

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Thursday, 2 March 2023 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

P A Redgate (Chairman)
A R Woolf (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock	R Gambba-Jones	M D Seymour
J R Astill	R A Gibson	S-A Slade
A C Beal	R Grocock	E J Sneath
F Biggadike	M Hasan	G J Taylor
H J W Bingham	C J Lawton	A C Tennant
M D Booth	J D McLean	S Timewell
C J T H Brewis	N H Pepper	J Tyrrell
T A Carter	G A Porter	S C Walsh
A Casson	J L Reynolds	D J Wilkinson
P E Coupland	G T D Rudkin	C N Worth

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors J Avery, J L King and G P Scalese.

In Attendance: The Joint Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive - Corporate Development (S151), the Assistant Director - Corporate, the Assistant Director - Housing, the Assistant Director – Finance, the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development, the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Team Leader.

92. **MINUTE SILENCE**

The Council observed a minute silence to mark the recent death of former Councillor Wayne Seabourn.

Councillor Porter spoke, remembering former Councillor Seabourn as a Councillor and many years previously, as a member of staff. He had always had a strong passion for social housing related matters.

93. **MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 18 January 2023.

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 18 January 2023 be signed as a correct record.

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94. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

Councillor Biggadike did not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but in the interest of transparency declared that, in relation to agenda item 13, he was a private landlord.

95. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman advised that he had no announcements to make at this point, but would make a statement at the end of the meeting.

96. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

The Leader commented that this was the last meeting of the Council before the District Elections in May. Some Councillors would be standing down after many years of service, and some members would not be re-elected. He commented that whatever the future held, all members should be proud of what had been achieved during their time as councillors. It was his opinion that SHDC was one of the best authorities in the country due to the work of all members, whichever group they belonged to, and the willingness to work together on issues that made the lives of local people better. Much of this term had been dominated by the Covid pandemic and members and officers had stepped up to the challenge. Sadly, the passing last year of Councillor Newton had left a huge hole – she had been a formidable leader of the opposition group and for her service and the service of all members, the community should be grateful. The Leader also thanked all staff on behalf of members for their service.

Councillor Worth provided an update on the UKSPF. Over 70 expressions of interest had so far been received across the partnership. In addition, some training/a briefing had been provided to Parish Councils from LALC, which had generated some extra expressions of interest which was encouraging.

Councillor Lawton confirmed that she would not be standing again at the District Elections. She had thoroughly enjoyed her work, but it had been made possible by the hard work of Housing officers. They were a splendid team and she wished to thank them publicly.

97. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

98. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

There were no questions without notice under Standing Order 7 asked by the leader of the main opposition group.

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Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Beal

Subject: Customer Services

Councillor Beal commented that the partnership with Boston and East Lindsey District Council was becoming established – how was the Customer Services department responding to the various areas being dealt with jointly. Councillor Astill responded that Boston Council were not yet fully integrated however, SHDC and ELDC continued to work in the same way. There had been some added pressures, particularly with call volumes, emails and physical contact as a result of implementation of a number of Government grants – ways of improving the service were constantly being looked at.

99. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Planning Committee – 11 January 2023
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 24 January 2023
- Planning Committee – 8 February 2023

100. **REPORT FROM CABINET MEETING ON 14 FEBRUARY 2023**

Consideration was given to the report of the Cabinet which sought approval for the Cabinet's recommendations.

Housing Comments, Compliments, Complaints and Compensation Policy, Tenant Engagement Framework and Housing Estate Management Policy

The Portfolio Holder HRA and Private Sector Housing presented the report.

No discussion was required on the exempt appendix to the report included later in the agenda.

DECISIONS:

That in relation to the Housing Comments, Compliments, Complaints and Compensation Policy, the following delegation amendments be made:

- a) All Chief Officers have authority to authorise payment of compensation in connection with complaints of up to £1,000 subject to the agreement of the Monitoring Officer and appropriate Portfolio Holder or Committee Chairman, and to informing the Performance Monitoring Panel
;
- b) The Assistant Director – Housing (and in their absence the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development) and Joint S151 Officer) to authorise payment of compensation in connection with complaints regarding the Council's function as

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a social landlord of up to £1,000 in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for HRA & Private Sector Housing.

