

Present: Councillor Alan Briggs (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Debbie Armiger, Councillor Biff Bean,
Councillor James Brown, Councillor Chris Burke,
Councillor Bob Bushell, Councillor Liz Bushell,
Councillor Natasha Chapman,
Councillor Martin Christopher, Councillor Annie Currier,
Councillor Laura Danese, Councillor Thomas Dyer,
Councillor Gary Hewson,
Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Councillor Bill Mara,
Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Councillor Neil Murray,
Councillor Donald Nannestad, Councillor
Lucinda Preston, Councillor Callum Roper,
Councillor Anita Pritchard, Councillor Clare Smalley,
Councillor Dylan Stothard, Councillor Naomi Tweddle,
Councillor Pat Vaughan, Councillor Calum Watt,
Councillor Aiden Wells, Councillor Joshua Wells and
Councillor Emily Wood

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Sue Burke, Councillor Hilton Spratt,
Councillor Rachel Storer and Councillor Loraine Woolley

9. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Pat Vaughan declared a Personal Interest with regard to the agenda items entitled *Audit Committee Terms of Reference* and *Treasury Management Stewardship and Actual Prudential Indicators Report 2023/24*, as his daughter worked within the Benefits team and his granddaughter worked in the Finance department of the City of Lincoln Council.

10. Former Councillor and Mayor, Geoff Kirby - Minute's Silence

Council observed a minute's silence in memory of the late former Councillor and Mayor, Geoff Kirby.

11. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

(a) 16 January 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

(b) 27 February 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

(c) 14 May 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

12. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor was pleased to report on some of the activities he had undertaken since taking office, which included:

- The Opening of the Cornhill Market, Lincoln
- Attending a performance of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory at the New Theatre Royal in Lincoln
- Supporting the Royal Logistics Core at the Waggoners Challenge at Sledmere House
- Attending Lincoln Shrievalty Association Annual General Meeting
- Attending the Lincolnshire Show
- Attend Ecumenical Vespers at St Peter and St Paul's in Lincoln
- Attending NW Counselling Hub Open Day
- Attending the Kyra Music Festival at the Epic Centre
- Watching the Watoto Children's Choir at Holy Cross Church
- Attending the reburial of Mathew Finders in Donnington and welcoming the Mayor of Port Lincoln in South Australia to the event
- Attending University of Lincoln Graduations
- And attending the birthday celebrations of a constituent.

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

Question from Member of the Public

Question

If funding was available, would it be considered to install outdoor exercise equipment in Whittons Park? Kompan, who completed the latest park improvements offered a range of multi-use bodyweight exercise equipment in their street workout catalogue which would be ideally suitable. To my knowledge, nothing of the sort existed in any outdoor spaces in the area that was freely and publicly available. Equipment of this nature would be excellent for a range of age groups, people who were unable to access regular gyms and those wishing to exercise outdoors. Whilst cardiovascular exercise was for the most part free of charge, quality strength training was obtained by a gym membership. In an era of budgeting, health and fitness should not have to be only available to those who can afford it. To that end, would the council be open to the idea of installing such equipment at Whittons Park?

Answer

All the city's open spaces, including equipped play areas were important facilities in support of community health, be that physical or mental health. The Council's tight financial position meant that it was not easily able to add new areas of responsibility such as outdoor gyms, no matter how beneficial they might be, if they added an ongoing revenue burden. Whilst capital funding for new initiatives like this could be hard to find, and was welcome when it was available, the real issue was the revenue funding required to inspect and maintain them in a safe condition ongoing.

The Council's focus was on maintaining current assets to a good standard, and seeking opportunities to improve our open spaces offer by innovative means,

which was why I hoped to bring forward an income generation strategy in support of open spaces very shortly.

There were many ways to exercise for free in our homes, our parks, our streets and our countryside, from walking running and cycling to organised activities and there were many free mobile apps such as StreetTag and Couch to 5K that could be used to help structure that activity or make it more fun. The Council worked with Active Lincolnshire and other partners to promote these in our communities and schools.

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

Councillor Martin Christopher to Councillor Joshua Wells

Question

Could the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth provide details on the total amount of Section 106 monies requested by planning teams vs what was actually received, for the last five years?

Answer

The total amount of section 106 monies requested by the Planning Authority between 2019-2024 for development subsequently approved was £2,594,542. £1,339,044 had been secured via section 106 agreements typically following a viability process.

Of those developments that had been built or had reached trigger points in that time, we had received £547,009. Other approved developments had either not been carried out or of those that were currently under construction, had not yet met the required trigger point in the development to pay the section 106.

There had been three applications since 2019 that had successfully demonstrated there was no viability to provide s106 monies. Only one of these applications was granted planning permission and in that case, it still had a s106 agreement, to require the ability to re-visit the viability at the end of the build. Any increase in viability would be captured as a commuted sum towards the full s106 request.

The proposal at 18-20 Kingsway and the recent Lindum Terrace applications had S.106 requests, and both successfully demonstrated that there was no viability to provide s106 contributions. Both applications were refused on this basis.

Councillor James Brown to Councillor Bob Bushell

Question

Could the portfolio holder list the sources and amounts of funding used to create the play area built in 2020 now occupying the site of the former St Giles Youth Centre on Swift Gardens?

Answer

The play area was funded using £60,200 of Section 106 funding and the existing multi-use games area was adopted from Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), with LCC providing £14,000 towards the cost of the refurbishment.

Additionally, the County Council had contributed a commuted sum of £74,250 to support the play area inspection and grounds maintenance for a period of 15 years.

This information was available in a report to the Executive dated 30 August 2017.

