



www.nelincs.gov.uk

**NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON**

**16<sup>th</sup> September, 2021**

**Present:** Councillor Hasthorpe (in the Chair)  
Councillors Abel, Aisthorpe, Astbury, Batson, Beasant, Brasted, Brookes, Cairns, Callison, Cracknell, Croft, Dawkins, Freeston, Furneaux, Goodwin, Green, Harness, Hogan, Hudson, Jackson, Lindley, Mickleburgh, Patrick, Pettigrew, Procter, Robinson, Rodwell, Rudd, Sandford, Shepherd, Sheridan, Silvester, Smith, S. Swinburn, Westcott and Wilson

**Officers in Attendance:**

- Rob Walsh (Chief Executive)
- Simon Jones (Assistant Director Law, Governance and Assets - Monitoring Officer)
- Sharon Wroot (Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources)
- Paul Windley (Democratic and Scrutiny Team Manager)

The proceedings were opened with prayers by Paul Wisken, the Civic and Mayoral Officer.

**NEL.27 MR AUSTIN MITCHELL**

Members stood to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect for Austin Mitchell, High Steward and former MP for Great Grimsby, who passed away on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.

**NEL.28 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor welcomed those present to the meeting and gave his thanks to everyone who had supported him in his recent sky dive which had raised over £1800 for the Mayor's Charities. He also thanked members of the Conservative Group for their donation to the Mayor's Charities, in lieu of Christmas cards. He concluded by urging all Members to join him at his 'Mayor's Do' on October 30<sup>th</sup> again in support of the Mayor's Charities, with tickets available soon.

## **NEL.29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillors Parkinson, Reynolds, Shreeve, K. Swinburn and Woodward.

## **NEL.30 MINUTES**

RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting of North East Lincolnshire Council held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were approved as a correct record.

## **NEL.31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Wilson declared a personal interest in item NEL.34 as he was employed in the skills sector.

## **NEL.32 QUESTION TIME**

There were four questions submitted by members of the public for this meeting, in accordance with the Council's procedures.

The first question was submitted by Mr Bonner to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism. Mr Bonner attended the meeting and put the question, as set out below:

*“Residents are asking if it is right that North East Lincolnshire Council should be applying for Levelling Up Funding to facilitate mass building on attractive and popular greenfield sites on the edge of town and take away our precious countryside at a time when there are over two thousand empty homes in North East Lincolnshire, many homes unfit for people to live in and many derelict buildings in Central Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham. Are you able to please explain the benefits of these new housing developments at average tax band D to those in the Borough who have been “left behind” for many, many years and who struggle to find genuinely affordable housing?”*

Councillor Procter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism, responded that the Local Plan identified a broad range of sites of different sizes and locations, including a mix of greenfield and brownfield sites. It was important to offer a mix of opportunities to address the broad spectrum of needs across the market. Greenfield sites across the borough were required to deliver a mix of housing for specific requirements such as affordable housing, extra care, retirement homes, and provision for self and custom built homes. However, there were many brown field site developments underway. Examples of this were the former western school site in Grimsby, the former Birds Eye factory site, the former Thrunscoe school site and the former Matthew Humberstone school site. In addition, Garth Lane featured in the Grimsby Masterplan as a site earmarked for housing, subject to planning agreement, and there were numerous other brownfield sites in the Local Plan. Councillor Procter noted that there was a need to face realities and unfortunately it would not be

possible to meet all identified needs through empty homes or brownfield sites alone. However, work continued to deliver on the Empty Property Strategy using a range of powers and activities, including enhanced Council Tax charges for absent landlords for properties of over 2, 5 and 10 years, ramping up to a 300% premium charge. The Council also had its Housing Strategy in place which specifically worked to deliver:

- People living in high quality, suitable properties
- Housing provision supports and accelerates economic growth and income generation for NEL
- Reduction in empty homes in the borough
- We reduce the gap between the most and least disadvantaged neighbourhoods, so that everyone can live in safe, healthy and vibrant community
- A revitalised town centre offer and a new urban community
- Enable and empower resident and groups to contribute and make a difference in their community
- Households living in energy efficient homes

In addition, Councillor Procter felt that it was worth noting that the term affordable in this case could mean low cost. Low cost housing was plentiful in these areas throughout the tenures and we still wouldn't meet the housing need we require for growth. Affordable Housing providers would have the opportunity to take on Section 106 properties which would support reducing housing need in the borough, and thereby increasing the number of affordable houses. He noted that many empty properties were two or three bedroomed pre-1919 terraced houses, requiring full refurbishment with owners who were unable to afford the repairs due to negative equity or insufficient capital.

Turning to the Levelling Up Fund, Councillor Procter reported that this would see investment in local infrastructure that had a visible impact on people and their communities. This included a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes, urban regeneration projects and cultural assets. The first round of funding would focus on three themes: transport investments; regeneration and town centre investment; and cultural investments. This was with the prime objective of creating 8000 plus jobs for current and future generations in the area. He stressed that the purchase and renovation of unoccupied housing stock was not an objective of the Levelling Up Fund and this was not eligible for funding under central government requirements. Essentially, the delivery of future housing stock was market led.

Councillor Procter commented that we live in a free market economy and it would be a dereliction of duty for any local authority or any U.K. government, irrespective of political affiliation, to point blank refuse to build aspirational homes and employment zones for future generations. However, he gave an assurance that, as with all planning applications, there would be a rigorous process that needed to be followed. For example, there would be extensive consultation with many organisations such as the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England during the planning process. Moreover, residents can put their views to planning officers and the Planning Committee, which would make the

final decision on any proposed housing site development, wherever that may be in the borough.

The second question was from Mr Brooks for the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets. As Mr Brooks was not in attendance at the meeting, the Mayor put the question as set out below.

*“In the Budget, Finance and Commissioning Plan Report to Cabinet of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021, it is stated that: ‘The Council will only achieve financial sustainability through funding and supporting economic and housing growth and maintaining a clear focus on its key outcomes’. Is it not the fact that due to the continued withdrawal of central government funding that North East Lincolnshire Council is struggling to achieve financial sustainability and that would explain the fact that projected ‘savings’ i.e. budget cuts of almost £5m look to be required in 2022/23 and 2023/24 despite council tax rates being increased by the maximum permitted? In simple terms would it be fair to say that the council is being forced to build thousands of new houses on green-field sites just to maintain a degree of financial sustainability?”*

