

SUMMONS
SUMMONS
SUMMONS

Council Summons



For the meeting to be held on
Tuesday, 23 February 2021

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CITY OF LINCOLN COUNCIL

Sir/Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the COUNCIL of the City of Lincoln to be held at The Guildhall on Tuesday, 23 February 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Virtual Meeting

To join this virtual meeting please use the following link:

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Chief Executive and Town Clerk

Angela Andrews

A G E N D A

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Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or personal and/or pecuniary.	
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	<i>This item is scheduled for consideration at the meeting of the Executive scheduled to be held on 22 February 2021. The agenda for this meeting of Council was published prior to the meeting of the Executive, so a copy of the report and appendix scheduled for consideration at the meeting on 22 February 2021 is attached.</i>	
(b)	Independent Remuneration Panel - Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme	To Follow

Present: Councillor Sue Burke (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Biff Bean, Councillor Bill Bilton, Councillor
Yvonne Bodger, Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor
Kathleen Brothwell, Councillor Chris Burke, Councillor
Bob Bushell, Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor
Geoff Ellis, Councillor Gary Hewson, Councillor
Jackie Kirk, Councillor Rosanne Kirk, Councillor
Jane Loffhagen, Councillor Rebecca Longbottom,
Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Councillor
Laura McWilliams, Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Councillor
Neil Murray, Councillor Bill Mara, Councillor
Donald Nannestad, Councillor Lucinda Preston,
Councillor Christopher Reid, Councillor
Edmund Strengiel, Councillor Ralph Toofany, Councillor
Naomi Tweddle, Councillor Pat Vaughan and Councillor
Lorraine Woolley

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Liz Bushell, Councillor Andy Kerry, Councillor
Helena Mair and Councillor Hilton Spratt

71. Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor reported that former City and County Councillor John Plant had recently passed away. Members took this opportunity to pay tribute to his memory.

72. Confirmation of Minutes - 30 November 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2020 be confirmed.

73. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ralph Toofany declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest with regard to the agenda item entitled 'Allotment Fees and Charges'. Councillor Toofany was a user of the allotment service and left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

74. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11 from Members of the Public and Provide Answers thereon

No questions were received.

75. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12 from Members and Provide Answers thereon

No questions were received.

76. Motion Under Council Procedure Rule 14 - Covid-19

Councillor Gary Hewson proposed the following motion:

“This Council notes that Britain is experiencing the worst recession for over 300 years and has the fifth highest number of deaths in the world due to Covid-19. The failure of this Conservative government to contain the virus has caused too many deaths and worsened the economic impact.

The alarm bells on the devastating impacts on people’s lives of this unfolding economic disaster are growing louder.

The effects are being felt in the city of Lincoln, especially among households already in low paid employment, with one in four children in the city in households below 60% of the national average household income, and having increasingly to resort to Food Banks in the city to survive.

The Council, along with its partners has been working hard to protect our residents from the worst effects of the pandemic, playing an active role in public health measures, together with action to support our communities, and to help our businesses survive.

The Council believes that further levels of unemployment and hardship are not inevitable if urgent action is taken now to avert the worst effects of the pandemic. This must include further action from government, to include the following measures:

- An increase in Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to £320 a week, the level of the current living wage, and make it available to all workers so people can afford too self-isolate. The current £96 a week is a fifth of average weekly earnings and 2 million who earn less than £120 a week are not even entitled to that. Even while the vaccine is being rolled out people will still need to self-isolate to prevent the virus spreading.
- An improvement to furlough arrangements so that no one is paid less than the minimum wage, it is unacceptable there are many of our lowest paid residents in Lincoln receiving only 80% of the minimum wage.
- No cutting Universal Credit in April - cutting UC back £20 a week amounts to taking away £1,000 a year from many of our low-income households in Lincoln.
- An increase to public service wages and raising the minimum wage to £10 an hour. A pay cut in real terms – after a decade of real cuts – is a grave insult to millions of public service workers who cared for our loved ones during this crisis. Raising their wages and the minimum wage to £10 per hour would greatly assist in the fight against in-work poverty in our city.
- Protect and create jobs; the TUC has shown investing £85 billion in green infrastructures would create 1.2 million jobs in 2 years and investing the resources public services need would create 600,000 jobs. This investment, alongside giving the packages of support sectors and businesses need will assist our residents in Lincoln with improved opportunities for employment

- These basic measures are the foundation to making sure we can build a better recovery from the impacts of this pandemic and begin to address the long term structural problems we have in Lincoln of low wages, and deep inequalities in income and wealth.

The Leader of the Council be requested to relay the content of this Motion onto the Government.”

Councillor Pat Vaughan seconded the proposal. He reflected that everyone had complained about the hardships faced as a result of lockdown and Covid-19, but that people had not been in the same circumstances. The hardship felt by those people in households of the lowest income were feeling the effects far worse than anyone. Councillor Vaughan said that, despite the furlough scheme, thousands of workers found themselves with little or no support, particularly those who were self-employed, with many families resorting to the humiliation of using food banks. He therefore called for further action by the Government, stating that 25% of families did not have enough to live on. People were still being expected to self-isolate which had an impact on their ability to work and it was those families of low income where further help should be provided.

Councillor Thomas Dyer, Leader of the Opposition, did not believe the Motion would achieve anything and was nothing more than a politically motivated attack during a global pandemic, designed to cause division at a time when everyone should be supporting each other. He claimed that the Motion included untrue information and inaccurate predictions which could not be substantiated and reminded Council that since the outbreak of Covid-19 the Government had provided unprecedented financial support. This included:

- the furlough scheme, which 9.9 million people had benefitted from which was worth £46.4 billion and had supported 1.2 million businesses;
- business grants, which 350,000 businesses had benefitted from and was worth approximately £10 billion;
- support to local authorities, including the City of Lincoln Council, which would equate to approximately £10 billion. This consisted of £4.6 billion to protect services, £1.1 billion to protect social care, £500 million to provide hardship Council Tax support, £100 million to maintain leisure provision, £32 million to support clinically extremely vulnerable people and £30 million to support implementation of Covid-19 regulations;
- a £280 billion investment to support jobs through business rate relief, CBILS, CLBILW, BBLs and future fund, VAT referrals temporary increase in Universal Credit, hardship funds, self-isolation payments, the kick-start scheme, mortgage holidays, the eat out to help out scheme, a temporary VAT cut, the culture recovery fund, the stamp duty cut and the restart scheme.

Councillor Dyer also reported that a total of 62 million Covid-19 tests had been delivered and, to date, over four million people had been vaccinated. He was of the opinion that, in times of such immense difficulty, people had come together as a country and as a society. He added that local communities had come together and offered support, food, company and companionship during the challenges of last year and took this opportunity to praise key workers and frontline staff for their outstanding contributions and support.

Councillor Dyer was of the view that the focus of the Government must be on economic recovery, with the route to prosperity being via successful businesses which in turn increased more jobs and more tax receipts. With these additional tax receipts more investment could be made in public services. He said that the unprecedented Government borrowing had been essential but that Government spending was not an unlimited resource. In order to restore confidence in the country's economy, Councillor Dyer was of the opinion that a plan to pay off the debt would be essential in the coming months and years ahead.

Councillor Dyer highlighted that the Motion did not include any mention as to how these proposals would be financed. In addition, within the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy he said that without Government support the City of Lincoln Council would not have had a balanced budget. He said that it was imperative for the City Council to concentrate on its own affairs.

Councillor Chris Burke was delighted that the Council had the courage to speak out against the Government. He praised the work of key and essential workers throughout the crisis who he said should be undertaking their important work with financial confidence. He was therefore opposed to the Government's freeze of public sector pay increases, stating that such complacency was outrageous. Councillor Burke was of the view that it was the City Council's duty to highlight concerns such as this and take appropriate action where necessary. He called for a cross-party approach in holding the Government to account.

Councillor Bob Bushell said that this was a time where people should be supporting each other, particularly those most in need. In respect of Councillor Dyer's comments, Councillor Bushell reflected that it came across as though there were no problems in society and that everything was positive. He emphasised that this was not the case and the city's low paid and unemployed were really suffering and desperate for support, with the Motion addressing the real issues that people were facing.

Councillor Donald Nannestad said that the Motion sought to ensure people had the bare necessities, which made a significant difference to those who currently did not and were struggling. He added that the Universal Credit system was completely inadequate and the wider number of people claiming the benefit had magnified how poor it was, challenging anyone to survive solely on Universal Credit or statutory sick pay.

Councillor Jane Loffhagen acknowledged that this pandemic would have been a challenge for any Government and although recognising the support it had put in place for people and businesses, was of the view that lots of people had fallen through the cracks. In respect of testing centres, she was of the view that certain people would not undertake a test through fear of having to self-isolate if testing positive as they could not afford the loss of income. Councillor Loffhagen was concerned that this was a significant risk to the continued spread of the virus, but was the reality of the situation. In respect of a pay freeze for key workers, she was opposed to this being put in place for the very people who had worked so tirelessly during the pandemic and called this an insult.

Councillor Laura McWilliams shared her experience in working on the front line in a care home and said that unless someone had worked in a role on the front line, on minimum wage, they could not claim that everyone was in this together. She had witnessed her own colleagues struggle with their mental health and physical exhaustion whilst watching the people they cared for die as a result of the virus.

Councillor McWilliams and her colleagues had themselves held whip rounds for people who were struggling to feed their families and pay rent and said that people in that industry on the frontline were not being treated properly or fairly. These people, on relatively low wages, were working extremely long hours under significant stress and pressure and did not have savings or nest eggs to fall back on. She explained that the reality in care homes and hospitals was that it was pandemonium.

Councillor Lucinda Preston claimed that the Government had prioritised certain groups of people over others and that it should give much more careful consideration as to how it spent public money, citing the procurement of large contracts or payments to consultants together with a cut in Universal Credit. Thousands of key workers were going above and beyond, doing their very best, across the country and they were not getting the support they should receive.

Councillor Edmund Strengiel was disappointed that the Motion highlighted a lot of negative aspects and did not properly acknowledge the support that the Government had put in place. He highlighted that the disease had not been instigated by the Government and that the country's economy had been flourishing prior to the pandemic, adding that it was due to the Government's financial management over the last ten years that had enabled it to invest so much in terms of support for people and businesses. Councillor Strengiel reminded Council that no decisions had been taken in respect of the assumptions made as part of the Motion and that they would be the basis of budgetary decisions in March 2021.

Councillor Ronald Hills reflected on previous epidemics that had occurred in his lifetime which were devastating enough for the people and communities effected, specifically flu epidemics which caused multiple deaths on the hospital ward he used to work in. The Covid-19 pandemic saw the spreading of a virus on an international scale with catastrophic effects which he felt no Government in the world had managed to control. Councillor Hills agreed with Councillor Strengiel's point that no decisions on the assumptions made in the Motion had been made. He added that the Motion consisted of nothing more than a wish list and was representative of where the country had been over the last year. It contained no recognition of the benefits of Universal Credit or national living wage, as well as no reference to work that had been undertaken to protect jobs and the range of opportunities that had arisen in the public sector. In terms of the City Council's finances, Councillor Hills agreed that the authority would have been virtually bankrupt without Government intervention through its financial support.

Councillor Christopher Reid highlighted that the Motion referred to the work the City Council had done to support people throughout the pandemic but stated that this would not have been possible without support from the Government. He acknowledged that something needed to be done to reflate the economy, however, it was his view that the Motion did nothing to achieve this. Councillor Reid was also confused in relation to the claim in the Motion that raising minimum wage to £10 per hour would greatly assist in the fight against in-work poverty in Lincoln, in the knowledge that the City Council currently employed staff on £9.30 per hour. He said that the Council had within its own power the ability to increase its own wage structure in line with what had been set out in the Motion, but had not done so. In relation to self-isolation, Councillor Reid highlighted that provision was available for low income assistance for those people who had to self-isolate and was keen that more people were made aware of their entitlement in respect of such schemes.

Councillor Alan Briggs was disappointed that no context had been included in the Motion to the support that had been provided to people by the Government in such difficult times. The proposal set out in the Motion had not been financed so it was unclear how this could be delivered. The Government had a £160 billion plan in place to protect jobs and people's incomes, whilst at the same time review public spending and rebuild the economy.

Councillor Gary Hewson agreed that people on the frontline knew how it really was during this pandemic. He had listened to what members of the opposition had said during the debate but highlighted that Members of Parliament were provided with an opportunity on 19 January 2021 to make a stance on the £20 reduction in Universal Credit and only six Conservative Members of Parliament were opposed to it. In respect of Universal Credit applications, as reported at the City Council's Performance Scrutiny Committee, the numbers in respect of Lincoln's tenants had doubled for the first two quarters of the year. He recognised that the Government had provided support but reminded members of the significant cuts in Government grant funding to local government over the years which had left local authorities across the country having to be more entrepreneurial.

Having been proposed and seconded and being put to the vote it was RESOLVED that the Motion be carried.

