

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

Apologies for Absence: None.

87. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2021 be confirmed.

88. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

89. Lincoln Town Deal Programme

Purpose of Report

To approve the Heads of Terms offered by the Government in respect of the Lincoln Town Deal and the proposed management and governance arrangements for the next stage of the process.

Decision

That the Executive:

- (1) Approves the Heads of Terms offered by Government in respect of the Lincoln Town Deal.
- (2) Approves the proposed management and governance arrangements for the next stage of the process, set out within the appended Local Assurance Document.
- (3) In approving the Local Assurance Document, delegates the following decisions to the Section 151 Officer and the Strategic Director of Major Developments, working in partnership with the Town Board and its Investment Sub-Committee:
 - the final selection of projects to be taken forward to full business case;
 - approval of final project business cases and funding awards, except for projects to be delivered directly by the Council, which would be subject to full Executive approval;
 - any future changes which are required to the Local Assurance Document to reflect the terms of the Heads of Terms Offer or any further guidance for this programme.

- (4) Authorises the submission of a planning application in respect of the Central Market project and delegates approval of the final planning submission to the Strategic Director of Major Developments and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

As part of the Government's analysis of the projects associated with Lincoln's Town Deal Fund bid, fourteen of the fifteen projects had scored high enough to qualify for this stage of the process equating to an offer of a £19 million investment in the city.

The next stage of the process consisted of the following:

- confirmation of Lincoln's acceptance of the Heads of Terms by 24 March 2021;
- confirmation of which projects, out of the fourteen accepted as part of the bid, Lincoln wished to progress further, within two months of accepting the Heads of Terms;
- within twelve months of the Town Deal being agreed, development and submission of final businesses cases for those projects selected.

The report set out an Assurance Framework and governance model that would be used to determine how the Lincoln Town Fund Programme would be managed and governed, taking account of the Heads of Terms agreement with the Government. It also provided further detail to support the arrangements set out within Lincoln's Investment Plan.

The framework and governance had been drafted with reference to the Local Growth Assurance Framework developed by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership for the management of its programmes and the existing policies and protocols which were in place for the City of Lincoln Council, as accountable body for the Town Fund Programme. The document outlined specific information in relation to governance, transparency, confirmation of the accountable body, scope and undertaking of due diligence, decision-making, contracting and claims, monitoring and grant claims, independent evaluation, claw-back and variation orders.

The newly established Investment Sub-Committee would have responsibility for approving final business cases, mirroring the principles followed by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership. To assist in the decision-making, each business case would be subject to an independent due diligence check in the same way as for the Local Enterprise Partnership funding projects to ensure transparent and robust decision-making. It was reported that having this framework in place would enable the determination of projects to be fast-tracked in order that delivery could commence as soon as possible, once the final selection of projects to proceed to business case stage had been confirmed.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe put on record his thanks to the City Council's team for the excellent work they had undertaken in preparing Lincoln's bid. These sentiments were shared by Councillor Christopher Burke.

Councillor Neil Murray commended an excellent result for the city in confirming £19 million of funding for investment in Lincoln. He was particularly pleased to see inclusion of the Central Market project and the associated recommendation contained within the report.

Councillor Donald Nannestad asked whether the Investment Sub-Committee reported to the main Lincoln Town Deal Board.

It was reported that the Investment Sub-Committee would assess individual business cases when they came through for specific projects, which was a process mirroring that used by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and make recommendations to the Town Deal Board and, ultimately the Council's Executive for final approval. Councillor Metcalfe responded to this point and said that it was hoped a consensus would be achieved by the Town Deal Board, however, if a consensus could not be reached and the Board was unable to agree upon a way forward, final adjudication would rest with the City Council as accountable body, through its Executive.

90. Business Support & Economic Recovery: Proposals for the use of Additional Restrictions Grant Funding

Purpose of Report

To approve proposals for the use of the Additional Restrictions Grant funding to provide ongoing support to businesses impacted by Covid-19 and promote the economic recovery of the city.

