

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 26 November 2025 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

J Whitbourn (Chairman)

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

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M D Booth, A Harrison and M Le Sage,

In Attendance: The Chief Executive, the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Assistant Director – Regulatory, the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development (PSPS), the Senior Licensing Officer, the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Officer.

55. MINUTE SILENCE

Members observed a minute's silence in memory of Doug Best, who had served as a Councillor at South Holland for many years and had sadly passed away at the end of September 2025. Councillor Alcock paid tribute to Mr Best who he had served with for many years at the Council.

56. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 1 October 2025.

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 1 October 2025 be signed as a correct record.

57. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

Action By

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58. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairlady reported that since the previous meeting, she had attended the following events across South Holland:

- A bingo night and a Slimming World presentation;
- The unveiling of the Grade I Lutyens War Memorial at Ayscoughfee Gardens;
- Participation in several community lunches, including a project at St Thomas' Church; thanks were extended to Councillor Tracy Carter for her work;
- An art exhibition at the Sessions House;
- Remembrance services;
- Awards presentation at the Welland Yacht Club alongside Councillor James Le Sage;
- A celebration with the local tennis group following the securing of winter premises; and
- Local democracy event with pupils from Holbeach Primary School;

In addition, thanks were extended to Councillor Tyrrell for fundraising at the recent bingo night.

The Chairlady advised of the following forthcoming events:

- The Spalding Christmas Lights Switch-On on Friday 28 November 2025; and
- A performance by Wygate Academy Choir at Ayscoughfee Hall on 1 December 2025.

The Chairlady concluded by expressing thanks to all who had supported recent events.

59. PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES

The Chairlady invited members to note the written Portfolio Holder updates, which had been circulated with the agenda which provided a summary of work undertaken by each Portfolio Holder within their respective areas of responsibility.

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 Asked Without Notice.

DECISION:

That the Portfolio Holder updates be noted.

60. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

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The Leader made the following announcement:

An induction session for the Student Council had recently taken place, with a good turnout of students. The session had been interactive, and three students had remained to observe the Cabinet meeting which followed. The first official meeting of the Student Council, including the election of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman, was expected to take place towards the end of January 2026, subject to agreement with schools on a suitable date. The Chairman or Vice-Chairman would be invited to attend Cabinet meetings and to be represented on the Town Board. It was noted that students had already contributed to the 'Vision for Spalding' and progress on the initiative was welcomed.

There were no further announcements.

61. QUESTIONS ASKED ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

62. QUESTIONS ASKED WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Barnes

Subject: Garden Waste Scheme

Councillor Barnes expressed disappointment at the lack of progress on the garden waste scheme, as referenced in the Portfolio Holder update. He questioned the routing system and queried why a more adaptable approach, similar to that used by the Post Office, had not been adopted. He highlighted that a period of six months had been spent developing an internal system now deemed unworkable, with a further four months required for improvements. Councillor Barnes queried why additional residents could not be accommodated on existing routes given confirmed bin availability and capacity and stressed that delays had resulted in wasted expenditure and lost revenue. He requested details of the total cost to date, the number of brown bins at the depot, the number of residents on the waiting list, and how many were on current routes. Councillor Astill advised that approximately 200 bins were held at the depot, some new and some used. There was no capacity on existing rounds, which had led to the creation of a waiting list that was closed in February or March 2025 due to uncertainty over expansion, although some residents had since joined the scheme. He confirmed that the Council's internal team, at no additional cost,

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had been working on new rounds, with some rework required following testing, and that software changes for uploading routes were being implemented. Councillor Astill acknowledged delays but emphasised the need to get the system right, confirming that the work would be completed by the end of Quarter 1 and that a factual briefing note would be provided.

In response, Councillor Barnes challenged the assertion of zero cost, noting officer time as an expense, and reiterated concerns about wasted resources and the need for urgency. He recommended that normal waste collections were not altered and highlighted that residents had been waiting for bins for 18 months. Councillor Astill responded that the work completed so far had not been wasted and confirmed the scheme's popularity, evidenced by a waiting list of 700–800 residents. He concluded that the work would be completed and a summary provided.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Eldridge

Subject: Waste Rounds

Councillor Eldridge queried whether the work on the waste rounds would be completed by March 2026. Councillor Astill confirmed that he was confident that the target date would be met.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Gibson

Subject: Spalding Remembrance Parade Road Closures

Councillor Gibson asked whether the Council had been charged by Lincolnshire County Council for road closures during the Spalding Remembrance Parade, noting that criticism had been directed at the County Council in this regard. Councillor Worth confirmed that Lincolnshire County Council did not charge for road closures. South Holland District Council was required to appoint a traffic management company, and this year an alternative provider was used, which incurred a cost. He explained that the parade route had been shortened to minimise town centre closures while maintaining a safe route for veterans. Councillor Worth also highlighted that the Safety Advisory Group was required to consider terrorism risks for all events as part of its risk assessment and clarified that councillor ward budgets could not be used to fund road closures.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Sheard