77. To Consider the Following Recommendations of the Executive and Committees of the Council

(a) Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that Council:

- (1) Notes the consultation responses relating to the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22.
- (2) Notes the proposed options to the core element of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2020/21, as set out in section 6 and paragraph 6.5 of the report, and agrees setting a capital reduction rate of £6,000.
- (3) Agrees the proposed change to the Council Tax technical premium as set out in section 6 paragraph 6.6 of the report, that from 1 April 2021 any property empty over ten years will receive a premium of 300%, incurring a 400% charge.
- (4) Approves the continuation of the £20,000 Exceptional Hardship Fund for 2021/22 to top up Council Tax Support awards in appropriate cases.
- (5) Does not support, at this time, the request from the Police and Crime Commissioner to implement a Council Tax exemption for Special Constables.

(b) Council Tax Base 2021/22

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED:

That Council:

- (1) Notes that there are no special items as defined in Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) applicable to any part or parts of the City of Lincoln local authority area.
- (2) Approves the Chief Finance Officers' calculation of the Council Tax Base for the financial year commencing 1 April 2021 and ending 31 March 2022, as set out in Appendix B of this report.
- (3) Approves, in accordance with the Chief Finance Officers' calculation, and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended), that the Council Tax Base for the 2021/22 financial year is 24,372.38.

(c) Council House and Garage Rents 2021/22

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that Council:

- (1) Approves the basis of rent calculation for changes to individual Council house rents as set out in the report, which represents an increase in the average calculated 52-week Council house net rent in 2021/22 of 1.5% for social housing rents (£1.05 per week) and affordable rents (£1.61 per week) increase per property.
- (2) Approves a 3% increase in Council garage rents for 2021/22 in accordance with the proposal set out in the report.

78. Allotment Fees and Charges

Councillor Ralph Toofany left the meeting during consideration of this item further to his declaration of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Leader of the Council, proposed the recommendations set out in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Donald Nannestad.

Councillor Thomas Dyer, Leader of the Opposition, reflecting on the current circumstances, said that vulnerable people in particular had been dependant on their own entertainment, with allotments being a key aspect of that for many people in the city. He therefore questioned the timing of a proposed increase, but welcomed the fact that a years' notice would be provided to allotment holders. He asked whether the Council could look into the possibility of introducing a concession for old age pensioners.

Councillor Bob Bushell reminded Council that the allotment service was very heavily subsidised even taking into account the proposed increase in fees and charges. He recognised the importance of allotments which was why the Council had recently invested approximately £1 million to improve security, access to water and the introduction of a new site. Councillor Bushell was content with a

concession being offered on a means tested benefit system as opposed to age and made the point that income generated by allotment fees and charges would be reinvested into the allotment service. He was also confident, even taking into account an increase in fees and charges, that users of the service would continue to consider it as good value.

Councillor Christopher Reid was concerned that elderly users of the service who would not qualify for a concession rate under the means tested benefit system would see their current concession removed as well as having to pay an increased fee. He would therefore wish to see a concession for old aged pensioners.

Councillor Metcalfe reiterated that the Council understood the value of allotments, particularly at times such as those the country was facing in the current circumstances, which was why such a significant capital investment was made in the service. He reported, however, that the Council's finances were in a very serious state and contributions from the majority of the authority's budgets was required in order to address this. In reviewing this against the allotment service, given the recent investment and importance of the service, it did not seem appropriate to cut the service. A better approach was therefore proposed whereby service users paid a bit more for the service in order that full provision in the city could be maintained. Councillor Metcalfe reported that, even with the increase in fees and charges, the cost of the service was still £67,000 per year. He added that low income groups would be protected but was of the opinion that age alone should not act as a proxy for low income.

Having been proposed and seconded and being put to the vote it was RESOLVED that changes to the fees and charges for allotments be approved, with effect from the annual billing in 2022 and new leases thereafter, and that these be based on:

- removal of the 50% discount based on age;
- protection of discounts for those on means tested benefits at 50%;
- an increase in based charges by 50%;
- any income achieved above £30,000, linked with inflation, be ringfenced for allotment projects.

COUNCIL

23 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2(VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Rosanne Kirk, Portfolio Holder for Reducing Inequalities

COVID 19 has had a significant impact on the city and our communities during the past year. This report focuses on the services under my portfolio, which the council has delivered to support residents during this difficult time.

I would like to thank council employees and elected members for their ongoing commitment towards reducing inequality in the city throughout the COVID 19 pandemic. Collectively the support and services provided by the council to our residents during this time are a great achievement and an achievement the council should be extremely proud of.

Key achievements

Below list some of the key achievements under my portfolio during the past year

- Development and launch of a brand-new befriending service to provide direct support to vulnerable and isolated residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Launch and delivery of a Community Support Helpline to assist those most in need during the pandemic to access vital supplies.
- Over £100k has been raised by Lincoln Community Lottery for good causes since its launch in August 2018.
- Continued success of the Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter, which has seen local businesses encouraged go above and beyond to support their employees and the local community during this difficult time
- Under the governments 'Everyone In' initiative the council successfully offered a place of safety to every person sleeping rough, or at risk of sleeping rough, during the pandemic
- 267 successful awards of £500 have been made under the national Test and Trace Payments Scheme (as of 21st January 2021)
- The Business Rates Team has been instrumental in supporting businesses in 2020/21, awarding £27 million in Expanded Retail Discount.
- The council has been successful in securing in excess of £1 million to provide 15 units of accommodation with support for the rough sleeping cohort.
- In 2020 a PSPO was brought in covering Lucy Tower Street, Broadgate and Central Multi-Story Car Parks with the aim of further reducing ASB in these areas and enhancing the public image and safety of our city.

Below provides more detail on the achievements of each service under my portfolio during the past year.

Befriending Service (New service)

In March 2020 the council developed and launched a brand-new befriending service to support Lincoln's residents who were identified as being vulnerable or at risk of becoming vulnerable whilst in lockdown. The key outcomes and achievements of this service are provided below:

- Through cross service delivery and partnership working the befriending service was ready to launch to our residents in early April 2020 – the service was developed, setup and rolled out in just under two weeks!
- 49 members of staff delivered befriending calls to those requesting this support.
- Guidance was developed and provided to those delivering the service. In nearly all cases, staff members had no prior experience of delivering this type of service but stepped up to ensure the service was a success
- In addition to those making the calls, members of staff from Neighbourhood Working, Corporate Policy and the Housing Repairs Service were involved in coordinating the service
- To ensure as many residents were made aware of the service as possible, the council directly contacted over 18,000 residents - Contact was made via telephone and letter and was aimed at residents who were identified as vulnerable or at risk of becoming vulnerable.
- At the peak of the service just under 500 vulnerable residents were receiving befriending calls on a weekly basis from the council.
- Just over 200 residents continued to receive befriending calls up to service close on 31st July 2020.
- To ensure those continuing with the service had the option of receiving calls going forward, each individual was offered the choice of continuing calls with one of four new service providers. In total 79 individuals took up this service:
 - Assist - 47
 - Community Lincs YMCA - 23
 - Age UK - 6
 - Supported Housing (COLC) - 3
- All individuals continuing to require a service were transferred across to their preferred new provider ready for commencement of calls w/c 1st August 2020.
- Over 200 positive comments were received regarding the council's befriending service

As Lincoln was placed into Tier 3 lockdown in December 2020 a small group of council befrienders delivered check-in calls with those individuals receiving calls up to the end of July 2020, but at the time had decided not to continue with another service provider. These calls were to provide each individual with an opportunity to have a chat, together with ensure they had the support they required in place for the Christmas period. In total 77 individuals were contacted during mid-December. A follow up call was also undertaken in January 2021 to those who requested this.

Community Helpline (New service)

Working alongside the Befriending Service, the council also setup and launched a community helpline in March 2020. The purpose of this service was to provide Lincoln residents with a point of contact should they require support in obtaining essential items such as food and prescriptions.

The key outcomes and achievements of this service are provided below:

- Brand new service setup up and launched in under two weeks.
- Service was primarily delivered by members of staff in the Democratic Services and Neighbourhood Working Teams
- Staff delivering the service were provided with guidance on dealing with difficult calls

- The service was widely promoted to residents and partners across the city
- The Helpline ran for eleven weeks between the period 23rd March and the 5th June 2020 - during this period the team responded to 1,273 telephone calls and 301 emails

Food vouchers for vulnerable families in the school holidays

In the absence of Government funding to provide 'free school meals' in the school holidays during the pandemic, City of Lincoln Council wanted to do something to help vulnerable families put food on the table during October half term. Working with the city's foodbanks, it was arranged for a Co-op voucher to be added to food parcels enabling families to buy fresh food from their local store.

Not all of the allocated funds were spent and restrictions continued, so the council used the surplus money to help Bridge Church deliver the FiSH scheme over the Christmas Holidays, which focused on helping those families identified by schools as "just about managing", i.e. struggling financially, but not entitled to free school meals. As some external funding was obtained at the eleventh hour there is still a small amount of our funds leftover, and with lockdown continuing this remaining amount will now go towards supporting the FiSH scheme during the February half term and/or Easter holidays.

COVID 19 Crisis Fund

Working in partnership with the Lincolnshire Community Foundation, an emergency City of Lincoln COVID 19 Crisis Fund was launched during April 2020. The purpose of the fund was to provide local good causes with funding to assist them to deliver their vital services in the community during the pandemic.

To ensure the allocation of funds was fair, all good causes seeking support from this fund were required to go through an application process, with all applications being assessed by an evaluation panel. This panel was supported by myself as an elected member and portfolio holder, together with council officers.

The key outcomes and achievements of this emergency fund are provided below:

- Over £25k raised and allocated
- 14 organisations across the city received funding support to enable them to deliver their services
- A number of financial donations were received from signees of the Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter, demonstrating social responsibility during this difficult time
- In May 2020 an allocation of £5,000 was made to the fund from the Lincoln Lottery Community Fund.
- This was supported with a further allocation of £6,500 from the Lincoln Lottery Community Fund in August 2020

Lincoln Community Lottery

Throughout the COVID 19 pandemic, Lincoln Community Lottery has continued to operate and raise vital funds for local good causes in an around the City of Lincoln. The lottery, which is free for good causes to join, provides a range of resources to

support good causes with selling tickets and subsequently raising funds. Sixty pence in every one-pound ticket sold goes directly to good causes, with fifty pence going to the supporters chosen cause and ten pence going into the Lincoln Lottery Community Fund. As outlined above, for 2019/20 the funding raised in the community fund has been allocated to the City of Lincoln COVID 19 Crisis Fund. To date over £100,000 has been raised by the lottery for local good causes. Currently 84 good causes are receiving funding support from the lottery. I continue to chair the Lincoln Community Lottery member panel.

Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter

The number of signees to the charter has continued to rise throughout 2020 and now stands at 83. These signees include a mix of small, medium and large organisations from across a wide range of sectors. Each signee to the charter has demonstrated their commitment to social responsibility, with each delivering a range of activities which benefit their employees and the local community they are located in. Throughout the pandemic it has been really encouraging to see a number of charter signees have continued to go above and beyond to support the communities they are located in, through directly undertaking a range of activities which support the communities around them. As a thank you for their commitment to the charter and social responsibility, City of Lincoln Council actively promotes all signees to the Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter via a wide range of routes. To find out more about the charter and to view the online directory of signees, please visit www.lincoln.gov.uk/socialresponsibility.

Universal Credit and Welfare Reform

From 2019/20, the focus of our in-house Universal Credit (UC) Support Team changed due to central government contracting with Citizens Advice to provide the 'Help to Claim' service of UC support. The team now focuses on wider, proactive, immediately-responsive and holistic welfare reform support – this is working successfully with internal and external stakeholders.

From the end of January 2020 to October 2020, the Welfare Reform Support team received 802 referrals. The table below shows the first point of contact and from where these referrals were received:

Referral received from	Number
Benefits	110
Citizens Advice	29
Customer	135
Customer Services	116
Department for Work and Pensions	46
Hospital	12
Housing	234
Housing Solutions (Council)	3
Housing Solutions (Private)	55
Parking	6
Private landlord	9
Recovery	1
Support Workers	10

Voids	1
Welfare	32
(Blank)	3
Total	802

Universal Credit itself continues to have a significant impact on the workload of the Benefits Team, with a high volume of UC-related documents requiring processing by the team, including in relation to Council Tax Support claims.

As well as Universal Credit, our Benefits Team continues to administer a whole range of other welfare reforms – such as Localised Council Tax Support, Spare Room Subsidy ('bedroom tax'), Benefits Cap and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). The team fully utilised the 2019/20 central government DHP grant and supplemented this grant too, to help our residents with their housing costs. This proactive approach aims to help residents mitigate impacts of welfare reforms.

