

## NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

### CABINET

21 November 2022

**PRESENT:** - Councillor Waltham MBE in the Chair

Councillors Hannigan (Vice-Chair), J Davison, Poole, Reed, Rose, C Sherwood and Marper

Simon Green, Becky McIntyre, Ann-Marie Matson, Paul Cowling, Rachel Smith, Adam Lovell and Richard Mell attended the meeting.

Councillors A Davison, O'Sullivan, L Foster, Rayner, Southern, Swift and Yeadon also attended the meeting.

The meeting was held at Conference Room, Church Square House, Scunthorpe.

1500 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

1501 **MINUTES - RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 26 September 2022 having been circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the chair.

1502 **GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 1 July 2022 be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

1503 **2022/23 FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE**

The Director: Governance and Communities submitted a report providing an update on the Council's in-year financial position, with specific reference to the inflationary environment and the ongoing measures and planned reserve utilisation to maintain a balanced position. It also identified the implications for the Council's medium term financial plan position and financial planning process for the 2023/24 budget setting process and requested Cabinet to note the latest revenue budget and capital position set out within the report and appendices and note the treasury management position against the prudential code.

The report explained that in February 2022, Council approved plans to invest £169.8m of revenue resource in 2022-23 and £137.8m of capital resource

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over a four-year period to support delivery of the Council plan, achieve its strategic objectives and legal duties for the benefit of residents and businesses. The financial strategy guided this and provided the mechanisms to ensure the council was financially sustainable and resilient.

At the time of setting the budget and medium-term financial plan the national economic outlook was that inflation would peak at 7.25% in April 2022 and begin to decline, taking two years to return to 2% target levels. The September 2022 rate of consumer price inflation (CPI) had now increased to 10.1% and was expected to further increase to around 11% in 2022. The Bank of England currently expected inflation to fall sharply to below the 2% target in two years' time.

In line with good financial management practices, the council's use of resources was closely monitored and reported to the Executive and this report provided information on the current financial position and would inform the next stages of financial planning, taking account of the risks and opportunities in respect of financial sustainability. A summary explanation with supporting appendices were provided under the following headings –

- Financial Position 2022/23 at Quarter 2
- Financial Resilience Context
- Medium Term Financial Plan and
- Budget Policy Framework

Councillor Marper, Cabinet Member Finance, Governance and Veterans thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and highlighted, summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – (a) That the financial position set out in the report be noted; (b) that the budget adjustments approved under delegated powers and the revised budget position for 2022/23 be noted, and (c) that the progress against the approved Treasury Management Strategy and prudential code indicators be noted.

1504 **INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS - ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

The Director: Children and Families submitted a report providing a summary update to Cabinet on the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officers 2021/22 and sought its permission to publish the annual report in accordance with statutory guidance.

The Director in her report explained that the work of the Independent Reviewing Officers was a statutory function as detailed in the Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook 2010. Independent Review delivered the following functions to all Children in Care within North Lincolnshire:

- To undertake an initial Child in Care review within twenty working days of a child entering care,

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- To undertake further Child in Care reviews within three months and thereafter six monthly,
- To determine if a review was required following any significant change in a Child in Care's circumstances,
- To undertake visits to Children in Care to ascertain their understanding of their care plan and to gather their views, wishes and feelings,
- To ratify care plans and offer independent advice and recommendations, and
- To fulfil records and decisions distribution requirements

The report stated that Annual Report 2021/22, which was attached as an appendix, followed a standard format and set out a range of information about the service, including the extent to which it complied with regulation and best practice, and what independent review helped the council learn about the broader provision for children in care. Key points were as follows:

- Children in Care in North Lincolnshire benefitted from a timely, good quality review of their care plan by an experienced, skilled, and well-trained Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). They were encouraged and supported to chair their own meeting, to attend, and to contribute their views.
- Robust systems of management oversight, quality assurance, dispute resolution, case allocation, and performance management helped ensure that the service was effective and responsive.
- Operating within a child-focused organisational culture with outstanding provision to children in care meant that IROs were able to prioritise children's participation and engagement and provide challenge and support to multi-agency teams to promote best outcomes.
- Independent review in North Lincolnshire was statutorily compliant and added value to a robust child in care system.

Councillor Reed, Cabinet Member Children and Families thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the key points in the Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report 2021/22 as summarised in the report be noted, and that it be published on the council's website.

