

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

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

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

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillor H J W Bingham and the Deputy Chief Executive - Communities.

In Attendance: The Chief Executive, the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Team Leader.

67. MINUTE SILENCE

The Council observed a minute silence to mark the recent death of Richard Tweddell who had sadly passed away on 22 January 2024, following a battle with cancer.

The Chairman stated that Richard had worked in Property Services within the Housing Department for a number of years. Thoughts were with Richard's family and friends at this sad time.

68. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of Full Council held on 22 November 2023.

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 22 November 2023 be signed as a correct record.

Action By

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69. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

70. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The following announcements were made:

The Chairman stated that this was the first meeting of Full Council of the new year – he hoped that all had had a good Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

The Chairman reminded members that details of events that he had attended as Chairman could be viewed under the Chairman's Log on the Council's website.

The Chairman advised of the following forthcoming events:

- Friday 26 January 2024 – Open Mic Night – South Holland Centre at 8.00pm. Tickets were still available.
- Friday 16 February 2024 – Quiz Night - Cowbit Village Hall at 7pm for 7.30pm start

Finally, the Chairman congratulated the Vice-Chairman for her efforts in getting Spalding on the Look North weather map.

71. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

The Leader made the following announcements:

- Councillor Bingham's attendance – Councillor Bingham had come into the offices but had then gone home as he was not well enough to attend the meeting;
- The Leader had held a very good meeting with the Woodland Trust recently – responsibility for trees/woodland, climate change and environment had now moved from the Leader's responsibility to Councillor E Sneath's portfolio. The Leader asked that if anyone had any suggestions for areas to plant trees, that they contact the Portfolio Holder;
- The White Horse Public House – following the recent accident involving two cars which had hit the building, the Leader advised that he had had a promising discussion with the owners. The front bay window would need repairing, along with the first-floor window, and the owners had agreed to undertake these repairs. They were also willing to undertake repairs to the ground floor window damaged in the summer of

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2022, along with looking at the paintwork and render. The project manager had advised that he had been instructed to conduct a full scheme for the building. A planning application would be submitted for the premises as a listed building, and submission of this was required by 2 February 2024. It was hoped that there would now be some rapid progress on improvements to the building. The owners had also advised that they were optimistic of getting a tenant for the public house.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercialisation, UKSPF and Levelling Up made the following announcement:

With regard to IDBs, the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP had recently made a statement awarding £3 million to those authorities most significantly impacted by that additional funding. These monies had been secured following pressure from the IDB Special Interest Group. At this point in time, the authority did not know how much the award would be, and it was very much a short-term solution. However, there had been an agreement to look at a more long-term solution to this problem. The Group was continuing to maintain pressure on the government around this issue and it was hoped that in the long term, all those affected would end up in a stronger position, with a clearer way forward. In light of the recent flooding, the work of the IDBs was indeed recognised.

72. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

73. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Gibson

Subject: Anaerobic digester – Rangell Gate

Councillor Gibson commented that he was receiving a lot of correspondence from the public regarding the proposed installation of an anaerobic digester at Rangell Gate. Concerns were being raised around the smell that could drift across residential areas. As a Council, could we undertake any due diligence to see how these residents may be affected and if so, could any action be taken before building commenced. Councillor Worth responded to advise that this was subject to a Planning application. Environmental Health would be able to have input

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into the application and would monitor this very carefully, due to its proximity to residential areas.

Question to: Councillor Tyrrell

Question from: Councillor Brewis

Subject: Missed refuse and recycling collections

Councillor Brewis stated that there had recently been more complaints over missed refuse/recycling collections than for some time. How could it be ensured that the confusion around changed dates over the Christmas and New Year period did not happen again next year? Councillor Tyrrell responded by stating that the re-routing of collections had been undertaken to find out whether a better job could be done. Until the six-month trial was completed (end of March), it would be difficult to evaluate this. There had been a number of issues creating problems – a huge amount of additional waste had to be collected over the Christmas period, and there had been staff sickness. The Pride Team had assisted in the collection of as much waste as possible. A clearer answer would be given once the six-month trial period had ended and the results evaluated.