Test and Trace Payment Scheme and Winter Grants Scheme

Our Revenues and Benefits Service has played a crucial role in the COVID-19 response for our residents. The national Test and Trace Payments Scheme was successfully implemented in September 2020 and as at the time of writing this report (21st January 2021), the team has made 267 successful awards of £500. In addition to this, the team was instrumental in developing a countywide scheme for awarding equivalent payments for those not entitled to Test and Trace Payments but suffering financial hardship – being £500 awards under the Winter Grant Scheme from December 2020 – 16 such payments have been made so far.

Welfare and benefits advice

Additional benefits claimed by Lincoln customers who sought the advice and assistance of the Welfare Team in 2019/20 totalled a weekly value of £27,170. Over the full year these additional benefits amounted to £1,412,852. In addition to these benefits, in many cases customers had backdated awards or lump sum payments. In 2019/20 the total value of backdated and lump sum payments amounted to £210,366.

A crucial service also offered by the team is the FCA regulated debt advice, which is the Money Advice caseworker support. 60% of the team are trained in debt casework and they offer a full service, starting with the preparation of the Standard Financial Statement (SFS). Customers' income and expenditure levels are explored to establish whether there are options to claim additional benefits or increase income in some other way. In 2019-2020 the team assisted and advised 97 individuals with their debts. The total debt managed was £491,551 for 97 City of Lincoln residents. 67% of these Money Advice clients were City of Lincoln Council local authority tenants.

Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support

Although Universal Credit Full Service was rolled out for new claims in Lincoln Jobcentre Plus from March 2018, our Benefits Team still has significant Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support caseloads to administer – as at the end of Quarter 3 2019/20 these figures were 5,405 and 8,955 respectively. Our Council Tax Support

caseload has risen since the initial COVID-19 lockdown – i.e. this was 8,491 at the end of February 2020, meaning a 5.5% increase up to the end of December 2020. Despite the challenges, pressures and demands on the Benefits Team, New Claims and Changes of Circumstance continue to be processed promptly, with positive average processing times being achieved.

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

A 'Business Rates Growth Policy' was approved by Executive on 23rd July 2018. The policy provides a time-limited rate relief discount to new and extended business premises within the City, in the interest of building the Business Rates base, supporting economic growth and job creation. Eligibility for this scheme is dependent on the extent of the business premises creation or extension, location and the impact of the new business or expansion plans has on the local economy. The impacts of COVID-19 have meant applications under this policy have reduced over the last nine months. However, in the first half of 2020/21, almost £39,000 has been awarded to businesses under this local policy.

The Business Rates Team has also been instrumental in supporting businesses in 2020/21, awarding £27 million in Expanded Retail Discount. Also, the team has worked closely with Major Developments colleagues to help administer the variety of business support grants throughout the year.

Financial Inclusion

Officers continue to be proactively involved in the Lincolnshire Financial Inclusion Partnership (FIP), with the Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits now being the chair of the Partnership. FIP aims to ensure that everyone has the capability and opportunity to access appropriate financial services and products needed to participate fully in society, and will play a key role in terms of financial-related aspects of COVID-19 recovery as residents may struggle with finances for some time.

Skills and Training (including Adult Learning and The Network)

Although the events of the last year have very much altered the skills and training landscape, officers remain in contact with a number of organisations to identify and promote skills and training opportunities to our residents. This year, City of Lincoln Council has registered as an organisation to help signpost residents to the government's Kickstart scheme, to try and find 6-month placements to young people seeking work.

The Network project, which aims to provide careers and related advice to the NEET group, proactively engages with young people to help them with a variety of issues and provide positive outcomes for them in trying to find work and development opportunities. The Network has continued to find innovative solutions to engage with young people during the pandemic. City of Lincoln Council continues to support this project, sitting on its Trustee and Management Board.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

In 2018, Lincolnshire district councils and Lincolnshire County Council agreed that we would take part in the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, which settles refugee families from Syria into this country. As a result, a number of families have arrived into Lincolnshire since that time, including two families into City of Lincoln in March 2019.

The families have been supported by support workers from Upbeat Communities, a specialist provider jointly commissioned by the district councils and funded from the Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme. The support workers have enabled the families to settle into life in this country by helping them to enrol into health services, getting children into school or nursery places, ensuring the families attend their ESOL English language classes and more. It has obviously been a particularly challenging and in many ways traumatic time for the families, however the families have settled in very well and their support will reduce and will be withdrawn once the families are more self-sufficient.

The COVID pandemic has unfortunately affected the Resettlement Programme and at the present time there are no plans to accept any more Refugees into the city.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

The past year has been extremely challenging for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Service. The Homelessness and Allocations Teams are working from home and only attending City Hall for exceptional circumstances, for example to undertake interviews that cannot be done by telephone or another form of technology.

The council has continued to receive high numbers of enquiries but the numbers of applications from families have reduced somewhat. We believe this is partly due to the ban on evictions introduced by government. The council has though seen increases in applications from single people where their non-secure living arrangements come to an end because of the increased pressures of living in lockdown and under the Tier restrictions. We have also seen an increase in very complex homelessness cases, for example Domestic Abuse, and dealing with these has taken significant amounts of staff time.

Our Rough Sleeping Team has continued to work from City Hall and face to face with clients, in a safe way. At the beginning of the pandemic the government launched the 'Everyone In' initiative, which required every local authority to offer a place of safety to every person sleeping rough, or at risk of sleeping rough. The council achieved this and went on to provide more permanent accommodation for some of those people. Others chose to move out of the accommodation provided and the council has continued to work with them to encourage them to engage and move away from the street. The council continues to see considerable success with this cohort although the work is extremely challenging at times.

The council has been successful in securing in excess of £1million to provide 15 units of accommodation with support for the rough sleeping cohort and we have also been

assured we will receive at least as much funding for 2021/2022 to continue our rough sleeping work.

Equality and Diversity

Employer perspective

The council is proud to remain accredited with the Disability Confident Scheme, building on the 22 years the council held the Two Ticks disability symbol. The council has continued to promote this status to residents and employees throughout the past year via the council's website and within our recruitment process.

New council employees continue to be required to complete Equality and Diversity training as part of their induction, and also periodically after. Throughout the year the council has also continued to actively promote Equality and Diversity training and events via the council's intranet 'City People' and 'In Brief' newsletters.

The council's workforce as at 31st March 2020 stood at 656 staff members, of which 314 were males and 342 were females. 34 members of the workforce declared a disability and 15 were from a black and ethnic minority group. The largest age group was 50 to 59 years of age, with 189 staff members in this age group.

The HR team continue to provide advice and guidance, monitor recruitment and workforce data and review HR policies and procedures.

Service user perspective

Equality and diversity is at the centre of everything we do as a council, and this is particularly the case in respect of my portfolio.

Since last year we have adopted new (slightly revised) Equality Objectives for a further four years. These are:

1. Our services are accessible and do not discriminate on any unjustifiable grounds.
2. Local communities, partners and stakeholders are empowered to influence the way our services are provided to them.
3. Equality and diversity is at the heart of decision making at all levels within the city council.
4. Our workforce at all levels reflects the makeup of the local community.
5. Equalities, Social Inclusion and Community Cohesion have all improved within our communities.

These objectives are supported by an action plan which is monitored by the Equality Advisory Panel of which I am Vice Chair. The Annual Equality Journal for 2019, published in October 2020, summarises the work of the group and other equality and diversity activity identified in the action plan. The action plan is usually developed as part of service planning, but because of the pandemic, was brought together separately and includes targeted projects which we undertook in response to COVID-19.

Managers continue to use the Equality Analysis Toolkit, which assists in assessing the impact on equality of proposed changes to policies, procedures and services. This helps us, as the decision makers, to consider any differential impact on those with

protected characteristics and ensures mitigating action is taken where it is appropriate to do so.

Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour (PPASB Team)

The PPASB service covers a broad range of areas. The core services provide a combination of both proactive and reactive actions designed to protect individuals, the community and the amenity of the city.

The core service areas are:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Noise
- Animals
- Pests/conditions of gardens
- Accumulations of waste
- Fly-tipping investigations
- Licencing consultations
- Bins on streets
- Littering Fixed Penalty Notices

The PPASB service consists of one Team Leader/Technical Officer, five Technical Officers, one Technical Assistant, one Admin Assistant, two Apprentices, one Littering Enforcement Officer and a Police Constable ASB Officer.

Service Demand

Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2019	688	748	866	616	2,918
2020	550	566	705	572	2,393

The table below shows the PPASB Enforcement Action undertaken during 2019 and 2020. It is important to note that prior to enforcement action being taken a number of informal actions or warnings will normally take place and so this table represents only the cases where we could not resolve informally or where an outright offence was evidenced.

Environmental issues	2019	2020
Littering Fixed Penalty Notices	424	167
Dog Fouling Fixed Penalty Notices	1	0
Dog Straying Fixed Penalty Notices	1	0
Fly Tipping Fixed Penalty Notices (Community protection notice warnings have been used through lockdown)	1	3 (8)
Bins on streets Community Protection Notice	9	6

Noise issues	2019	2020
Noise Abatement Notices	24	11
Noise Prosecutions	3	2
Noise Warrants	1	0
Noise Community Protection Notice	5	6

General ASB issues	2019	2020
ASB Community Protection Orders	9	8
Prosecutions	1	0
Injunctions	3	0
Criminal Behaviour Orders	11	0
Closures	1	0

Condition of property related issues	2019	2020
Prevention of Damage by Pests Notices	9	8
Condition of Garden or Property Notices, Inc. F&V EPA and ASBCP	7	8
Subsequent Fixed Penalty Notices	0	1

Other enforcement	2019	2020
Prosecution for microchipping of dogs	1	0
Community Protection Notice for dog attack on person	1	0
Microchipping notice	6	1

Intervention Team

The Intervention Team is tasked with reducing and addressing on street ASB across the city. The team is holistically addressing the root cause of the issues on a support first basis, however they also have at their disposal a number of enforcement tools and powers to use where appropriate and required.

The Intervention Team consists of one ASB Outreach Officer, one Mental Health Nurse and one Addaction Outreach Worker.

The team has continued to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic ensuring the most vulnerable still had access to them for support and signposting.

City Centre issues and partner collaboration

At the end of 2018 the PPASB service and Intervention Team have worked with Lincolnshire Police and Lincoln BIG to bring into effect a Public Spaces Protection Order to allow the gating of St Peters Passage to prevent further instances of serious ASB.

In 2020 a PSPO was brought in covering Lucy Tower Street, Broadgate and Central Multi-Story Car Parks with the aim of further reducing ASB in these areas and enhancing the public image and safety of our city.

The PSPO for the city centre prohibiting street drinking and substance use is currently being renewed.

I have provided a brief update below on further work undertaken with our key partners during the past year to help address city centre issues.

Lincolnshire Police

The PPASB service and the Intervention Team continue to work closely with both the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Lincoln Central Policing Team within the City Centre. The colocation of the Carholme, City Centre and Abbey Neighbourhood Police Teams in the PPASB office at City Hall has further improved the working

relationships and allowed officers to work closer and support each other to tackle ASB across the city.

University

The PPASB service continues to have a good and productive working relationship with the university, particularly around tackling student issues across the city.

Health and Social Care

The Intervention Team and the PPASB team have continued to work with a range of partners including the ARC team, Neighbourhood Nursing Team, Critical Time Intervention Team based at HMP Lincoln and many more. The benefits of collaboration are delivering better, joined up and holistic care and support to the city's most vulnerable groups be these housed or homeless.

Safer Lincolnshire Partnership

The Safer Lincolnshire partnership has strategic overview of four key areas. These areas are Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse, Serious and Organised Crime and Reducing Offending, with cross cutting themes of Mental Health and substance misuse. During the past year, City of Lincoln Council has continued to have representation at both the ASB Core Priority Group and the Domestic Abuse Core Priority Group.

Protecting Vulnerable People

Over the course of the last two years, City of Lincoln Council's internal safeguarding meeting has been rebranded as 'Protecting Vulnerable People' and has been expanded to encompass Hate Crime, PREVENT, Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery. This approach ensures that we have a coordinated approach to a range of safeguarding issues and can ensure that training of staff and any materials that may be needed to protect vulnerable people are centrally stored. The group has initially worked on a number of priorities that focus around training of staff and ensuring that reports are centrally stored and auditable. I have provided a brief update on each of the areas that encompass the Protecting Vulnerable People agenda below.

PREVENT

Officers from the council continue to attend and contribute to the PREVENT Steering Group, in addition to delivering PREVENT actions arising from the Protecting Vulnerable People meeting. All council staff continue to be required to complete online PREVENT training at least every two years.

Domestic Abuse

City of Lincoln Council officers continue to attend and contribute to the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership Domestic Abuse Core Priority Group. Within the last year training has been provided for all Housing Officers to ensure they have the required skills and knowledge to assist them in being able to undertake DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment) risk assessments with victims disclosing domestic abuse. It is also the intention of the council to train Customer Service Team Leaders to increase the provision of trained staff further in the coming year.

Hate Crime

The council is currently reviewing Hate Crime Awareness training for all staff through the Protecting Vulnerable People Group. Council officers also continue to attend and support the Community Cohesion Steering Group.

