

Present: Councillor Jackie Kirk (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Biff Bean, Councillor Bill Bilton,
Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor Chris Burke,
Councillor Sue Burke, Councillor Bob Bushell,
Councillor Liz Bushell, Councillor David Clarkson,
Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor Matthew Fido,
Councillor Gary Hewson, Councillor Andy Kerry,
Councillor Rosanne Kirk, Councillor Jane Loffhagen,
Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Councillor Helena Mair,
Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Councillor Ric Metcalfe,
Councillor Neil Murray, Councillor Donald Nannestad,
Councillor Lucinda Preston, Councillor Christopher Reid,
Councillor Clare Smalley, Councillor Mark Storer,
Councillor Edmund Strengiel, Councillor Pat Vaughan,
Councillor Calum Watt and Councillor Loraine Woolley

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Bill Mara, Councillor Laura McWilliams,
Councillor Hilton Spratt and Councillor Naomi Twedde

43. Mayoral Announcements

Mayor's Engagements

The Mayor referred to her engagements since the last meeting of the Council, which had included:

- Holocaust Memorial Services;
- High Sheriff's Legal Service;
- University of Lincoln's Graduation Services;
- Royal Anglian Regiment Freedom Parade;
- MK Dons v Lincoln City Football Club at Milton Keynes;
- Annual School Visits; and
- St Barnabas Warehouse Opening.

44. Confirmation of Minutes - 18 January 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

45. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

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

No questions had been submitted by members of the public.

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

Councillor Clare Smalley to Councillor Donald Nannestad, Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing

Question

I understand from residents that there have been delays with housing repairs recently. Could the portfolio holder provide an update on how many council units are currently void, how many units have been void for over twelve months and how many rented properties have outstanding repairs?

Reply

Council Donald Nannestad stated in reply that the overall total of voids stood at 103, comprising: general needs housing 69, purchase and repair / rough sleeper accommodation programme 10, miscellaneous 3, homeless licence 4, decant 1, and sheltered 16. Of the 103, 85 related to general needs housing, comprising 69 and 16 sheltered housing units.

Councillor Nannestad added that the number outstanding for longer than a year as of 15 February 2022 was one (in John Street), where there was a plan for its sale, due to condition, with approval for this disposal due to be sought from the Executive.

Supplementary

Councillor Smalley asked the portfolio holder to update council on the plans in place to reduce the backlog of repairs and ensure Lincoln residents in council homes really had quality housing.

Reply

Councillor Nannestad replied that the number of outstanding repairs stood at 1,750, but there was no backlog as such, and this was average for a council which undertook up to 17,000 repairs in any given year.

Councillor David Clarkson to Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Question

How will elected member oversight be built into the Western Growth Corridor project?

Reply

Councillor Neil Murray stated that councillors would continue to have oversight on the project through the existing mechanisms, including the Performance Scrutiny Committee and the annual scrutiny of the portfolio holder. In addition, there would be Executive decision-making process and briefing sessions for all councillors at key stages.

Supplementary

Councillor Clarkson requested clarification of the role, composition and purpose of the *Charterfields Committee*, which had been referred to at a recent meeting of the Audit Committee.

Reply

Councillor Murray undertook to provide a written response to this supplementary question.

Councillor Eddie Strenziel to Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Question

How will the Council ensure that local residents are kept up to date with the development progress of the Western Growth Corridor, ensuring that where possible, residents can be aware of any disruption at the earliest point?

Reply

Councillor Neil Murray referred to the development at Swanpool as a good example of levelling up and stated in reply that a new community engagement and communication plan was being developed at the moment from the landowner and developer that would look at a range of methods by which to not only update residents, but also to involve them in the development. This would include leaflets, social media channels, community-based events and through local councillors, who would be kept informed of progress. Councillor Biff Bean, as a local ward councillor, had offered to facilitate a community forum for this purpose and officers were currently working with the other landowner, Lindum Group, to enable this to happen.

Councillor Alan Briggs to Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Question

Can the executive member update the Council on how he expects to keep local members updated in respect to the Western Growth Corridor development and any key decisions being taken?

Reply

Councillor Neil Murray stated that as portfolio holder he was looking to have regular meetings with the ward councillors to discuss and inform on the progress of the development and consider any issues raised by the community that had not been resolved by officers.

