

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 13 May 2026 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

J Whitbourn (Chairman)  
J L Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)

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

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors S Chauhan, A Spencer and D J Wilkinson.

In Attendance: The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), the Executive Director - Finance (Section 151 Officer), the Service Director – Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director - Communities, the Service Director – Corporate Services, the Group Manager - Communications and Engagement, the Democratic Services Manager, the Democratic Services Team Leader and the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer.

**1. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN**

The Monitoring Officer invited nominations for the election of Interim Chairman to oversee agenda item 1, Election of Chairman for 2026/27.

Councillor Woolf and Councillor Gibson were both nominated and seconded, and following a vote, Councillor Woolf was appointed as Interim Chairman for item 1 only.

Councillor Woolf invited nominations for the election of Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor J Whitbourn and Councillor A Harrison were both nominated and seconded, and following a vote, Councillor Whitbourn was appointed as Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

**DECISION:**

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That Councillor J Whitbourn be elected as Chairman for the ensuing year.

(Councillors J Whitbourn and A Harrison joined the meeting following the declaration of the result. Councillor J Whitbourn thereupon took the Chair and signed the Declaration of Office)

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman invited nominations for the appointment of a Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor J Reynolds, Councillor A Harrison and Councillor M Hasan were nominated and seconded, and following a vote, Councillor Reynolds was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

**DECISION:**

That Councillor J Reynolds be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

(Councillor Reynolds thereupon signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office).

**3. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of Full Council held on 26 February 2026.

**DECISION:**

That following a correction to the spelling of 'Caudwell Farm' at page 77 of the minutes, that the minutes of Full Council held on 26 February 2026 be signed as a correct record.

**4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

Councillor T Carter declared an interest at item 13 of the agenda and left the room for the whole of this item.

**5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Chairman expressed her sincere thanks to members for their kind words and support over the past year. She acknowledged that the success of the events and the funds raised had been made possible through the attendance and contributions of those present. She thanked all those involved for helping to ensure the events were a success and noted that

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discussions would take place with Communities and Democratic Services regarding future events in the coming year.

The Chairman also reflected that it had been an honour to serve on the Council alongside Councillors Alcock and Brewis (who, prior to the formal meeting, had been recognised at a presentation for over fifty years' individual service and for which the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire was in attendance). The Chairman expressed her appreciation for their support, contribution and dedication, noting the high regard in which they were held. She thanked them for their work and stated that it had been a privilege to work with them over the past year.

**6. PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Leader which asked the Council to note Portfolio Holder updates on work being undertaken within each of their Portfolios.

Members were reminded that the report was for noting only and that any questions arising from its contents should be raised under Agenda item 8 – Questions without notice.

**DECISION:**

That the Portfolio Holder updates be noted.

**7. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.**

The Leader of the Council advised that Councillor Tyrrell was to be appointed as a Support Member to the Cabinet. Councillor Tyrrell would provide support to the Leader and Councillor Astill in relation to a number of schemes, particularly to assist whilst the Leader's focus was directed towards Local Government Reorganisation matters.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Environmental Services informed members that the expanded Garden Waste Service had gone live to residents during the last week of April 2026. As part of the implementation, approximately 2,500 residents had experienced changes to their collection days. He reported that an error had occurred during the activation of the new routes, resulting in disruption to a number of customers, with some areas more significantly affected than others, and offered his apologies to those residents impacted. He advised that, in response, affected customers would receive an additional collection to extend their subscription; however, members were asked to note that this would be undertaken as a manual process and would therefore take some time. He further advised that an independent review of the expansion project had been commissioned, the findings of which would be reported to a Special Performance Monitoring

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Panel meeting to be scheduled. Since the launch of the expanded service, there had been 543 additional subscribers. The Portfolio Holder also clarified the revised subscription arrangements, confirming that new subscribers would purchase their bin as a one-off cost in addition to the subscription fee, after which the bin would belong to the resident. Existing subscribers would also now be deemed to own their bins. In both cases, the Council would no longer collect bins at the end of a subscription period.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, Conservation and Heritage announced the availability of funding to support Lincolnshire households struggling with rising heating oil costs. She explained that funding had been provided by the Government via Lincolnshire County Council and was being distributed through the Lincolnshire Community Foundation. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that information regarding eligibility criteria was available online or via elected members, and that following completion of a straightforward application process, successful applicants could receive a £300 voucher. She emphasised the importance of raising awareness of the scheme, particularly given the ongoing colder weather, to ensure that eligible residents were able to access the support available.