Modern Slavery

The council has a Modern Slavery Statement and is signed up to a Modern Slavery Charter. Modern Slavery Awareness Training is also being reviewed by the Protecting Vulnerable People Group.

Response to COVID-19

Both the PPASB and Intervention Team have continued to provide high levels of service throughout the pandemic. Whilst the Intervention Team have had to find ways to continue to work safely on the front line throughout the pandemic, the PPASB team have had to find innovative ways to deliver a front-line service from home. You can see from the statistics provided that the service demand has remained high and that in spite of furloughed team members and new challenging working environments, the team has continued to deliver.

PPASB Service over the next 12 months

Over the next 12 months both the PPASB service and the Intervention Team will continue to work collaboratively to make positive changes within our communities.

It is anticipated that on street ASB will continue and that intervention in the form of both support and enforcement will continue to be required. The teams will continue to work with partners to look for sustainable opportunities to look to embed best practice, this is especially important with the Intervention Team funding currently ending in December 2021.

Demand across all services provided by the teams is expected to remain high.

CCTV Service

During the early phase of the pandemic the CCTV service was designated an essential service and has continued to operate on a 24-hour basis although shifts have been reduced to single operators in line with COVID-19 operational risk assessments.

As the strategic plan was being developed, social monitoring (checking adherence to COVID-19 rules) became a priority with operators logging over 1,300 incidents over 30 weeks with the data provided to the relevant steering groups.

The unit has continued to support services including Environmental Health, Licensing, PPASB, Homelessness and Parks as well as Lincolnshire Police. Government restrictions have affected the day and night-time economy and operators have refocused tasks to conduct comprehensive sweeps of the City safeguarding business premises and the vulnerable.

Statistics show that during the last year operators have logged over 12,500 incidents of which 2,300 were public order offences. The unit also recorded over 400 incidents looking for missing persons and over 600 dealing with mental health issues.

The last quarter has seen a reduction in recorded incidents by 30%, possibly as a result of ongoing Government restrictions, and this is expected to continue through the early months of 2021.

Operators continue to make a significant difference in our city particularly when supporting Police during serious incidents. One of the council's CCTV operators recently received a letter of commendation from Lincolnshire Police for their assistance in dealing with a serious incident in the city.

World Hello Day

In November 2020 the council supported World Hello Day 2020, which was the eighth time the day had been celebrated in the city. Due to the pandemic we were unfortunately unable to deliver a range of face to face events to mark the occasion. However, the Lincoln Interfaith Forum hosted a Zoom meeting on Saturday 21st November to celebrate World Hello Day. The event was well attended and provided a great opportunity to say hello and meet people from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds. Myself and the Mayor attended this online meeting. In addition, I also recorded a video outlining the importance of World Hello Day and bringing our communities together, especially during this difficult time. The video was promoted via the council's social media channels and was watched by over 500 people. We look forward to marking World Hello Day in 2021.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Whilst the focus during this past year has been on reducing the impacts of the pandemic, it was important that we continued to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, which takes place annually. For 2021 Holocaust Memorial Day took place on 27th January. Unfortunately we were unable to deliver an event internally this year, however, as an alternative, myself and the Leader, Cllr Ric Metcalfe, working with the Communications Team, produced a video raising awareness of the impacts of the holocaust and the importance of marking Holocaust Memorial Day each year. The video was communicated to staff and residents via the council's social media channels. The theme of Holocaust Memorial Day 2021 was 'Be the light in the darkness'.

Forward look

This past year has been exceptionally difficult for our communities, residents and council staff. I am extremely proud of the significant level of support the council has been able to provide, and it is clear this support has made a huge difference to the residents and communities of Lincoln. This work will continue moving forward as Lincoln experiences the ongoing difficulties caused by the pandemic during the months ahead.

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COUNCIL

23 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2(VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Geoff Ellis, Chair of the Audit Committee

Mr Mayor, Members of the Council

Introduction

This report summarises the work of the Audit Committee to date in the year ending April 2021 and is to confirm that the Committee's function is consistent with best practice as well as demonstrating the positive impact of its work.

There are seven meetings of the Committee during the period up to April 2021; the June meeting (eighth meeting) was cancelled due to Covid-19.

Covid-19 has obviously had a significant impact on the Council including the operation of Committees. Whilst the first meeting of the year was cancelled, meetings have continued since then and will continue as planned until the year end. Further details on the impact of Covid-19 is covered in the relevant sections below.

Purpose of the Audit Committee

The Audit Committee, as a key part of the Council's corporate governance arrangements, oversees and assesses the Council's risk management, control and governance arrangements and advises the Council on their adequacy and effectiveness.

It also has responsibility for reviewing the statutory financial reporting process through approval of the Statement of Accounts and receiving key reports from the External Auditor.

Specifically it provides:

- Oversight and challenge to the Statement of Accounts
- Oversight and review of the Annual Governance Statement
- A review of the Internal Audit Strategy and Audit Plan
- A review of Internal Audit progress reports and recommendations including appropriate follow up actions for outstanding Audit recommendations
- An examination of the External Audit Plan
- Consideration of External Audit reports, including the "report to those charged with governance", the "Annual Audit letter" and "certification of grant claims and returns report"
- Review of Counter Fraud arrangements and associated monitoring reports
- Annual review of the Council's Treasury Management Policy/Strategy
- Annual review of risk management arrangements
- Oversight of Information Governance including data protection.

Membership and Independence

The Audit Committee comprises seven Councillors and (since 2013) one Independent Member. The current Independent member, Jane Nellist is from the Education sector, is a qualified accountant with experience of public sector finance and was appointed from April 2016. Having one or more Independent Members, particularly with a financial background, is seen as best practice, as their experience and expertise assists the Audit Committee to discharge its role more effectively. The Audit Committee and the Officers have found the Independent Member's contribution to be particularly useful and I would like to offer my thanks for the Independent Member's continued support.

As Chairman of the Committee, I confirm I am free from Executive functions, and have not had my independence impaired during my time to date as Chair.

Membership during 2020-21

The membership for 2020/21 has remained fairly constant and is similar to 2019/20. I took over as Chair from May 2018 and Councillor Laura McWilliams is Vice-Chair
The full list of Councillors are:

Councillor Geoff Ellis (Chair)
Councillor Laura McWilliams (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Thomas Dyer
Councillor Jackie Kirk
Councillor Gary Hewson
Councillor Bill Mara
Councillor Rebecca Longbottom
Jane Nellist (Independent Member)

Relationships

I am happy to report that there continues to be a sound working relationship between officers and Members of the Committee.

Internal Audit functional responsibility rests with Jaclyn Gibson (Chief Finance Officer) on behalf of the Chief Executive whilst the Audit Manager has a direct reporting line to all levels of the Authority both at officer and member level.

I am satisfied through discussions with External Audit representatives and Internal Audit that relationships between Internal and External audit have been satisfactory and are effective.

Mazars are the External Auditors with effect from September 2018.

The external auditor takes consideration of and uses the work of our internal auditors in connection with their integrated audit of the Council's financial statements and other work. External and internal auditors collaborate to minimise duplication of effort and work in tandem to help management and the Audit Committee ensure that the Council's financial reports and other information are accurate and that its system of

internal control is effective. Internal audit have also audited elements of the housing benefit subsidy claim on behalf of the external auditor, which also provides a saving on the audit fee.

The 2019/20 statement of accounts audit progressed more smoothly than 2018/19; issues that arose as part of the 2018/19 accounts were addressed by both parties.

Audit Committee - Terms of Reference

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance on Audit Committees, which sets out various requirements, has been incorporated into the terms of reference of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee terms of reference were updated in July 2018 and were reviewed again in February 2021 (there were no changes in 2021).

Two of the main changes in 2018 were:

a) To support the review of External Audit the Audit Committee will consider any issues raised by PSAA (Public Sector Audit Appointments) in its annual report. This summarises results from quality reviews and was received by the Audit Committee in December 2018 which showed the Council's new External Auditors (Mazars) had received the highest assurance rating.

The Audit Committee received a further update on external audit quality in its December 2020 meeting which showed that there were some quality issues with firms and Mazars responded specifically on matters that related to them.

b) To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations. It was agreed that an annual report on partnership governance arrangements would be provided to the Audit Committee.

An annual assurance report was scheduled to be received by the Audit Committee in March 2020 however due to Covid-19 this has been delayed; partnership arrangements will be considered by management in February and hopefully an annual report can be presented in March or early in the new financial year.

Internal Audit Terms of Reference

These were updated in December 2019, to reflect changes to national standards although only relatively minor changes were made. The changes were reviewed by the Audit Committee. A further review took place again in February 2021,

Audit Committee Training

Committee Members receive relevant training during the year, including:

- Training linked to understanding the Council's financial statements
- Treasury management
- Corporate governance Counter fraud arrangements (through specific counter fraud training material)

- Risk management
- Internal audit and Audit Committee arrangements/effectiveness

Some training has been deferred due to Covid-19 and will recommence in 21-22

The Audit Committee highlighted the fact that for any new members the committee very quickly get into detail on complex reports such as the statement of accounts so any training needs to be delivered in a timely manner.

Officers will review training options available both internally and externally for 21-22.

Information Governance and Data Protection

A considerable volume of work has now taken place across the Council, to meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (in force from April 2018) and the new Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

In July 2018 the Audit Committee reviewed a range of Information Governance policies before Council approval. The Council needs to have policies to enable the Council to be compliant with the new legal framework and the information governance team needed to roll out the policies in order to increase awareness of the GDPR to officers' and councillors.

Therefore members of the public can be confident that the organisation are aware of their responsibilities of the new legal framework.

The Committee receives a regular update report on Information Governance from the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

The Audit Committee recognises this is a significant area and presents a number of risks which are being adequately addressed. There is always further work to be done around training, asset registers, new systems etc and this work in progress.

Internal Audit and the Audit Committee

Independence

To comply with best practice, I can confirm that the Audit Committee is suitably independent and that the Committee's terms of reference are consistent with *CIPFA* best practice guidance. Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the City Council's operations.

Operationally it sits under the Chief Executive and has freedom to report to any level within the organisation.

Audit Plan, Progress Reports and the Annual Internal Audit Report

The Audit Committee approves the Annual Internal Audit Plan and the Internal Audit Strategy.

The work of internal audit is reviewed at each meeting. This review includes a summary of audit reports as well as performance against the plan and other measures. It is pleasing to note that the majority of audits achieve a high level of assurance, reflecting that in most areas, risks are being effectively managed and the control environment is sound. Those audits which require a greater degree of improvement are classed as having limited or no assurance.

An annual report by the Audit Manager is presented to the Audit Committee following the end of the financial year, which also helps to support the Annual Governance Statement.

The 2019-20 annual internal audit report to the July 2020 meeting gave a substantial (green) assurance across areas of governance, risk and control.

The Covid-19 emergency impacted on the internal audit plan and a revised (reduced) plan was agreed by Audit Committee in September 2020. The audit team for a while were diverted to help support the emergency response. Completion of the revised plan will ensure sufficient coverage across governance, risk and control. The revised plan includes work on Covid-19 risks.

Counter Fraud

The Committee also reviews counter-fraud arrangements, receiving an annual report in September 2020 and a 6 monthly update report in December 2020. The Council is part of the effective Lincolnshire Fraud Partnership (LCFP) – this is a partnership of Lincolnshire Councils who successfully bid for and received government funding to tackle fraud locally. The partnership continues with a small annual financial contribution until at least March 2022 under current arrangements. During 2020/21 LCFP has continued to support nominated fraud representatives by raising awareness of emerging fraud risks, including those linked to Covid-19 and arrangements during a pandemic emergency. The focus of work in 21-22 will be around business rates, council tax single person discount and cyber-crime.

The Committee considers relevant corporate counter fraud policies and any updates, as well as information on fraud risk and fraud training. It will review the anti-money laundering policy in March 2021 and recently reviewed an updated counter fraud risk register.

Some fraud projects have been delayed due to Covid-19 including work on Council Tax single person discount however this will commence in 2021. This has the potential to increase Council Tax revenue.

Tenancy fraud (such as unauthorised sub-letting) is also a current project and this is also a high-risk area nationally.

The Council continues to be involved with the National Fraud Initiative (fraud and error) which involves national data matching using a range of Council data sources. Matches are received and reviewed by officers. Data has been submitted for 2020 and new matches will be reviewed in 2021.

The cyber fraud threat is an ongoing risk to the Council and the Committee monitors agreed actions relating to anti-malware and IT Disaster recovery. The Audit Committee is monitoring IT Disaster recovery arrangements as this is currently a significant issue on the Annual Governance Statement.

Further counter fraud training for officers and members will be offered in 2021.

The Council's main fraud strategies and policies can be found on the Councils' website.

The City of Lincoln Council is a "friends against scams" organisation (www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk) to help protect the city's residents, staff and members from becoming victims of scams. The partnership with a National Trading Standards body, involves encouraging staff and others to take part in scam awareness and advice training. The Council works with partners to publicise and warn against scams operating nationally and locally.