Decision

- (1) That the proposals set out in the report for the use of the Additional Restrictions Grant funding to provide ongoing support to businesses impacted by Covid-19 and promote the economic recovery of the city, be approved.
- (2) That the final allocation of funding for each of the measures outlined in the report be delegated to the Section 151 Officer and Strategic Director of Major Developments.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

A total of £2,868,060 had been awarded to the City of Lincoln Council to administer on a discretionary basis, known as the Additional Restrictions Grant. This funding could be deployed at the discretion of the authority, up to March 2022, and had to be focussed on providing direct support to businesses but could not be used as a wage top-up.

As of 15 February 2021, £440,143 had been spent supporting those businesses who were unable to receive grant funding through the previous mandatory support schemes. The Additional Restrictions Grant fund would continue to be deployed to support businesses that did not meet the mandatory criteria as long

as lockdown or restrictions continued which it was envisaged would be at least until April 2021.

In addition to offering continued support with running costs, officers were working on a package of further support to assist economic recovery. To inform how best to utilise these funds and support economic recovery with the resources available, the Council had engaged with a number of stakeholders. A survey had also been undertaken on business needs, embedded within the grant application process, and research undertaken by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Greater Lincolnshire Economic Recovery Plan had also been taken into account. Key findings and analysis of this important piece of work was appended to the report.

Draft proposals were presented to members of the City Council's Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee on 9 March 2021 as it had been undertaking a scrutiny review of the impact of Covid-19 on businesses and the economy since September 2020. Comments from members of the Committee had been incorporated into the proposals set out in the report.

The proposal set out in the report consisted of ringfencing the remaining £2.43 million of the grant funding and utilising those resource as follows:

- £500,000 safeguarded to continue to operate discretionary, ongoing support to businesses during any further periods of restrictions during 2021/22;
- £500,000 ringfenced for a Business Revival scheme to support businesses to adapt, diversify, digitalise and prepare for re-opening;
- up to £900,000 for a Visitor Economy Support Package, to help fund a renewed place marketing campaign;
- up to £350,000 for a High Street Recovery Package to support retail businesses and high street recovery as a whole;
- up to £180,000 for measures to support young people in business or with a route to employment.

Full rationale and timescales associated with each allocation were detailed in the report.

Councillor Neil Murray had personally received very positive feedback from businesses who had benefited from support grants during the Covid-19 pandemic and had been very complimentary of the Council's staff and the timely way in which they had been able to help. He placed on records his thanks to all involved for a job well done, the sentiments of which were shared by the Leader of the Council.

91. HR Policies (Redundancy, Pension and MARS)

Purpose of Report

To seek approval to implement the proposed changes to the Council's Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme and to provide an update on further changes following the revocation of the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020.

Decision

- (1) That the report be noted in relation to the revocation of the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020 and the subsequent policy amendments.
- (2) That the proposed changes to the Council's Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme be approved.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

Recent reviews of the Council's Redundancy Policy, Pension Policy, and Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme were undertaken following the implementation of the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020.

Changes to the Council's Redundancy and Pension Policies were previously agreed by the Executive in January 2021, however the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations had now been revoked by the Government, and any changes which were made to the Council's policies in relation to these Regulations were now obsolete. Based on this the authority had reverted its Redundancy Policy and Pension Policy back to their original versions, noting this revocation.

Additionally, the Council had now removed any reference or provisions associated with those Regulations from its Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme. The report provided an overview of the additional changes proposed as part of the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme Policy following its review, set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

92. The CIPFA Financial Management Code

Purpose of Report

To inform Executive of the new CIPFA Financial Management Code which was applicable in shadow form during 2020/21 with compliance expected from 2021/22.

Decision

- (1) That the publication of the Financial Management Code be noted and that the first year, 2020/21, be a shadow year where local authorities are able to demonstrate that they are working towards full implementation which, for the first full year of compliance, will be 2021/22.
- (2) That the initial assessment, attached at Appendix A, setting out the Council's assessed level of compliance compared to standards contained within the Financial Management Code and resulting actions required be noted.