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets, Councillor Jackson, Leader of the Council, responded that council tax created sustainable recurrent income for the council to fund frontline services where central grant funding wasn't available. Council tax made up approximately 47% of this council's funding and therefore any change in the council tax base (the number of properties) brought in additional income. However, it was important to note that any increase to the council tax base also brought additional costs in terms of service delivery. The additional income generated for the council was marginal and was reinvested into service delivery. Changes to the council tax base were influenced by local demographics on supply and demand for new builds, levels of void properties, locally set discounts and the Council Tax Support Scheme. Not all these factors were within the control of the council itself. Whilst there were existing gaps within the current medium term financial plan (MTFP) of £4.6M in 2022/23 and £4.7M in 2023/24, this was not uncommon at this stage in the budget process and these gaps would be revisited as part of the forthcoming budget setting process. Savings, efficiencies and changed ways of working usually reduce or eliminate the budget gap. There was also still some uncertainty in relation to future Council funding. Budget estimates in the MTFP were based upon projections in the agreed Local Plan in terms of potential supply of new homes. However, the main driver for building new homes across the borough was NOT to bring in council tax revenue. It was to deliver the exciting and ambitious growth plans as set out in the Local Plan that was unanimously adopted by this Council in March 2018. The Plan is predicated on the creation of around 8000 new jobs in North East Lincolnshire by 2032 and building about 10000 new homes over the same time-period. Only this way can we transform the local economy and bring more wealth and prosperity to our borough.

The third question was submitted by Mrs Downes to the Leader of the Council. Mrs Downes attended the meeting and put the question, as set out below:

*“In the debate on the Climate Emergency motion in September 2019, Council Leader Philip Jackson declared “For me it’s about what we do, not what we say. Declaring a climate emergency sounds good and is morally a great idea but it doesn’t actually deal with any of the issues”. He also went on to say “we’re proving a good example and leadership so I’m not in favour of declaring a climate emergency”. At the time Deputy Leader John Fenty stated “it staggers me that Lib Dems bring this motion but did nothing during their time while propping up Labour who were also complicit in doing next to nothing” and added “in the safe hands of this administration North East Lincolnshire will not be in a climate emergency.” Two years on, the council’s record on environmental issues is sub-standard to say the least. To give just two examples: The end of year figures for 2020/21 issued by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership show that a mere 11% of Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) and Local Geological Sites (LGSs) within North East Lincolnshire are under positive management. This is a proxy measure of local biodiversity and is used by central government to assess the performance of local authorities and is an appalling reflection on North East Lincolnshire Council. As a second example, the council declared a climate emergency two years ago. Despite that, there is still not a climate emergency plan in place, despite 78% of other councils already having such a plan. Is it not time that North East Lincolnshire Council started to get serious about biodiversity and environmental issues and immediately start to correct its poor performance?”*

Councillor Jackson, the Leader of the Council, confirmed that he did say that he was against the declaration of a climate emergency in North East Lincolnshire as he considered it to be gesture politics. He felt that it should be about what we do and not what we say. He considered the Council to have a good track record; and not “sub-standard” as Mrs Downes alleged. On climate issues, the Council had undertaken an in-depth review of current policies, procedures and activity, to propose an approach to identify further opportunities to reduce our own carbon emissions as well as contribute to mitigation work and reduction of carbon emissions across North East Lincolnshire. As part of this work, the council had carefully considered government direction such as the 25-year Environment Plan, the 10-point plan for green industrial revolution and the progressing Environment Bill, as well as local directions and plans. The work had resulted in two technical carbon road maps, one for the Council’s internal activities and one for the wider borough. It had been further expanded to ensure equal attention was given to the ecological impact of climate change and longer-term threat to biodiversity. The council was currently in the process of public consultation on the proposed carbon reduction priorities. The final Carbon Road Map and action plan was expected to be in place by the end of the year. Councillor Jackson added that the council had not stood still in respect to Climate Action during this policy development stage. In 2021 alone, funding had been secured to implement £2.9 million of energy improvements to public buildings in North East Lincolnshire. This was in addition to the council managed Great Lincolnshire Smarter Energy Scheme which had seen over £9 million worth of funding to energy improvements for businesses and public bodies in Lincolnshire. Other notable climate improvements included:

- Enabling continued investment in energy efficiency of North East Lincolnshire's housing stock through grants and government funded programmes.
- 13% of the council's current vehicle fleet was already fully electric and this would increase to 16% by March 2022, with 31 vehicles in total fully electric, including the mayoral car.
- Most of the council's street lighting had now been upgraded to energy efficient LED, reducing carbon emissions by 35%.
- All council electricity was purchased from sustainable sources.
- Solar panels had been installed on the roofs of several of the council's larger buildings.
- North East Lincolnshire's cycle route network had been greatly expanded and plans were in place to extend it further.
- Over the last couple of years, the council's waste and recycling collection service had been completely overhauled with households now having a big increase in recycling capacity. This had resulted in a significant improvement in recycling rates after many years of stagnation under the previous Labour administration. Residual household waste was consumed by the energy from waste plant at Stallingborough, generating power, with an insignificant volume of waste going to landfill.

In terms of biodiversity, Councillor Jackson was very proud of the unique nature in North East Lincolnshire. The Council had worked very closely with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership and voluntary groups to ensure nature areas were surveyed and correctly classified as Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites to highlight their need for special consideration. In 2008, 17 sites had been identified. By 2018, after a programme of effective identification and surveys, the number of recognised sites had increased to 38. Most of these sites were not on council land. Management plans were currently in place for the larger council owned sites and work was progressing to have them in place for all Council owned Local Wildlife Sites. The council was restricted in what it could do regarding land outside of its ownership, but it would continue to work with landowners. Councillor Jackson welcomed the changes brought in by the Agricultural Act 2021 and proposed in the Environment Bill 2021, which he hoped would help to increase nature preservation and enhance biodiversity both on public and private land. Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites were not the only sites which were important to manage for biodiversity and the council was currently looking at where it can best improve and expand the biodiversity in our natural environment areas. The council was currently going through public consultation on proposed priorities for preserving and enhancing our Natural Assets. This would include local implementation of schemes aimed to increase biodiversity on both public and private land including Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery, and Landscape Recovery. The council aimed to publish its ambitious Natural Asset Plan by the end of the year to set out its priorities and an action plan to tackle this very important issue.