The processing of significant amounts of Covid-19 grants has also involved officers in managing fraud risks and assurance reports are regularly provided to BEIS (Department for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy). Grant data is also being submitted to NFI (National Fraud Initiative) for local and nationwide data matching.

Audit Recommendations and Agreed Action

Another important part of the Committee's role is helping to ensure that audit recommendations are implemented. The Committee ensures that officers are acting on recommendations from both internal and external audit with updates being received at each meeting.

The Audit Committee have asked for more information on older outstanding recommendations and managers have attended to provide more detailed information. This approach will continue and appears to have had a positive effect on the effective implementation of audit recommendations.

Audit recommendations are integrated into the Council's performance management system and are regularly reviewed by Managers, Directorate Management teams and Corporate Management Team (CMT) as well as Portfolio holders. The number of high priority recommendations outstanding is low.

The Audit Committee have also encouraged portfolio holders to take a greater interest in outstanding actions within their areas of responsibility.

Assurance Lincolnshire Partnership

The Council's Internal Audit Team is part of the wider Assurance Lincolnshire Partnership which includes the City of Lincoln Council, Lincolnshire County Council, and more recently Nottinghamshire County Council. Assurance Lincolnshire provides internal audit services to eight Councils in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire (including the three core partners).

The partnership is making good progress and yielding positive benefits for the internal audit service in Lincoln. As part of the partnership arrangements the Council contracts directly with Boston Borough Council providing its internal audit service. The current contract runs until 2021/22.

Audit Standards

The City of Lincoln Council and the wider Assurance Lincolnshire Partnership comply with internal audit standards and passed their external quality assessment review (EQA) in September 2016, which must be undertaken within a 5-year period. The next review will take place later in 2021.

Audit Committee Work Programme

The Committee receives reports mainly from the Audit Manager, the Chief Finance Officer and the External Auditor covering a wide range of topics.

A selection of areas covered/reviewed this year includes:

- Annual Governance Statement (review of AGS and update reports on significant issues)
- Information Governance updates and policies
- Statement of Accounts (review)
- Treasury Management Policy and Strategy (consultation prior to approval by Council)
- Annual Internal Audit Report
- Internal Audit Strategy and Plan
- Internal audit progress reports
- Counter Fraud Reports
- Risk Management Annual Report
- Report to those Charged with Governance
- Annual Audit Letter (External Audit)

The resourcing for the audit plan remains at a satisfactory level enabling appropriate coverage across key financial and corporate systems, with sufficient resources to respond to emerging risks. There will be a small reduction in planned resources as a result of agreed savings from 2021-22.

The Audit Committee receives an annual “Combined Assurance” report. Working with management, Internal Audit records first, second and third line assurances for all the key areas of Council business. The aim is to give Senior Management and the Audit Committee an insight on assurances across all critical activities, key risks and projects. Assurances are drawn from the “three lines of defence” including management, corporate business assurance functions such as performance management and internal audit plus other third parties. The report also feeds into the Audit Manager’s annual internal audit opinion, internal audit plan and annual governance statement. The next report will be presented to the Audit Committee in June 2021.

External Audit Arrangements, Reports and Conclusions

The external auditor's primary role is to express an opinion on whether management has given a true and fair view of the information in its financial statements. The auditor expresses this assurance in an auditor's report.

External auditors also examine and express an opinion on grant claims and returns made by the Council, to ensure that accurate figures are reported to Central Government, and that claims for grant funding are made in accordance with relevant rules.

Currently, External Audit assess whether the Council has appropriate arrangements to deliver value for money and this is also reported annually.

The Council's external audit was provided for 2019-20 by a private sector accountancy firm, Mazars procured through Public Sector Audit Appointments

The Audit Committee has a role to comment on the scope and depth of external audit work, through considering plans and reports to ensure the work gives value for money.

The Committee considers the reports of External Audit and inspection agencies, including the External Auditor's "Auditors Report" and the report to "Those Charged with Governance".

The Committee has considered the 2019/20 External Auditor's report. On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to report that the 2019/20 final accounts were presented by the Council for audit by the required (revised) statutory date and the External Auditor was proposing to issue an unqualified opinion (this is still pending). As part of the audit work undertaken Mazars considered the internal controls in place relevant to the preparation of the financial statements. The findings of this work resulted in 3 recommendations being made in respect of IT General Controls, Expected Credit Loss Model and Asset Valuation Inputs which will be addressed.

The Auditor also confirmed that it expects to give an unqualified opinion on value for money (arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources).

Regulatory Framework

Risk Management

The Committee has a role (through its terms of reference) in overseeing risk management strategies and also receives an annual report. I am pleased to report that risk management arrangements are working well and risk management is used effectively to help manage our strategic, operational and project risks.

Financial Statements

The Committee reviews the authority's financial and assurance statements, including the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement, ensuring the latter

properly reflects the risk environment and any actions required to improve it and then to recommend its adoption.

Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance

The Annual Governance Statement is a statutory statement and provides an overview of key governance arrangements within the Authority, including any significant control issues arising during the year. This is signed by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive and is presented to Council alongside the Statement of Accounts. The Audit Committee monitors all “significant issues” arising from the Statement approximately each quarter. There is currently one “significant issue” in relation to IT disaster recovery, which is has an Amber rating. Good progress is being made with new IT infrastructure which will help mitigate the risks identified.

City of Lincoln Council must ensure that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. It also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way our functions are exercised, having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging this overall responsibility, the council must put in place proper governance arrangements for our affairs.

The Council’s Code of Corporate Governance is about how we ensure that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

The Code of Corporate Governance sets out the documentation, systems and processes by which the authority transparently controls its activities. It enables us to monitor the achievement of our strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money. The Audit Committee has previously reviewed and approved the Code of Corporate Governance and updates.

The code is based on a set of seven core principles:

- Core Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- Core Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Core Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
- Core Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Core Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

- Core Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Core Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

The Committee considers whether there are any concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit (including the external audit report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts) that need to be brought to the attention of the Council. There are no such issues arising to date during 2020/21.

Treasury Management

It is also worth noting the Committee's role in relation to Treasury Management. Guidance has meant that the Audit Committee has an increased role in assessing the robustness of Treasury Management policy. Training is provided to the Committee by the Council's Treasury Management consultants.

The Committee reviews the strategy and considers the adoption of Treasury Management indicators prior to Council approval.

The Council's Constitution

The Committee has a role in reviewing certain aspects of the Council's Constitution, in particular contract procedure rules and financial procedure rules when changes occur.

The Audit Committee reviewed an update for the financial procedure rules in March 2018.

Effective Challenge

The Committee provides effective challenge across the full range of Council services and provides independent assurance on the risk management and governance framework and associated internal control environment to the Council and the public.

The Committee has received a variety of reports from both Internal and External Audit during the year. It has scrutinised and challenged the findings of audit reports on risk and control issues, sought clarification and in some cases required detailed explanations and action plans to address significant issues.

Impact of the Audit Committee's Work

By completing the work programme and providing challenge where required, the Audit Committee has:

- increased public confidence in the Council's governance arrangements;
- reinforced the importance and independence of internal and external audit and other review processes that reported to the Audit Committee;

- assisted in the co-ordination of assurance with internal audit and, in so doing, made management more accountable;
- provided additional assurance through a process of independent and objective review; and raised awareness of the need for internal control and
- helped ensure the timely implementation of audit recommendations.

Conclusions

This annual report has summarised the work of the Audit Committee over the last twelve months and has demonstrated the breadth and impact of the Committee's work.

I confirm therefore that the City Council's Audit Committee and Audit function is consistent with best practice

In conclusion I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to Laura McWilliams Vice-Chair, Jane Nellist, the Independent Member, to all those elected members who have served on the Committee, to Jaclyn Gibson, Colleen Warren, and the Finance team, John Scott and the Internal Audit team, Becky Scott, Sally Brooks and all those officers that have provided reports, training and guidance to the Committee.

Councillor Geoff Ellis
Chair of Audit Committee

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COUNCIL

23 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2(VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Naomi Twedde, Design Advocate

Madam Mayor, Members of the Council

Design is an important part of protecting and enhancing our beautiful city. The City of Lincoln Council Planning Department have been working hard to retain the uniqueness of Lincoln, but also to help Lincoln to grow and thrive as a city. The Planning Department are passionate about design, and work with developers to get the best design levels possible on all applications. In order to get the best levels of design, planning officers negotiate with developers with real effort focusing on improving the quality of both design and the materials used.

Negotiations on design are one aspect of the planning application process and officers are tasked with taking all planning issues into account when managing the built environment. This often means that a level of compromise is required, but planning officers strive to achieve the best design possible on each application. Some examples of schemes where excellent design standards have been achieved include: the residential development at Chad Varah House on Wordsworth Street, the student accommodation currently under construction at St. Marks, the student scheme on the corner of Beaumont Fee and Park Street and the University of Lincoln's Medical School. The Cornhill and Sincil Street development also continues to be a focus for officer's time, and I think this is a very good example of the impact good design can have on the built environment. Although these schemes are quite different in terms of their design approach, they are all of a high quality and respond very well to their context.

One of my priorities as the Design Advocate and as Chair of the Planning Committee is to improve engagement with local Councillors on large or potentially contentious planning applications. I decided that a Design Forum would be an excellent way of consulting with local Councillors on applications of note within their Wards. The Design Forum consists of the Assistant Director of Planning, the Planning Officer for the application, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee and the local Councillors for the ward in which the application is proposed. Where it was close to the boundary of two Wards, Councillors would be invited from both Wards. The rationale behind this idea was to improve engagement with the public via the ward Councillors, to listen to the views of local Councillors before a decision was made and to ensure we utilised the vast local knowledge that local Councillors have of their Ward and residents.

We planned to formally launch this in May 2020, however this wasn't possible due to the increased demands during the Covid 19 pandemic. This will now be formally launched in May 2021, following the planning training that takes place each year. Despite not being in a position to formally launch the scheme, we have been able to trial the Design Forums on a few larger, or potentially contentious schemes in 2020.

We held a design forum with Carholme Councillors for the application on the former Jack Machin motorcycle garage site at 128 Carholme Road, and with Minster and Castle Ward Councillors for the Bishop Grosseteste student accommodation proposal on Riseholme Road, just to name a couple. I think the forums held so far have been really valuable and have made a positive contribution to the development management process.

The Lincoln Design Awards have been extremely successful and provide an excellent way of celebrating good design for new developments in Lincoln. They also provide an opportunity to showcase exemplar schemes in the City and highlight what is possible in terms of sensitive and contextual design solutions that can sensitively respond to Lincoln's historic townscape. We were due to hold the Lincoln Design Awards in 2021, but unfortunately, we have had to postpone these until 2022 due to the Covid 19 pandemic and associated restrictions. I look forward to holding these next year and celebrating some of the brilliant developments that have taken place in the City since the last Design Awards.

I also want to explore the role of design and how this can help achieve our net zero carbon targets, I think that good design can play a pivotal role in this. One of the ways this might be facilitated, could be to look at examples of best practice and case studies where this is being pioneered elsewhere.

We have seen many challenges over the past year; however, our planning officers have continued to champion excellent design in our beautiful City, and I am confident this will continue in the future. As Design Advocate, I am committed to protecting Lincoln's historic townscape and its associated urban grain. I believe that the best way to achieve this is to promote contextual design that complements the existing urban fabric of the City's long architectural heritage. It is essential that we are able to suitably balance the historic fabric of Lincoln with the City's natural growth, whilst also ensuring that developments in the City respond in a way that reflects the City as it is today.

I would like to finish by thanking officers in the Planning Department for all of their excellent work and support over the past year.

Councillor Naomi Tweddle
Design Advocate

REPORT UNDER RULE 2(VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor McNulty, Chair of the Ethics and Engagement Committee

The principal role of the Ethics and Engagement Committee remains as follows:

- Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted members.
- Assisting Councillors in observing the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Advising, training or arranging to train Councillors on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Assessing and hearing any cases of an alleged breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Considering matters relating to the governance of the Council and ethical conduct by councillors, and propose relevant guidance if appropriate.
- Monitoring councillor development and offer guidance intended to improve its efficacy, value, or delivery.
- Developing innovative and effective proposals to improve democratic engagement.

I would like to place on record my thanks to all members of the Committee for their valuable contributions. My thanks also go to Roger Vine for the support he provides in his role as the Council's Independent Person.

Since the last report to Council the Committee has considered the following items:

- The Committee on Standards in Public Life;
- Start Time and Duration of Meetings;
- Democratic Engagement;
- Promotion of the role of Members and Committees;
- Member Code of Conduct, including revisions to the City Council's Code and the introduction of the Local Government Association Model Code of Member Conduct;
- National Democracy Week;
- Engagement Events;
- Social Media Policy.

