fund for the current financial year.

The Council would therefore declare a surplus on Council Tax of £382,814 for the financial year 2019/20.

The main reasons for the surplus were noted as being a higher than anticipated collection rate for the financial year together with a lower rate of write-offs than had originally been estimated.

78. Housing Delivery Programme Update

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the programme of development and acquisitions to maintain a pipeline of affordable housing delivery and seek approval to proceed to the pre-construction phase for the proposed scheme of new build affordable homes on land owned by the Council off Rookery Lane.

The report also sought approval to carry out the demolition of Garfield View, Woodburn View and Trelawney Church, all located off Queen Elizabeth Road on land identified for future development.

Decision

- (1) That the outline proposals for the delivery of a scheme of approximately 48 units off Rookery Lane be approved.
- (2) That a further report be presented to the Executive once the final scheme cost has been confirmed.
- (3) That a further budget allocation to proceed to the pre-construction phase of the scheme, funded from the Housing Improvement Programme new build allocation, be approved.
- (4) That proposals for the demolition of Garfield View, Woodburn View and the former Ermine Methodist Church and a budget, funded from the Housing Improvement Programme new build allocation, be approved.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Other options considered and rejected were set out in paragraph 8.1 of the report.

Reason for Decision

The report provided an updated programme for the delivery of housing across the City for the period up to 2022.

A concept plan for a scheme of 48 affordable homes off Rookery Lane was proposed, as set out in the report. This proposal would be developed for further consultation and a planning application prepared for submission in March 2020. During this pre-construction phase, technical survey work would be carried out to inform the detailed design of the scheme in order to improve cost certainty. It was estimated that the scheme would commence on-site by December 2020, subject to the granting of planning permission and approval of the final costs and delivery budget. This would be the subject of a further report to the Executive.

It was also proposed to progress with the demolition of Garfield View, Woodburn View and Trelawney Church, all located off Queen Elizabeth Road. The demolition of Garfield View and Woodburn View was required to enable access into the proposed housing site whereas the demolition of Trelawney Church was required to prepare the site for future development. Early demolition of these properties would reduce the authority's Council Tax liability and costs associated with the upkeep and maintenance of vacant property whilst development proposals were being reviewed.

Further details regarding the programme for delivery up to 2022 and proposals relating to Rookery Lane and Queen Elizabeth Road in particular, were set out in the report.

79. Scrutiny Review of Social Isolation

Purpose of Report

To provide the Executive with an opportunity to consider the final report of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee's scrutiny review into social isolation, which set out draft recommendations based on evidence gathered and key outcomes highlighted as part of the review.

Decision

That the key findings and conclusions of the scrutiny review be actioned as necessary and fed into the development and formation of the Health and Wellbeing strand of the Council's Reducing Inequality theme of its Vision 2025.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

The Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee undertook a scrutiny review into social isolation, the scope of which was to investigate:

- how prevalent social isolation was in Lincoln and why it was occurring;
- what support was currently in place for people suffering from isolation;
- whether the current support was sufficient to address the issue of social isolation.

Representatives from a range of organisations delivering services and support across the city, and wider county, attended meetings of the Committee in order to contribute to the review and provide evidence which was used to formulate key findings and conclusions as set out in the report. Extracts of the evidence

received from contributors to the review were attached at Appendix A of the report.

A summary of the main findings and conclusions was noted as follows:

