

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 14 May 2025 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

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

B Alcock	S Chauhan	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	D J Wilkinson
T A Carter	M Le Sage	C N Worth
A Casson	P A Redgate	
N Chapman	J L Reynolds	

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors A Spencer

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

1. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN

Prior to the election of Chairman, the outgoing Chairman thanked Councillors for their support during his two year Chairmanship. He announced that over the two year period, a total of £21,065.94 has been raised for his Chairman's charities – Blood Cancer UK and Mencap.

The outgoing Chairman invited nominations for the election of Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

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

DECISION:

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

(Councillor J Whitbourn thereupon took the Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.)

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2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

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

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

DECISION:

That Councillor A Harrison be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

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

3. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Full Council held on 27 February 2025.

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 27 February 2025 be signed as a correct record.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman thanked the past Chairman for all his hard work during his two year tenure, and also congratulated him on the monies raised towards his charities.

She stated that it was an honour to be elected to the role of Chairman, that she would work hard for the District over the next year and was determined to continue raising the profile of the Authority.

The Chairman announced that she intended to support the following charities – Spalding Lions Club, Spalding Round Table; and Spalding United Youth Football Team.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

The Leader made the following announcements:

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- He wished to congratulate those recently elected as County Councillors to Lincolnshire County Council in the recent LCC elections. He hoped that all councillors could work together to support the South Holland area, and the Local Government Reorganisation proposals.
- He advised that Councillor Carter would be standing down as the PSPS Shareholder representative. She would be replaced in this role by Councillor Redgate.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services made the following announcements:

- He reminded members of the forthcoming Member Briefing on Waste Services Proposals – this would be held in person to support an effective discussion.
- Garden waste – In response to a question raised at the last Council meeting around waiting lists for garden waste bins, he advised that residents on the list had been contacted and offered the service, that there was no longer a waiting list, and that the service was currently at capacity.
- The Portfolio Holder congratulated the Democratic Services Team on running the recent LCC elections for the local area, and also the Assistant Director – Corporate in his first outing in the role of Returning Officer.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Development provided an update on the Castle Sports Centre. He advised that early works were underway on site, such as surveying and trenching, with minimal disruption to users. The dry side work at the site was scheduled to start in September with a move to the site at Red Lion Street while work was underway. An opening of the new facilities in 2027 was anticipated. He also advised that a Briefing would be provided to Councillors to ask questions of the Project Team – its officers were drawing together all details so that full answers could be provided to questions.

7. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

8. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Barnes

Subject: Portfolio Holder updates

Councillor Barnes understood that the Leader had advised that a short update report was to be provided by each Portfolio Holder to Council meetings. When would these be available? Councillor Worth responded that these reports would be forthcoming to each Council meeting and that this would start from the next Council meeting on 23 July 2025.

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Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor Booth

Subject: Fly tipping

Councillor Booth raised the potential dangers of fly tipping in rural areas, stating that glass bottles left near dry grass in fields was a potential fire risk. Was the Authority undertaking a campaign to stop fly tipping and raising these issues, and could the Recycling Centre in Spalding be open for longer to assist in the fight against fly tipping? Councillor Casson responded that the Recycling Centre was run by Lincolnshire County Council and that longer opening hours would help - he fully supported longer opening hours. With regard to awareness campaigns, there was already good coverage but he would request more media output in this area. With regard to fines, those that were caught fly tipping would be fined. Following some work undertaken on environmental crime and the Kingdom Contract by a joint scrutiny task group, consideration was being given to proposals with a view to increasing fines and bringing them in line across all three authorities.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor M Le Sage

Subject: Use of outdoor space at Castle Sports Complex

Councillor M Le Sage asked why, in light of no building work commencing until September, the outdoor space at the Castle Sports Complex could not have been used for the local Beer Festival and Flower Festival. Councillor Taylor explained that although work on the site had first been announced two years ago, it would not have been known when planning permission would be considered and granted. Some work had already started on the site which made it unviable to hold events there, and there were other sites in Spalding that could be used and should be developed going forward.