In terms of complaints, since 1 January 2020 I can report that three complaints were received against members, none of which required any further action. Despite these complaints I am sure that Council will agree that councillors appear to be continuing to behave and interact between themselves and the public in a responsible and respectful manner. I think all members would agree that the pragmatic and even-handed approach to responding to complaints by the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person is to be welcomed. I understand that further training on the Code of Conduct will be provided to all members later this year.

The work of the Committee, particularly that which it undertook on engagement, the social media policy and promotion of the role of members and committees at the beginning of 2020, was impacted as a result of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. I look forward to the Committee revisiting these important matters in the coming year.

Councillor Adrianna McNulty
Chair of the Ethics and Engagement Committee

COUNCIL

23 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2(vi) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Bill Bilton, Chair of Policy Scrutiny Committee

Madam Mayor – Members of the Council:

I am sure I will not need to remind members of the dramatic changes that have taken place since my last report to Full Council in January 2020 as Chair of Policy Scrutiny Committee. The impact of coronavirus has significantly affected both the way in which our committee carries out its business and the approach of members to the topics we scrutinise.

I would like to thank members and officers for their support and efforts in allowing Policy Scrutiny Committee to continue its work in acting as a critical friend to the Council. All members of the committee regardless of political background are committed to trying to deliver the best outcomes for the city and guiding the development of policy towards achieving the Council's strategic priorities.

Our committee has had a typically broad range of policies and strategies to scrutinise this year including the following topics:

- Vision 2025
- Allocations Policy
- Motion to Reduce and Regulate the use of Fireworks
- Modern Slavery Charter and Statement Review
- Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter
- Review of the Trusted Landlord Scheme
- Public Space Protection Orders
- Planning White Paper Consultation
- Draft Housing Strategy 2020-25
- Built Facilities Strategy
- Physical Activity Strategy
- Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy
- Environmental Policy

An ongoing and recurring theme has been the challenge posed by cars parked on grass verges in different areas of the city. Members are understandably concerned about the impact this can have in disrupting the flow of traffic through key areas of the city. There is a particular concern regarding the impact on vulnerable people who may be unable to catch buses or use footpaths as a result of obstructions caused by these parked cars.

Officers have sought to engage with the issue both through the Council's own resources and by talking to partner organisations across the city. I am sure members

will recognise that there are no easy answers to this problem and I have little doubt that it will continue to be a topic for much more debate in the coming year. I would like to thank the Lincoln Tenants' Panel for its valuable input and efforts in taking the matter forward for consultation.

I continue to act as the Council's representative on the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire, which is hosted by Lincolnshire County Council. After an interruption of several months during the first stages of the pandemic, the Health Scrutiny Committee resumed its meetings in June 2020 and has continued to meet regularly since then.

I provide regular updates to Policy Scrutiny Committee regarding the Health Scrutiny Committee's work. As members of Full Council will appreciate, the last year has been a time of unprecedented challenges for the National Health Service and many other organisations devoted to public health. I am sure all members would join me in thanking healthcare workers for their devotion and hard work throughout the last year battling against huge difficulties under incredible pressure.

The Health Scrutiny Committee has attempted to understand and to provide input into the delivery of health services across the county. While coronavirus has with good reason often dominated the discussion of healthcare, we will all recognise that there remain many other health challenges, whether pre-existing or affected by the current crisis that the Health Scrutiny Committee should strive to keep on its radar.

I am sure the coming year will be another unpredictable and demanding one. Our council, city, and country all face many different challenges and the role of the Policy Scrutiny Committee will remain to give members an opportunity to shape the Council's response to these challenges in the most effective way. Thank you again to all officers and members who have assisted us in trying to do that this year.

Councillor Bill Bilton
Chair of the Policy Scrutiny Committee

COUNCIL

23 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2 (VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Lucinda Preston, Sustainability Advocate

Overview

A year ago most people were aware of Coronavirus and some its dangers but I don't think any of us could have imagined the impact it would have on our lives and how day to day life would alter for the next 12 months.

Every area of life has been affected by the pandemic and the City Council's Sustainability agenda has been no different. From the operational difficulties that every organisation has faced to the huge financial constraints placed upon the Council because of loss of income, this year has been challenging for us as an environmentally aware council. However, the City Council has still been able to progress many of its goals and initiatives because of the commitment of officers and councillors alike and also the organised plans and initiatives that were already in place pre-pandemic.

Sustainability cuts across a number of portfolios as well as linking directly to the Vision 2025 strand 'Let's address the challenge of climate change'. As last year, I would like to pay tribute to the work of all our Executive members who are committed to sustainability in all we do. I would also like to thank our superb City Council officers for their excellent work plus thank them for helping me put together this report. As a City Council we are also indebted to the many committed residents, organisations and groups in our city for whom sustainability is integral to everyday life.

Sustainability: Tackling Climate Change (Key Points)

The pandemic has understandably been at the forefront of people's minds over the past year. However, it is important to remind ourselves that we remain in the middle of a climate emergency. For the future of our planet, it is vital for every council to do what it can to reduce carbon emissions.

In July 2019 Lincoln City Council agreed the motion to declare a Climate and Environmental Emergency. This included a commitment for our city to achieve a net zero carbon target by 2030. Despite the unprecedented challenge of the past year, the City Council has made some progress towards this goal.

The City Council's commitment to tackling climate change has been underlined by the appointment of Kate Bell as a dedicated Climate Change Manager.

Lincoln Climate Commission (LCC)

- The Roadmap to Zero Carbon Lincoln was completed and approved by Lincoln Climate Commission in July 2020. This sets out the projections for Lincoln's Carbon Dioxide emissions to 2030, our carbon budget (how much carbon we

can emit per annum to remain carbon neutral), the gap between our current CO2 emissions and net zero and the actions we need to deliver to remain within our carbon budget.

- The Lincoln Climate Commission was formalised in September 2020. The commission now has 36 members from the public, private and community sector and a range of sub-groups focused on delivering climate awareness and climate action in Lincoln and more widely, Lincolnshire.

Further Initiatives

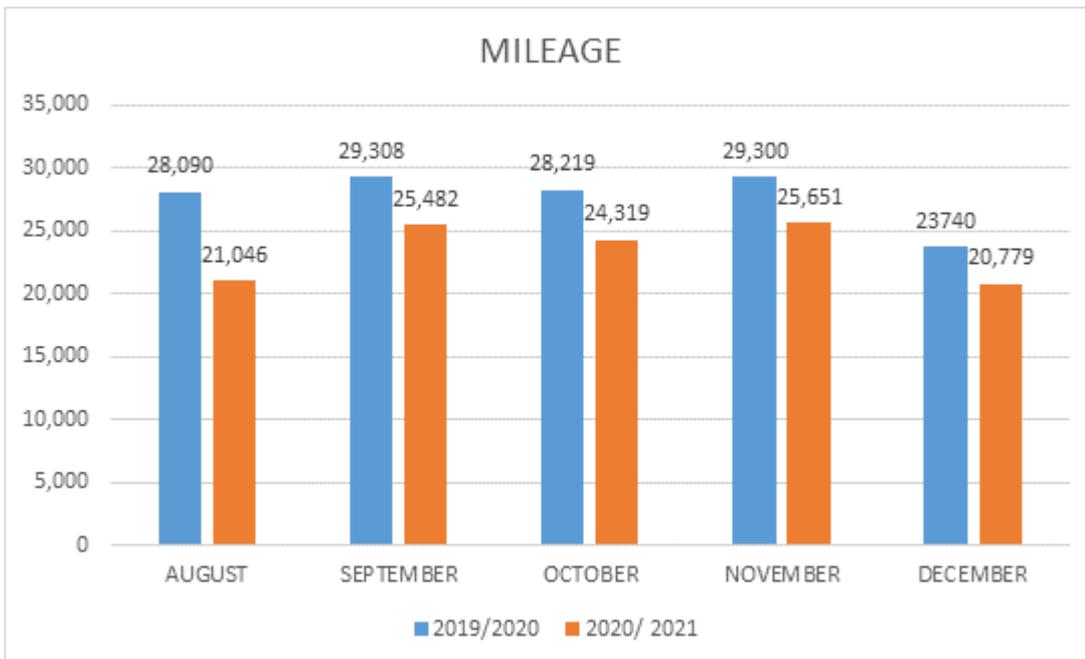
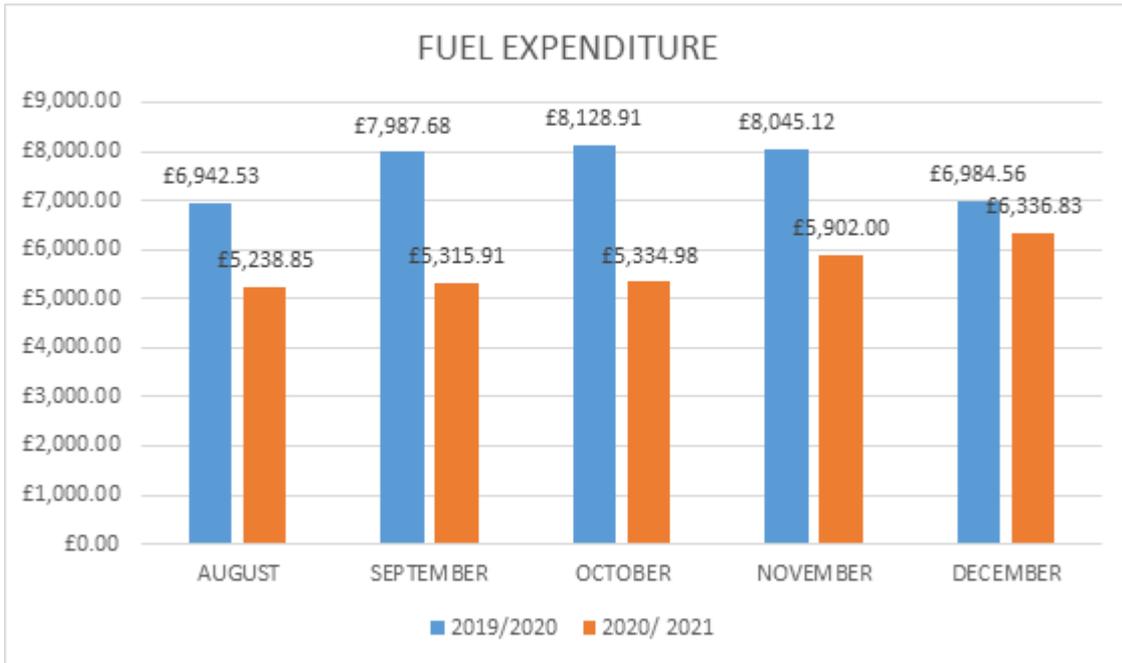
- In September 2020 Lincoln City Council also submitted its Environmental Management System for external audit and was delighted to be accredited with a Silver award. The City Council is now preparing a Decarbonisation Plan and is looking to achieve a Green award in 2021.
- The City Council has submitted a Roadmap to Net Zero programme as part of the Towns Fund Bid. At the time of writing we are awaiting the outcome (due in March 2021).
- In January 2021 Councillor Ric Metcalf signed the UK100 Net Zero membership pledge. The Council will be able to share knowledge and best practice with fellow members of the network.

Sustainability: Housing

Lincoln City Council is one of the main providers of homes in the city and a key stakeholder in encouraging and developing more sustainable housing/living in the city.

Council Housing Provision

- The City Council is currently in the procurement stage for new vehicle fleet provision. The manufacturers interested at the moment offer a mixture of fuel types including petrol/diesel and hybrid (a mild hybrid not a full hybrid). The fuel choice will depend upon vehicle type and usage. Mild hybrid will offer a 2% cut on emissions.
- The Housing Repair Service has decreased mileage on average of 4,200 miles a month with a fuel reduction on average of 2k per month during the pilot (please see the graphs below). This demonstrates the financial benefits of the new system, not just the sustainability benefits. Once the new fleet is introduced the City Council will be looking into further ways of offsetting the carbon footprint, including driver training and green initiatives.



- With regards to products, all timber is sustainably sourced. The department recycles 100% of materials that go into skips and have started the introduction of waterproof boarding instead of tiling finishes to properties (please be aware that the department is potentially changing managed store providers so some delay will be inevitable). The department is also reviewing our van stocks to ensure we only carry the correct number of materials and has recently introduced a Research and Development group that focuses on the next generation of materials and products within the housing stock.
- From the Housing Strategy side, the EPCs for Swift Gardens (Markham House) are all EPC rating B They perform at very good in most areas. The gas, heating

and hot water are classed as good (giving the B rating) and is an area we will need to consider in the future.

- On new builds such as Rookery Lane we are:
 - Putting in electrical vehicle charging points to new properties
 - Houses built with fabric first approach to reduce energy usage
 - A sustainable 'Urban Drainage Scheme' as part of the site drainage management.
 - Mechanical heat recovery system
- In other areas the department has used recycling of material from demolition, where useful.