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Subject: Spalding Remembrance Parade Format

Councillor Sheard raised concerns regarding the format of the recent Spalding Remembrance Parade, noting that many residents and service personnel had expressed disappointment and felt the event had not been delivered correctly. She sought reassurance that next year's parade would follow the correct format and involve ex-Service personnel in its planning. Concerns were also highlighted about the choice of song at the end of the service, which some felt was inappropriate. Councillor Worth responded that the Council was responsible only for road closures, while the organisation of the parade itself was managed by the Royal British Legion, Spalding Branch. He confirmed that the wreath-laying had followed the appropriate protocol. Councillor Worth acknowledged the feedback regarding the song which would be taken into consideration for next year.

Question to: Councillor Casson

Question from: Councillor Reynolds

Subject: Fixed Penalty Notice Fee Increases

Councillor Reynolds queried the increase in fees for fixed penalty notices for littering, fly-tipping and graffiti. Councillor Casson confirmed that the proposed increases were as follows:

- Fly-tipping: from £400 to £1,000
- Littering: from £150 to £300
- Graffiti: from £150 to £500

Question to: Councillor Redgate

Question from: Councillor Wilkinson

Subject: Youth Shed

Councillor Wilkinson raised concerns about the closure of the Youth Shed in Long Sutton in March 2025, which had left over 100 children without access to the facility. He noted reports on social media suggesting the centre might reopen with support from South Holland District Council and asked whether the facility, which had previously received over £90,000 in UKSPF funding, would receive further funding and reopen. Councillor Redgate advised that UKSPF funding was largely concluded, with approximately 99% already allocated, unless further funds were distributed by the Mayoral Authority in the following year. He confirmed that any future funding would be considered on its merits however could not confirm whether additional funding would be provided. Councillor Wilkinson asked if the Council was continuing to support the facility. Councillor Redgate clarified that this was outside his remit and that he was not aware of any funding currently being provided by the Council. The Leader undertook to clarify the appropriate Portfolio Holder and provide

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an update after the meeting.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Geaney

Subject: Spalding Town Forum, the Town Board and Spalding Business Improvement District (BID)

Councillor Geaney requested clarification of the Spalding Town Forum, Town Board and Spalding Business Improvement District (BID) and queried the associated impacts upon the Council/local tax payers for activities such as a recent installation project. Councillor Worth responded that Spalding Town Forum was a debating group with no decision-making powers, representing the town and its residents. The Town Board was responsible for managing the £20 million government grant, which did not come from local taxpayers. The Council paid a levy into the BID which was drawn from Council resources. Councillor Worth confirmed that local taxpayers had not funded the sheep installation, which was financed by the Civic Society through external funding.

Question to: Councillor Astill

Question from: Councillor Beal

Subject: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Funding

Councillor Beal requested an update on government Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding. Councillor Astill advised that some funding was known, but the position on food waste funding remained outstanding. He noted that further information might be included in the forthcoming budget and confirmed that members would be informed as soon as funding was confirmed.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Alcock

Subject: Planters in Spalding Hall Place and Red Lion Street

Councillor Alcock queried whether the planters in Hall Place and Red Lion Street were the responsibility of the Council and, if so, whether there were plans to replace plants and trees that had not survived, and measures to prevent this recurring. Councillor Taylor responded that a grant had been obtained by the Council to install and maintain the planters, although this was not within his Portfolio. Councillor Astill undertook to seek clarification on replanting plans and added that a new Group Manager for Street Scene was now in post and was preparing a schedule for members detailing maintenance activities such as cutting, trimming and pruning.

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Question to: Councillor Bingham
Question from: Councillor Woolf
Subject: Pantomime sales

Councillor Woolf asked for an update on ticket sales for the forthcoming pantomime at the South Holland Centre, noting its commercial importance and popularity. Councillor Bingham reported that overall ticket sales at the South Holland Centre were up by approximately 13,000 compared to previous years. The pantomime had already sold around 9,500 tickets, with several performances close to selling out. He credited the success to the efforts of the South Holland Centre team, performers and the production company.

Question to: Councillor Astill
Question from: Councillor Tyrrell
Subject: Bulky Waste Collection of Settees

Councillor Tyrrell raised concerns about delays in the collection of settees, noting that residents had been waiting for over a month. Councillor Astill confirmed that settees were still collected as part of the bulky waste service but explained that recent legislative changes required specific recycling processes. He undertook to seek clarification from the service and provide an update.