Question to: Councillor E Sneath

Question from: Councillor Tennant

Subject: Conservation areas and protection of the environment

Councillor Tennant stated that new planning legislation would make it easier for authorities to monitor conservation areas and protect the environment. Could consideration be given to adding Long Sutton to the agenda – it was felt that the area had been neglected over the last 15-20 years and it was blighted by a Grade 2 listed hotel in the town centre. It was also requested that the way in which other authorities addressed enforcement be considered in order that successful practice could be used locally. Councillor E Sneath responded that she would be happy to visit Long Sutton and meet with individuals to discuss the issues and to move things forward.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Prevention of digital exclusion

Councillor Eldridge asked what the Council was doing to ensure that its customers were not excluded digitally. Councillor Astill responded that there were currently two documents in place – the Customer Strategy that had been approved by Cabinet earlier that month, and the IT Strategy. Both documents would ensure that any projects brought forward would not have a detrimental effect

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on the community. In addition to this, one focus project group around sheltered housing had been undertaken and there were various other bids being submitted for Levelling Up funding to undertake more digital inclusion training across the district.

Question to: Councillor Carter

Question from: Councillor Harrison

Subject: Success of Christmas Pantomime at the South Holland Centre

Councillor Harrison commented that she had heard a lot of positive feedback regarding the pantomime at the South Holland Centre – were there any figures available for tickets sales, and how did they compare to previous years? Councillor Carter advised that the figure for this year was £10,646, a rise from £10,339 last year. This had brought in an increased gross revenue of 3% compared to last year. In addition to the pantomime, there was a lot of growth at the South Holland Centre – ticket sales for 22/23 was £24,691, and ticket sales for 23/24 were forecast at £30,000. A rise in attendance of 8% was also forecast. There had been some great feedback regarding the pantomime, and an extra performance would be added to the 2024 pantomime schedule.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Spencer

Subject: Swimming Pool

Councillor Spencer stated that members had been advised that a report regarding the replacement of the swimming pool would be available before Christmas, but that no information on responses to the consultation had been made available. Work on the pool was due to start later in the year – when would there be information available to scrutinise? In addition, members had been advised that there were no monies available for an Olympic-sized pool, which could bring in additional income – had this been considered and costed and had consideration been given to any match funding? Councillor Taylor responded by clarifying that the leisure replacement project was for a health and well-being hub and not purely a swimming pool. Members had been provided with a briefing in October of last year where many councillors had taken part and provided feedback. Councillor Taylor, the Leader and the Finance Portfolio Holder had met the project manager again this week where some good designs had been seen and it was pleasing to see the progress that had been made. There had been consultation with user groups, and the issue of a 50-metre pool had neither been raised by the swimming groups, nor at the briefing in October. Regular briefings and updates for Councillors

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would be arranged and there would be the opportunity to provide comment.

Question to: Councillor Tyrrell
Question from: Councillor Alcock
Subject: Littering and litter bins

Councillor Alcock firstly asked the Portfolio Holder if part of his Portfolio was to ensure that the district was litter-free as far as possible, and to assist the public in doing this? Councillor Tyrrell responded that it was part of his Portfolio. Councillor Alcock then followed up by asking why there was no money in the budget to replace litter bins – would he ensure that there was a fund available for the replacement of existing bins and adding more if required. Councillor Tyrrell advised that the Authority could only replace those that were already damaged. With regard to paying for them, he would confirm the situation regarding the budget with officers. In relation to bins currently on the street, if they could not be easily accessed, they could be moved or replaced. Councillor Alcock commented that the budget was zero and it had been suggested to him that if a replacement was required, that members' designated budgets could be used to fund replacement – he did not agree with this and stated that provision of litter bins was an Authority function and member budgets should not be used for this purpose. Councillor Tyrrell stated that he would look into the issue and respond in due course.

