

# Public Document Pack

## NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

<b>PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL</b>
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**22 November 2023**

**Chairman:** Councillor Judy Kennedy

**Venue:** Room G01e/G02e,  
Church Square House,  
Scunthorpe

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**E-Mail Address:**  
Matthew.nundy@northlincs.gov.uk

### AGENDA

1. Substitutions
2. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and personal or personal and prejudicial interests and declarations of whipping arrangements (if any).
3. To take the minutes of the meeting of the panel held on 18 October 2023 as a correct record and authorise the chair to sign. (Pages 1 - 2)
4. Public speaking request, if any.
5. Housing Associations in North Lincolnshire (Pages 3 - 14)
  - (a) Discussion and questions with Mr S Hepworth, Chief Executive - Ongo and Mr M Macdonald, Chief Executive - Lincolnshire Housing Partnership
  - (b) Next stages, if any.
6. Added Item (if any).
7. Any other items that the Chair decides are urgent by reason of special circumstances that must be specified.

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

## NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

### PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL

18 October 2023

**PRESENT:** - Councillor J Kennedy (Chair)

Councillors S Swift (Vice-Chair) and P Vickers

Councillor J Reed, the council's Children, Families and Communities Cabinet Member attended the meeting in accordance with Procedure Rule 1.37(b) of the council's Constitution.

The meeting was held in Room S01e, Church Square House, Scunthorpe.

166 **SUBSTITUTIONS** - There were no substitutions at the meeting.

167 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS AND DECLARATIONS OF WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS (IF ANY)** - There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and personal or personal and prejudicial interests.

No whip was declared.

168 **TO TAKE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PANEL HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 AS A CORRECT RECORD AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN** - That the minutes of the proceedings of the meetings held on 20 September 2023, having been printed and circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the Chair.

169 **PUBLIC SPEAKING REQUEST, IF ANY** - No public speaking requests had been received.

170 **PROVIDING HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT TO NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE RESIDENTS** - The Chair welcomed Rachel Johnson, the council's Head of Housing, Rehabilitation and Recovery and James Jellinek, the council's Lead Officer Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention to the meeting. Mrs Johnson and Mr Jellinek had been invited to discuss the housing, rehabilitation and recovery service with the panel.

The Head of Service and Lead Officer guided members through a presentation which informed the panel of –

- What the service comprised, including management team, team members and total budget.
- The local North Lincolnshire Council offer.
- Service statistics.

**PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**18 October 2023**

- Aspirations of the service.
- Top ten priorities of the service.
- An update on the 'somewhere safe to stay hub'.

Councillor J Reed, Children, Families and Communities Cabinet Member attended the meeting in accordance with Procedure Rule 1.37(b) of the council's Constitution and spoke at length on the council's commitment to assisting those residents who needed support with their housing needs.

Following the presentation, the Chair facilitated a discussion between the panel and Mrs Johnson, Mr Jellinek and Councillor Reed.

**Resolved** – (a) That the presentation be received with thanks, and (b) that the council's Head of Housing, Rehabilitation and Recovery, the council's Lead Officer Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention and the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Communities be thanked for their attendance, presentation and for answering members' questions.

171 **ADDED ITEM (IF ANY)** - There was no added item for consideration at the meeting.

172 **ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MUST BE SPECIFIED** - There was no urgent business for consideration at the meeting.



# Growth and merger opportunity

NLC Scrutiny Panel  
22 November 2023





# What are we looking at doing?

We are exploring a **potential** merger with Lincolnshire Housing Partnership (LHP), a housing association based in Grimsby and Boston.

If it went ahead, it would be **equal** between us and LHP. Two Lincolnshire-based organisations joining forces.

We have a lot in common with LHP and makes sense in terms of geography, our vision and values and future ambitions.