**8. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6**

The following questions on notice were received from Councillor Eldridge and responses provided by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Environmental Services.

Councillor Eldridge was entitled to ask one Supplementary Question to each Question on Notice, without notice (this should be a question and not a statement). Where a Supplementary Question was asked, the question and the response is detailed under the relevant question.

**Question 1:** As you are aware, approximately 2,500 properties recently received notification from SHDC that their garden waste collection days would be changing. Unfortunately, this caused considerable confusion, as the changes coincided with a Bank Holiday week and were further compounded by issues with the website not displaying the amended collection days. Following implementation, I was contacted by numerous residents within my ward who reported that their garden waste collections had been missed entirely. After raising this with the team, it was identified that around 90 properties were affected due to a technical issue, the majority of which were within my ward. In addition to this, there were further disruptions where some subsequent collections were delayed by a day in certain areas due to reported high volumes of garden waste which led to service delays, this was then followed by a further amendment to collection days of which residents were notified via email. **Response:** There was some delay in collecting garden waste from some customers. However, this was caused by a technical issue with the software used to plan the routes, as soon as the software problem had been resolved, the collections were

made within the capacity.

**Supplementary Question:** Councillor Eldridge queried whether further re-routing of garden waste collections would be required to accommodate additional subscribers and, if so, whether this would result in further changes to collection days. She also sought assurance that any future re-routing would not result in properties being omitted and that clear communication would be provided to residents. **Response:** Councillor Astill advised that the current service model was based on an anticipated uptake of 40% of households, with the budget forecast set at 34%. Current subscription levels were reported to be approximately 29%. He explained that the projected growth should not necessitate further re-routing in the immediate future; however, if the service experienced a significant increase in demand, further re-routing would be inevitable at some point. Councillor Astill expressed confidence that issues experienced during the recent re-routing would not be repeated. He reiterated that an independent review had been commissioned and confirmed that this would include consideration of the processes followed, including communication arrangements.

**Question 2:** Due to this recent poor service and in light of the council's upcoming transition to wheelie bins for all collections, I would appreciate clarification on the following:

1/ What measures have now been implemented to prevent similar issues occurring in the future? **Response:** It is important to say that the garden waste collection service is a good service. Some statistics: 292766 collections made annually; 99.78% collections completed on their scheduled day (last financial year); 8 complaints received (last financial year). The recent service issues occurred due to an issue with the software used by the waste team to manage the collection rounds, which resulted in incorrect information (on the new rounds) being uploaded into our "in cab system" and also impacted the information on the Councils website. The new rounds are being built from the ground up using a specialist supplier, the software being used to plan the routes for "bags to bins" is different from what was used to plan the garden waste changes.

2/ Why were there issues relating to high volumes when overall capacity should be known based on the number and size of bins? In principle, capacity planning should account for the possibility of all bins being presented full. **Response:** The issue wasn't due to lack of capacity, but a technical issue in the software used. The collection rounds have recently been redesigned to enable all residents across the district to apply for a garden waste collection, and these new, optimised rounds are now working as expected. We have received 543 new garden waste subscribers in those areas previously unable to access this service.

3/ Can a system be introduced to ensure that ward members are

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notified promptly—via email and, if possible, text message—when any waste collections (garden waste, general waste, or recycling - and moving forward food waste) are missed? This should include affected roads, a brief explanation, and the revised collection date.

**Response:** As a result of this and the capacity challenges within the general waste and recycling collections (caused by the volume of waste being presented), a process has been introduced where missed collections are:

- Reported to the supervisors (leading to)
- Ward members are made aware (leading to)
- The communications team updating social media channels and customer services having the information available for residents.