The final question was submitted by Mrs Downes to the Leader of the Council as follows:

*“As self-styled safe hands, given the Grimsby West development cuts through one of the most diverse areas of natural habitat and one of only 221 chalks streams worldwide and then build 3,700 houses on green-field land when there are viable alternatives, what plans do the council have to review the Local Plan for 2013-2032 in light of the recent IPCC report which adds weight to the argument that the Local Plan was a product of its time? Many other councils such as Lancaster City Council, Leeds, Wokingham, Somerset, Cheshire and Chester to name a few have already reviewed their local plans to ensure they are fit for purpose.”*

Councillor Jackson responded by firstly correcting that the Local Plan was very clear that the Grimsby West development was potentially 3500 homes, not 3700. Councillor Jackson noted that all Local Plans must be reviewed within five years of adoption and that was why some councils were ahead of us on reviews as they adopted their plans earlier than us. It was agreed at Cabinet in June 2020 to commence a review of our Local Plan which was subsequently paused because of the publication of the planning white paper. However, with delays to these reforms and no time scales for progression, Cabinet would be agreeing to re-start the process at its October meeting. He emphasised that this review was not related to the current Grimsby West protests. A key priority was to ensure that the plan was kept up to date, and to ensure that control was maintained over where development took place. This year, the council had reached a critical point regarding its five-year housing land supply assessment. Failure to act now could leave the council open to applications for speculative developments on sites not allocated for development, and we had seen the devastating effect that had prior to the adoption of the current Local Plan in 2018. The review would address changes to national planning policy and local strategies. He felt that much of the local plan was operating well and did not need revision. Grimsby West was one of three strategic housing allocations intended to deliver housing over the long term. Development of a new plan would take around three years to supersede the existing local plan and must follow the same statutory process as preparing the original local plan. He looked forward to extensive public engagement with the review process. He concluded by noting that the planning process did not stop while a plan was under review and the current plan continued to apply.

### **NEL.33 THE LEADER’S STATEMENT**

The Council received a statement from the Leader of the Council.

The Leader welcomed the return to the Council Chamber but noted that COVID had not gone away. He paid tribute to all involved in the vaccination programme which was currently the most important line of defence to the virus. The health and care system in the Borough faced a very challenging winter period and officers were reviewing business continuity plans and were working closely with NHS colleagues to do as much as practicable to meet the challenges that lay ahead and support effective public service delivery. Partnership working and collaboration had never been more important and the leadership role being taken across the integrated care agenda reflected the council’s role as an important partner across our health and care system.

The Leader stressed that economic recovery was pivotal to taking the area forward and mitigating the damage caused by the pandemic. Engagement continued with partners to ensure that the public, private and voluntary sectors work together and play to their strengths over the months and years ahead. The review of the Local Plan was linked to this. He reminded Members that the plan was predicated on the creation of around 8000 net new jobs in North East Lincolnshire by 2032 and building about 10000 new homes over the same time-period. This would transform the local economy and bring the increased wealth and prosperity that everyone wanted to see across our borough. The review of the Local Plan had been paused because of the publication of planning white paper. However, with delays to these reforms and no time scales for progression, Cabinet would be agreeing to re-start the process at its October meeting. The Leader emphasised that this review was not related to the current Grimsby West protests. Rather, it was a key priority to keep the plan up to date, and to ensure that there was control over where development took place. He added that this year, the council had reached a critical point with regards to its five-year housing land supply assessment. Failure to act now could leave the council open to applications for speculative developments on sites not allocated for development, the devastating effect of which had been seen prior to the adoption of the current Local Plan in 2018. Development of the new plan would take around three years to supersede the existing local plan and must follow the same statutory process as preparing the original local plan. He noted that the planning process did not stop while a plan was under review and the existing plan would continue to apply.

The Leader commented on the impact of COVID on the resort of Cleethorpes. It was recognised that the resort was ripe for further development to reap the full benefits of the staycation market and make it a resort that provided all year-round attractions. Therefore, the council was currently tendering for external expertise and capacity to consult and work with all stakeholders to develop a new resort masterplan. Although this plan would encompass most of the resort area, it would particularly focus on the North Promenade, as it was considered to be in most need of investment and had great untapped potential. The intention was that the new masterplan would form the basis of a Levelling Up Fund bid in the new year.

Meanwhile, in Grimsby, work continued apace on working up the Future High Streets Fund and Towns Fund projects which would help transform and repurpose the town centre. The Port of Grimsby had been selected as the location to test renewable hydrogen production within offshore wind farms. The £4.5 million project, spearheaded by Ørsted and ITM Power, would see the technology developed and demonstrated alongside the company's East Coast Hub. The Leader felt that this was clearly an exciting project for Grimsby and it was another demonstration of the growth of the renewable and carbon zero industries and jobs in the area.

The publication of the Levelling Up White Paper in the autumn was eagerly awaited, setting out the Government's approach to devolution and investment in the future growth of those parts of the country that were yet to operate under any form of devolution. This was anticipated to include proposals for so called "County Deals". The Leaders of the ten councils across Greater Lincolnshire, the

three upper-tier authorities and the seven districts, had submitted a joint letter to the local government minister clearly demonstrating our shared interest, and the Leader looked forward to making progress in future discussions. Meanwhile, meetings of the newly established Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee continued, with Leaders of the three Greater Lincolnshire upper tier authorities and representatives from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership collaborating on strategic infrastructure, industrial decarbonisation, food, tourism, skills and provision of a joint coroner's service across the extended footprint. As well as delivering potential service improvements and efficiencies, this was a practical demonstration to government of our willingness and ability to work together.

The Leader concluded by noting that details of special urgency decisions taken in accordance with the Constitution as well as an update on the implementation of Motions previously resolved at preceding Council meetings would be circulated to all Members by Democratic Services after this meeting.

### **NEL.34 ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

The Council considered a report from the Leader of the Council seeking to adopt the refreshed Economic Strategy. This report was referred to Council by Cabinet at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. The recommendations of Cabinet were circulated at this meeting.

RESOLVED - That the Economic Strategy 2021 be agreed, as drawn subject to the following additions:

- i. At page 43, section 9.31: an additional provision to work with private sector colleagues to assess the potential for a careers advice service for students from secondary and tertiary education settings; and
- ii. Noting that inward investment includes businesses across all sectors (including tourism) to incorporate specific tourism objectives into the Cleethorpes Master planning exercise.

### **NEL.35 TREASURY OUTTURN REPORT 2021/22**

The Council received a report from the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets containing details of treasury management arrangements, activity and performance during the 2020/21 financial year. This report was referred to Council by Cabinet at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.

RESOLVED – That the report now submitted be noted in respect of treasury management activity during 2020/21.

### **NEL.36 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

The Mayor invited Councillor Rodwell to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“Is it true you can no longer take extra waste to the tip if you don’t register your car and contents first on the North East Lincolnshire website?”*

Councillor Swinburn, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport responded that only people with large vehicles, as set out on the council’s website, were being asked to register. There had been a large increase in vehicles visiting the sites from outside the Borough and it was important not to allow the sites to be mis-used. Therefore something had to be done to alleviate the problem to make this less of a burden on the taxpayers of North East Lincolnshire.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked if the portfolio holder would agree that barriers to recycling needed to be removed.

Councillor Swinburn responded that steps had been taken to reduce fly tipping in the Borough and recycling figures had actually increased.

The Chair invited Councillor Dawkins to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council’s Standing Orders.