# What would it look like?

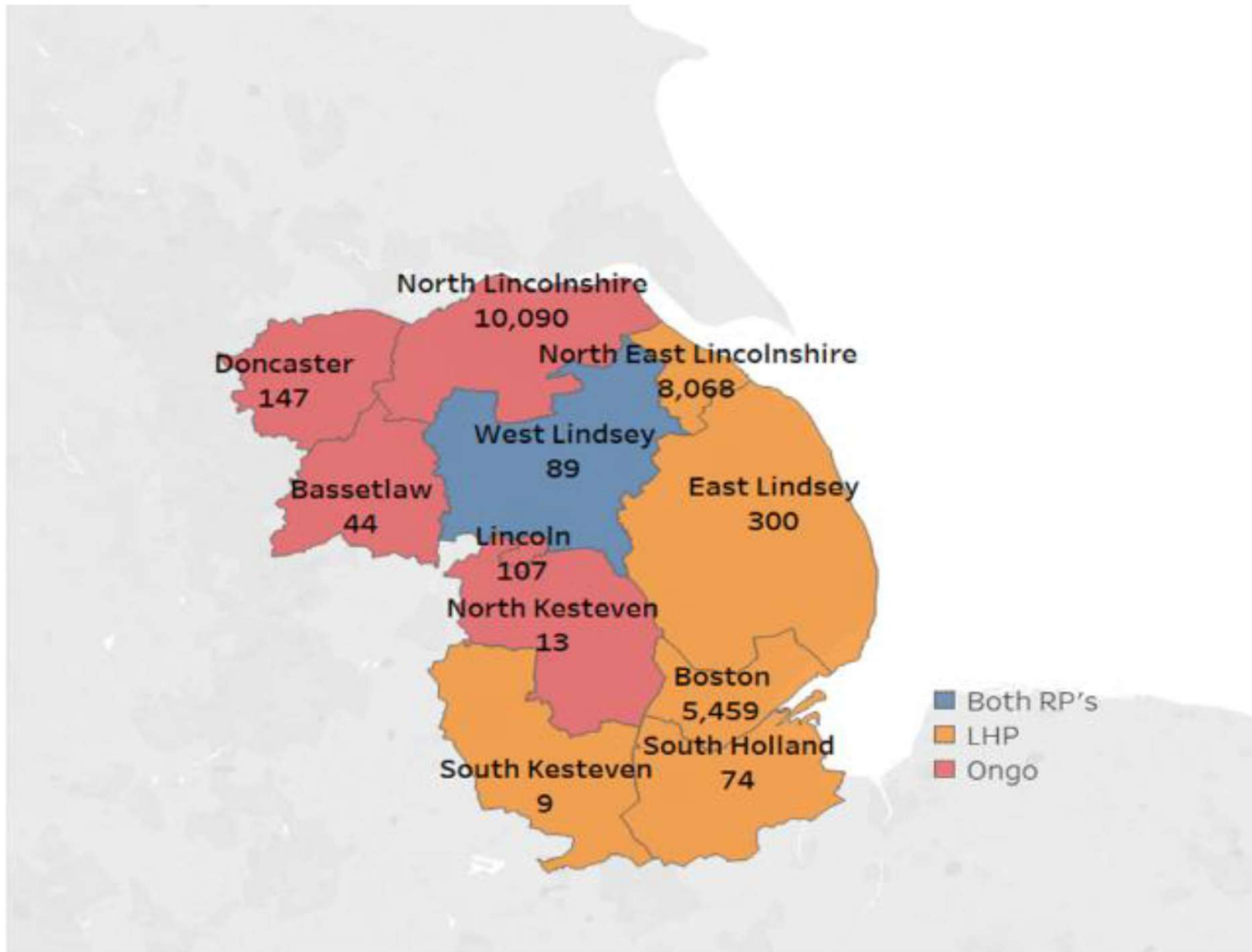
We would manage around 23,000 homes, making us the largest housing association in the region – with approx. 44% of all affordable housing in the area. We would have much wider geographical coverage.

We would be based in Scunthorpe, Grimsby and Boston with main offices in each location.

We would have around 800 colleagues.

We would have one Board, one Chief Exec and one Leadership team made up of colleagues from both organisations.