- (3) That progress against the actions identified be monitoring through the Annual Governance Statement monitoring process.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

Local government finance in the United Kingdom was governed by primary legislation, regulation and professional standards. The general financial management of a local authority, however, was not supported by a professional code. This situation changed when, in December 2019, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy published its Financial Management Code to provide guidance for good and sustainable financial management in local authorities. It had been produced to assist local authorities in demonstrating their financial sustainability through a set of standards of financial management.

The standards had different practical applications according to the size and different circumstances of individual authorities, and their use locally should reflect this. The principle of proportionality applied to the Financial Management Code and reflected a nonprescriptive approach to how each standard was met.

The Covid-19 crisis had seen local authorities placed under extreme pressure to respond to the needs of their communities by providing services and support to an unprecedented extent. Understanding these pressures, the CIPFA Financial Management and Governance Panel had considered these changes against workload, reprioritisation and resource issues facing local authority staff. It concluded that while the first full year of compliance with the Financial Management Code could remain as 2021/2022, it could do so within a more flexible framework where a proportionate approach was encouraged. In practice this was likely to mean that adherence to some parts of the Code would demonstrate a direction of travel.

As a first step towards ensuring that the City Council met the Code in 2021/22 the Chief Finance Officer had produced a draft Self-Assessment against the Code, attached to the report at Appendix A. The Self-Assessment would be continually reviewed and refined. The completion of this Self-Assessment had identified a range of further actions required, the majority of which were already planned areas of work for 2021/22. These were detailed in paragraph 4.8 of the report.

93. Housing Delivery Programme - Rookery Lane

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the programme of development and acquisitions to maintain a pipeline of affordable housing delivery.

Decision

That the Executive:

- (1) Approves the submission of a bid for grant funding under the Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 Continuous Market Engagement route for an affordable housing scheme on land owned by the Council off Rookery Lane.
- (2) Subject to receiving planning consent, approves, in principle, to enter into a delivery agreement for the development of new build affordable homes on land owned by the Council off Rookery Lane.
- (3) Subject to receiving planning consent, delegates the final approval of the delivery agreement to the Section 151 Officer and the Director of Housing and Investment, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Major Developments, provided that the final total scheme cost is financially viable.
- (4) Agrees to widen the scope of the Acquisitions Policy to allow non-registered providers to apply for retained usable Right to Buy receipts in order to provide additional social housing and approves the draft set out in Appendix II.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

Since the previous report to Executive in January 2020, during 2020-21 the Council had successfully delivered the following pipeline:

- 5 new-build homes developed for affordable rent at Swift Gardens
- 15 new-build homes acquired for affordable rent at Sandal Street
- 38 homes acquired under the Council's Purchase and Repair and Move-On Accommodation Programmes

In addition, the Council had completed the demolition of Garfield and Woodburn Views and Trelawney Church as a first step towards enabling the redevelopment of the land north of Queen Elizabeth Road.

Delivery of De-Wint Court was progressing well, with the 70 unit extra care sheltered housing scheme due to complete before the end of the calendar year.

Proposals for the development of Rookery Lane had been informed by detailed surveys and site investigations and the scheme had been refined to take account of comments received as part of the planning consultation process. The final scheme, which was subject to planning consent, comprised 42 high quality homes. Subject to consent and approval of the final budget and delivery agreement, works would commence during Summer 2021, with scheduled completion by December 2022.

The delivery of quality, affordable housing remained a priority for the Council and significant progress had been made despite the challenges presented by the current Covid-19 pandemic. The table set out at paragraph 3.1 of the report provided an update on delivery over the period 2019-23. Further information regarding the Council's housing delivery programme was set out in the report.

An update regarding Rookery Lane and associated details were also set out in the report. It was noted that the final scheme now comprised a total of 42 new build affordable homes, all of which would be provided for affordable rent upon completion. The design had taken full account of the constraints and opportunities presented by this site and was considered to be in keeping with the surrounding area, making a positive overall contribution to the housing offer within the city. The housing mix had been informed by local need and demand, with the breakdown set out in the table at paragraph 4.6 of the report.