*“The previous Labour administration failed to tackle growing congestion on our road network, leading to delays for road users and businesses and increased levels of pollution. Will the Portfolio Holder for Highways instigate a review of relevant speed limits in order to help reduce congestion, journey times and pollution?”*

Councillor Swinburn responded that the council had a robust Highways Strategy that had delivered significant success, including Toll Bar, the Little Coates Scheme, Kiln Lane, the hospital junction improvements, the Humber Link Road and the Riby Square improvements. This had been achieved by successfully securing external funding. Schemes identified for the future include the A180 roundabouts, the A1136, and the Grimsby West Strategic Link Road. Consistent annual data collection provided good quality information for the council to manage and plan for changes to travel behaviour. Success in schemes to get people out of cars and onto sustainable travel modes, helping meet carbon objectives. These schemes include A180 Cycle Superhighway, Improvements to South Humber Bank cycle Routes, Real Time Information displays for public transport, electric car charging points among others. He confirmed that he would ask officers to instigate a review of speed limits in the Borough.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Dawkins enquired whether there would be a review of all routes in and out of Grimsby town centre.

Councillor Swinburn noted that these were under constant review and there would be a review of all forms of congestion.

The Chair invited Councillor Wilson to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council’s Standing Orders.

*“At a full council meeting over a year ago, you said you would look into the cleaning of pavement gullies, such as the ones located on the pavements in Corporation Road, can you update the chamber on what progress you have made?”*

Councillor Swinburn responded that the gully cleaning rota had been changed to the benefit of the Borough. Gullies were emptied and cleansed on a routine basis as part of the council’s maintenance programme. This was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance. As part of the maintenance regime all road gullies were emptied and cleansed at least once a year, however areas which were known to have a particular problem with carriageway flooding, had the road gullies cleared on a more regular basis. If there was a blocked gully in a passageway, this was normally the responsibility of the owners of the properties which the passageway served. If the passageway was a part of the adopted highway, it would be the council’s responsibility to clear and maintain the gully. Councillor Swinburn noted that there were very few passageways that were part of the adopted highway. He reminded Councillor Wilson that if there was a problem with a particular gully then this could be reported through the usual channels.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson noted that the pavement gullies on Corporation Road had been blocked for a while and given his response to the original question had focused on road gullies, he wondered if the portfolio holder knew what a pavement gully was.

Councillor Swinburn reminded Councillor Wilson that if there was a particular problem with a pavement gully then this should be logged via the customer portal on the council’s website.

The Chair invited Councillor Wilson to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council’s Standing Orders.

*“Could the portfolio holder inform this Council on how many cases have ended up in court for street issues in the residential part of west marsh such as fly tipping, dog fouling and littering in the last two years?”*

Councillor Shepherd, Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities, responded by presenting the following figures for 2020 and 2021 (to date):

- Fly tipping: 2020 – 0 prosecutions in West Marsh ward, 2021: 1 pending and 1 one listed for court but then withdrawn.
- Public Space Protection Orders: 2020 – 21, 2021 – 3
- Dog fouling: 2020 – 0, 2021 – 0
- Littering: 2020 – 18, 2021 – 5
- Littering from vehicles: 2020 – 1, 2021 – 0.

Councillor Shepherd felt that these figures showed that enforcement procedures were working and a reduction was being seen in those offences.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson enquired how many cases of fly tipping had been reported in the West Marsh ward.

Councillor Shepherd responded that 14 cases had been reported. The Safer Street Initiative was bringing investment to the ward and they were trying to get the public to report more in key areas but it was difficult.

The Chair invited Councillor Wilson to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Health and Adult Social Care, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“Do the following three sections of legislation still apply, if not, by what have they been superseded?”*

- 1) *Section 78, Public Health Act 1936 gives the council the power to clear private passageways.*
- 2) *Section 4, Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 requires the council to inspect land, and take action, to deal with rats and mice when a complaint has been made.*
- 3) *Section 34, Public Health Act 1961 gives the council power to remove “seriously detrimental” rubbish.”*

Councillor Cracknell, Portfolio Holder for Health and Adult Social Care, responded that Section 78 of the Public Health Act 1936 gave the council the power to clear private passageways. It was still in force but it was a discretionary power that the local authority can opt to use, and not a statutory duty. It had not been used in North East Lincolnshire and to our knowledge was not commonly used by other local authorities. It was a problematic piece of legislation to apply, as costs needed to be claimed back from all residents occupying premises served by the passageway. Establishing occupancy and sharing out costs was complex and time consuming. As there was no power to prosecute anyone for non-compliance, there was also risk the local authority could not recover the cost of clearance if people refused to pay. The legislation also does not apply to vacant properties, leaving empty property owners free of duty. Overall, there was a risk that using this power would place a charge only on compliant residents, leaving many others with unpaid bills and no repercussions.

Section 4 of the Prevention of Damage By Pests Act 1949 required the council to inspect land, and take action, to deal with rats and mice when a complaint had been made. This was served on the owner or occupier of the land. It was regularly used by the Environmental Enforcement Team for waste on private land and gardens, where it can be established exactly who was responsible for each land parcel. Community Protection Notices under Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 were also used for some of these situations.

Section 34 of the Public Health Act 1961 gave the council power to remove “seriously detrimental” rubbish. This could be used, but generally seen to have been superseded by section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA). EPA must be served on the person/s causing the nuisance or leaving the waste,

but if we don't know who left it there, then it could be served on the owners of the land.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson enquired why, given the legislation in place, rubbish was being allowed to accumulate in alleyways.

Councillor Cracknell responded by confirming that it was the EPA that was being used to enforce such matters.

The Chair invited Councillor Patrick to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“When the special Covid grants from government cease, will this council face a deeper funding crisis, or is there a clear plan of how the shortfall will be bridged?”*

In the absence of the portfolio holder, Councillor Jackson, the Leader of the Council responded that the council's financial challenges had been well known and understood for some time. COVID had exacerbated those challenges and there had been a rise in demand for services particularly within adults and children's social care, creating further financial challenge. However, to what extent that would become long term, was unknown, given that COVID hadn't gone away, and rising case numbers had been seen, both here and in most other areas. Plans had been developed to help with recovery – both as a local authority and as a place – our response to and recovery from COVID was shared and discussed with Elected Members earlier on in the pandemic. The council had utilised government support packages to best effect so far, especially in its swift and efficient response supporting the local business community. However, COVID funding was only ever going to be short term. Through our financial planning process, the council would model funding assumptions and spending plans, and deal with any gaps, following our internal governance process, engaging informally and formally with Elected Members as part of that process.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked, with reserves running dry and borrowing out of control, how the Leader would feel when he becomes the first in the authority's history to be issued with a Section 114 bankruptcy notice.

Councillor Jackson responded that he was not anticipating that to happen.