4/ As email contact details are held for all residents subscribed to the garden waste service, could these residents also be contacted directly to inform them of any disruptions? **Response:** We are looking into new software that will provide customers with a “newsfeed”, which in turn sends out notifications about live issues (including: delayed routes, renewal information for garden waste, blocked access etc) when introduced this will ensure residents can be kept up to date about their service automatically. It will also reduce demand into Customer Services, meaning an improved response for our customers who want to speak to a real person. Improving communication in this way would enable us to provide timely updates to residents, reduce confusion, and help confidence in the service.

5/ Additionally, a recent email regarding garden waste collections was sent in error with more than 500 recipients cc'd in when they should have been bcc'd which could not be recalled. Can you please advise members:

5.1 How this occurred? **Response:** Emails were sent directly from the system and the bcc (blank carbon copy) box was not ticked in error, however, the full circumstances are being investigated in accordance with policy.

5.2 Where the investigation into this matter currently stands and the outcome if we have one yet? **Response:** This matter has been reported to the ICO following the Councils policy and we await the outcome.

5.3 What measures have now been put in place to ensure that such a data protection breach does not occur again? **Response:** We will adopt any recommendations made by the investigation to reduce the risk of this error occurring in the future.

**9. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

**Question to:** Councillor Worth

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**Question from:** Councillor Barnes

**Subject:** Member involvement in Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Councillor Barnes opened by offering his congratulations to the Chairman and Vice Chairman on their appointments and wished them a successful year. He then directed his question to Councillor Worth and queried the specific actions the administration was planning to take to ensure that all elected members, across all wards and political groupings, would be fully involved, informed and empowered throughout the transition to a unitary authority. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that the transition was both smooth and accountable. He further sought assurance as to how transparency would be maintained and how equal participation for all members would be guaranteed, particularly given the significance and complexity of the Local Government Reorganisation process. In response, Councillor Worth thanked Councillor Barnes for his question and acknowledged the importance of member involvement in the process. He advised that activity relating to LGR was expected to increase significantly from mid-July, when further announcements were anticipated. He indicated that, at that stage, dedicated Member briefings would be arranged to provide updates and outline next steps, with further briefings scheduled throughout the transition period over the following year. Councillor Worth explained that a committee would be established to oversee the process, noting that although this body would not have specific decision-making powers, it would act in an advisory and oversight capacity. He added that there would be no restriction on the Council's Scrutiny Committees considering matters relating to the process, should they wish to do so and further advised that members would receive updates through a combination of email communications, face-to-face briefings and officer-led sessions. Councillor Worth emphasised that the situation was likely to evolve quickly once national announcements had been made and that members should expect frequent updates as further information became available.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Gibson

**Subject:** Waste collection issues at Surfleet Reservoir

Councillor Gibson raised concerns regarding rubbish being left following waste collections at Surfleet Reservoir, noting that split bags, often caused by vermin, were contributing to waste entering the watercourse and impacting the local environment and wildlife. He asked whether any further action could be taken to safeguard the area following collections. In response, Councillor Astill advised that, where a bag was split by a crew during collection, there was an expectation that the crew would clear the resulting waste. He acknowledged however that bags being split due to other factors such as by vermin remained a widespread issue across the district and were more difficult to resolve. He stated that he could not

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guarantee a full resolution in this instance but undertook to raise the matter with the relevant team and provide an update following further consideration.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Avery

**Subject:** Support for vulnerable residents under new waste arrangements

Councillor Avery asked for details of planned arrangements to support elderly residents, those with disabilities, or individuals living with dementia when transitioning from bagged waste collections to a wheelie bin system, particularly in relation to sorting and presentation of waste. In response, Councillor Astill advised that further detailed information would be provided at an upcoming member briefing scheduled for early June. He confirmed that a programme of engagement activity was planned to support the transition, including events in marketplaces and outreach to community groups. Councillor Astill further advised that, as part of the move from bagged collections to wheelie bins, an increase in assisted collections was anticipated. He expressed confidence that, through the planned engagement and support from the relevant teams, the needs of elderly residents, those with disabilities and individuals living with dementia would be identified and appropriately supported.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Eldridge