101. **KEY DECISION PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan.

- Councillor Alcock commented that there were a number of items on the Key Decision Plan with decisions due before 28 February 2023 and 1 March 2023. He asked if any of these decisions had been taken, particularly 'Procurement of Fuel Supplier' – had a supplier been agreed, who was it, and was the price fixed for the year.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services advised that this decision was still pending, and that he would be making a decision on this in the very near future.
- Councillor Alcock asked that all members be informed when this decision was taken.

DECISION:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

102. **ANNUAL BUDGET REPORT 2023/24, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND CAPITAL STRATEGY, TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY/STRATEGY AND ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development (S151) which requested approval of the General Fund and HRA budgets for 2023/24 including the use of reserves, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital Programme and Strategy, Treasury Management Policy/Strategy, MRP Policy and Annual Investment Strategy, Fees and Charges, Pay Policy Statement and the Annual Delivery Plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercialisation and Partnerships introduced the report and outlined the main details of the Budget.

- The Covid pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine had had a huge global impact and consequently had impacted on the Council's finances. Very high inflation, high interest rates, workforce shortages and industrial action was impacting individuals and businesses. The Council was not exempt from these pressures.
- A huge amount of additional work had been required in order to produce a balanced budget, and the Portfolio Holder requested that his thanks be passed on to all involved.
- Over the years, the Council had managed its finances well, building up small reserves year on year while still maintaining good levels of service to its residents. These reserves would now need to be called upon. Going forward, strict budgets

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and careful budget scrutiny would be required, while still maintained good levels of service.

- There would be continued weekly collections of waste and recycling, and continued investment in affordable and market rental homes, commercial lets for small businesses, community heritage and general assets, and the successful garden waste service. In addition, there was improved CCTV in Spalding town centre, and land for a community woodland had been secured. The Council would continue with its partnership with Boston Council and ELDC, and also PSPS, continuing to drive out efficiencies, keeping costs down, and providing a strong voice in Government for the sub-region.

The summary headlines of the Budget were as follows:

- The General Fund budget of £16million would be balanced, with the use of reserves and an efficiency savings programme of £885,000;
- Drainage Board levy increases of around £540,000 over the last 2 years would be eased by a District Council Tax increase of 3%, creating an additional £257,000 towards the drainage boards costs of £3.1million for the year;
- Government funding would remain static at around £2million;
- Interest earned on cash investments would increase to around £1.8million, due to rises in interest rates;
- Business Rate income was set to increase by around £1million;
- General running costs of Council services in 2023/24 would increase by around £3.5million through increased staff pension costs, general overheads, contracts, supplies and services;
- Increased homeless costs had been included for 2023/24;

HRA

- The HRA was set to show a surplus of £2.2m to be invested in new affordable Council homes;
- Around 3,750 Council home rents were due to increase by 7% as Government capping allowed. However, SHDC would be introducing a 2% cost of living credit on this rent increase to assist tenants;
- Investment in Council homes continued with maintenance and improvement works of over £6.5million to keep them at the Decent Homes Standard.

Members were advised of three amendments to be made to the reports:

- The Garden Waste Collection Service was a non-statutory service which residents elected to receive, and should not be subsidised by all Council Tax payers. It had been anticipated that the charge for this service would have to increase due to increases in fuel and staff costs however, fuel costs had fallen and take up of the service had increased resulting in the ability to leave the charge for 2023/24 at £52. The Table of Fees and Charges at Appendix 4 (Page 266 of the agenda pack) showed an increase for the service to £56 and it was proposed that this charge remain at £52 for 2023/24.