The Chair invited Councillor Patrick to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Health and Adult Social Care, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“Could the Portfolio Holder detail the outcome of the resolution at the previous full council regarding the proposals to expand prescription charges and whether she supports the view provided?”*

Councillor Cracknell responded that the outcome was as shown in the minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Full Council had asked scrutiny to review the consultation document. The

panel took time to look at each of the questions and its comments, as noted in the minutes, were passed on to the Department for Health and Social Care.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick enquired when, coupled with all the other problems that a lot of people would be facing, would the Conservative Party's war against the vulnerable people in society end.

Councillor Cracknell responded that the consultation was far-reaching. Anyone was able to respond and she thought there would be wide and varied responses. As an example, people at the start of their careers may have an issue with supporting and effectively subsidising a 63 year old person with a fairly substantial income.

The Chair invited Councillor Patrick to present the following question to the Leader of the Council, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“Does the Leader feel that the group known as 'Save Freshney Valley' and other residents with similar views on this topic have been listened to and had their views properly respected to date?”*

Councillor Jackson responded that yes he did.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked what was the point of the administration claiming to be a listening council if they were just going to ignore people.

Councillor Jackson did not accept that the group had been ignored and on the contrary, felt that they had been engaged on a number of occasions. He had spoken on radio programmes about the potential development and there had been a number of meetings between councillors and the group. He felt that the comprehensive responses to the public questions at this and previous Council meetings showed that they were not being ignored. Councillor Jackson was pleased to have the public engaging on a key issue and his administration would continue to listen and engage.

The Chair invited Councillor Patrick to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Skills, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“Does the portfolio holder share my support for the non-statutory financial provision made available to care leavers currently in higher education?”*

Councillor Lindley, Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Skills, responded that he did share that view. He felt that it was a timely question as an 11 year old looked after child from our area was about to attend an independent school in Hull, with aspirations to move on to university. He felt that we had to accept that many of our looked after children did not have the best start in life and when opportunities like this occurred they should be supported in every way possible. He felt that the allowances being paid to our looked after children supported that.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked if the portfolio holder shared his view that the current subsistence allowance should be maintained and kept under regular review to make sure that it was adequate.

Councillor Lindley responded that the current allowance was in line with neighbouring authorities and he wouldn't want to see it withdrawn as the authority was doing the right thing in making it available.

The Chair invited Councillor Sheridan to present the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, the question having been submitted on notice in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

*“Many residents in the West Marsh don't have room for the recycling bins, and make use of bring to sites that are within walking distance of their homes; how will the removal of even more 'bring to' sites, such as the one at the Community Centre, support those residents to recycle that are using those facilities currently, especially when other 'bring to sites' in the area, such as the one formally in the Duke of York Gardens, have also been removed.”*

Councillor Swinburn responded that it had been clearly shown that we were recycling more since the larger bins had been introduced. The bring to sites had not been generating excess waste and therefore it was prudent to remove such underused sites. This would enable the council to make better use of staff resources, such as within street cleansing and grounds maintenance, in order to maintain the upkeep of the Borough. He added that if anyone had any concerns about their bins, then they can contact the council and a visit would be arranged.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Sheridan asked why the portfolio holder was not listening to ward councillors who felt that the bring to site should still be in use and its removal would be detrimental to the local community.

Councillor Swinburn did not feel that its removal would be detrimental as it had been shown that the sites were being under used.

## **NEL.37 MINUTES OF THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

The Council received the minutes of decisions taken under delegated powers at the following meetings:

- Cabinet – 14<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> August
- Portfolio Holder Environment and Transport – 9<sup>th</sup> August
- Portfolio Holder Children, Education and Skills – 23<sup>rd</sup> August
- Scrutiny Panel Children and Lifelong Learning – 15<sup>th</sup> July
- Scrutiny Panel Communities – 22<sup>nd</sup> July
- Scrutiny Panel Economy - 9<sup>th</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July
- Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August, 19<sup>th</sup> August
- Scrutiny Panel Tourism and Visitor Economy – 29<sup>th</sup> July

- Place Board (operating as the Health and Wellbeing Board) – 5<sup>th</sup> July
- Audit and Governance Committee - 22<sup>nd</sup> July
- Planning Committee – 14<sup>th</sup> July
- Licensing Sub Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> July, 30<sup>th</sup> July
- Appointments Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> July

The Mayor advised that a number of questions on notice had been received on the above minutes. They would be dealt with in the order in which they had been received; each questioner would be permitted one supplementary question and there would be no debate on the questions asked or the answers given.

- (1) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Cabinet – 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute CB.43 (Review of Bring To Site Provision)

*Given the clear opposition to recycling by the portfolio holder, how does he feel about being the first portfolio holder for environment of this council that doesn't care about the environment?*

Councillor Swinburn responded by noting that the Waste Strategy had resulted in the largest public consultation response recorded by this authority. 4,800 participants had stated that they wanted to see a change from the system that had been put in place by the previous administration. It had now been just over a year since the larger recycling wheelie bins had been introduced and the amount recycled had reached record levels. In 2019, 709 tonnes were being recycled each month and in 2020 this had risen to 843 tonnes. The council was achieving a 40% recycling collection rate; a figure that had never been achieved previously. A pilot scheme for food waste had now been introduced and 98% of respondents had said that they were happy with the pilot and wanted it to continue. The council was helping households more than ever to recycle and he felt that the figures spoke for themselves. Councillor Swinburn stated that he did care about the environment and it was quite clear that he was not opposed to recycling.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked whether the portfolio holder knew what percentage of the population would support the removal of the bring to sites.

Councillor Swinburn responded that he did not have the figure to hand but he agreed to report this back to Councillor Patrick in writing.

- (2) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Portfolio Holder for Finance in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Cabinet – 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute CB.47 (Treasury Outturn Report)

*The council is facing the prospect over the next few years of some £21 million of loans maturing and requiring payment, where will this money be found in a financial plan that is running on fumes?*

In the absence of the portfolio holder, Councillor Jackson responded that he did not recognise the allegation that the plan was running on fumes. In terms of the £21m loans maturing, it was his understanding that they would be refinanced as appropriate in line with the council's treasury management policies.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked whether in referring to re-financing, did this mean the administration would be paying off debts by accruing more debt.

Councillor Jackson responded that as a previous portfolio holder for finance, Councillor Patrick should be fully aware of how the council's treasury management policies operate.

- (3) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Rodwell to the Chair of the Children and Lifelong Scrutiny Panel in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Children and Lifelong Learning – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute SPCLL.9 (Children's Social Care Improvement Update)

*Where it says 'panel members had been informed by vulnerable families that they felt like they were out of the loop with our services and had not been contacted recently'. How many vulnerable families complained they were not contacted?*

Councillor Freeston, Chair of the Children and Lifelong Scrutiny Panel, responded that he was unable to answer the question accurately without referring to council officers but he was more than happy to do so and then provide a written response.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked how the council made sure that vulnerable families knew how to make contact and seek assistance.