- the Council could play a more active role in bringing organisations together to encourage and perhaps facilitate greater partnership working and sharing of information and good practice. This could include the promotion of services, events and activities available in communities and raising awareness of social isolation and loneliness;
- more could be done to promote the symptoms or characteristics associated with social isolation, as well as contact details of key organisations in order to facilitate the effective signposting of services;
- the issue of social isolation and loneliness should be highlighted to the Council's staff and elected members, particularly those who come into contact with residents regularly as part of their day-to-day business in order that they can identify symptoms and understand what services or organisations to signpost people to;
- acknowledging those people unable to access online services or electronic communication, the Council should ensure that there was always an option to contact any of its services without the need to access the service online;
- a review should take place to ensure that the Council's approach to responding to requests for holding community events included guidance and advice that was supportive and user-friendly;
- consideration should be given to ways in which the Government's £2 million funding aimed at addressing loneliness could be promoted to those frontline organisations so that it could be effectively utilised in Lincoln. Further consideration should also be given to the availability of any other sources of external funding to support the issue of social isolation and loneliness in the City of Lincoln.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Leader of the Council, placed on record his thanks on behalf of the Executive to the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee for an excellence piece of work which he was pleased to see would feed into the Council's Health and Wellbeing strand of the Reducing Inequality theme of its Vision 2025.

80. Lincoln Intervention Team - Year 2 Funding - Amendment

Purpose of Report

To update the Executive on a successful funding bid for the Intervention Team and seek approval to amend the funding structure previously approved to cover a third year of the Team.

Decision

That the re-allocation of £60,000 reserve funding into 2020/21 used to enable the Intervention Team to continue through to December 2021 be approved.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

The Lincoln Intervention Team was introduced in October 2018 as a one year project. Further funding had since been secured via the Council and partners to continue for a further year, however, a successful funding application to the National Lottery Community Fund had enabled the project to continue through to a third year.

Proposed funding structures for the second and third year were set out within the report with a re-profiled spending account outlined in paragraph seven of the report.

It was noted that the Intervention Team provided a holistic and innovative service that worked closely with key partners to achieve an improvement for both individuals and communities that would lead to sustainable positive changes.

81. Hartsholme Country Park - Fees and Charges

Purpose of Report

To seek agreement to the use of some specific charges in Hartsholme Country Park, in advance of the Council formally agreeing the Council's full table of fees and charges for the year ahead.

To seek an adjustment of the way that fees and charges for some areas of the Council's business were set, moving to a two year proposal, so that customers could have certainty in advance therefore permitting earlier bookings to be taken.

To seek agreement to support the Council's channel shift initiatives by taking card payments only.

Decision

- (1) That the principle of setting some fees two years ahead where there was a business need be endorsed and that this be reflected in future fees and charges setting reports to the Council.
- (2) That the fees and charges set out in Appendix A be supported and referred to the Council for consideration.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Alternative options considered and rejected were set out in paragraph seven of the report.

Reason for Decision

Fees and charges were currently set on a year-by-year basis, however, in some trading areas where advance bookings were taken it had been identified that there was demand for customers to book and pay on timetables not compatible with the Council's current process. The ability to advertise the availability of bookings a long way ahead was important, which the current annual process of setting fees and charges did not currently support.

It was proposed that the table of fees and charges for Hartsholme Country Park was amended to make recommendations for two years. These had reference to the normal procedure of inflation based on 3% annually, but were also mindful of market pressures from competition, had reference to the quality of facilities offered and took into account customer feedback. The revised schedule of fees and charges as proposed was set out in Appendix A of the report.

The proposal to only accept card payments for bookings was in line with the Council's channel shift initiatives.

82. New Developments - Charges for Bins

Purpose of Report

To provide clarification to a decision taken by the Executive last year in relation to the costs of providing waste bins in new developments, making clear that this was for the provision of the bin only, not the ongoing service, and that developers were the first choice for payment.

Decision

- (1) That the Council maintains its first approach to charge developers, making a developer responsible for bin provision costs in alignment with previously agreed fees and charges.
- (2) That, where a developer refuses to pay, this cost be passed to residents directly, explaining the reason for the charge.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

In October 2017 the Executive agreed to charge developers for bin provision and agreed a set of charges as set out at paragraph 5.1 of the report.

The Council would continue to ask developers to cover these costs but in those cases where developers refused to pay the new residents would be approached directly to pay, explaining that they were being asked due to the refusal of the developer to pay. It was noted that the legislation permitting charging of residents was clear and beyond challenge.