Question to: Councillor Worth
Question from: Councillor Beal
Subject: Bridge Hotel, Sutton Bridge

Councillor Beal asked for an update on the Bridge Hotel in Sutton Bridge. It was again on the market. When it had last been for sale, the Council had submitted a bid – what was the situation this time? Councillor Worth responded that the last time the Bridge Hotel had been on the market, the Council had submitted a bid for the maximum amount allowed by the district valuer (there was a need to get best value for money). The amount currently being requested considerably exceeded this limit and a bid was therefore not viable on this occasion. In reference to Councillor Tennant's earlier question regarding action being taken with regard to unsightly buildings, he had taken action with regard to the White Horse and would also work with Councillor E Sneath with regard to the Bridge Hotel in Long Sutton, to hopefully move the issue along.

Question to: Councillor Taylor
Question from: Councillor Sheard

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Subject: CCTV hub update

Councillor Sheard asked if there was any update on the CCTV hub and in attracting individuals to monitor the footage. Councillor Taylor advised that a vacancy for monitoring staff had been advertised, along with some vacancies for volunteers. He was also working on an update to be provided to the Spalding Town Forum at its meeting next week.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Astill

Subject: Environment Agency – breach of bank between Crowland and Spalding

Councillor Astill commented that, following the recent breach of the bank between Crowland and Spalding, the Environment Agency had come up for some criticism from local farmers and drainage boards around their mis-management of the situation, and their lack of provision of timescales to address the issue. Could a letter be sent by the Authority to the Environment Agency to ensure that they undertook their responsibilities and that they provide assurances on timescales to deal with repairs. Councillor Worth confirmed that he would happily write to the Environment Agency. He was very aware of the good work that the drainage boards had undertaken, and it was unfortunate that the Environment Agency had not met the same good standards.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Booth

Subject: Expansion of CCTV provision

Councillor Booth asked, with regard to CCTV, if there was active promotion of expansion to Parish Councils. His Parish Council had asked for information last year and had received no response. Councillor Taylor apologised for the lack of a response and he would investigate this. It was his and the Council's ambition to expand CCTV across the district. The type of CCTV coverage in the Long Sutton/Sutton Bridge area relied on the electrical supply from local businesses and this was not the most efficient system.

Question to: Councillor Carter

Question from: Councillor Brewis

Subject: Promotion of markets

Councillor Brewis stated that market users and stall holders were very happy with the new administration's wish to promote markets. There was a real need to get on with this – when would

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we start doing this, particularly in the outlying towns and villages with markets? In his opinion, the rent rises had not been helpful. Councillor Carter responded that with regard to rent rises, there had only been one piece of feedback from stall holders which had stated that they were happy to pay the increase. Traders were very happy with the rise. Councillor Carter and the Markets Manager had met last year with traders and would be meeting again to hear their feedback. Signage and promotion had been raised and some large banners had been produced for display. A UKSPF bid to support the purchase of gazebos and marketing/promotion had been successful. Branding had been undertaken and the Facebook page promoted all markets. Much work had already been undertaken, but there was still more to be done.

Question to: Councillor Tyrrell
Question from: Councillor Spencer
Subject: Mixing of landfill/recycling waste

Councillor Spencer stated that he had received several complaints from residents in his ward around bin collection. Referring to an earlier question, he acknowledged that the six-month trial period had not yet expired however, it did not appear to be going well due to the number of complaints. A specific complaint from residents had been the sight of refuse collectors putting landfill and recyclable waste into the same vehicle – if this was the case, what incentive did the public have to follow guidance towards greener initiatives. What was the decision-making process around mixing waste? Councillor Tyrrell asked for information on the dates and roads where this had allegedly happened – vehicles were fitted with cameras and these could be checked once dates and locations were known.