In terms of supporting local housing organisations to deliver additional social housing, since the introduction of the Council's Acquisition Policy the Council had not received any applications from registered providers for the retained Right to Buy receipts, which was likely due to the availability of alternative funding such as the Homes England grant. However, in order to support all local providers of social housing to provide additional social housing it was proposed to extend the Acquisition Policy to allow all providers of social housing to apply for useable retained Right to Buy receipts. Proposed changes to the Policy were set out in Appendix II attached to the report.

Councillor Donald Nannestad said that the proposals set out in the report were important in terms of the Council's bid to have more Council properties, particularly welcoming the inclusion of more three and four bedroomed properties. It was important for the Council to ensure that it replaced those properties it sold because there was still a high demand for Council housing.

94. Draft Lincoln Zero Carbon Update Report

Purpose of Report

To inform and update members of the Executive on the Council's progress to address the challenge of climate change and to seek approval of climate change projects for delivery in 2021/22.

Decision

That the Executive:

- (1) Agrees to continue to improve the Council's Environmental Management System, implementing the recommendations from the iiE audit and prepare for accreditation by Investment in the Environment in Summer 2021.
- (2) Approves the draft Decarbonisation Plan for internal and external consultation prior to reporting back to Executive with a final draft Plan in Summer 2021.

- (3) Approves to provide necessary resources to set up and deliver the Climate Assembly, including officer time and a revenue budget of £10,000, in the absence of external grant, with funding to be approved from the Vision 2025 earmarked reserve.
- (4) Agrees for the Climate Change Manager to continue to support the Lincoln Climate Commission to deliver 'Lincoln 2030 - A Strategy for consultation' within the proposed timeframe.
- (5) Approves officers to proceed with preparing a Green Homes Grant delivery plan and delegates acceptance of the subsequent allocation and grant conditions to the Strategic Director of Major Developments and the Chief Finance Officer, with a further report to the Executive setting out the detailed financial implications of the scheme.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

In January 2020 the Council appointed a Climate Change Manager to develop, implement, co-ordinate and champion the Council's policies, strategies and action plans to adapt to the impact of climate change and reduce Lincoln's carbon footprint. Since this appointment the Council had achieved the following:

- establishment of a new City Council Environmental Management System and accreditation from an independent body;
- approval of a new Environmental Policy and Environmental Policy Statement for the Lincoln Christmas Market;
- successfully securing £72 000 to install new 'fast' electric vehicle charge points for use by residents, without access to off road parking, in city centre locations due to be completed by the end of March 2021;
- preparation of the City Council's Single Use Plastic Audit and Action Plan for 2020;
- reduction of the Council's Carbon Dioxide emissions by 14% since the 2018/19 baseline year;
- supporting the Lincoln Climate Commission to prepare the 'Lincoln Roadmap to Zero Carbon' setting out climate projections and emission pathways to achieving net zero Carbon by 2030;
- supporting Lincolnshire County Council to submit the Road to Zero programme of projects as part of the Lincoln Towns Fund bid;
- working with Lincolnshire County Council to prepare and inform the Lincoln Cycling and Walking Network Plans and the Lincoln Transport Strategy;
- applying the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund to secure skills funding to prepare feasibility studies to decarbonise three Council buildings, awaiting outcome of the decision;
- commencing work with the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Team to review and consider the opportunities for preparing a carbon neutral Local Plan;
- ensuring that the Housing Investment Team recycled and reused, wherever possible, building materials to significantly reduce waste.

Further details were outlined in the report in relation to the following specific elements of the challenges facing the authority in respect of climate change:

- the City Council's Environmental Management System;
- the Lincoln Climate Assembly;
- Lincoln 2030 – a Climate Strategy and Action Plan for consultation;
- Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery, Phase 2.