**Subject:** Bank holiday waste collections and communications

Councillor Eldridge raised concerns regarding disruption to waste and recycling collections following the recent bank holiday, noting that a surge in waste presented had impacted services across the district. She observed that this pattern commonly occurred after bank holidays and asked whether additional resources could be put in place in advance of future bank holidays to better manage increased volumes and reduce the likelihood of missed collections. She further referred to the revised collection arrangements introduced for the early May bank holiday, whereby only those collections scheduled for the bank holiday Monday were rescheduled, rather than all collections being moved back by one day as had previously been the case. Noting that the Council's website indicated that similar arrangements would apply for the forthcoming bank holiday, she queried the communications being issued to residents to ensure awareness of these changes and minimise disruption. In response, Councillor Astill acknowledged the points raised and explained that the revised approach to bank holiday collections had been carefully considered. He advised that the previous "slip day" arrangement, whereby all collections were moved back by one day, had resulted in disruption across the entire district. By contrast, the new approach, which only affected those properties with collections due on the bank holiday Monday, was intended to limit disruption to a smaller number of residents, allowing

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the majority of collections later in the week to proceed as normal. He confirmed that these arrangements would remain in place for the forthcoming bank holiday. Councillor Astill further noted that, with the planned introduction of the new bin collection system later in the year, collection arrangements would change, with crews expected to operate on most bank holiday Mondays, subject to specific exceptions. In respect of communications, Councillor Astill advised that information regarding bank holiday collection changes would continue to be shared through the Council's established channels, including the Council's website. He also encouraged members to support dissemination by sharing information within their wards. Addressing the issue of increased waste volumes and service disruption, Councillor Astill advised that the matter was not limited solely to bank holiday periods and was part of wider service pressures. He confirmed that officers were actively exploring options to strengthen operational resilience, including the use of additional resources. He noted that, whilst agency staff were currently utilised, this could present challenges in sourcing staff at short notice. Alternative options were under consideration and discussions ongoing with senior officers, and he undertook to update members once a decision had been reached.

**Question to:** Councillor Bingham

**Question from:** Councillor Barnes

**Subject:** Officer Planning Training

Councillor Barnes queried the training provided to Planning officers, who did not routinely engage with elected members or the public, to ensure they had the necessary skills and confidence to do so effectively when required. How was the adequacy of such training assessed. In response, Councillor Bingham advised that he was not directly involved in the training of staff and would need to obtain further information from officers. He undertook to provide a response following those enquiries.

**Question to:** Councillor Casson

**Question from:** Councillor Geaney

**Subject:** Impact of the Tobacco and Vapes Act

Councillor Geaney queried the level of impact the recently enacted Tobacco and Vapes legislation would have on the Council, particularly in relation to licensing. In response, Councillor Casson welcomed the introduction of the legislation and advised that it would result in a significant increase in workload for the licensing team, given the wide range of premises affected. He indicated that much of the enforcement responsibility would lie with Trading Standards. He further noted that a Government consultation was expected and that, at present, there was no confirmation regarding additional funding to support the increased workload.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Hasan

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**Subject:** Replacement of public bins

Councillor Hasan raised concerns regarding the removal of a number of public litter bins within the town, citing specific examples including locations on Spring Street and Swan Street. It was noted that one of the bins had been reported as being in poor condition and had subsequently been replaced after some time, however other bins had not yet been reinstated. He highlighted that the absence of such bins was contributing to increased instances of littering and fly tipping, as well as broader cleanliness concerns within the area and asked when the outstanding bins would be replaced.

Councillor Astill advised that he would discuss the specific locations with the Councillor Hasan following the meeting and would refer the details to the relevant service team for investigation. He explained that, where issues with SHDC bins had previously been reported, replacements had been arranged, and stated that there was no reason in principle why the same approach could not be taken in this instance.