Councillor Clare Smalley to Cllr Donald Nannestad

Question

The Council set out great aspirations in our Vision 2025 document (which was very close to ending now). One measure of success was that the “Net number of council homes in the city has increased” could the portfolio holder provide figures to show this increase please.

Answer

During his time as Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing which began in 2018, the Council had added 442 properties to its stock.

Very sadly, during the same period, the Council had lost 278 family homes due to the Right To Buy Scheme. Over the period this was a net gain of 164 homes.

This was a remarkable achievement given the two years lost to Covid-19, as well as the downturn in the economy, that had seen material and labour costs increase exponentially and the cost of borrowing driven up by a significant increase in national interest rates.

The Council was expecting a further eleven new family homes to be added to its stock in October 2024 as a result of its Hermit Street development.

Alongside this, again in the same period, the private sector and Registered Providers had built 176 affordable homes in the City.

Supplementary question

Does the Portfolio Holder consider this to be an aspirational figure?

Answer

Compared to other local authorities the Council was performing excellently. However, right to buy continued to be an issue and the Council continued to lose properties to it.

Councillor Natasha Chapman to Councillor Naomi Tweddle

Question

Given the recent change in national government and the possibility of increased funding for local government, if the Leader of the Council expects this increase to occur, what would their main priorities be?

Answer

The Leader of the Council advised that there had been a new dawn since the last meeting of the Council. The Council was continuing to work on Vision 2030, which would set the strategic vision for the Council and City over the coming five years. The Council continued to be ambitious and had an excellent track record in delivery of projects. The Council would continue to look to reduce inequality across the City; climate change continued to be a priority for the Council, along with addressing the housing crisis the City faced.

Supplementary Question

Would the Leader of the Council commit to freezing rents?

Answer

As set out above, the Executive was in the process of developing the Vision 2030 and its priorities and therefore the Leader would not commit to any specific issue.

15. Motion Under Council Procedure Rule 14 - City Bus Shelters

Councillor Natasha Chapman moved the following motion:

“This Council notes:

- The poor state of many of the bus shelters in our city, with badly damaged shelters being removed rather than repaired.
- That bus shelters provide many benefits, including protecting people from bad weather, making them feel safer while waiting for the bus and allowing those less confident on their feet to access bus travel more easily.
- Converting bus stop roofs into plant-covered habitats would help combat air pollution and provide food and shelter to pollinators who are at risk due to habitat loss, as well as being visually appealing and improving the appearance of our city.
- The Council has committed to address the climate crisis by aiming for carbon Net Zero by 2030.
- Hull Council have achieved this quite recently, using a grant from the UK shared prosperity fund and supported by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, demonstrating the feasibility of this proposal.

This Council believes:

- That maintaining the existence and good repair of our bus shelters would promote the use of public transport in Lincoln, which will play a vital role in our strategy to reach Net Zero by 2030.
- That making our bus shelters bee-friendly would bring benefits to biodiversity, public health, and the character of our city itself.

This Council resolves to:

- Investigate the feasibility and implementation of bee-friendly bus shelters in Lincoln.
- Explore partnership opportunities with local businesses, gardening groups, and environmental charities (such as the Wildlife Trusts) to obtain funding through grants and sponsorship for bee-friendly bus shelter installation and maintenance and leverage expertise and community engagement in the design, planting, and upkeep of the bee-friendly shelters.”

The above motion was seconded by Councillor Martin Christopher, who reserved his right to speak.

During discussion of the motion, the following points were noted:

- The current state of bus shelters across the City was a concern and improvements were required, of which some were branded with the City of Lincoln Council's logo and therefore reflected badly on the Council. The motion sought to improve the visual nature of the bus shelters; remedy any defects; introduce wild flowers for insects; and would overall improve the City's open spaces. Maintenance visits for the shelters would consist of 1 – 2 times per year.
- The seconder of the motion, having reserved his right to speak was invited to speak by the Mayor, who reiterated that the motion sought to improve the visual appearance of the bus shelters and make them a more welcoming and comfortable environment while waiting for a bus service. The proposal would bring both environmental and visual positive impacts; and the motion sought to explore funding options to make it possible. The shelters could also be used to display community information or news.

The Leader of the Council was invited to speak. She advised that the motion was premature, as the Council was in discussions with the County Council on the responsibility of bus shelters. However, the Leader advised that she appreciated the spirit of the motion and this could perhaps be explored once discussions with the County Council had reached a conclusion.

Councillor Chapman, who moved the original motion, was invited to give her right of reply. She advised it was pleasing that this topic could be discussed again in future once the discussions with the County Council had received a conclusion.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

16. Portfolio Responsibilities

The Leader of the Council presented the changes to portfolio responsibilities.

The report was noted.

17. Opposition Arrangements

It was moved, seconded and

RESOLVED that the amendments to the Constitution, as set out in the report, to reflect the position of shared opposition groups be approved, and that the proposal for 2024/25 – 2025/26 be noted.

18. Audit Committee Terms of Reference

It was moved, seconded and

RESOLVED that the changes to the Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

19. Appointment of Independent Members: Audit Committee

It was moved, seconded and

RESOLVED that the appointment of Jane Nellist and Dave Carter as Independent Members of the Audit Committee with effect from 1 September 2024, be approved.

20. Amendments to Representatives on Committees and Outside Bodies

It was moved, seconded and

RESOLVED that the amendment to the appointments to outside bodies list, as detailed in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 of the report, be approved.

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

(a) Treasury Management Stewardship and Actual Prudential Indicators Report 2023/24 (Outturn)

It was moved, seconded and

RESOLVED that the actual prudential indicators, as detailed within Appendices A and B to the Treasury Management Stewardship and Actual Prudential Indicators Report 2023/24, be approved.