1505 **EDUCATION AND INCLUSION PLAN 2022-2025**

The Director: Children and Families submitted a report seeking approval of the new North Lincolnshire Education and Inclusion Plan 2022 – 25. The plan, which was attached as an appendix, set out the vision of how the Council, schools and multi academy trusts would work together to achieve ambitions for children and raise standards. It was founded on principles of schools working together, in the family of North Lincolnshire schools, regardless of designation, and set out the shared approaches to improving outcomes for

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children, challenging poor performance and raising standards, and ensuring a diverse estate of sustainable, inclusive local schools for all North Lincolnshire Children.

The report explained that the Education Inclusion Plan set out how the Council, schools, academy trusts, and key partners including DFE, Ofsted, Diocese would work together to ensure an enabling, accessible universal learning offer for all children, raising standards in schools, ensuring resilience and diversity in the education landscape and aligning local place leadership of education with local priorities and emerging national policy direction.

The plan outlined approaches and priorities to improve outcomes for children, the alignment of targeted and specialist support with sector led approaches, leadership development so that support and challenge for all schools is bespoke, coherently planned across services and so that the best person or service provided the right support at the right time. The Education and Inclusion Plan set the local approach, including through partnership working, to meeting statutory guidance for Local Authorities, including –

- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education Act 2002, including Schedule 2; Education Act 2005; Education Act 2011
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Governance Regulations 2010; School Governance (Collaboration) Regulations
- Schools Causing Concern – Guidance for Local Authorities and RSCs
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- National Curriculum in England Framework, Key Stages 1 to 4
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working together to Safeguard Children
- SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years

Councillor Reed, Cabinet Member Children and Families thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the Education and Inclusion Plan be approved and supported which will give place level clarity and leadership to the local partnership approaches to raising standards, challenging poor performance, driving inclusion, and building a diverse and resilient education estate; and will provide a tool for all partners to frame decision making in the context of emerging national policy.

1506 **ANNUAL REPORT OF LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 2021/22**  
The Director: Children and Families submitted a report Cabinet informing Cabinet of the publication of the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2021/22,

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and consider the review in relation to planning, commissioning and budget setting. The Annual Report was attached as an appendix.

The Director in her report explained that as per Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, there was a statutory requirement to publish an annual report, which set out what has been done as a result of the Local Arrangements and how effective these arrangements had been in practice. The Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and young people 2021/22 had been endorsed by the Children's MARS Board on behalf of the three safeguarding partners from North Lincolnshire Council, North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (now the North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership) and Humberside Police. The Annual Report was then required to be distributed through relevant governance routes across the three safeguarding partner organisations and relevant partnership arrangements, to be considered in relation to planning, commissioning and budget setting.

The report summarised and highlighted key aspects of the Annual Report which demonstrated that the Children's Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board:

- effectively met its statutory obligations,
- benefitted from strong and consistent leadership,
- had made good progress against its 'shine a light' areas of focus, and
- listened to and took account of the voices of children, young people and families.

Councillor Reed, Cabinet Member Children and Families thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2021/22 be received, and it be considered where relevant in relation to planning, commissioning and budgets setting processes.

**1507 IMAGINATION LIBRARY TEN YEARS ON**

The Director: Governance and Communities submitted a report updating Cabinet on the outcomes achieved over the ten years of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire. A document highlighting the key successes over the last ten years was appended to the report.

The report explained that the Imagination Library formed part of the Council's commitment to children having the best start in life through the investment in Children's Literacy and the offer that supported and enabled the home learning environment. The impact was evidenced through the educational outcomes achieved by children and young people over this period, especially those who did not have the same opportunities as their peers or are at risk of underachieving.

By the anniversary date of the Imagination Library's inception, it was

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anticipated that over 22,500 children have participated and over 835,000 books issued. Also, children who first registered with the Imagination Library when it was launched in 2013 reached the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in 2016. Since 2016, data had been collated and analysed showing that children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their unregistered counterparts each year. In 2022, 67.1% of children who registered with the Imagination Library achieved a good level of development at the end of the EYFS, compared to 52.6% of children who were not registered.

The Director in her report stated that the success of the Imagination Library programme had been achieved through close collaborative working with key partners, including early years settings, schools, and health professionals, to ensure that every child can participate in the Imagination Library. Parents were made aware of the Imagination Library scheme and to use the further benefits that the books can provide. As a result, parents had access to further information on themes such as health and wellbeing, good hygiene, school readiness, family matters, bereavement, and diversity.

It was recognised that book ownership was important, but in North Lincolnshire we know that it is how books are used in the home learning environment that has the greatest impact on outcomes for children. The wider work around each book is invaluable in maximising the learning opportunities made possible by children receiving high quality books into their family home. Sharing books meant so much more than a love of reading. Time together enjoying books promoted secure attachments, which encouraged confidence, self-esteem, health, and well-being. Having those special times together built communication, listening, understanding, and talking skills, and helped to lay the foundations of good literacy.