Question to: Councillor Astill
Question from: Councillor Sheard
Subject: Out of Hours service

Councillor Sheard stated that the Out of Hours service had been advertised on digital media - she was aware of a number of people who had tried to contact the advertised number but had received no response. Could this be looked into and if there was a problem, could this be resolved? Councillor Astill commented that the Out of Hours service was operated by Lincolnshire County Council across of a number of the Authority's services. He was not aware of any issues but would investigate and provide a response.

74. COMMITTEE MINUTES

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The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Governance and Audit Committee – 9 November 2023
- Planning Committee – 14 November 2023
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 15 November 2023
- Policy Development Panel – 12 December 2023
- Planning Committee – 10 January 2024

75. KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan.

DECISION:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

76. REPORT FROM CABINET MEETING ON 12 DECEMBER 2023

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

2023/24 Quarter Two Finance update

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercialisation, UKSPF and Levelling Up presented the report.

DECISION:

- 1) That the use of New Homes Bonus (NHB) from reserves of £300,000, to alleviate in year budget pressures, be approved;
- 2) That the Capital Programme at Appendix A – Table 4 be amended to take into account the changes set out within the report.

77. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2023

Consideration was given to the report of the (Acting) Returning Officer and Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development, which asked Council to consider the recommendations following the review of Polling Districts and Polling Places within the South Holland District area.

The Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) introduced the report, which included at Appendix 1 the (Acting) Returning Officer's Proposals of polling districts and polling places

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for South Holland.

The following issues were raised:

- Councillor Astill commented that following feedback from himself and County Councillor Pepper, it was encouraging to note that the Polling Station for the west of Crowland was in the west of the town. What was not so positive however was that residents in Tongue End still needed to travel a significant distance to vote. He and the Elections Team would endeavour to seek a solution to this and he also suggested that ward members collectively write to the electorate there to encourage them to apply for a postal vote.
- Councillor Alcock supported what Councillor Astill had said. He commented that in the past there had been polling stations in Tongue End and suggestions going forward were required.

DECISION:

- 1) To adopt the polling districts and polling places as listed in Appendix 1 to this report which include the following changes:
 - a. To relocate the following streets in Pinchbeck from Polling District PS2 to PS1 – Rotten Row, Primrose Crescent, The Chase, Fennell Road, Wayet Road, Brayfields and odd numbers of Rose Lane to accommodate growing electorate numbers.
 - b. To relocate the Polling Place for Polling District CRD1 from Crowland Parish Rooms to Snowden Pavilion, off Thorney Road, Crowland.
 - c. To relocate the Polling Place for Polling District CRD2 from Snowden Pavilion to Crowland Community Hall, Broadway, Crowland.
 - d. To relocate the Polling Place for Polling Districts CRD4 and CRD5 from Deeping St Nicholas Primary School to Deeping St Nicholas Church.
 - e. To relocate the Polling Place for Polling District PS2 from Pinchbeck Village Hall to Pinchbeck Church Hall on Rose Lane.
 - f. To confirm Monkshouse Scout Hut as the Polling Place for Polling District SMK4.

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- g. To confirm Bromley Hall as the Polling Place for Polling District SMK5.
 - h. To merge Polling Districts SC1 and SC2.
 - i. To merge Polling Districts SSJ3 and SSJ4.
- 2) That the (Acting) Returning Officer be granted delegated authority for keeping polling districts and polling places under review and amending any such arrangements (following consultation with local Ward Member(s)) where there is an operational need, prior to the next compulsory District wide review.

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

The following proposed substitute members to the Chief Officer Employment Panel were reported to Council:

- Councillor Elizabeth Sneath (Conservative)
- Councillor Margaret Geaney (Conservative)
- Councillor Ingrid Sheard (Independent)

DECISION:

That the appointment of the following substitute members to the Chief Officer Employment Panel be approved:

- Councillor Elizabeth Sneath (Conservative)
- Councillor Margaret Geaney (Conservative)
- Councillor Ingrid Sheard (Independent)

79. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 7.20 pm)

(End of minutes)