A comparison of the state of charging by some other authorities was attached to the report at Appendix A. Whilst not all Councils charged, it was understood that many other authorities did and of those that did not many were in the process of considering this option due to financial pressures. It was expected that this would be standard practice in due course.

83. Lincoln Zero Carbon Update Report

Purpose of Report

To inform and update the Executive on progress towards Lincoln's net zero carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions target by 2030 and request that consideration be given to the resources required across a range of service areas to deliver the proposed actions outlined in the report.

Decision

- (1) That the Council continues to provide ongoing secretariat support to the Lincoln Climate Commission and to work collectively with the Commission to deliver a science based zero carbon roadmap for the Lincoln local authority area and establish a citizens' assembly to broaden consultation.
- (2) That the bronze, silver and green membership levels for investment in the environment and the resources required to proceed with the implementation of an Environmental Management System be noted.
- (3) That an Environmental Policy be prepared by the end of March 2020.
- (4) That a Lincoln Christmas Market Environmental Policy be prepared by October 2020.
- (5) That the key points from the emerging Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy be noted.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

The City Council hosted Lincoln's first low carbon conference on 14 March 2012, launching the Low Carbon Lincoln Partnership and Charter. To date, 48 local organisations and businesses had signed the Low Carbon Lincoln Charter and following the launch event the Partnership prepared the Low Carbon Lincoln Plan 2012-2020 and agreed a target to reduce Lincoln's CO₂ emissions by 25% by 2020. The latest figures for Lincoln indicated a per capita CO₂ reduction of 44% between 2005 and 2017.

In March 2018, as part of a Vision 2020 drive to integrate sustainability into the Council's operations and services, the Corporate Management Team agreed to set up a Carbon Reduction Taskforce made up of officers representing all Directorates and service areas of the authority with responsibility for environmental management and property management. The Taskforce was also attended by the Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place, the Sustainability Advocate and the Strategic Director of Major Developments in her capacity as the Corporate Management Team's Sustainability Champion. An overview of the work undertaken by the Taskforce since 2018 was set out at paragraph 2.3 of the report with actions scheduled during 2019/20 outlined at paragraph 2.4.

At its meeting on 23 July 2019 the City Council agreed a motion declaring a Climate and Environmental emergency. The motion included a commitment for Lincoln to achieve a net zero carbon target by 2030. It was reported that for Lincoln to become a net zero carbon city by 2030, emissions would need to be capped at approximately 53 kilo tonnes per capita. It would be necessary to drastically reduce emissions by a further 51% from the current 3.5t CO₂ per capita to 1.7t per capita per annum.

The report provided detailed information on Lincoln's CO₂ emissions in respect of the following:

- electricity consumption;
- gas consumption;
- transport.

In addition, updates were provided on the following:

- the Lincoln Climate Commission;
- the role of digital/smart technology and Lincolnshire's energy assets to achieve zero carbon;
- the scope of Lincoln's roadmap to zero carbon;
- the Lincoln Transport Taskforce.

With regard to the City of Lincoln Council's own emissions and mechanisms in place to contribute towards a zero carbon target, updates were provided in the report on the following key areas:

- the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan;
- new homes;
- the Western Growth Corridor;
- travel plans;
- a review of Council fleet vehicles;
- the Emerging Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy;
- the Council's Environmental Management System;
- the Council's commitment to reduce single-use plastics;
- Lincoln Christmas Market Environmental Policy.

Councillor Bob Bushell, Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place, praised an excellent report which he said showed that progress had been made since the conference in 2012 both within the City Council internally and in working with key stakeholders.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Leader of the Council, concurred with the above sentiments and reflected that energy generation, energy use, waste and transport were the key areas that needed addressing on a residential, commercial and industrial level.

84. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because it was likely that if members of the public were present there would be a disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

This item was considered in private as it was likely to disclose exempt information, as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. No representations had been received in relation to the proposal to consider this item in private.

85. Housing Delivery Programme Update

Minute number 78 includes details of the decision associated with this item.