Councillor Christopher Reid to Councillor Bob Bushell, Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place

Question

As the executive member will be aware, the Council announced to the public on social media that green bin collections would not take place on the week of 31 January 2022. The following day it was then announced this would no longer be the case, however collections did not take place in some cases. How many bins were missed after the Council said collections would take place as normal?

Reply

In reply, Councillor Bob Bushell advised that green bins were presented at each subscriber's discretion and between mid-January to mid-March there was a low presentation rate. Between 31 January to 4 February 2022, Biffa, the contractor, had reported a high incidence of Covid-19 infections in their workforce and two vehicles had been out of action due to breakdowns. The Council did not collect green waste on 31 January 2022, but the Council had returned and made collections on 5 February 2022. The remainder of that week's rounds were all caught up by 3 February 2022. In total the Council had only received six complaints of non-collection covering the whole week.

Supplementary

Councillor Christopher Reid advised that not all bins had been collected because he was personally affected, as his bin was not collected.

Reply

Councillor Bob Bushell suggested that perhaps Councillor Reid was one of the six complainants. However, this would be looked into.

Councillor Bushell added that this had represented a great example of the Council's staff working with the contractor to overcome the twin challenges of staff and vehicle availability, and to work collaboratively for the public good.

Councillor Mark Storer to Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Question

Following the recent decision by the Lincolnshire County Council's Planning Committee to go back to the drawing board in respect to residents parking in the Bailgate, what consideration has been taken to implement a one-hour free parking scheme in one of our uphill car parks?

Reply

Councillor Neil Murray advised by way of reply that it was the City of Lincoln Council's understanding that the County Council had three options for the Bailgate Residential Parking Scheme:

- (1) to continue the scheme as originally proposed – joint spaces for either visitors to the Bail (one hour) or residents (no time limit);

- (2) to abandon the scheme and leave current arrangement in place; or
- (3) to develop a compromise solution where so many spaces would be allocated to residents and so many to visitors.

Councillor Murray also advised that whilst the City of Lincoln Council had received no notification yet of the outcome of the County Council meeting in the previous week, social media would suggest the County Council had deferred a decision pending a site meeting.

Councillor Murray explained that the City of Lincoln Council's preference would be for the County Council to explore the compromise solution that would give residents more access to on street parking but would also retain an element of free visitor parking. This was felt to be a workable solution and the City of Lincoln Council looked forward to the outcome of the County Council's further deliberations on this.

Councillor Murray added that the Council had reservations over a scheme of one-hour free parking as experience from elsewhere would suggest that a wider number of visitors, who would normally park for up to two hours, would endeavour to park within the one hour. This would adversely impact on businesses in the area as visitors would ultimately spend less locally.

Councillor Murray stated that the Council would be open to a conversation with the Bailgate Guild, if they wished to explore a scheme whereby shop owners would reimburse shoppers (who spent above an amount in their shop) with their parking fee as a way to generate more spend. These schemes had been adopted elsewhere.

Supplementary

Can the Portfolio Holder commit to exploring the possibility of the 1 hour free parking as part of the parking review?

Reply

Councillor Murray reiterated that the Council had reservations over a scheme of one-hour free parking for the reasons set out above. This would adversely impact on businesses in the area as visitors would ultimately spend less locally.

Councillor Andy Kerry to Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Our People and Resources

Question

What are the implications of the Levelling Up White Paper on the City Council?

Reply

Councillor Ric Metcalfe stated in reply that it remained to be seen what the White Paper would achieve, and the Council had expected to see more detail on local government reorganisation and devolution. The document was lengthy and potentially could impact on a wide range of services and activities delivered by the Council. Whilst there were a range of summary briefing papers in the public domain, officers were currently looking at the impact specifically on Lincoln and this Council.

Councillor Metcalfe confirmed that for Lincoln, the City Council was being entrusted to lead on the shaping and delivery of its share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which had replaced the former European Union funding. The Council was working with other local partners and a report to the March meeting of the Executive was expected. The White Paper mentioned specific devolution deals, but Greater Lincolnshire was not one of the nine county devolution deals announced.

Councillor Metcalfe advised that he had requested that officers provide an all-member briefing on the white paper so it could be discussed as a Council. It was hoped this would be arranged in the coming weeks.

Supplementary

Can you provide an update on the progress of discussions with the other councils in Lincolnshire?