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- In relation to Agenda Item 12 (Council Tax Setting 2023/24), at Appendix B, the header to the sixth column should read 'Precept 2022/23' and not 'Band D 2022/23).
- Members were asked to disregard the Market Fees as set out within the Table of Fees and Charges (Appendix 4, pages 265-266 of the agenda pack) which were incorrectly detailed. The correct Market Fees for members consideration were:
 - Spalding Market (Tuesday and Saturday) - £7
 - Holbeach Market (Thursday and Saturday) - £7
 - Crowland Market (Friday) - £7
 - Long Sutton (Friday) - £8.50These charges reflected no change from the previous year.

The following points were raised:

- Members thanked officers for their explanation of the budget and acknowledged the work it had taken to get the budget to this point.
- The Strategic Programme referred to Parish Councils - Council liaison with Parish Councils had improved, with efforts being made to involve them in the spending of recently acquired Government funding. It was hoped that an improved relationship with Parish Councils would continue in the future.
- Members questioned where within the budget papers details of income from assets sold generally, and specifically the benefit for the disposal of the depot in Holbeach, could be found?
 - Members were advised that any receipts yet to be received would not feature in the budget until they were received. Capital receipts were used to finance the Capital Programme – the balance brought forward was not shown as this was not a requirement of the Budget report.
- There were many pressures on the Council's budget, specifically the issue of Homelessness. It was hoped that this budget would not be exceeded. Much hard work was needed to ensure that the Council continued in its compassionate approach, whilst maintaining costs within the budget.

DECISIONS:

- a) That the amendments to the report, as detailed in the minute above be agreed; and
- b) That Council approve the following recommendations proposed by Cabinet on 14th February:
 1. That the Revenue Estimates for the General Fund, HRA and Spalding Special for 2023/24 (Appendices 1, 1a, 1b and 1c) be approved.

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2. That the Council Tax for a Band A property in 2023/24 be set at £130.26 (£3.84 per annum increase on 2022/23 levels) and Band D £195.39 for 2023/24 (a £5.76 per annum increase on 2022/23 levels).
3. That the Spalding special expenses for a Band A property be set at £16.98 for 2023/24, (previously £16.38 in 2022/23) and Band D £25.47 for 2023/24, (previously £24.57 in 2022/23).
4. The additions to and use of reserves (as detailed at Appendix 1) be approved.
5. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (at Appendix 1) be approved.
6. The Capital Programme and Capital Strategy (Appendices A and 2) be approved.
7. The Treasury Management Policy 2023/24 (Appendix 3a) and Treasury Management Strategy, including the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 3b) be approved.
8. The Annual Delivery Plan for 2023/24 (Appendix 5) be approved.
9. That Full Council delegates approval to the Deputy Chief Executive Corporate Development (S151), to account as required for any s31 grant and reserve transactions required in respect of the Collection Fund.

That Council Approves:

10. From 1st April, 2023, the Council implements a pay supplement to raise pay to £10.90 per hour for all Council employees on the National Joint Council (NJC) pay rate currently paid below this sum.
11. The Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 (Appendix 6)
12. The Fees & Charges Schedule for 2023/24 (Appendix 4)

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations (Annual Budget Report 2023/24, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital Programme and Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Policy/Strategy and Annual Delivery Plan). The vote was as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Apologies/Absent
Councillor Alcock			Councillor Avery
Councillor Astill			Councillor Cronin
Councillor Beal			Councillor Drury
Councillor Biggadike			Councillor King
Councillor Bingham			Councillor Scalese
Councillor Booth			
Councillor Brewis			
Councillor Carter			
Councillor Casson			
Councillor Coupland			
Councillor Gambba-Jones			
Councillor Gibson			
Councillor Grocock			
Councillor Hasan			

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Councillor Lawton			
Councillor McLean			
Councillor Pepper			
Councillor Porter			
Councillor Redgate			
Councillor Reynolds			
Councillor Rudkin			
Councillor Seymour			
Councillor Slade			
Councillor Sneath			
Councillor Taylor			
Councillor Tennant			
Councillor Timewell			
Councillor Tyrrell			
Councillor Walsh			
Councillor Wilkinson			
Councillor Woolf			
Councillor Worth			

103. **COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2023/24**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development (S151) which sought Council approval for the setting of the amounts of Council Tax applicable for 2023/24 for each valuation band and in each part of the district.