Question to: Councillor Bingham

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) under second stage of consultation process – response

Councillor Eldridge commented that there were currently four NSIPs at the second stage of their consultation processes. Could a combined statement be sent to the Secretary of State to reflect the Authority's views? Councillor Bingham responded that the Council had sought outside assistance to deal with these hugely complex projects in order to ensure that the best and most detailed responses could be given in the interests of residents. This was being paid for, in most cases, by an extra charge to the developer. The Portfolio Holder had attended the online consultation the previous evening for two of these projects and had not been impressed – all questions had to be in writing, no conversation on points was allowed and questions were screened. Councillors attended to put forward the views of their residents and better engagement to this end was required. The Council, through decisions made at Planning Committee, had made it clear that it did not support the mass industrialisation of large swathes of BMV land, but did support the right project in the

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right place. Although any response from the Planning department would be solely based on planning issues, for the major projects, a further response from the Council was being drawn together and this would be circulated and sent by the Leader. The Authority was only a consultee on these projects and engagement from all political levels, both nationally and locally, was required.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Brewis

Subject: Local Government Reorganisation

Councillor Brewis asked whether it was likely that proposals for Local Government Reorganisation would go forward or be withdrawn in the future. The Leader responded that feedback to initial proposals that was due to be received in mid-May was now more likely to be received at the end of the month. It was his view that the process was likely to slip.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Barnes

Subject: Spalding Heritage Strategy

Councillor Barnes asked for further information on progress with the Spalding Heritage Strategy and whether there was a timeframe. Councillor Taylor advised that some work around the riverside had already taken place. The Spalding Heritage Strategy was on the forward plan to be considered within the next couple of meetings – he would advise when there was further information.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Alcock

Subject: Utilisation of Kingdom contract to address early presentation of refuse

Councillor Alcock asked whether consideration could be given to publicity regarding the early presentation of waste to alert the public to the rules and regulations surrounding the issue? He also asked whether the contract with Kingdom could be utilised to investigate and potentially prosecute individuals? Councillor Astill responded that he would support these proposals. Councillor Casson reported that he went out with Kingdom a few times each month and advised that they looked at certain streets where there were problems, and that there had been some prosecutions around early presentation.

Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor J Le Sage

Subject: Early presentation of refuse

Councillor J Le Sage stated that there continued to be issues in the St Johns ward around early presentation of refuse, and also asked if Kingdom could visit daily and check for early presentation. He also asked whether a letter had gone out to residents at Lucknow Lane regarding early presentation. Councillor Casson advised that he would check the situation with regard to a letter to Lucknow Lane residents.

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He also stated that there were only three officers dealing with the South Holland area and it would not be possible for them to visit all areas. They were however doing a good job and prosecutions were being achieved.

Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor Hasan

Subject: Anti-Social Behaviour in Spalding Town Centre

Councillor Hasan commented that the recent improvements to Spalding town centre (public toilets and sculptures) were appreciated however, how would anti-social behaviour around the toilets be handled? The Leader responded that with regard to anti-social behaviour, hot-spot policing was due to start at any time, and a contract was in the process of being signed. The area around the public toilets in the Sheep Market would be picked up as part of this initiative.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor M Le Sage

Subject: Rough sleeping in Abbey Passage, Spalding

Councillor M Le Sage asked for an update on the state of the Abbey Passage in Spalding which had been occupied by rough sleepers for some time. The state of the passageway was so poor as a result that many people were now no longer using it. The Leader advised that the area that the homeless people were in was private property, owned by Hills Furniture Store. Anti-Social Behaviour officers had visited on numerous occasions when there had been promises to clear the area up but this had not happened. The Council could not enforce on this issue as it was on private property.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Customer Services – call waiting times

Councillor Eldridge commented that there were reports that call waiting times to Customer Services had increased – was this the case, and how would this be resolved? Councillor Astill responded that waiting times were 12% higher than last year however, 'Call Back' and 'Web Chat' facilities had since been introduced. He commented that demand across Revenues and Benefits was particularly high. He advised that a briefing note on how this worked would be sent to members. He also stated that the three Portfolio Holders across the Partnership whose responsibility covered Customer Services met regularly to consider how a technical response could be provided for those that wanted it, thus freeing up time to take telephone calls.

9. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Governance and Audit Committee – 30 January 2025
- Planning Committee – 5 February 2025

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- Policy Development Panel – 11 February 2025
- Planning Committee – 4 March 2025
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 12 March 2025
- Governance and Audit Committee – 20 March 2025
- Planning Committee – 2 April 2025

10. REPORT FROM CABINET MEETING ON 1 APRIL 2025

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

2024/25 Quarter Three Finance update

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report which had been presented and discussed fully at Cabinet.

DECISION:

- 1) That the Capital Programme at Appendix A (to the Cabinet report) – Table 4b be amended to take into account the changes set out in the Cabinet report;
- 2) That the Capital Programme at Appendix A (to the Cabinet report) – Table 5A be amended to take into account the changes set out in the Cabinet report.

11. KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan.

DECISION:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

12. SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE

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 progress of the Alignment and Delivery Plan (section 2) be noted;
- That the Performance Framework 2025/26 (section 3) be noted;
- That the updates from the Priority Partnerships (section 4) be noted;
- That the Partnership Scrutiny update (section 5) be noted.