Question to: Councillor Astill
Question from: Councillor J Le Sage
Subject: Rubbish Collection at Capella Close and The Terrace

Councillor J Le Sage thanked Councillor Astill for previously meeting with residents regarding rubbish collection issues and asked for an update. Councillor Astill advised that he was still awaiting a response from officers, having requested a review of the situation. He confirmed that the decision was operational and, while he would continue to press for a resolution, reinstatement of collections could not be guaranteed. Councillor Le Sage expressed frustration at the lack of progress and emphasised the impact on residents and the need for stronger action.

Question to: Councillor Astill
Question from: Councillor Tennant
Subject: Christmas Tree Waste Collection

Councillor Tennant raised concerns about reports on social media that residents with brown bins could not leave whole Christmas trees for collection and were required to chop them up to fit inside the bin. He questioned the reasoning behind this change and noted that January was not a peak month for general gardening waste. He highlighted criticism on social media and suggested the decision be reconsidered,

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particularly for outlying areas of the district where access to recycling centres was difficult. Councillor Astill acknowledged the concerns and confirmed he was unaware of the issue. He undertook to seek clarification from the team.

Question to: Councillor Worth

Question from: Councillor Brewis

Subject: Fast Food Packaging Deposit Charge Campaign

Councillor Brewis referred to a discussion at an earlier meeting regarding the possibility of the Partnership initiating a national campaign to introduce a deposit charge on fast-food packaging. The intention was that customers would either return the packaging or, if discarded, others could collect it and redeem the deposit, similar to historic bottle return schemes. Councillor Brewis noted significant public interest in the idea which would help to address littering issues and asked if this would be taken forward. Councillor Worth understood that national legislation was already in place to encourage producers, particularly supermarkets, to reduce waste and recycle within their own facilities. He undertook to discuss the matter further with the relevant team and Portfolio Holder, acknowledging the merits of the suggestion, however additional action would not be necessary if covered by national legislation.

Question to: Councillor Taylor

Question from: Councillor Sheard

Subject: Spalding Indoor Bowls Club

Councillor Sheard requested reassurance be provided to members of Spalding Indoor Bowls Club, formerly based at the Castle Sports Complex and temporarily relocated to Long Sutton, following rumours that they might not be able to return once renovation works were complete. Councillor Taylor confirmed that there was no truth to the rumour and reiterated that the plan remained for the bowlers to return to the Castle Sports Complex in Spalding upon completion of the works, anticipated in early 2027. He expressed disappointment that such speculation had arisen and advised that any further concerns should be raised with him or the project team, who could provide written reassurance if necessary.

63. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the following Committees and Panels were noted:

- Planning Committee – 10 September 2025
- Governance and Audit Committee – 11 September 2025

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- Policy Development Panel – 23 September 2025
- Planning Committee – 8 October 2025
- Performance Monitoring Panel – 15 October 2025
- Special Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel – 21 October 2025

64. KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan.

DECISION:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

65. 2025/26 MID TERM TREASURY REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) which provided members with an update on Treasury Management performance and activity to ensure best practice was maintained.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report and advised that the Council was required to review Treasury Management activities and provide an update on Prudential and Treasury indicators for the year. The report, at Appendix 1, had previously been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 13 November 2025, in addition to quarterly updates throughout the financial year. The following main points were highlighted:

- The latest revised budget for capital expenditure was £35 million, with actual expenditure at the end of September recorded at £6.7 million;
- The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure as at 30 September 2025 had increased to £84.5 million. Investments totalled £43 million, and external borrowing remained at £67.5 million. In addition, the Council had issued loans of £6.5 million to Welland Homes;
- The bank base rate started the year at 4.5% and had reduced to 4% by the end of September 2025. The overall rate of return on investments during the first half of the financial year was 4.67%;
- The Council had budgeted to borrow £10 million from the Public Works Loan Board for HRA capital expenditure, however, following the receipt of £15 million in grant payments during the first half of the year, this borrowing was not expected to be required in the current financial year;

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- At Quarter 2, borrowing costs less investment income totalled £231,000 compared to the original budget of £661,000, representing a favourable variance of £430,000; and
- The forecast outcome for the year was predicted to be £440,000 against a budget of £1.493 million, representing a favourable variance of just over £1 million.

Members considered the report and made the following comments:

- Members expressed appreciation for the clarity and detail of the Treasury reports and thanked officers for their work.
- A member asked whether councils affected by a former Government decision to place significant debt on council tenants had sought to have this reversed by the current Government.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Finance acknowledged this remained a legacy issue for the authority, and while the Council had taken on the debt, it continued to maintain a substantial and high-quality housing stock. A potential impact on this matter resulting from Local Government Reorganisation was noted as an area for future monitoring.

DECISION:

That the contents of the report at Appendix 1 be received.

