

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 26 July 2023 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

A R Woolf (Chairman)
J Whitbourn (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock	L J Eldridge	S-A Slade
D Ashby	M Geaney	E J Sneath
J R Astill	R A Gibson	T Sneath
P Barnes	A Harrison	A Spencer
H J W Bingham	M Hasan	G J Taylor
M D Booth	S Hutchinson	A C Tennant
C J T H Brewis	J L King	J Tyrrell
T A Carter	J Le Sage	D J Wilkinson
A Casson	M Le Sage	C N Worth
N Chapman	P A Redgate	
S Chauhan	I Sheard	

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors J Avery, A C Beal and J L Reynolds.

In Attendance: The Joint Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive – Communities, the Deputy Chief Executive – Programme Delivery, the Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer, the Assistant Director – General Fund Assets, the Community Development Manager, the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Team Leader.

19. MINUTE SILENCE

Minute Silence

The Council observed a minute silence to mark the recent death of former Councillor Jenny Rowe.

Councillor Worth spoke, commenting that he had known Councillor Rowe for many years, that she had been a lovely person, larger than life with strong views. She had been particularly passionate about the Sutton Bridge ward that she had represented between 1999 – 2007. She had been well regarded in the local community and would be sadly missed.

20. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 17 May 2023.

Action By

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 17 May 2023 be signed as a correct record.

21. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

Councillor Carter declared an interest in agenda item 14 and stated that she would leave the meeting during discussion of this item.

22. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Since being elected Chairman, he had been very busy attending events in the community – there was a log of events that he had attended on the Council's website;
- The Chairman's Charities were confirmed as Blood Cancer UK (Eastern Region) and MenCap (all proceeds raised to benefit the South Holland area).

Forthcoming Events:

- 13 August 2023 – As part of the Give It A Go Day at the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field, a Chairman's Tug of War would be held – teams were encouraged to join at a cost of £10 per team.
- 18/19 August 2023 – With the support of Spalding Round Table, there would be an outdoor cinema event in Ayscoughfee Gardens. Ticket prices would be £5 for a family of 4; £2 per adult; £1 for under-16s:
 - Friday 18 August 2023 – The Greatest Showman (Sing-a-Long)
 - Saturday 19 August 2023 (11am) – Frozen (Sing-a-Long)
 - Saturday 19 August 2023 (6pm) – Top Gun
- 24 September 2023 – Civic Service at All Saints Church, Moulton

23. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

The Leader made the following announcements:

- Devolution – An all-member briefing would be provided by the Leader on Thursday 7 September 2023. It had not been possible to provide the briefing any earlier as negotiations were still taking place between upper-tier authorities,

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

ministers, District Councils, MPs etc and there could still be some change. The final decision would not be at a District level - it was ultimately one for the upper-tier authorities (Lincolnshire County Council and the two unitary authorities). It would also not affect any services going forward – the only way that services could go to a combined authority would be if the district authority wanted them to, and this was unlikely.

- Peer review – some details had been shared with members, and more detail would be provided when an action plan had been produced. The outcome had generally been very positive, and the Leader thanked all those that had been involved in the process.

There were no announcements from members of the Cabinet.

24. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

25. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Gibson

Subject: Levelling of BMX mounds at Castle Sports Field

Councillor Gibson commented that a decision had recently been made to level the BMX mounds at the Castle Sports Field in readiness for the new leisure complex at the site. Young people were not well catered for with regard to recreation – had research been undertaken to ascertain if it had been well-used and if it was, could it be located elsewhere? Councillor Worth responded as he had made the Portfolio Holder Decision due to Councillor Taylor being the ward member that covered the area in question. Discussions had been held with Pedals and representatives of BMX users. There were safety issues with the current BMX track and all felt that levelling it was the safest thing to do. Ongoing discussions were being held with these groups and in the future young people with regard to identifying appropriate funding and adding facilities –