**Question to:** Councillor Casson

**Question from:** Councillor J Le Sage

**Subject:** Taxi licensing compliance and enforcement

Councillor Le Sage raised concerns regarding taxi services within the district, particularly in the Spalding area. He reported that he had received complaints from residents alleging that disabled passengers were being asked to pay additional charges when travelling with wheelchairs, which he noted was not permitted. He further raised concerns regarding taxi meters not being operated or not being clearly visible to passengers, potentially resulting in a lack of transparency around fares. Councillor Le Sage emphasised that such practices could disproportionately affect more vulnerable or less informed residents who may not be aware of their rights. He therefore requested that enforcement action be considered and asked whether the Portfolio Holder would commit to undertaking spot checks to ensure that taxi operators were complying with licensing requirements and operating lawfully. In response, Councillor Casson acknowledged the concerns raised and confirmed that taxi drivers should not be charging additional fees to disabled passengers. He advised that the matter would be raised with licensing officers and agreed that checks could be undertaken to ensure compliance with the relevant regulations.

**Question to:** Councillor Worth

**Question from:** Councillor M Le Sage

**Subject:** Progress of the empty Johnson Hospital building

Councillor Le Sage referred to previous discussions involving himself, Councillor Worth and Councillor Bingham regarding the condition of Johnson Hospital and the status of its ownership, noting that the owners were based outside of the local area. He asked whether, as the Council

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approached its final year, any further action could be taken to progress matters before the end of the Council's term. In response, Councillor Worth advised that whilst progress had been slow, an intermediary had now been identified, allowing the Council to establish a line of communication with the owners for the first time. Councillor Worth further advised that a meeting with the intermediary was expected to be arranged in the coming weeks, although he cautioned that it was too early to determine what the outcome might be. He confirmed that any further progress would be reported to members in due course.

**Question to:** Councillor Taylor

**Question from:** Councillor Sheard

**Subject:** Sauna provision at new leisure facility

Councillor Sheard advised that a number of residents had raised concerns regarding the absence of a sauna facility within the new leisure facility. She noted that the sauna at the existing swimming pool was currently well used and asked whether data could be provided on current usage levels. Councillor Sheard further queried whether, should a reduction in membership be observed following the opening of the new facility, particularly if this was attributable to the lack of a sauna, the Portfolio Holder would consider his position. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Sheard asked whether there remained any opportunity to revisit the current design and give further consideration to the inclusion of a sauna, in light of the concerns being raised by users. In response, Councillor Taylor acknowledged the concerns raised and confirmed that usage figures for the existing sauna facility could be provided. He noted that he was familiar with the facility and recognised that it was valued by a number of regular users. However, he advised that the design for the new facility had already been through the appropriate consultation processes, including member engagement and public consultation, and had now been finalised. As such, he indicated that it would not be possible to revisit or amend the design at this stage to incorporate additional facilities such as a sauna. In addressing the question regarding his position, Councillor Taylor stated that he did not consider resignation to be a proportionate response, noting that it would not be feasible to accommodate every preference within the design of the facility. He further commented that, whilst a sauna had not been included, alternative provision may be available locally through private businesses. Councillor Taylor concluded by confirming that the project remained on schedule and within budget, and that he remained confident in the overall delivery of the new facility.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Brewis

**Subject:** Communication of waste collection changes

Councillor Brewis referred to recent disruption to waste collections, noting that a significant number of residents had presented their waste on an

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incorrect day due to changes in the collection schedule. He highlighted that not all residents were aware of the revised arrangements, particularly those who did not access online communications and asked whether the Council would ensure that all residents, especially those in rural areas or those without access to digital services, would receive clear and accessible information regarding collection arrangements. In particular, he sought assurance that a hard copy timetable would be provided to households setting out when each type of waste would be collected under the new system, in order to prevent confusion and disruption. In response, Councillor Astill acknowledged the concerns raised and agreed that clear and effective communication would be essential as changes to the waste collection service were implemented. He confirmed that the Council was actively considering a range of communication methods to ensure residents were appropriately informed. He advised that this included the potential provision of a collection timetable that could be distributed to residents, although the precise format and method of delivery were still under development. Councillor Astill noted that work was ongoing to determine the most effective way to communicate with all residents, including those who may not have access to digital channels. He assured members that communication arrangements formed a key part of the service transition and that further details would be confirmed as the work progressed.