Reply

Councillor Metcalfe advised that an agreement would be required from all ten greater Lincolnshire councils, and it was therefore difficult to provide a running commentary on discussions, as it was an ever-evolving situation. Councillor Metcalfe confirmed that he would ensure all councillors were updated on progress and would be included at key milestones, rather than taking a top-down approach to decision-making compared to other councils.

Councillor Thomas Dyer to Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Question

Is a £30,000 cost a year, to clean the floor of the Lincoln Central Car Park an acceptable use of Council resources?

Answer

Councillor Neil Murray stated that Lincoln Central Car Park had always been designed as the Council's premier car park in the city of a quality not seen before in the city. This, coupled with its central position, made it a highly significant car park and it had been predicted to achieve £1,500,000 of income this year (suppressed due to Covid-19) and this would rise significantly as people continued to return to the city centre.

Councillor Murray explained that to maintain the environment, the décor needed a higher level of input to give that sense of quality. Coupled with that, this was an outdoor car park and so was exposed to build up of dirt, debris and staining. Rather than clean the car park every week, where it would quickly become dirty again, the Council had adopted a full deep clean twice a year, with the next one scheduled for March 2022, in effect a spring-clean ready for the spring/summer season; and a second later in the summer if needed. Not only the floor surfaces, but all aspects of the car park were deep cleaned.

Councillor Murray also explained the Council was looking at the surface of the car park and in particular the orange paint scheme, the cleaning of which was only part of the deep clean, as the Council was not clear yet whether the current appearance was dirt or the paint wearing away.

Councillor Murray continued that the Council was currently looking at how it could reduce these costs in the future and whether, for instance, a directly employed resource within the car park on a regular basis might prove more economical.

The Council would take a view on the décor following the next deep-clean. The design had focused light and space, to give a sense of safety and security, which required light colour schemes, and these typically came with a higher cleansing cost.

Councillor Murray confirmed the costs of the cleansing for Lincoln Central Car Park as £27,482, which included deep-cleaning the ground floor parking deck and the vehicle access and egress points; deep-cleaning of the first, second, third and fourth parking decks; deep-cleaning the vehicle ramps (excluding deck four to five). The cleaning included jet washing and deep-cleaning to all raised edging and kerbs etc; all bump strips around the parking deck edges and ramps; obvious carbon deposits up to eye level girders and banisters; and jet washing and rinsing white and coloured walling soiled by 'run through' from the floors above. Furthermore, the programme included deep cleaning to the floors of the three stairwells; the lower access corridor to side doorway; lift lobbies to all floors (excluding floor five). There was also a clean-up crew in attendance early the following morning, after deep cleaning in these areas, to remove any incidental soiling that may be blown around during the cleaning process. They would focus on ledges, lower walls, info panels, fire doors and glass doors etc.

Councillor Murray concluded that the Council had won an award for Lincoln Central Car Park four years previously as the best car park in Britain, which was much deserved as it was a good example of a high quality car park.

Supplementary

As this was an unbudgeted cost, is there a long term plan to reduce the cost of the cleaning?

Reply

Councillor Murray reiterated the high quality of the award-winning car parking, which had been deemed a success for the City.

Councillor Matthew Fido to Councillor Bob Bushell, Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place

Question

Can the executive member provide an update on the Yarborough Leisure Centre roof situation?

Reply

Work was progressing at a pace to design and install the replacement of the ceiling above the large pool at Yarborough Leisure Centre. The smaller pool had reopened and our leisure partner, Active Nation, had introduced a range of new

classes to capture a wider range of user including parent and child sessions. This had helped mitigate to an extent, the temporary loss of the large pool.

The structural engineers had provided details of two ceiling designs, and one of these options was currently being finalised. Whilst this design was being finalised, all of the other requirements (such as internal scaffolding to get to the ceiling) were being progressed so we could move very quickly when everything was in place. This would represent a significant investment in the pool by the City Council (estimated up to £450k currently). We anticipated at this stage the pool being re-opened in the summer when the works were complete.

48. Receive Reports under Council Procedure Rule 2 (vi) from Members

(a) Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Chair of Audit Committee

Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented her report, which summarised the work of the Committee between January 2021 and January 2022. During this period seven meetings of the Committee had taken place and Councillor Longbottom had become chair in May 2021.