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Gibson

Subject: Unsightly buildings

Councillor Gibson commented that there were a number of unsightly sites within the area that were privately owned (The Bull

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

and Monkie, the former Johnson Hospital and the White Horse Public House were mentioned) – could anything be done to improve them and bring them back into use? Councillor Worth responded that getting in touch with owners was always one of the biggest challenges, although he was due to speak an intermediary for one of the properties mentioned and would state that the Authority would work with them to find a use for the building. Another option in some circumstances was to offer rate relief to businesses on a sliding scale to assist them in getting off the ground. Wherever possible, it was important to keep dialogue going.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Whitbourn

Subject: Proposed closure of ticket offices at railway stations

Councillor Whitbourn advised that she had been contacted by many residents regarding the potential closure of the ticket office at Spalding Railway Station (as part of wider nationwide proposals to close ticket offices). There was a national petition on Facebook against the closures – it was important to share and publicise this. Councillor Whitbourn asked if Councillors could undertake any further action with regard to the proposed closures. Councillor Taylor advised that this issue had also been raised at the recent meeting of the Spalding Town Forum, where concern had been raised over the brevity of the consultation period. He reported that many similar objections had been raised, resulting in the extension of the consultation period to 1 September. There were many reasons to object against the closure of ticket offices as they were a valuable resource for older people, vulnerable and disabled residents and it was therefore important for Councillors to encourage as many people as possible to object.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Brewis

Subject: CyberCrime

Councillor Brewis commented that millions of pounds were lost to CyberCrime – was there any intention by the Council to raise the profile of this problem? Councillor Astill responded that the responsibility for cybercrime sat nationally but as a Council, work was undertaken alongside district councils, the County Council, the Resilience Forum and the National Centre for Cyber Security. There was Cyber Awareness training for members which was not mandatory, but a link to this would be shared with members.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Brewis

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

Subject: Proposed reduction of services by StageCoach

Councillor Brewis commented that StageCoach was proposing to reduce services on the 505 service and he hoped that the Council would be responding strongly to oppose these proposals? Councillor Worth responded that using the bus all the time saved the user a significant amount of money per annum. If Stagecoach were planning to reduce their service, this was an issue that the Council should be objecting to and a letter would be sent to them opposing the proposals.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Sheard

Subject: Live streaming of meetings

Councillor Sheard commented that she understood that other meetings were live streamed on a regular basis - why could a Full Council meeting not be live streamed? Councillor Astill advised that the technology in the Council Chamber had been replaced prior to the District Council Election, and it was the intention to start streaming more meetings. Full Council would be a suitable place to start. When meetings were held remotely as a result of the Covid pandemic, it gave the public the opportunity to engage and listen. Live streaming would be looked into in the near future.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor J Le Sage

Subject: Consultation – new Leisure Centre

Councillor J Le Sage congratulated all those that had been involved in securing the funding for the new Leisure Centre. He commented that the area was well known for producing quality swimmers and it was important therefore to ensure that the new swimming pool was fit for purpose for the next 30-40 years: 1) Would the consultation taking place be appropriate, with all relevant parties included?; 2) Would these views be listened to?; and 3) Why was a 50 metre pool not being built, which would encourage competitive swimming into the area? Councillor Taylor provided an update on progress, confirming that the government bid had been for £20million with the project to finally cost £26million when completed. The project would include more than purely the swimming pool. Some consultation had already started (a meeting would be taking place with the Bowls Club next week). Any group that wished to be involved would be included and he requested that he be advised of any that may have been missed. In addition, the views of those not using the facility needed to be reflected, in order to encourage greater usage.

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -

26 July 2023

Councillor J Le Sage responded, asked whether all funding areas had been exhausted, for example Sport England or Lottery Funding to provide greater funds to improve the facility, rather than relying purely on the government funding? Councillor Taylor replied advising that financing of the project had been increased from £20million to £26million, and it was possible to use some S106 agreement monies for Spalding around leisure, and the council would continue to look for further funding sources.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Success of call-back service

Councillor Eldridge asked how many successful interactions there had been since the call-back service had been launched?