**Question to:** Councillor Taylor

**Question from:** Councillor Alcock

**Subject:** Progress of leisure centre development

Councillor Alcock asked for an update on the progress of the new leisure facilities, and in particular whether the project remained on schedule and whether it was expected to be delivered within the approved budget of £28 million. In response, Councillor Taylor confirmed that the project was currently on target and within budget. He advised that construction works were continuing at pace and that there was ongoing engagement with the project team to monitor progress. Councillor Taylor advised that an updated position would be circulated to members, the press and the public following forthcoming project meetings. He further noted that regular newsletters were being prepared by the developer and distributed to neighbouring properties, ensuring that local residents were kept fully informed of ongoing developments.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Eldridge

**Subject:** Communication to ward Members on missed collections

Councillor Eldridge raised concerns regarding the level of detail provided in communications issued to members in relation to missed waste collections. Whilst acknowledging that notification emails were being circulated she noted that these were often too general, citing examples where issues were reported simply as affecting "Spalding" without identifying the specific

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wards or areas impacted. Such lack of detail made it difficult for ward members to respond effectively to resident enquiries and requested that future communications be more precise, clearly identifying affected locations.

Councillor Eldridge further asked whether additional methods of communication could be explored to ensure more timely notification, including the use of text messaging or mobile applications such as WhatsApp, so that members could be made aware of issues at the earliest opportunity and provide prompt updates to residents. In response, Councillor Astill acknowledged the concerns raised and agreed that the level of detail within communications to members could be improved. He confirmed that this had already been identified and that he had suggested changes to ensure future updates were more specific, including providing information at ward level where possible. In relation to alternative communication methods, Councillor Astill acknowledged that whilst such options could offer more immediate updates, he cautioned that not all members used the same technology platforms and it would therefore be important to ensure that any approach adopted was inclusive and accessible to all. He confirmed that the matter would be taken away for further review, with a view to identifying appropriate and effective ways of improving communication with members.

**Question to:** Councillor Astill

**Question from:** Councillor Barnes

**Subject:** Accuracy of waste service communications and service issues

Councillor Barnes raised a number of concerns regarding inconsistencies in communications relating to the waste service. He referred in particular to messages issued to residents indicating that brown bins were now owned by the resident, followed by further communications advising that subscriptions needed to be renewed and that such bins could be collected if this was not done. He queried the accuracy of such communications and emphasised the need for clarity and consistency. He further highlighted issues relating to contaminated waste, citing a specific example where a bag had been labelled as contaminated without any explanation being provided and where no record of the issue appeared to have been made by the service. He advised that, despite making enquiries through customer services, no response had been received. Councillor Barnes expressed broader concern regarding the level of detail and quality of communication from the service, including responsiveness and record-keeping, and asked that these matters be reviewed to ensure accurate information was provided to residents and that service standards were improved. In response, Councillor Astill acknowledged the concerns raised and confirmed that issues relating to the garden waste subscription communications had already been identified as system-generated errors and had been corrected. He agreed that the situation highlighted the need to review all aspects of communication to ensure accuracy and consistency, both in communications with residents and with members. He

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advised that improvements were being considered, including the potential use of technology to better inform members and residents. In this regard, Councillor Astill confirmed investigations into the Bartec system were underway for the cabs and the possibility of introducing a customer portal to enable residents to interact more directly with the service and report issues more easily. He noted that this could also help to reduce demand on customer services. In relation to the specific issue raised regarding contaminated waste, Councillor Astill undertook to investigate the matter further and provide clarification to Councillor Barnes.