Councillor Freeston was aware that officers had been contacting vulnerable families but he agreed to take it away and make sure that a detailed response was provided.

- (4) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Green to the Chair of Communities Scrutiny Panel in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Communities – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 Minute SPC.8 (Review of Motorcycle Nuisance in Parks and Open Spaces)

*What is an anti-theft motor cycle gate and how this will work in practice?*

Councillor Silvester, Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Panel, responded that it was a barrier designed in a slalom or chicane shape but unfortunately it did not work in practice. Hence, the portfolio holder had taken the sensible decision not to pursue the petition request.

- (5) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Communities – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 Minute SPC.11 (Energy Carbon Roadmap)

*Does the portfolio holder consider the 2050, perhaps 2040 target to reduce the council carbon emissions target to zero to be ambitious?*

Councillor Swinburn noted that this wasn't his portfolio area but he had commented on this minute regarding electric vehicle charging points. However, he responded that he didn't believe the targets were ambitious but they were realistic.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked if the target needed to be adjusted, what year would it be brought down to so that the portfolio holder could be held to account.

Councillor Swinburn repeated that this wasn't his portfolio area so he was unable to answer that question.

- (6) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Goodwin to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*It says there is no student accommodation on the Garth Lane development but is the council still in talks about having a University in the town centre?*

Councillor Procter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism, responded that the Grimsby Masterplan did not make reference to a university campus. The approved proposal was for a mixed use residential development. This would form one of the main elements of the £21m Towns Fund monies aimed at bringing about new housing stock at the brownfield Garth Lane site.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Goodwin asked why it was referred to in the minute if it was not part of the plans.

Councillor Procter responded that he could only answer the question in terms of policy and it was the administration's policy that Garth Lane would be developed for residential housing.

- (7) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*Who made the decision to withdraw from developing a higher education offer in the town centre, which was part of a wider aspirational policy for our young talent and our towns?*

Councillor Furneaux, Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel responded that the development of skills for our school leaving population was important. Cabinet had agreed an additional provision within the draft Economic Strategy for a potential skills advice service. The Grimsby Masterplan made no reference to a university campus and the Town Investment Plan provided further details on the proposals for the Garth Lane site. In June 2021, Cabinet considered proposals for the area in question based on funding available. This involved a scoring system with one of the criteria being a strategic fit with the Grimsby Town Centre Masterplan. This led to a recommendation for a housing development in Garth Lane along with a new provision for Grimsby Central Library. In addition, the plans for the new On Side Youth Zone included the potential for mentoring for young people, with the facility being more than what some would see as a glorified leisure centre.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson asked, if the decision was dropped, how was this scrutinised by the panel.

Councillor Furneaux responded that, as it was not part of any of the proposals, a decision was not required.

- (8) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Leader of the Council in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*The Leader confirmed that there will not be any intention of student accommodation along Garth Lane, why?*

Councillor Jackson responded that the question of a higher education presence in the town centre was part of the discussions on what the Grimsby Masterplan would look like. While it was speculated upon, it was never agreed. The Grimsby Masterplan was then put together and widely consulted upon. It was not felt that a higher education facility fitted in best with our plans and therefore student accommodation was not required. One of the Towns Fund projects would be the repurposing of the upper floors of the Central Library to focus on the skills and green agenda. So, there would be an education facility in the town centre but not a higher education facility. It had been agreed to look at a housing accommodation offer on Garth Lane and the Leader felt that this would provide the additional support that the town centre needed.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked if the Leader was aware that the previous administration had held extensive discussions on a higher education facility and this shift away showed a lack of ambition around the green future of Grimsby as a town.

Councillor Jackson responded by referring to the development of the green innovation hub at the Central Library and noted regular green initiatives around the town. He felt that there was a significant amount of education facilities available for the green agenda.

- (9) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Leader of the Council, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*Roughly what percentage of the annual housing target of the current local plan does the Leader believe to be reasonably delivered within the Grimsby town centre?*

Councillor Jackson responded that he could not provide an answer as it was unknown at this stage due to the proposals being very embryonic.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked if the Leader would challenge his belief that it would not deliver more than 1% of the target.

Councillor Jackson repeated that he did not know at this stage. However, he didn't feel that the idea of housing in the town centre was to meet a target but rather to diversify our offer and bring living back into the town centre to encourage footfall.

- (10) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Goodwin to the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*What is happening about the anti-social behaviour around the Minster and the hotel with the youngsters as it can be very intimidating walking round there after 6.00 pm when leaving work for me and any other workers leaving work at that time and also the bus station with drinkers at all times of the day?*

Councillor Shepherd responded that a multi-agency approach was being taken to tackle this issue. Police enforcement of anti-social behaviour through Public Space Protection Orders was being assisted by the use of CCTV and youth workers were also being utilised to provide support.

- (11) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Rodwell to the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*Can you update us on the current problems in the construction industries, including shortages of material and price increases?*

Councillor Furneaux responded that unfortunately this was a national issue that was outside his remit as Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked about the causes of the shortages and whether this related to grants being cut.

Councillor Furneaux referred to his previous response.

- (12) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Rodwell to the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:  
Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*What is 'aspirational waterfront housing'?*

Councillor Furneaux responded that until the plans were finalised it would be difficult for him to comment on the actual make-up of the proposed housing. However, he felt that the most needed to be made of such prime residential land.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked whether this would be an opportunity for good social and affordable housing or for landlords to make profit.

Councillor Furneaux repeated that it would be difficult to respond until plans were finalised and the matter taken through the planning process.

- (13) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:  
Scrutiny Panel Economy – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Minute SPE.4 (Town Investment Plan Projects)

*Can I ask the Chair, how many houses will be on offer in the town centre scheme?*

Councillor Furneaux responded that it would be difficult to provide an estimate until the scheme was finalised.

- (14) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:  
Scrutiny Panel Economy – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute SPE.12 (Levelling Up Fund Bid)

*How does the bid for the western relief road bring a positive success and pride to our area? Bearing in mind, in the Governments' prospectus for bidding, the chancellor says "prosperity can be measured in many ways". However, for many people the most powerful barometer of economic success is the positive change they see and the pride they feel in the places they call home.*

Councillor Furneaux responded that this project was still in its infancy. As such, it was very early to comment on the intricacies of the scheme. However, if the bid was successful then the scheme would follow the usual process, including planning, when issues relating to the wider environment could be crystallised.

Councillor Wilson raised a point of order as he felt that he had not an answer to his question.

Councillor Furneaux felt that he had provided an answer but added that the Local Plan, including reference to the Western Relief Road was agreed back in 2018 in order to bring local prosperity and pride to the area. As such, these matters were interlinked.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson asked how the Western Relief Road would give residents a belief of success and pride in the Borough.