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13. SPECIAL URGENCY - NON-KEY DECISIONS - APPLICATION OF CALL-IN

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) which reported to Council the reason for urgency relating to a Non-Key Decision, as required by the Council’s Constitution.

DECISION:

That the information contained within the report be noted.

14. POLITICAL GROUP REGULATIONS, COMMITTEE/OUTSIDE BODY MEMBERSHIP REVIEW, 2025/26 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND APPOINTMENT OF SECOND INDEPENDENT PERSON

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer), the purpose of which was: a) To confirm in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the allocation of committee seats to political groups and to agree a reduction in the number of Committee seats subject to a further report to Council; b) To confirm in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, appointments to committees and outside bodies and to review membership; c) To agree the 2025/26 Schedule of Meetings; and d) To appoint a second Independent Person.

The Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) presented the report.

In an amendment to Appendix B, it was clarified that Councillor D Wilkinson would not be proposed as a member of the Policy Development Panel.

Members considered the report and the following issues were raised:

- Concerns was raised by a number of members regarding the proposal to reduce the number of seats on the Performance Monitoring Panel, Policy Development Panel, Planning; and Licensing Committee/Committee of the Licensing Authority. Particular concern was raised regarding the reduction in numbers on the Planning Committee and members asked for the reasons behind the proposal.
 - The Leader responded that a reduction in numbers would result in greater flexibility for members as they would not need to be appointed to as many committees, and it would also allow for greater flexibility in appointing members with particular skills to specific committees. With regard to Planning in particular, ward member could always attend to raise specific issues in their ward.

In accordance with Standing Order 16 (paragraph 16.3) of Part 4A of the Constitution (Procedural Standing Orders), a recorded vote on recommendation 5 was agreed and undertaken. The vote was as follows:

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For	Against	Abstain	Apologies
Councillor Astill	Councillor Alcock	Councillor Chauhan	Councillor Spencer
Councillor Avery	Councillor Ashby		
Councillor Beal	Councillor Barnes		
Councillor Bingham	Councillor Booth		
Councillor Carter	Councillor Brewis		
Councillor Casson	Councillor Gibson		
Councillor Chapman	Councillor Hasan		
Councillor Eldridge	Councillor Hutchinson		
Councillor Geaney	Councillor King		
Councillor Harrison	Councillor J Le Sage		
Councillor Redgate	Councillor M Le Sage		
Councillor Reynolds	Councillor Sheard		
Councillor Scalese	Councillor T Sneath		
Councillor Slade	Councillor Tenant		
Councillor E Sneath	Councillor Wilkinson		
Councillor Taylor			
Councillor Tyrrell			
Councillor Whitbourn			
Councillor Woolf			
Councillor Worth			

DECISIONS:

- 1) That the Council approves that the following Committees be appointed to in accordance with political proportionality legislation and approves the committee sizes and allocation of seats as detailed in Appendix A:
 - Performance Monitoring Panel;
 - Policy Development Panel;
 - Licensing Committee;
 - Chief Officer Employment Panel
 - Chief Officer Employment Appeals Panel

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- Standards Panel;
- 2) That the Council approves that the following Committees be appointed to without being politically balanced and approves the committee sizes and allocation of seats as detailed in Appendix A:
 - Planning Committee;
 - Governance and Audit Committee;
 - Committee of the Licensing Authority;
 - Appeals Panel;
 - Settlements Agreements Sub-Committee;
 - Independent Panel
 - 3) That the Councillor Development Working Group be re-appointed to, reflecting cross party membership.
 - 4) That the Council approves the appointments to Committees and Working Groups as nominated by Group Leaders and detailed in Appendix B, with the exception that Councillor D Wilkinson not be appointed as a member of the Policy Development Panel;
 - 5) That the Council approves a proposal to revise the number of seats to specific committees as detailed at Section 1.12 of this report to take effect from the Full Council Meeting in July 2025 and that it be noted that a further report will be presented to the next meeting of Full Council to approve the committee seat allocations and appointments.
 - 6) That the Council notes the current appointments to Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendix C and receives nominations for any vacancies.
 - 7) That the Council approves the Council meeting dates and its' Committee meeting dates and notes the proposed dates for Cabinet meetings for the Council Municipal Year 2025/26 (Appendix D).
 - 8) That delegated authority be granted 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.
 - 9) That Mr David Simpson be appointed as the second Independent Person, for the period 14 May 2025 for an initial three year term until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2028.

15. **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.

16. **HEALTH SCRUTINY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE REPORT**

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

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DECISION:

That the report be noted.

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

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.10 pm)

(End of minutes)