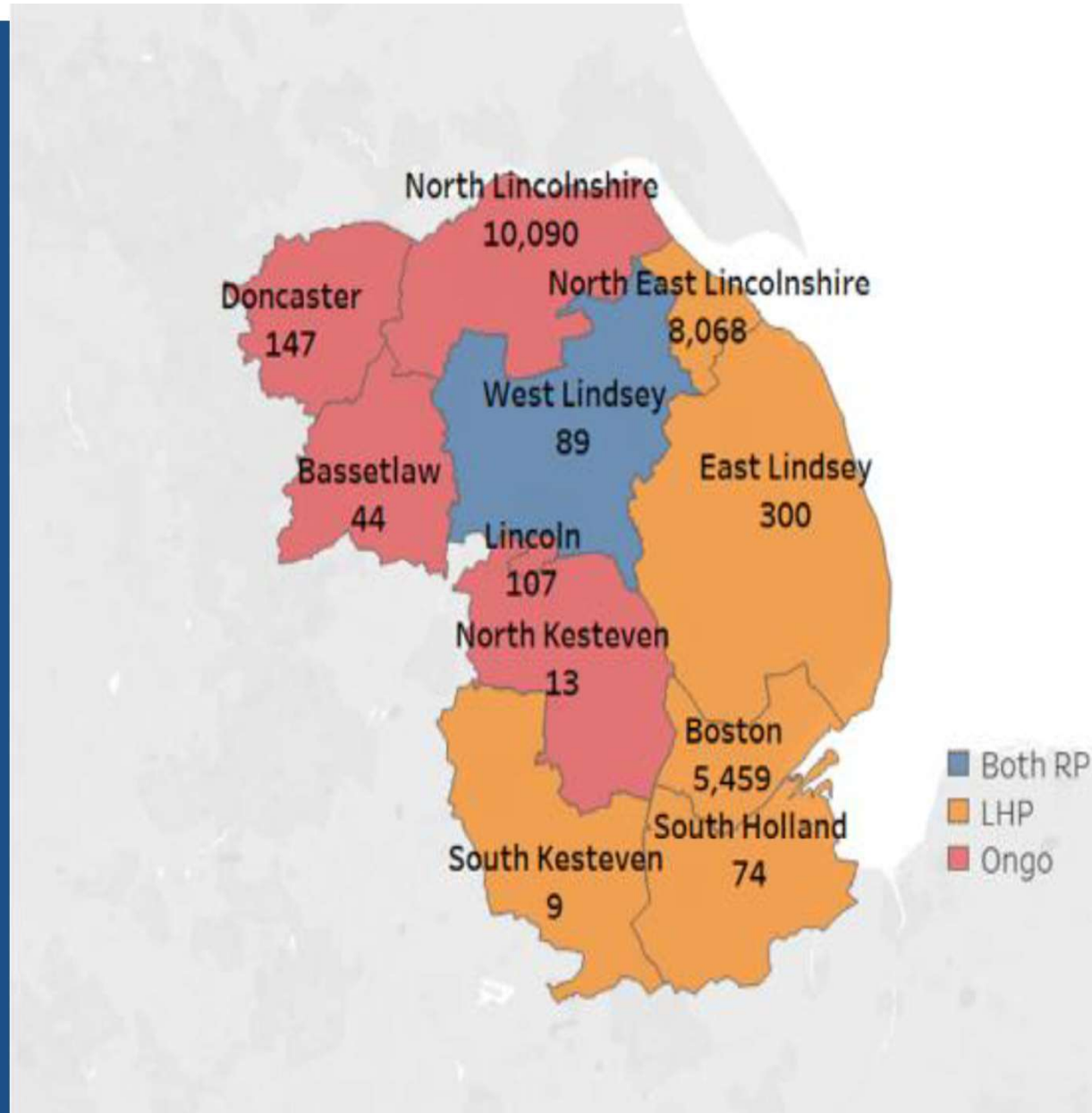
## Greater Lincolnshire's 10-point plan for devolution

Deliver infrastructure for:

1. Strategic growth and jobs in key sectors
2. Green recovery and a low carbon Lincolnshire
3. Transport that connects people to jobs and places
4. Unlocking housing and sustainable growth
5. Managing our unique rural environment

Develop skills and opportunity by:

6. Skills culture that promotes aspiration across Lincolnshire
7. Growing skills needed for future jobs in key sectors
8. Creating pathways and apprenticeships into new jobs
9. Increasing employment opportunities and productivity
10. Accelerating innovation, research and technology



# Why do we want to merge?

We could deliver better services for our customers and tenants and give us the ability to build more homes and improve local places.

We would combine strengths to deliver better outcomes for our customers and tenants and be able to invest in and improve more communities.

A merged organisation would be able to do more and be more resilient for the future. Both organisations understand their markets and could make the most of shared resources across the whole region.

**LHP**



# Why is this a good thing?

- We would be more responsive to our customers and tenants – by having larger frontline teams, supported by more specialists
- Bigger development pipeline and more opportunities to invest in local places
- Greater resilience to deal with different economic cycles and current challenges around income, inflation and interest rates
- Stronger local partnerships and bigger voice for social housing in the region
- Bigger organisation offers better career growth and colleague retention & development

# What happens now?

- Established joint executive team with LHP / Ongo to oversee due diligence and support respective Board
- Respective Boards will make a decision on moving forward or not with the merger once the due diligence has been completed
- Directors already thinking about priorities and will discuss with teams leading into the new organisation so we can start planning improvements as early as possible
- Important we continue to deliver core services to customers and deal with any issues speedily



# Timeline



**September** – colleagues, customers and unions updated on potential merger plans

**September – October** – follow up meetings and information to be shared with colleagues

**October - November** – due diligence is expected to conclude

**November** – Formal tenant consultation begins

**December 2023/January 2024** – Joint decision by both Boards to be made on whether to proceed with merger

**January 2024** – New Chief Exec and Group Chair of Board of joint organisation appointed

**January – March 2023** – New board and leadership team of joint organisation created

**TBC in 2024** – Merger takes place and LHP Ongo is officially formed



# For more information...

We will be sharing regular communications and keeping tenants updated along the way – all tenants will have the opportunity to comment on the proposals before boards make decisions

Our websites will be regularly updated with the latest information, so please keep checking there.

Ongo Key News will have an article in each publication outlining the latest position

Please feel free to contact us directly with any questions

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**LHP**

**Any questions?**



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