The Portfolio for Finance, Commercialisation and Partnerships introduced the report which set out statutory resolutions that the Council needed to approve in accordance with the Budget as set out at agenda item 11.

As detailed in the previous minute, at Appendix B, the header to the sixth column should read 'Precept 2022/23' and not 'Band D 2022/23'.

DECISION:

- a) That the formal Council Tax resolutions for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A and summarised at 4.1 of the report (and detailed below) be approved; and
- b) That the charge to be levied on the Council Taxpayers of Spalding for services provided in their town (Spalding Special Estimates) (£241,124 for 2023/24) be approved. This equates to a Band D equivalent charge of £25.47 (£24.57 for 2022/23).

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4. Council Tax Resolutions

4.1 The required resolutions for the approval of the levels of Council Tax are set out at Appendix A. The figures relating to the District Council and the average of the parishes are summarised in the following table:

Resolution Ref	Description	SHDC	Parish Precept (incl Spalding Special)	Total
		£	£	£
3a	Gross expenditure	38,984,457	1,371,358	40,355,815
3b	Gross Income	33,153,824	-	33,153,824
3c		5,830,633	1,371,358	7,201,991
1a	Tax base	29,841	29,841	29,841
3d 3f	Band D Council Tax	195.39	45.96	241.35

Council is recommended to approve the following resolutions:

1 It is to be noted that on 14 December 2022 the Council calculated: -

(a) the Council Tax Base 2023/24 for the District as **29,841** (item T in the formula in section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended) and;

(b) Dwellings in those parts of the district to which a Parish precept relates as shown in **Appendix B**

2. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish precepts) is **£ 5,830,633**

3 That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act): -

(a) £40,355,815 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act;

(b) £33,153,824 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;

(c) £7,201,991 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a)

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above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (item R in the formula in Section 31a (4) of the Act);

- (d) £241.35 being the amount at 3(c) divided by the amount at 1(a) (item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
 - (e) £1,371,358 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Including Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (see **Appendix B**);
 - (f) £195.39 being the amount at 3(d) less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) by the amount at 1(a) calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its areas to which no parish precept relates;
4. That it be noted that for the year 2023/24 the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Lincolnshire have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Council Tax 2023/24	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Lincolnshire County Council	1,002.42	1,169.49	1,336.56	1,503.63	1,837.77	2,171.91	2,506.05	3,007.26
Police & Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire	194.16	226.52	258.88	291.24	355.96	420.68	485.40	582.48

- 5. That having calculated the aggregate in each case the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in **Appendix E** as the amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 of the categories of dwellings shown.
- 6. **Appendix F** provides definitions for the formal Council Tax resolution.

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In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a recorded vote was taken on each Budget decision. The vote was as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Apologies/Absent
Councillor Alcock	Councillor McLean		Councillor Avery
Councillor Astill			Councillor Cronin
Councillor Beal			Councillor Drury
Councillor Biggadike			Councillor King
Councillor Bingham			Councillor Scalese
Councillor Booth			
Councillor Brewis			
Councillor Carter			
Councillor Casson			
Councillor Coupland			
Councillor Gambba-Jones			
Councillor Gibson			
Councillor Grocock			
Councillor Hasan			
Councillor Lawton			
Councillor Pepper			
Councillor Porter			
Councillor Redgate			
Councillor Reynolds			
Councillor Rudkin			
Councillor Seymour			
Councillor Slade			
Councillor Sneath			
Councillor Taylor			
Councillor Tennant			
Councillor Timewell			
Councillor Tyrrell			
Councillor Walsh			
Councillor Wilkinson			
Councillor Woolf			
Councillor Worth			

104. RENT SETTING 2023-2024

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director Housing which sought Council approval for the proposed applicable rent increase allowable under The Direction on the Rent Standard 2023 for Council tenants and other housing tenures.