Councillor Bob Bushell commended the report and said that it spoke for itself in terms of the progress that had been made on this important agenda, representing an excellent achievement for the Council. He put on record his congratulations to everyone involved in achieving the silver award and welcomed a wider representation on the Lincoln Climate Assembly.

Councillor Christopher Burke echoed these sentiments and said that Kate Bell in her new role as Climate Change Manager had done a brilliant job, together with Councillor Bushell as Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place who had showed real leadership. He referred to the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee and reported that the City Council was leading the way on climate change, with other district authorities in the county working positively in partnership.

Councillor Neil Murray highlighted that the Government had introduced Local Authority Delivery Schemes before and take up had been disappointingly low. It was noted that officers shared the same concerns but that improvements to the scheme had been made. The dynamic purchasing system introduced by the Midlands Energy Hub, for example, had made a significant difference. Part of the Council's delivery plan would be to identify a minimum of 25 properties that could benefit from the scheme, with the team having had quite a lot of experience and success with other similar schemes, such as the Warm Homes Fund. In addition to the Local Authority Delivery Scheme, other funding mechanisms could potentially be used in addition to improve those properties identified.

95. Management Agreement Relating to an Area of Hobblers Hole

Purpose of Report

To seek approval to enter into a ten year management agreement with Long Leys Residents Association for the general management and improvement of an area of open space known as 'Hobblers Hole' off Long Leys Road, Lincoln.

Decision

That approval be given to the Council entering into a ten year management agreement for the environmental improvement of a section of Hobblers Hole by Long Leys Residents Association.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

In early 2020 officers were approached by the Chair of Long Leys Residents Association, who was keen to explore the potential to improve the biodiversity of an ephemeral pond on Hobblers Hole. In addition, the Association was developing plans to undertake a range of other environmental improvements in the vicinity to create a focal point for the general public. The whole project had

been designed to further galvanise the work of Residents Association and therefore presented a strong opportunity to bring the community together on a project to enhance a green space in the city.

In order for Long Leys Residents Association to undertake this work it was seeking a 10-year management agreement. It was anticipated that this duration would enable the Association to access external grant funding to realise their plans for the site. The site was identified in Appendix A attached to the report, with the essence of the agreement set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report. It was noted that the management agreement would include a range of terms, conditions and safeguards to ensure that the site remained available for the public at all times and to comply with the covenant on the land.

Councillor Neil Murray took this opportunity to thank Simon Walters, Strategic Director of Communities and Environment, for all his hard work and patience in respect of this project which he said was a very good example of how the Council could work with local resident groups.

96. 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.

These items were considered in private as they were 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 these items in private.

97. Housing Delivery Programme - Rookery Lane

The decision relating to this item was reflected in minute number 93 above.

98. Exchange of Properties between Housing Revenue Account and General Fund

Purpose of Report

To consider a mutual exchange of properties between the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund by way of appropriation.

Decision

The recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

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

Reason for Decision

The reason for the decision was set out in the report.

99. Management of Change - Proposal to Delete the Post of Enforcement Officer

Purpose of Report

To seek approval on a proposal to delete the post of Enforcement Officer within the Public Protection and Anti-social Behaviour Team.

Decision

The recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

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

Reason for Decision

The reason for the decision was set out in the report.

Additional information arising from comments made at the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee on 16 March 2021 were considered prior to the Executive reaching its decision.

100. Management of Change - Proposal to Delete one Full Time Equivalent Booking Coordinator Post

Purpose of Report

To seek approval on a proposal to delete one fulltime equivalent Booking Coordinator post within the Sports, Leisure and Bereavement Team.

Decision

The recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

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

Reason for Decision

The reason for the decision was set out in the report.

101. Management of Change in Development Management

Purpose of Report

To seek approval for a reduction in resource within Development Management.

Decision

The recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

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

Reason for Decision

The reason for the decision was set out in the report.

102. Management of Change - Detailed Case for Restructure of Systems Team

Purpose of Report

To seek approval for a revised structure for the System and Information Team.

Decision

The recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

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

Reason for Decision

The reason for the decision was set out in the report.