Local Plan

The following is useful to know simply in terms of wider context. It is worth noting that it is only a very brief overview of part of the Local Plan

At the time of writing, the emerging local plan, for consultation in summer 2021, is likely to set its aim to be a Local Plan which assists the Central Lincolnshire area on a path towards becoming a carbon net zero sub-region. One goal will be to encourage better designed, higher quality sustainable housing.

In relation to housing, consultant recommendations for the new plan include, amongst others, the need to regulate development beyond 'basic' Building Regulation requirements. The City Council is very supportive of such recommendations.

Sustainability: Reducing Single Use Plastic

The City Council remains committed to reducing single use plastic having previously passed a motion for the city to be plastic-free by 2022. There has been some progress over the past year though the pandemic has inevitably had some impact.

- The City Council's Plastics Audit was completed April 2020.
- Single Use Plastic Action Plan was put in place May 2020.
- Previously the City Council has undertaken substantial work towards making the Christmas Market plastic-free (for example, by enforcing a limit on the use of single use plastic). However, the 2020 Christmas Market was obviously unable to go ahead because of the pandemic.
- Promotion of plastic-free events remains a priority but as with all events, these have not been taking place because of the pandemic. A shorter-term goal is to promote plastic-free aspirations more in our parks.

Sustainability: Waste/Recycling

More on waste/recycling is covered in Cllr Bushell's report (to be considered at Council on 2 March 2021). The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership is still including a review of carbon footprint as a part of its performance measures. This is however proving more

difficult to assess and measure than anticipated, so is taking longer to set up than expected. COVID measures have not helped, but it still remains as a clear objective.

Sustainability: Improving our Urban Environment

As outlined last year, the City Council continues to look at other ways to reduce the carbon footprint but to also to make Lincoln an attractive place to live and work in. The value of attractive urban spaces for physical and mental wellbeing should never be underestimated, especially for those residents who do not have their own garden/open space. It cannot be emphasised enough that this is an economic and equality issue as well as an environmental issue.

As a part of the recent street scene contract extensions, work groups have been set up to look at how services should develop, and what should be prioritised in future years. Recognising the Council's environmental agenda, the open spaces group has given priority to two key areas: tree planting and wildflowers.

- **Tree Planting.** Due to demands on staff and partner agencies this year it has not been possible to make progress on the development of a Tree Strategy as had been hoped. As outlined in Cllr Bushell's report (to be considered at Council on 2 March 2021), this remains an objective of the Council, and so is worth a mention here, as is the fact that the City Council has remained true to its policy of "1 for 1" for tree replacements this year. This year's trees are currently being planted.
- **Wildflower Planting.** A work group headed by the council's Senior Ranger in Hartsholme Country Park is developing a comprehensive list of sites that are sustainable for different types of wildflower planting. There will be two key approaches developed based on either annual wildflower mixes into open ground, or perennial wildflower mixes into permanent grassland. The site list is being carefully checked now, as it is vital that we don't cause any environmental damage inadvertently. As a part of the site reviews grass cutting regimes will also be reconsidered. It is hoped that some of the first sites will be seeing changes this spring.

The exciting Boultham Park Restoration project continues. This has funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and includes the restoration of the lake and surrounds in the park. This project has a strong environmental focus, and is being delivered with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust as a key partner. Capital works are in progress now, but there will be a legacy of engagement with the community until the end of March 2023.

Sustainability: Transport

Sustainable transport is a key element of sustainability and our City Council continues to look for ways to support residents in travelling sustainably.

- **Infrastructure** The Government invited authorities to submit applications to the Emergency Active Travel Fund for temporary or trial road closures and cycle routes. This was followed by a second funding round called the Active Travel Fund. As part of the preparation for this bid the City Council worked with the

County Council to identify priority routes in Lincoln – Sincil Bank, Wigford Way and Brayford Wharf East - and submitted a proposal. Unfortunately once the funding was secured the county councillors would not approve any cycling infrastructure in Lincoln and allocated all the funding to other areas. This was disappointing for our city. We hope that more money will become available at some point.

- The City Council has submitted a plan for a Sincil Bank green travel corridor and infrastructure improvements to Wigford way as part of the Towns Fund projects. Unfortunately, the County Council decided not to offer any match funding for these schemes.
- **Electric Car Charging Points** The City Council remains committed to increasing the number of electric car changing points across the city. As part of an OLEV (Office for Low Emission Vehicles) funded project, in the autumn the City Council launched a residents' survey to find out more about demand from residents for on-street electric vehicle charge points.
- **City Council Staff Travel** Even when the pandemic comes to the end, the City Council is expecting to see a reduction in commuter travel. There will be a staff travel survey in the spring. As part of the Council's Environmental Management System it also monitors working car/train journeys; there has obviously been a large reduction of these as people haven't been attending conferences and meetings around the country.
- The introduction of MS Teams and roll out of remote working devices will mean that this reduction in journeys will also be a long term phenomenon as many people will continue to have virtual meetings, training and conferences as it saves so much time not having to travel. This will continue to be monitored along with energy consumption (e.g. the reduction in the number of IT servers has reduced electricity consumption at City Hall) as part of the EMS for 2020/21 which will be completed in the Summer. The City Council now has a revised baseline year for 2018/19 and 2019/20 so it will be using these to compare our energy consultation and green house gas emissions. All these sustainability measures and the carbon reduction outcomes will be covered in detail in the new Decarbonisation Plan due later in the spring.

Sustainability: Food

- **Allotments** These have retained high numbers of letting, with waiting lists. This is an interest that was seeing a growing demand pre-COVID, and lockdowns have understandably seen this further increase.
- The service benefitted from significant investment last year, but has recently seen consideration of price increases for next year due to the continuing impact of COVID on the City Council's finances. A year's notice of increases has been given to tenants, and although not welcome, most feedback has been understanding and pleasingly has not led to a reduction in tenancies.

- **Fairtrade** The City of Lincoln continues to retain its accreditation as a Fairtrade City by the Fairtrade Foundation. To help retain this accreditation, there is a Lincoln Fairtrade City Steering Group which has representation on the group from City of Lincoln Council, Lincolnshire Co-op, University of Lincoln and the Centre for Reconciliation. This group is chaired by Councillor Gary Hewson.
- As of February 2021, 84 business premises, cafes, churches, schools in the city support Fairtrade and use/sell a number of Fairtrade products.
- The pandemic has restricted the work of the Fairtrade City Steering Group considerably, however it has continued to raise awareness of Fairtrade where it can and will be supporting Fairtrade Fortnight 2021 (22nd February and 7th March 2021). The group will increase its work on Fairtrade over the coming year as restrictions start to lift.
- The city is due to renew its Fairtrade City accreditation in the Autumn of 2021.
- **Lincolnshire Food Partnership.** Lincoln City Council continues to support the work of the Lincolnshire Food Partnership (previously the Lincoln Food Partnership), with our Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits sitting on the Board, supporting and inputting into various projects. The Partnership's stated aim, is: "We're a partnership of local organisations working together for fairer, healthier, greener food for all, through sustainable local action". As the City Council, our role on this board focuses on promoting and helping to deliver food poverty related initiatives, as well as supporting sustainable of food models in Lincoln.

Sustainability: Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter (includes a green section)

The charter was launched in 2018 with the aim of recognising organisations in the city which go the extra mile to support their employees and the local community. Sign up to the charter is free of charge. The City Council asks that each organisation demonstrates in their application that they deliver a range of socially responsible activities, above the statutory minimum, which benefit their employees and the local community. The number of activities required varies in line with the size of the organisation. This includes 'green' activities.

As of February 2021, 83 local organisations have committed to the principals of the charter and have gained accreditation as a socially responsible employer. A number of socially responsible sustainable activities undertaken by accredited organisations include: initiatives to reduce travel/air miles, using local suppliers/local products, initiatives to reduce food waste, use of electric or hybrid vehicles, recycling initiatives and initiatives to reduce energy consumption and waste.

Again, due to the pandemic, the City Council has been restricted on the amount of promotional activities it has been able to undertake; however, it will look to increase the number of activities once restrictions lift.

Sustainability - Information on Lincoln City Council Website

The City Council's website continues to develop. There is both a Climate Change section and a Green and Sustainable Living section. The latter contains clearly signposted sections including 'Making your home more energy efficient'; 'Single use plastic-free Lincoln'; 'Electric vehicle charge points' and 'Composting' to name but a few. It is a very useful resource for residents who have the time to scan multiple websites or would just prefer a simple click to obtain the information they need.

At the time of writing, our Climate Change officer has begun the process of putting together a 'toolkit' website. Over the coming months she will be working with members of Lincoln Climate Commission to furnish this with information that residents will find useful.

Conclusion

This is a snapshot of the City Council's work over the past year but I hope members find it useful. Given the context of the pandemic, a huge amount has been achieved in meeting sustainability objectives. Further progress will undoubtedly be made in the months to come.

Councillor Lucinda Preston
Sustainability Advocate

COUNCIL

23 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2 (VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Helena Mair, Children and Young Person's Advocate

A reflection of how a pandemic has changed lives for young people.

The past year has been a difficult and challenging time for all of us. Some of us have lost loved ones, we have missed our contact with our friends and families and we all just want our lives to get back to normal. This report is a voice for the young people of Lincoln who so often don't have a voice. They too have missed their friends have had concerns for their families and have lost loved one.

The pandemic has impacted on all of us and although children have fewer health risks related to Covid-19 the Children's Commissioner in her report 'Childhood in the time of COVID-19' states that children have "suffered disproportionately from the nations efforts to contain the virus"

The report below is not a report on what we have achieved as a council over the past year but a reflection of how Covid-19 has affected children and young people across the world, the Country and The City of Lincoln.

Poverty

Over the past year more families have faced financial instability with low-income families unable to budget for unexpected expenses. It is estimated that in Britain more than 120,000 children have been plunged into poverty due to the COVID-19 economic crisis. These figures would equate to approximately 200 children in living in Lincoln.

The controversy over free school dinners which has been highlighted by Marcus Rashford shows how close to the edge of survival many families have been forced by the pressures of the pandemic.

During the half term holidays in October The City of Lincoln Council showed leadership by making emergency funding available to support food for children who would not have been supported through the school holidays.

Young workers are some of the hardest hit by the economic crisis. Many young people work in low paid jobs and zero-hour contracts in sectors such as hospitality and retail which have been hardest hit. Newly qualified school leavers and university leavers have been unable to enter the world of work as all the vacancies have dried up for them. Many young people have had to return to their parental home adding to their family costs and losing their sense of independence.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported that by August 2020, almost 4.6 million households were in receipt of Universal Credit, an increase of nearly 90% from the start of the year. Most of these households will have seen their incomes fall, putting them at risk of falling below the poverty line. Families with children continue to account

for nearly four in ten households on Universal Credit, exposing large additional numbers of children to the risk of falling into poverty.

Education

Whilst school closures were essential to help control the spread of COVID-19 the results of the school closures have had a big impact on the lives of children, causing social isolation for young people and stress and pressure for so many families. Access to e-learning got off to a rocky start and highlighted more inequality with some children having no access to computers and internet services. Not only have children lost access to schools during lockdown but their education when schools have been open has been disrupted by intermittent unpredictable breaks caused by outbreaks of the virus.

By mid-February children will have lost half an academic year - as much as 5% of their school career - in learning time. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has estimated that each pupil will lose an average of £40,000 in lifetime earnings from lost time in school. But it's not just about money. The United Nations Convention on the rights of the child mandate that "Education should develop every child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the full" These are not things which come from online tutorials but are nurtured in the classroom and developed in the playground. The impact of Covid-19 and children's ability to grow and develop will be felt for many years to come.

Young people are now facing the news that they won't be taking exams this year and many are anxious about their future as it is not even clear yet how their work will be assessed. Last summer the algorithm system caused more confusion than clarity and these results can play a huge part in determining a young person's future.

Homelessness

Young people have been among the hardest hit by the economic impacts of the pandemic, with many job losses concentrated in the hospitality and retail sectors. Half of all eligible workers aged 16-24 were furloughed in the first three months of the pandemic, and youth unemployment has reached 13.6%, more than three times the figure for all ages.

There is clear evidence that thousands of young people across the country are facing homelessness and housing insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Centrepoin research has found that young people across the country were finding it harder to access support and find accommodation, as local authorities and other organisations closed physical spaces and moved services online.

Organisations across the country have been continuing to provide support to vulnerable young people, in spite of the many challenges thrown up by the COVID-19 pandemic. But there is deep concern that levels of youth homelessness are likely to increase further, and current policies and investment decisions may not be enough to provide young people with the specialist support they need.

During the period from April 2020 – January 2021 we received 4 approaches from 16/17 year olds. In 3 cases we were able to prevent their homelessness and in the

fourth we were able to relieve the homelessness by assisting the young person to access safe and suitable accommodation. Our work with this age group generally involves close partnership working with other agencies including Children's Services and specialist providers.