Councillor Astill advised that since its launch on 9 May, there had been 891 successful call backs in May, and 633 in June. This had had a significant effect in reducing demand.

Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor M Le Sage

Subject: Early presentation of rubbish bags

Councillor M Le Sage commented that there had been significant issues with early presentation of rubbish bags and fly tipping in Ayscough Avenue, and early presentation in Stonegate and Churchgate. He thanked Councillor Casson for the assistance he had provided to himself and Councillor Ashby thus far and asked for an update on the current situation. Councillor Casson could only refer to the issues at Ayscough Avenue and Crocus Walk. He advised that warning letters and education letters had been sent out to all properties. Enviro Crime officers were now regularly attending the site to check for early presentation of waste and evidence of offenders. Where evidence was found, fixed penalty notices would be issued, and two were already being issued this month in that location. Close working was being undertaken with Waste Services who were providing an additional clearance on Fridays. This was a complex problem to solve and required changes in behaviour from a number of residents in this area to meet long term aims.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Barnes

Subject: Chairman's visits to wards in the District

Councillor Barnes advised that at the last Full Council meeting, Councillor Taylor had stated that he planned to visit every ward in the District – when would this be launched and how was it

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -

26 July 2023

progressing? Councillor Taylor advised that he had recently been provided with a tour by the ward member for Gedney of her area. He would be happy to work with Councillor Barnes and other Councillors to arrange a time to visit Fleet and other wards in the District.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Wilkinson

Subject: Priory Road carpark – individuals camping

Councillor Wilkinson highlighted the situation of individuals currently camping in the car park at the Council Offices in Priory Road. Did they pose a risk to people, particularly staff? Councillor Worth was aware of the situation and there was no risk.

Councillor Wilkinson responded asking how the situation was being dealt with and how was it being monitored? Councillor Worth advised that members of staff were monitoring the situation on a daily basis. Councillor Carter also clarified that usual processes were also being followed. Change4Lincs (a specialist outreach service) were also engaging with them. Currently, the Council was waiting for their evidence to come forward in order for next steps to take effect. However, she was confident that people were safe.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Alcock

Subject: Progress report – new Leisure facilities

Councillor Alcock commented that it had been some time since Councillor Taylor's update to the Performance Monitoring Panel on the new leisure facilities, and asked for the following further information – 1) When would the scheduled timetable of appointments and activities be available for the redevelopment of the leisure facilities – no commitment had yet been given on what would be provided and what it would look like; 2) Details of where the balance of finance would be found. It was important that the Council and the public were aware of this; and 3) How would governance and monitoring of the programme be undertaken? Councillor Taylor advised that a Project Manager was in place, and they were currently working their way through the plan. There was a plan to speak to all Councillors later this year, potentially September/October, with regular updates being provided thereafter. Councillor Alcock highlighted the need to fix target times.

Question to: Councillor Carter

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

Question from: Councillor Alcock
Subject: Vision for the South Holland Centre

Councillor Alcock asked when the vision statement/business plan would be available for the South Holland Centre. Councillor Carter advised that she had discussed this issue at a recent Cabinet Away Day, where many ideas had been discussed. She had then worked with officers on some amendments and improvements, and she expected to see a version that she was comfortable with in the next month or so. The Deputy Chief Executive (Communities) confirmed that this was realistic and that the document would be presented to scrutiny following the August recess.