**Question to:** Councillor Bingham

**Question from:** Councillor J Le Sage

**Subject:** Update on play parks

Councillor Le Sage requested an update on progress relating to play parks across the district. In response, Councillor Bingham provided a preliminary update and advised that a more detailed report would be brought forward once further information had been finalised. He confirmed that officers were currently undertaking a comprehensive assessment of play park assets across the district. This work included reviewing the condition of individual sites, undertaking a cost analysis to determine the level of investment required for maintenance, refurbishment and potential improvements, indicating that initial findings were broadly positive. The exercise was focused on identifying opportunities to achieve better value for money, including exploring how investment could be targeted more effectively to both maintain existing facilities and enhance overall quality. This included considering routine maintenance works aimed at improving the general appearance, safety and usability of sites. In conclusion, Councillor Bingham advised that the work was ongoing and that he hoped to provide a further update to members, either directly or through the Spalding Town Forum, once more detailed proposals and costings had been confirmed.

**10. COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Policy Development Panel – 3 February 2026
- Special Policy Development Panel – 9 February 2026
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 10 March 2026
- Planning Committee – 11 March 2026

Governance and Audit Committee – 19 March 2026

**11. KEY DECISION PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan

**DECISION:**

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

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**12. REPORT FROM CABINET MEETING ON 28 APRIL 2026**

Consideration was given to the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 26 April 2026 which sought approval for the Cabinet's recommendations.

The Leader introduced the report, referring to the Memorandum of Understanding approved by Cabinet, which included the Pride and Place programme and set out indicative funding allocations over a ten-year period. It was reported that funding would commence in 2026/27 at £742,000, increasing to £1.992 million in 2027/28 and just over £2 million in 2028/29, with allocations continuing annually thereafter.

**DECISION:**

That Council approved the recommendation from Cabinet to amend the Capital and Revenue budgets to reflect the funding as set out in Section 2 of the Cabinet report, and delegated authority to the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) to vary the Council's Capital and Revenue base budgets for projects under the parameters of the Pride in Place programme for Spalding.

**13. SOUTH & EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Director – Corporate Services which presented a Partnership performance update and Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) review.

The Leader presented the Partnership Performance Report, and advised that:

- 81% of projects within the 2025/26 Annual Delivery Plan had been completed in-year;
- A joint leisure agency contract had been signed across the Partnership, delivering significant savings, and that the Partnership was now on track to achieve £47 million in savings against the original £42 million target, with further savings anticipated; and
- Lobbying of Government in respect of Internal Drainage Board funding was ongoing, with the Council awaiting confirmation of its allocation from the £5 million fund.

**DECISION:**

That Council:

- 1) Noted the content of the report in respect of the progress of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership; and

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- 2) Subject to agreement by the other Partnership Councils, approved the updated Memorandum of Agreement for the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (Appendix A) and delegated authority to the Executive Director – Finance to sign the revised Agreement on behalf of this Council. The new Agreement, upon signing, replacing the previous Agreement.

**14. SPALDING COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - STAGE 1 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Director – Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) which presented the draft recommendations of the Community Governance Review (CGR) Working Group following the Stage 1 consultation and sought approval to publish these for the Phase 2 consultation.

Councillor Ashby, Chair of the Community Governance Review Working Group, introduced the report and summarised the outcome of Stage 1 of the review of the unparished area of Spalding, including that:

- The review been approved by Council in November 2025 under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007;
- The review was being undertaken in the context of proposed Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), which would remove the District Council tier and require consideration of future local representation for Spalding;
- The Stage 1 consultation, held between February and March 2026, had received 173 responses, with results indicating clear support for the establishment of a Parish Council and a preference for a single council covering the whole town;
- The Working Group therefore recommended the creation of one Parish Council for Spalding, comprising 19 councillors, with 6 parish wards aligned to existing district ward boundaries; and
- A final decision was not being sought at this stage however Council was asked to note the consultation outcomes and approve the draft proposals for publication and progression to Stage 2 consultation.