Councillor Furneaux responded that the bid contained details of housing and this would include some form of aspirational housing. He was sure that the council would be mindful of limits on where developments could be built and it was difficult for him to comment any further prior to the planning process.

- (15) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Economy – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute SPE.12 (Levelling Up Fund Bid)

*Within the Levelling Up Fund bidding process, there is a requirement for consultation within the community, how many residents have been consulted and given responses on the current proposals being considered within our area?*

Councillor Swinburn responded that the bid was born from schemes identified in the Local Plan, which was signed off with cross party agreement in 2018 and that provided the opportunity for public consultation. There was not enough time for public consultation on the Levelling Up Fund bid but the only requirement of the bid was regarding engagement.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked how many people had been engaged on the bid.

Councillor Swinburn responded that he did not have any figures for this but reiterated that there had been opportunities to comment as part of the Local Plan process.

- (16) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Rodwell to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.8 (Oncology)

*What is the council doing to sort out the shortage of consultant oncologists for our area?*

Councillor Hudson, Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, responded that the council was restricted and all it could do was regularly monitor

the situation through the scrutiny process and make sure that our health providers were doing the best they could.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked whether years of austerity had contributed to the shortage of health professionals.

Councillor Hudson did not think that it had.

- (17) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Green to the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.8 (Oncology)

*Currently I realise the ability to manage the service and offer appointments has been affected by the pandemic and the timing for appointments has been extended from 6 mins per appointment to 10 minutes, reducing the numbers of patients able to be seen by the service. When appointments are offered to women in North East Lincolnshire they are offered an appointment at Hull first. If the woman then declines this as she feels unable to travel to Hull, for whatever reason, this is seen as personal choice. In order to get the appointment rearranged she has to then ring at the beginning of the month to be allocated a place at St Hugh's. If when she rings all those places are allocated she has to ring back next month to try to get an appointment. One woman I know of has had to wait for an extra 3 months. This still applies when referred by a consultant or when the woman has a history of cancer or issues with disability. Can I ask the portfolio holder if this is likely to continue and are there any plans to offer an equal service to patients in our area?*

Councillor Cracknell responded that it clearly was an anxious time for anyone having to attend oncology services. From the presentation at the scrutiny panel, the changes to the way the service was delivered had been introduced as a result of shortages and the need to see as many people as possible. The panel was informed that patients would be prioritised based on clinical need. While it was preferable to have as many services available close to home, the important factor was the health outcome for each patient and that could mean a service specialism could not be delivered at a local level. However, the panel was assured that patients on the south bank requiring nurse-led chemotherapy, would receive that at the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital in Grimsby.

- (18) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.9 (Integrated Care System)

*Does the Chair share my concern about governance arrangements for the integrated care system, especially regarding finance and the role of elected members, bearing in mind the size of the council budget that will be allocated and*

*as he knows, it is the responsibility of all elected members to have oversight of these budgets?*

Councillor Hudson responded that he did have concerns and noted that the Chief Executive had reported to the panel that there was more work to be done.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson asked if the Chair would push for wider engagement of Members on this matter.

Councillor Hudson agreed that it was important for Elected Member representatives to be involved.

- (19) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.9  
(Integrated Care System)

*Could the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care update this chamber on her policy regarding the commissioning of health services, especially on keeping these services within the boundaries of North East Lincolnshire.*

Councillor Cracknell responded that, as we face the challenges of COVID recovery and look to tackle the inequalities and vulnerabilities that it had exposed, as well as data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, she believed that we should cement place-based partnerships at a local level to address the key needs and factors in our community.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson noted that as part of the development of the integrated care system, the council may be asked for views on putting services out of area and he asked whether the portfolio holder would support the view that we should avoid the NHS becoming a service where patients had to go nationally to get the care they needed.

Councillor Cracknell responded that she was looking to ensure as many services as possible were commissioned and delivered locally. She shared the view that we did not want remote services, although there may be economies of scale where certain functions could be better provided on a larger footprint. Essentially, she wanted there to be place-based services based on the needs of the local population.

- (20) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Green to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.10  
(Provisional Outturn Report)

*Traditionally the disabled facilities grant (DFG) is underspent and the issue was resolved asking that a report be provided and submitted to future meetings. Whilst I was on the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, I asked why this was*

*happening and was assured this was a temporary issue due to insufficient staff and that this would be resolved in the future. I personally have been involved in assessments for a DFG and there were always issues regarding sufficient staff to actually carry out the assessments and then the ability of the equipment service to supply them due to insufficient staff. I understand these issues go back a number of years and would like to know when we might get some action to ensure there are sufficient staff in all departments to ensure this fund is properly spent.*

Councillor Hudson agreed with the concerns raised by Councillor Green and noted from the minutes that action was being taken to address this and a report was due to be considered by the panel.

- (21) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.10 (Provisional Outturn Report)

*Could the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care tell this Chamber what the overall budget was for public health in 2012 and what the budget is today without any additional COVID funding.*

Councillor Cracknell noted that public health transferred into the council in 2013/14 so she couldn't go back to 2012 but the relevant figures were £9.2m and £11.5m.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson asked whether the portfolio holder believed that public health was in a position to be prepared for the pandemic.

Councillor Cracknell responded that if Councillor Wilson was asking whether public health took a lead in ensuring that all measures were taken during the pandemic, then she did believe that public health was ready, in conjunction with partners. She did not believe that there were any services not delivered by public health because they weren't prepared.

- (22) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Rodwell to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.18 (Government Consultation – aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the state pension age)

*Can I clarify that paragraph 5 states 'the majority of the health panel except Councillors Wilson and Rudd agreed that exemptions to prescriptions should rise to pension age'.*

Councillor Hudson confirmed that was correct.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked if the Chair shared her surprise at this given the health inequalities in this area.

Councillor Hudson responded that he was content with the proposals because of the number of exemptions that would be in place.

- (23) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Wilson to the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.18 (Government Consultation – aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the state pension age)

*Could I ask the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, if she agrees with her conservative colleagues on the scrutiny panel, that free prescriptions should be phased out, despite the fact that this council through its scrutiny function believes it will adversely affect our area as set out in question 5.*

Councillor Cracknell responded that the important issues here was the ability to pay and that no-one could not access medicines because they could not afford to. The consultation document outlined a list of exemptions and, as the pension age was raised, she did not feel it unreasonable for the working population to be asked to pay as long as they can afford to pay.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilson asked whether the portfolio holder felt that the 1619 residents in North East Lincolnshire who were estimated to pay for their prescription charges if this change was introduced, would agree with her?

Councillor Cracknell responded that no-one would want to pay for something that was previously free of charge but she was of the opinion that if they can afford to pay then it wasn't unreasonable for them to do so.

- (24) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.18 (Government Consultation – aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the state pension age)

*Is the Chair confident that if these proposals are realised, that they cannot and will not have a detrimental impact on the quality of life for those affected?*

Councillor Hudson responded positively.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked what the Chair would say to a resident who ended up not taking their medication because they could not afford to pay for it.