Question to: Councillor Carter
Question from: Councillor T Sneath
Subject: Council assistance to residents with housing issues

Councillor T Sneath highlighted the sad circumstance of a recent murder of a woman camping in a churchyard in Spalding, and the current situation of individuals camping in the Council's car park – was there any more that the Council could do to assist individuals with housing problems? Councillor Carter commented that in relation to the murder, a live police investigation was currently underway and she could therefore not discuss details of that case, other than stating that her thoughts were with the lady's family and friends. SHDC did do a lot as an authority – homelessness was a national issue, and SHDC offered a range of support depending on an individual's circumstances – advice and signposting, providing emergency housing, supporting individuals to find longer-term accommodation, or support for people to remain in their own home. The type of help provided was on a case by case basis, and depended upon their eligibility for support. With regard to the classification of priority need, this was not a district decision but was defined by the Housing Act. SHDC was part of group of councils who worked with Change4LLincs who worked on an outreach basis, visiting and engaging with people, including rough sleepers. Councillor Carter encouraged anyone with housing issues, and anyone witnessing these issues, to get in touch with the Council, providing as much detail as possible – the Housing Options Team would then refer this to Change4Lincs who would provide support. She also reminded Councillors of a Housing Briefing for Councillors, arranged for the following week to provide more detail on the range of services, including homelessness.

Question to: Councillor Casson
Question from: Councillor Booth

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

Subject: Fly tipping and littering

Councillor Booth commented that the environmental crime enforcement contract had been in operation over the past few months. How many fines had been issued and were they only in Spalding? Did the Portfolio Holder also agree that the recycling centre, run by LCC not being open every day contributed to fly tipping in the countryside. Councillor Casson commented that having the recycling centre open every day would be better, but could not state whether this impacted on fly tipping. Since the contract had been set up, there had been 335 fixed penalty notices issues, of which 329 were for littering and spitting, and 6 for fly tipping. Officers were going out to other towns, and had been in the Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge area. There had been 20 reported fly tips in Long Sutton, and 15 in Sutton Bridge in the last quarter. Total reported fly tips across the district in the last quarter totalled 551. It was a huge problem however the new contract had shown an improvement. They had been mainly in Spalding as this was where the main footfall was, but they were also going to other areas within the district aswell.

26. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Planning Committee – 7 June 2023
- Governance and Audit Committee – 29 June 2023
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 4 July 2023 (including exempt minute)

27. KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan.

DECISION:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

28. FINAL REPORT OF THE SIR HALLEY STEWART PLAYING FIELD TASK GROUP

The final report of the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field Task Group was presented by Councillor P Redgate.

DECISION:

That the recommendations of the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field Task Group be supported.

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

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

The following Outside Body appointments were reported to Council:

- Lincolnshire County Council Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee – Councillor A Beal was nominated to represent as a member of this outside body;
- South Holland Internal Drainage Board – Councillor E Sneath and Mr P Foyster were nominated to represent as members of this outside body;
- Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board – Councillor A Harrison was nominated to represent as a member of this outside body.

The following Committee change was reported to Council:

- Councillor A Casson to replace Councillor J Whitbourn as a member of the Planning Committee.

The following Company appointment was reported to Council:

- Councillor E Sneath was nominated to be appointed as Company Director for South Holland Homes

DECISION:

That the following appointments be approved:

- Councillor A Beal to be appointed to represent on the Lincolnshire County Council Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee;
- Councillor E Sneath and Mr P Foyster to be appointed to represent on the South Holland Internal Drainage Board;
- Councillor A Harrison to be appointed to represent on the Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board;
- Councillor A Casson to replace Councillor J Whitbourn as a member of the Planning Committee
- Councillor E Sneath to be appointed as Company Director for South Holland Homes

30. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL -
26 July 2023

31. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

DECISION:

Under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

32. REPORT FROM CABINET MEETING ON 6 JUNE 2023

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

Strategic Land Acquisition – To secure Cabinet consent to progress a strategic land acquisition in the South Holland area

The Portfolio Holder for Assets and Strategic Planning presented the report.

DECISION:

That the recommendations, as detailed within the exempt report be agreed.

(The meeting ended at 7.40 pm)

(End of minutes)