66. LICENSING ACT 2003 - STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Regulatory to adopt the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Protection introduced the report, and the following main points were highlighted:

- The Statement of Licensing Policy set out the approach the Licensing Authority would apply to promote the licensing objectives when carrying out its functions under the Licensing Act 2003;
- The authority was required to review, adopt and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy every five years, with the current review due by the end of January 2026;
- The Committee of the Licensing Authority had considered a draft revised policy on 22 May 2025 and agreed that consultation should be undertaken. Public consultation took place between 2 June 2025 and 27 July 2025, and

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responses were reviewed by the Committee on 9 September 2025, with amendments made where appropriate;

- The Policy Development Panel had recommended that 75% of windows facing retail areas remained free from signage, decoration or obstruction; and
- The final draft policy, attached at Appendix 2, was now being presented to Council for adoption and publication. Failure to adopt and publish the policy by the statutory deadline would leave the authority open to challenge against licensing decisions.

Members considered the report and made the following comment:

- The Chairman of the Policy Development Panel thanked the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and the Committee of the Licensing Authority for their consideration and inclusion of the recommendation from the Policy Development Panel, as noted above.

DECISION:

That the Statement of Licensing Policy be adopted and published by the statutory deadline.

67. PENSION & PENSION DISCRETIONS POLICY

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Corporate which sought Council’s approval for the revised HR policy (Pensions and Pensions Discretions Policy)

The Portfolio Holder – Corporate and Environmental Services introduced the report and the following main points were highlighted:

- The policy was a statutory requirement under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulation and set out how the Council would apply certain discretionary powers relating to pensions;
- The policy had been developed by PSPS and had been considered by the Readers’ Panel, including officers and trade union representatives, as well as by the Policy Development Panel; and
- Approval of the policy would strengthen consistency across the partnership, safeguard compliance, and provide a fair and transparent approach to pension-related decisions.

Members queried the meaning of ‘mandatory’ within the ‘discretionary’ policy. The Head of HR and Organisational

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Development explained that certain matters were classed as mandatory discretions under the LGPS framework and must be included in the Council's policy.

DECISION:

That the HR policy (Pensions and Pensions Discretions Policy) be approved.

**68. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR THE
UNPARISHED AREA OF SPALDING**

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) which sought Council approval to commence a Community Governance review for the unparished area of Spalding.

The Leader introduced the report and stated that:

- The matter had been under discussion for a considerable period and that the likelihood of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) had prompted the issue to be brought before full Council to ensure that Spalding retained a local voice to address issues that might otherwise be remote from a unitary council;
- The report set out the detail and process of the proposed Community Governance Review (CGR). It was clarified that there was no difference in powers between a parish council and a town council; the distinction lay solely in the name;
- The process would be lengthy and did not guarantee the establishment of a town council, as this was dependent upon two stages of consultation. The final decision would rest with full Council;
- In respect of recommendation 2, consultation had taken place with Group Leaders to ensure appropriate representation on the Working Group, which would comprise the following Councillors:
 - Councillor J Le Sage,
 - Councillor M Le Sage,
 - Councillor D Ashby,
 - Councillor G Taylor,
 - Councillor J Whitbourn,
 - Councillor M Hassan and
 - Councillor I Sheard.

Councillor Barnes queried whether it would be advisable to appoint at least one member who was an existing parish councillor to the Working Group. In response, the Leader stated

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that the intention had been to ensure representation from all Spalding wards, which had been considered a key priority.

DECISION:

That Council:

- 1) Approved the terms of reference for a Community Governance Review and the publication of Stage 1 consultation;
- 2) Appointed seven members (as named above) to a CGR Working Group to consider consultation responses and present draft proposals and final recommendations to full Council; and
- 3) Delegated authority to the Chief Executive to undertake the CGR, including making and publishing any necessary modifications to the Terms of Reference.

69. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance (Monitoring Officer) which asked the Council to receive the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25.

The Chairmen of both overview and scrutiny committees addressed the meeting with the following comments:

- Councillor Alcock, the Chairman of the Performance Monitoring Panel, acknowledged the support provided by officers and members, which was essential to the work of the committees and expressed his appreciation for the assistance of his Vice-Chairman, Councillor Booth.
- Councillor Woolf, the Chairman of the Policy Development Panel, extended his thanks to Councillor Eldridge as Vice-Chairman and to the panel members. He highlighted that the work undertaken by the panel had real impact, as exemplified at agenda item 12.

DECISION:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/2025 be received.

70. HEALTH SCRUTINY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of Councillor G Scalese which provided South Holland District Council with an update following the latest meeting of the Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire Committee.

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DECISION:

That the report be noted.

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

There were none.

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

There are none.

73. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

Members resolved that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be 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 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**74. PARTNERSHIP CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT
TEAM - ESTABLISHMENT ADJUSTMENT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Regulatory which sought member approval to make permanent the existing temporary s113 agreements within the Partnership Climate Change and Environment Team.

DECISION

That the recommendations detailed within the exempt report be approved.

(The meeting ended at 7.48 pm)

(End of minutes)