Councillor Hudson felt unable to comment on what he felt was a supposition but he hoped that would not happen.

- (25) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Health and Adult Social Care – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Minute SPH.18  
(Government Consultation – aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the state pension age)

*Is the Chair of the panel aware that given that the constitutional remit gives scrutiny no powers to make statements or positions on matters for the cabinet or council as a whole, thus, allowing your panel to speak on behalf of the council as a whole on the issues mentioned in this minute means that you as chair were in breach of the constitution?*

Councillor Hudson responded that the panel had acted on officers advice without the Monitoring Officer intervening.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked if he was aware as a Chair that he should seek assurance at all times that his panel was acting in accordance with the Constitution and to not do so would make his position untenable.

Councillor Hudson responded that he had acted in good faith with the support of officers and he would take this matter up with the Monitoring Officer after this meeting.

- (26) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Green to the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Tourism and the Visitor Economy – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute SPTVE.10  
(Beach Enforcement)

*My query is around the enforcement activity around the control of dogs along the promenade and the resort of Cleethorpes. Does that control only extend to the issuing of fines to dog owners who either allow their dogs on the beach area or who do not clean up after their dogs?*

In answering the question, Councillor Shepherd extended the response to cover the whole of the Borough. He had been discussing this matter with Humberside Police and it was clear that current legislation was inadequate aside from a specific offence under the Dangerous Dogs Act relating to dog on human attacks. Current pathways involved collating information but not necessarily taking action. It was hoped that action could be taken if the victim had suffered harm, harassment, or distress. The next steps involved working with the police to refresh the pathways and they will then be shared so all involved could work in partnership to resolve the issues.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Green stated that she was more concerned about the number of visitors to the resort who ask where they can take

their dogs and she wondered whether there were any plans for alternative signage.

Councillor Shepherd felt that there were plenty of places to walk dogs safely. Signage was in place to warn people not to walk dogs on the beach but this was repeatedly ignored. However, as part of the pathways work, he agreed to look into areas that people could be directed to.

- (27) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Rodwell to the Chair of Tourism and the Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Tourism and the Visitor Economy – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute SPTVE.11 (Welcome Back Fund)

*How much did North East Lincolnshire get from the 'welcome back fund'?*

Councillor Brookes, Chair of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel, confirmed that the total amount was £241,143.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Rodwell asked how this had been spent.

Councillor Brookes responded that very little had been spent so far but some would be used to provide temporary planters. The rest would be spent on planned work around the Borough.

- (28) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Mickleburgh to the Chair of Tourism and the Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Scrutiny Panel Tourism and the Visitor Economy – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute SPTVE.11 (Welcome Back Fund)

*Do we have any further information as to whether grant funding from the Welcome Back Fund will go to specific tourist attractions in North East Lincolnshire?*

Councillor Brookes responded that a programme was now underway at Meridian Point in Cleethorpes with events booked throughout the next year. It was anticipated that this would bring extra footfall and income into the Borough, which was the purpose of the funding. However, he felt that it was a bit too early to confirm how all the funding would be utilised.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Mickleburgh asked whether the Chair felt that it was important to consider the whole of the Borough rather than just Cleethorpes when deciding how to spend the money.

Councillor Brookes agreed.

Note – Councillor Mickleburgh left the meeting at this point.

- (29) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Health and Well Being Board – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute HWBB.8 (Proposal to establish a Well Being Hub)

*Whilst we all can support the proposal for a wellbeing hub in the current and hopefully soon post COVID society, such a service could be operated from existing family hubs, half of which will now be closed, this shows yet another example of a lack of strategic forward thinking by this administration, doesn't it?*

Councillor Cracknell responded that the wellbeing hub was still in early development. This was expected to be a signposting service and a voluntary sector single point of access putting residents in touch with services. It was not a family hub or community centre that people go to but rather a concept of partnership working by the voluntary and community sector to enhance access to services.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked whether the portfolio holder agreed that signposting could be delivered in the family hubs and would have benefitted them immensely.

The signposting service needed telephony with people expected to be phoning outside normal office hours and this explained why it would be hosted by Centre4. She felt that this was the best way forward with this particular project.

- (30) A question on notice was submitted by Councillor Patrick to the Chair of the Planning Committee, in accordance with the Council's Constitution as follows:

Planning Committee – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Minute P.12 Item 4

*Given that the committee unanimously voted to refuse this application, showing sympathy that the rebuilding of one property on one plot in the middle of a greenfield in an area of rural character would have a detrimental impact, without any predetermination, you yourself Chair must have a lot of sympathy for the 'Save Freshney Valley' campaign given that the proposal in this case is for thousands of houses??*

Councillor Harness, Chair of the Planning Committee, responded that each planning application was different and considered on its own merit. If a planning application was submitted for the Grimsby West development then it would also be considered on its own merit.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Patrick asked whether the Chair had any sympathy for the 'Save Freshney Valley' campaign.

Councillor Harness responded that any sympathy that he may or may not have was not relevant at this time.

At the conclusion of the questions, the minutes of the meetings were moved en bloc by Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Swinburn.

RESOLVED –

1. That the minutes of the following meetings of Cabinet and the Committees of the Council be approved and adopted, as submitted:
  - Cabinet - 14<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> August
  - Portfolio Holder – Environment and Transport 9<sup>th</sup> August
  - Portfolio Holder – Children, Education and Skills 23<sup>rd</sup> August
  - Scrutiny Panel – Children and Lifelong Learning 15<sup>th</sup> July
  - Scrutiny Panel – Communities 22<sup>nd</sup> July
  - Scrutiny Panel – Economy 9<sup>th</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July
  - Scrutiny Panel – Health and Adult Social Care 4<sup>th</sup> August, 19<sup>th</sup> August
  - Scrutiny Panel – Tourism and Visitor Economy 29<sup>th</sup> July
  - Place Board (operating as the Health and Wellbeing Board) - 5<sup>th</sup> July
  - Audit and Governance Committee - 22<sup>nd</sup> July
  - Planning Committee - 14<sup>th</sup> July
  - Licensing Sub Committee - 9<sup>th</sup> July, 30<sup>th</sup> July
  - Appointments Committee - 19<sup>th</sup> July
2. That a written response be provided by Councillor S Swinburn to Councillor Patrick's question on minute CB.43 of the Cabinet meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021 regarding the percentage of the population that would support the removal of bring to sites.
3. That a written response be provided by Councillor Freeston to Councillor Rodwell's question on minute SPCLL.9 of the Scrutiny Panel Children and Lifelong Learning meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 regarding how many vulnerable families had complained they were not contacted and how the council made sure that vulnerable families knew how to make contact and seek assistance.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 9.42 p.m.