Members raised the following points:

- Members observed that 173 responses seemed low. The Leader responded that the number of responses received was considered a good level of engagement when compared with similar reviews undertaken elsewhere, where response rates had often been lower
- In response to a question regarding the future of funds held by the Spalding Town Forum, the Leader advised that, subject to Local Government Reorganisation proceeding, a Parish Council for Spalding could be included within any future statutory arrangements. In those circumstances, it was anticipated in principle that funds held

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by the Spalding Town Forum could transfer to a future Town Council and indicated that Spalding Special Expenses would also be expected to transfer. However, it was noted that this would be subject to timing considerations and further work once the position on reorganisation was confirmed.

- The Chairman of the Council expressed thanks to the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer for the significant amount of work undertaken in supporting the Community Governance Review, which was acknowledged by members.

**DECISION:**

That Council:

- 1) Noted the outcomes of the Stage 1 Consultation; and
- 2) Approved the draft recommendations of the CGR Working Group for publication and Stage 2 consultation as listed below:
  - Establish a single parish of Spalding for the unparished area of Spalding;
  - That the Council size for the Parish of Spalding be 19 Councillors, based on national guidance and proportional representation for an electorate of approximately 22,000 (forecast to rise to 23,500 by 2031);
  - That the Parish of Spalding be warded into six wards, aligned with the existing district ward boundaries to ensure clarity and coterminosity, as follows:

<b>Name of Parish Ward</b>	<b>Number of Councillors to be elected to the Parish Ward</b>
Castle	2
Monkshouse	4
St Johns	3
St Marys	3
St Pauls	3
Wygate	4

- That the first elections for the proposed new electoral arrangements be in May 2027, aligning with ordinary parish council electoral cycles.

**15. DEMOCRATIC ARRANGEMENTS 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Director – Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) which sought to: a) establish, allocate

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seats and appoint members to the Council's Committees and Panels for 2026/27; b) receive nominations and appoint to any vacancies on Outside Bodies; c) approve the 2026/27 Schedule of Meetings; and d) re-appoint members of the Independent Remuneration Panel until May 2028.

The Service Director – Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) introduced the report and presented the recommendations for Council, highlighting the following revisions:

- Regarding recommendation 1, that 'Appendix A' was the document at Appendix 1;
- Regarding recommendation 2, that 'Appendix B' was the document at Appendix 2; and
- Regarding the recommendation 3, that 'Appendix C' was the document at Appendix 3.

Regarding the receipt of nominations and appointment to vacancies on Outside Bodies at Appendix 2

- The Service Director – Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) referred to Appendix 2 which advised of a single vacancy for the Outside Body 'Spalding Water Taxi Company Limited'. Councillors proposed and seconded the following members for the position: Councillor Sheard, Councillor J Le Sage and Councillor Casson. Following a vote, Councillor J Le Sage was appointed to the position;
  - In response to a member query as to whether more than one member could be appointed, the Leader responded that the number of appointments was the decision of the company and not the Council; and
- It was noted that the Lincolnshire County Council Flood and Drainage Scrutiny Committee should be removed as this no longer existed.

**DECISION:**

That Council:

- 1) Approved the establishment of Committees and Panels for the Municipal Year 2026/27, including the allocation of seats to political groups and appointments (and substitutes) as nominated by Political Group Leaders, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, including an increase to the size of the Planning Committee from 11 members to 13 members;
- 2) Noted the current appointments to Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendix 2 and received nominations and appointments to any vacancies; and following this, that Councillor James Le Sage be appointed to the Outside Body 'Spalding Water Taxi Company Limited'.

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- 3) Approved the Council meeting dates and its committee meeting dates and noted the proposed dates for Cabinet meetings for the Council Municipal Year 2026/27 (Appendix 3);
- 4) Delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Chairman to amend or cancel meeting dates as necessary, subject to compliance with any constitutional requirements where an agenda has already been published; and
- 5) Re-appointed the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel until May 2028.

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

There were none.

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies had been dealt with during the previous item.

**17. HEALTH SCRUTINY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire Report.

**DECISION:**

That the report be noted.

**18. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.07 pm)

(End of minutes)