The report made reference to the main purpose of the Audit Committee, including its roles in relation to the annual statement of accounts; the annual governance statement; the audit strategy and the audit plan; the external audit plan; and risk management arrangements.

The Chair thanked members and officers for their work in support of the activities of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(b) Councillor Patrick Vaughan, Chair of Performance Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Patrick Vaughan, Chair of Performance Scrutiny Committee, presented his report to the Council, which covered the period from November 2020 to February 2022. During this time, ten meetings of the Committee had been held. Councillor Vaughan had become Chair in November 2021. Councillor Vaughan also thanked Councillor Gary Hewson, former Chair of the Committee, for his work during this period.

The report made reference to the Committee's activity, including quarterly financial and performance monitoring; consideration of target setting and budget review.

The Chair thanked members and officers for their work in support of the activities of the Committee and paid particular thanks to the council's Business Manager – Corporate Policy, Pat Jukes who was due to retire in March 2022. Furthermore, Councillor Gary Hewson also paid thanks to Pat Jukes for her hard work and commitment to the Committee over many years.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(c) **Equality Journal April 2020 to March 2021 (Councillor Naomi Tweddle, Chair of Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel)**

In the absence of Councillor Naomi Tweddle, Chair of the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, the Council was requested to direct any comments or queries to the Democratic Services and Elections Manager.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

49. **To Consider the Following Recommendations of the Executive and Committees of the Council**

(a) **Vision 2025 - 3-Year Delivery Plan 2022-2025**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Vision 2025 Interim Review (February 2022), including the three-year delivery plan, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

During the debate on this item, Councillor Tom Dyer made reference to the need for maintenance of some of the Council's current assets, particularly at the Lincoln Bus Station and to remove outdated signs on Carholme Road, which had referred to events in 2018 before focusing attention on the Council's vision. Councillor Dyer advised that for this reason the Conservative Group would not support the motion.

On being put to the meeting, the motion set out above was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the Vision 2025 Interim Review (February 2022), including the three-year delivery plan, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

(b) **Council House and Garage Rents 2022/23**

The recommendations to the Council, as set out on page 90 of the agenda and report pack, were duly moved and seconded.

On being put to the meeting, the motion set out above was declared carried.

RESOLVED

(1) That the basis of rent calculation for changes to individual Council house rents, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report, which represented an increase in the average calculated 52-week council house net rent in 2022/23 of 3.6% for social housing rents (an average increase of £2.57 per week) and for affordable rents (an average increase of £4.06 per week), which was in accordance with Government policy, be approved.

(2) That the increase in garage rents for 2022/23 by 3%, as set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report, be approved.

50. **Independent Remuneration Panel - Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme**

Consideration was given to a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel on its recent review of the Members' Allowances Scheme, which recommended a 5% increase on councillors' basic allowances for 2022/23.

Councillor Metcalfe thanked the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for their hard work on the review. However, Councillor Metcalfe advised that at a time when households across the city were struggling to make ends meet due to the significant increase in the cost of living in recent months, it was not possible to justify accepting the recommended amount. Therefore, Councillor Metcalfe moved that the annual basic allowance paid to all members of the council be increased by £88.00 per annum with effect from 1st April 2022, representing an increase of 1.75%, which was in-line with the anticipated staff pay award.

Councillor Metcalfe advised that in addition to its proposal to increase councillors' basic allowance, the Independent Remuneration Panel had suggested that there was no increase this year in the special responsibility allowances granted to those councillors with additional duties, such as committee chair, political group leader, executive member etc, but that the amounts allocated to each role were looked at ahead of next year's allowance review. Councillor Metcalfe also moved that this was accepted by the Council.

Councillor Chris Burke seconded the motion.

Councillor Tom Dyer supported the motion and requested that all those in receipt of a special responsibility allowance fully engaged with the Independent Remuneration Panel at its next review, as it had been critical over the lack of member engagement during this review. Councillor Metcalfe committed to full engagement.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the annual basic allowance paid to all members of the Council be increased by £88.00 per annum with effect from 1st April 2022.
- (2) That the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances remained the same for 2022/23.
- (3) That a further comprehensive review of the Members' Allowances Scheme be undertaken in 2022/23 by the Independent Remuneration Panel, specifically focusing on all Special Responsibility Allowances, with any recommendations arising from the comprehensive review being considered for implementation from 1 April 2023.