For 18-25 year olds, within the same period we received 157 approaches. The outcomes of these varied according to individual circumstances however we prevented 17 instances of homelessness and assisted 58 young people to secure alternative safe and suitable accommodation. We provided housing advice to 19 people and still have 18 people under assistance. The remaining cases were closed as no further contact was made after initial advice or because the Council owed no further duty to the applicant. Again the council works very closely with a range of specialist accommodation and support providers in ensuring young people receive quality advice and assistance.

Physical Activities

In terms of physical activity and the health of our young people, Covid and lockdown has greatly reduced the physical exercise our young people are getting. This lack of physical activity involved in outdoor games/sports and the social interaction that comes with these activities has impacted on their wellbeing.

Mental Health

Children and young people in Lincoln and across the UK have had their lives turned upside down by the pandemic. Almost every young person has had to adjust to dramatic changes in their education or employment, routine and home life. Some have experienced bereavement or other traumatic experiences during the lockdown period, while groups who were already marginalised or disadvantaged are now likely to become more so. Children with existing mental health needs have struggled to get help due to the lockdown,

A survey of young people with existing mental health needs for the Young Minds Charity found that:

- **80% of respondents agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse.** 41% said it had made their mental health "much worse", up from 32% in the previous survey in March. This was often related to increased feelings of anxiety, isolation, a loss of coping mechanisms or a loss of motivation.
- **87% of respondents agreed that they had felt lonely or isolated during the lockdown period,** even though 71% had been able to stay in touch with friends.
- Among more than 1,000 respondents who were accessing mental health support in the three months leading up the crisis (including from the NHS, school and university counsellors, private providers, charities and helplines), **31% said they were no longer able to access support but still needed it.**

In the coming months and years, the impact of COVID-19 will effect young people dramatically and It is important that we put children and young people at the heart of our thinking and that any policy decisions and money spending should consider the impact of young people in our City. This report was made possible due to recent reports published by the Children’s Commissioner, Young Minds, Centrepont, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. I would recommend that councillors take the time to look at recommendations made by these reports. As a council we will work towards reducing inequality and help young people reach their full potential and thrive in our City. We will work towards highlighting and changing policy for children and young people in the months and years ahead.

Councillor Helena Mair
Children and Young Person’s Advocate

SUBJECT: PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**REPORT AUTHOR: HUMAN RRESOURCES AND WORK BASED LEARNING
MANAGER**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To request that Executive recommend to Council the attached Pay Policy Statement, drafted in compliance of section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.

2. Background

- 2.1 Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. This must be approved by Council by the end of March.
- 2.2 The Government requires local authorities to produce pay policy statements which articulate an authority's own policies towards a range of issues relating to pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff and its lowest paid employees.
- 2.3 The Government also considers that decisions on pay policies should be taken by elected members, as those directly accountable to local communities. The Act therefore requires the pay policy statement and any amendments to be considered by a meeting of full Council and cannot be delegated to any committee.

3. Pay Policy 2021/22

- 3.1 In order to comply with the Act, the pay policy statement must include the Council's policy on:

- The level and elements of remuneration for chief officers
- The remuneration of the lowest paid employee, and the definition of 'lowest paid employee'
- The relationship between the remuneration of chief officers and other officers
- Specific aspects of chief officers' remuneration, including at appointment, increases, termination and any other payments.

The Act defines remuneration to include pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increase in enhancements of pension entitlements, and termination payments.

- 3.2 The Pay Policy Statement must be:-

- approved formally at full Council by the end of March each year but can be amended at any time during the year

- published on the Council’s website
- complied with when the council sets its terms and conditions for chief officers

The City of Lincoln Pay Policy Statement is attached at **Appendix 1**.

4. Strategic Priorities

4.1 Let’s reduce inequality

By producing the pay policy statement, the Council ensures, in relation to any remuneration that it is being transparent and accountable.

5. Organisational Impacts

5.1 Finance

As identified in the attached statement.

5.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

The legal considerations are set out in the body of the report and therefore there are no additional legal implications arising. The pay policy statement complies with the statutory requirements.

5.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The requirements of the Equality Act are considered as part of the recruitment, selection and pay structure processes.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Pay Policy Statement be forwarded to Council with a recommendation to approve.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? One

List of Background Papers: None

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City of Lincoln Council Pay Policy Statement 2021/22

1. Introduction

The City of Lincoln Council recognises the need to manage scarce public resources while balancing the need for remuneration at all levels to be adequate to secure and retain high quality employees who are dedicated to public service.

It is important that the City of Lincoln Council is able to determine its own senior pay structures in order to address local priorities and compete in the local labour market.

It is recognised that senior management roles in local government are complex and diverse functions which operate in a political environment where national and local pressures may conflict. The City Council's ability to attract and retain high calibre leaders capable of delivering a complex agenda during times of financial pressure is crucial especially when the numbers of senior management roles are reducing.

2. Legislation

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for each financial year. The Act provides details on matters that must be included in the policy and guidance from DCLG, JNC for Chief Officers of Local Authorities and ALACE have been used in preparing this statement.

The Pay Policy Statement must be:

- approved formally at full Council by the end of March each year but can be amended at any time during the year
- published on the Council's website
- complied with when the Council sets its terms and conditions for Chief Officers

3. Context

The Council, like all other local authorities, continues to face unprecedented and uncertain times as it copes with the challenge of delivering public services with a much lower level of financial resources than previously.

The Council continues to do all that it can to minimise the effects arising from annually reduced resources on the public and those employed by the Council and will prioritise those services that are needed the most.

It has taken sensible steps to comprehensively review the services it delivers, and the way that it delivers them, so that its limited resources are used to

maximum effect, and it will continue to build on its record of delivering new and better ways of doing things.

4. Scope

In order to comply with the Act, the pay policy will include the Council's policy on:

- The level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers
- The remuneration of the lowest paid employee, and the definition of 'lowest paid employee'
- The relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and other officers
- Specific aspects of Chief Officers' remuneration, including at appointment, increases, termination and any other payments.

The Act defines remuneration to include pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increase in enhancements of pension entitlements, and termination payments.

5. Senior Pay

In this Policy the senior pay group covers the top five tiers of the organisation. These are the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.

The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers of Local Authorities and the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Executives adopted a modified version of the HAY job evaluation scheme for authorities to use to facilitate a review of senior posts.

In 2003 the Employers Organisation was engaged by the City Council to evaluate senior management posts using the HAY Job Evaluation Scheme. This exercise was repeated in 2005.

In early 2015 a restructure of the Council took place which saw the introduction of two Statutory Officer posts and they, together with the Assistant Directors, were given a wider remit in terms of strategic service delivery. As a result of the restructure, a further salary evaluation was undertaken, and the following salary ranges were agreed.

Chief Executive	-	£109,422	-	£123,588
Strategic Directors	-	£83,541	-	£97,515
Statutory Officers	-	£71,130	-	£76,578
Assistant Directors	-	£61,896	-	£68,256
Head of Joint Service	-	£54,501	-	£60,861

The percentage differentials between grades is between 76 and 79% of the Chief Executives bandings for Strategic Directors, 62 and 65% Chief Executives bandings for Statutory Officers, 70 to 74% Strategic Directors

bandings for Assistant Directors and 62 to 65% Strategic Directors for Head of Joint Service.

Since this date salary increases will be in line with the negotiated settlements as agreed by the JNC for Chief Officers and Chief Executives.

5.1 Current Salary Levels for Chief Officers

Chief Executive annual salary bands

CX01 £109422
CX02 £113469
CX03 £117507
CX04 £121577
CX05 £123588

Strategic Directors' annual salary bands (76 to 79% of Chief Executives pay bandings)

CD01 £83541
CD02 £87669
CD03 £91791
CD04 £95919
CD05 £97515

Statutory Officers annual bands (62 to 65% of Chief Executives pay bandings)

SO01 £71130
SO02 £72492
SO03 £73854
SO04 £75213
SO05 £76578

Assistant Directors annual bands (70 to 74% of Strategic Directors pay bandings and 55 – 56% of Chief Executive pay bandings)

C001 £61896
C002 £63486
C003 £65076
C004 £66672
C005 £68256

Head of Joint Service annual bands (62 to 65% of Strategic Directors pay bandings and 49% of Chief Executive pay bandings)

JS01 £54501
JS02 £56085
JS03 £57675
JS04 £59271
JS05 £60861

Any national pay award, once agreed, would be applied.

The bands are in place to recognise and reward long service and loyalty, and also to allow some discretion in terms of starting salaries based on:

- Salary levels in a previous role
- Qualifications, skills and knowledge which are desirable within the role but if already held by the individual would diminish the need for training and development.

5.2 Allowances and benefits for the Chief Executive and Chief Officers

There are no other additional elements of remuneration in respect of overtime, bank holiday working, stand-by payments, enhanced payments for evening or weekend working paid to senior staff, as they are expected to undertake duties outside their contractual hours and working patterns without additional payment. In line with this we do not operate an 'earn back' scheme and do not consider this would be appropriate at this time.

5.3 Severance of Chief Officers contracts

There is no severance package for Chief officers, outside of those relating to entitlements under the JNC Terms and Conditions, the policies of City of Lincoln Council and the Local Government Regulations which relate to all employees on termination or dismissal.

5.4 Publication of information relating to Chief Officer Pay

Rates of pay are published in accordance with the Localism Act.

5.5 Additional Fees

The Chief Executive is the Returning Officer for the City of Lincoln Council. The Returning Officer is the person who has the overall responsibility for the conduct of elections. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983, although appointed by the Council the role of the Returning Officer is one of a personal nature and distinct and separate from their duties as an employee of the Council. The Returning Officer is personally responsible for:

- the nomination process for candidates and political parties;
- provision and notification of polling stations;
- appointment of presiding officers and polling clerks;
- appropriate administration and security of polling stations;
- preparation of all ballot papers;
- the actual Count and Declaration of Results;
- issue, receipt and counting of postal ballot papers;
- all candidates' election expenses return

6. Pay Structure

The pay structure for employees who are covered by the National Joint Council for local Government Services (Green Book) are calculated using the Greater London Provincial Council Job Evaluation Scheme. Employees only receive a pay rise when it has been agreed nationally with the Joint Negotiating Committee. Employees can move up a spinal column point within their grade after each year of service until the highest spinal column point is reached.

The Salaries for employees covered by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local authority Craft and Associated Employees (Red Book) are within the Craft Development scheme which was agreed under the terms of a local agreement in 2006. Employees under the Craft Development Scheme are paid according to their skills and ability linked to their specific craft.

Employees only receive a pay rise when it has been agreed nationally with the Joint Negotiating Committee. A pay rise of 2.75% was agreed in 2020 applicable from 1st April 2020.

The Council does not have a policy that would allow any employee to minimise tax payments.

7. Living Wage

The Council became an accredited member of the Living Wage Foundation in October 2013.

The Council has previously implemented the living wage increases. Depending on the outcome of the pay award negotiations for 2020/21 will determine whether the Council would progress to seek approval to implement the latest living wage rate. The Council implemented the living wage increase of £9.30 in April 2020.

8. Relationship between pay rates

The lowest paid employee within the Council is on a scale S1B and is paid £17,988. The hourly rate for this lowest scale is currently above the living wage rate (£9.3237).

The hourly rate for this lowest scale would increase to £9.50 per hour if the latest Living Wage rate is approved.

The highest graded post is that of Chief Executive of £123,588 per annum.

Therefore, the ratio between the Chief Executives pay and the lowest paid employees is 6.9:1. This is the same as last year and considered to be acceptable at this time.

9. Pension contributions

All employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme make individual contributions to the scheme in accordance with the following table.

Local Government Pension Scheme – contribution bands with effect from the 1 April 2020.

Band	Salary Range	Contribution Rate
1	£0 - £14600	5.5%
2	£14601 - £22800	5.8%
3	£22801 - £37100	6.5%
4	£37101 - £46900	6.8%
5	£46901 - £65600	8.5%
6	£65601 - £93000	9.9%
7	£93001 - £109500	10.5%
8	£109501 - £164200	11.4%
9	More than £164201	12.5%

Employers' contributions to the LGPS vary depending upon how much is needed to ensure benefits under the Scheme are properly funded and are set independently. The rules governing the pension scheme are contained in regulations made by Parliament.

10. Travel

Essential car user allowance has been removed from all employees except where it is provided as a reasonable adjustment in relation to disability. Mileage is paid at the prevailing HMRC rate for all employees.

11. Professional fees

Professional fees are only paid to practising Solicitors who require membership in order that they can lawfully act as a Solicitor.

12. Market Supplements

No market supplements are paid.

13. Discretionary Payments

The Council has an approved Change Management Policy which includes an Early Retirement and Redundancy policy, and this will be applied equally to all members of staff. The Council has a flexible retirement policy.

14. Decision Making

Decisions on remuneration are made by Executive.

15. Disclosure

This Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's Website. In addition, details of employees paid above £50,000 are disclosed.

16. Review

This Pay Policy will be reviewed annually in line with the Localism Act and any guidance issued by the DCLG.

December 2020

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