The Portfolio Holder for HRA and Private Sector Housing presented the report and highlighted the proposed Cost of Living support package referred to earlier in the

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meeting by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercialisation and Partnerships as part of the Annual Budget Report 2023/24.

Councillor Biggadike requested that it be noted that he had voted against the recommendations.

DECISION:

That the following rent increases be approved:

Social tenants of South Holland District Council, South Holland Homes and S106 units managed by the Council	7%
Shared ownership rents. (Leaseholders)	7%
Guest rooms and community centres for Council tenants	7%
Alarm monitoring charges	7%
Guest rooms and community centres for private hire	7%
Homeless accommodation for individuals and families	7%
Garages and garage plots	7%

That the following support measures be approved:

Existing social tenants as of Monday 3 April 2023 until Sunday 31 March 2024 with the following tenures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductory• Secure• Assured shorthold• Assured (non-shorthold)	Weekly support, equivalent to 2% of the gross weekly rent charged for the property
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105. **THE SOUTH & EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Corporate which provided a six-monthly update on Partnership performance.

The Leader of the Council presented the report.

DECISION:

That the following be approved:

- The Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) 2022/23 update (Section 2)
- The Performance Framework 2023/24 (Section 3; Appendix A)

That the following be noted:

- The Peer Review Action Plan delivery progress (Section 4)
- The updates from the Priority Partnerships (Section 5)

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- The Partnership Scrutiny Action Plan delivery progress (Section 6)

106. SPALDING RECONNECTED: HISTORIC TOWN AND RIVERSIDE – NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND GRANT ACCEPTANCE

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development which requested approval for acceptance of a National Lottery Heritage Fund award of £233,163 which would provide funding in support of the Spalding Reconnected: Historic Town and Riverside scheme, and agreement to the creation of the budget to fund the scheme.

The Portfolio Holder for Assets and Planning (and Spalding Town Centre Improvement Plan lead member) presented the report.

Members commented that the funding was extremely welcome, as the river was a real asset to the town, and thanked officers for their work in securing the grant. It was hoped that other towns and villages in the South Holland area would be able to secure their own funding.

DECISION:

- 1) That the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant award of £233,163 for the Spalding Reconnected: Historic Town and Riverside project be formally accepted;
- 2) That delegated authority be approved for the Assistant Director for Strategic Growth and Development to enter into grant agreement with the National Lottery Heritage Fund in conjunction with the lead Portfolio Holder (Councillor Grocock); and
- 3) That the necessary budgetary amendments be made in respect of the grant award and the associated funding arrangements.

107. NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEES AND OTHER SEATS AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION.

There were none.

108. HEALTH SCRUTINY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of Councillor Scalese in respect of Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire.

DECISION:

That the report be noted.

109. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

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The Chairman used this opportunity to thank all members for the respect and courtesy that they had shown him as Chairman during the last two years, and that working together, great things had been achieved. He also thanked all officers for their duty and due diligence.

He wished good luck to all members seeking re-election and wished farewell to all those standing down.

He thanked all those that had supported him in his charity work – just over £10,000 had been raised.

He finished by stating that being Chairman has been a great experience and stated that this office was something to be cherished.

Members responded by thanking the Chairman for the inclusive and excellent way he had chaired meetings, and for his work towards good causes.

The Leader of the South Holland Independents and Independent Group also echoed the words of the Chairman, and the Leader earlier in the meeting. He thanked officers for their assistance during the term, especially the staff within Democratic Services who had provided guidance to himself and the Group over the last six months. He wished those members who were not standing for re-election well. He finished by thanking the Chairman for his Chairmanship, for his inclusivity and fairness, and for his excellent community work.

(The meeting ended at 7.23 pm)

(End of minutes)