In recognition of the effectiveness of the programme in North Lincolnshire and successful partnership working with the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library the Dollywood Foundation were hosting a celebration event at Normanby Hall on 20 January 2023.

Councillor Reed, Cabinet Member Children and Families and Councillor C Sherwood, Cabinet Member Safer, Stronger Communities – Rural jointly thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and in turn highlighted, summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the Director's report celebrating ten years of North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library programme be received, and the difference made to young children's early learning outcomes be noted.

1508 **REVIEW OF FREE PARKING POLICY**

The Director: Economy and Environment submitted a report updating Cabinet on North Lincolnshire Council's (NLC) Free Parking policy and impact on visitors accessing the Town Centre areas, and to determine whether the

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policy was appropriately supporting the positive delivery of NLC Economic Growth Plan and Economic Renewal Plan.

The Director in her report explained that two hours free parking was introduced at all North Lincolnshire Council's Pay and Display car parks in 2014 to support the Town Centre's economy. The aim of free parking was to encourage visitors to the town centre shops and amenities at no cost and enable the town centre to compete with out-of-town retail estates. Prior to 2014 the cost of parking was £1.50 for 2 hours within North Lincolnshire. Since its introduction over thirteen million free parking tickets have been issued. Whilst the full value this has had to business was difficult to quantify, customers within North Lincolnshire had benefited to the tune of £19.5 million.

On average 1,662,900 pay & display tickets would be obtained per year, of which 1,535,700 million were free. During 2020-21 at the peak of COVID 19 this fell to 844,000, with 797,500 free parking tickets issued. Whilst paid tickets remained around 50% down on pre COVID figures, the numbers of free tickets had recovered to around 80%. This indicated that visitors were returning to the Town Centre and the free car parking policy was enabling this.

The report also stated that in terms of supporting the town centre economy it was the free parking numbers that were also an indication of the retail recovery, as the paid for parking was primarily used by town centre workers and not retail customers. Similarly, when two hours free parking was first introduced, 92.6% of pay & display tickets were free. This percentage had continued to rise over the years and despite the pandemic had risen to 94.7% in 21-22. This year looked to continue that trend with currently 94.8% of pay & display tickets being free. In addition, free parking on a Saturday was also introduced. But as no pay & display tickets were now required on these days it was difficult to know accurately how much free parking had been offered during the weekend.

Councillor N Poole, Cabinet Member Highways and Flooding thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and highlighted, summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the content of the Director's report and continuation of existing policy be noted and endorsed.

**1509 TREE PLANTING AND THE NORTHERN FOREST**

The Director: Economy and Environment submitted a report updating Cabinet on progress towards tree planting targets and outlined future approaches to the Northern Forest and other tree planting initiatives.

The Director in her report explained that the Northern Forest was the government's 25-year vision to plant 50 million trees across the North of England, stretching from Liverpool to Hull. This was set out in the 25-year

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Environment Plan. National Forest Inventory data provided the following baseline information for North Lincolnshire:

- Area of tree cover: 4263 hectares
- Percentage tree cover: 4.9% of land surface.
- Ancient Woodland: 0.4% of land surface

From that baseline, the Council had set a target to plant a further 172,000 trees: one for each resident. Officers within Economy and Growth had identified six main approaches to maintaining and increasing tree cover in North Lincolnshire,:

1. Urban Areas- identifying and planting on suitable Council and partners' land
2. Urban Areas- identifying and planting suitable locations for street trees
3. Rural (& some Urban) Areas- Targeting tree planting according to the Biodiversity Opportunity Map:
  - (a) Avoid important open habitats, archaeology, open landscapes, landfill sites and other constraints.
  - (b) Target and support landowners through the Woodland Trust
4. Green Infrastructure/Ecosystem Service standards for new development:
  - (a) Local Plan (Policies DQE2p, DQE3p, DQE8p, DQE12p & DQE13p).
  - (b) Supplementary Planning Documents
  - (c) Design Codes (e.g. Lincolnshire Lakes)
5. Tree protection and Replacement
  - (a) No loss of Ancient Woodland
  - (b) Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and Conservation Areas
  - (c) Planting a specified number of trees for every tree lost
6. Natural regeneration and natural habitat change – allowing native trees to spread naturally creating scrub and new woodland.

The report summarised and highlighted the success of projects undertaken from 2020/21 to date and set out proposed projects to 2025, together with associated financial implications and alignment to the council's 'A Green Future' (north Lincolnshire) Strategy.

Councillor D Rose, Cabinet Member Environment and Strategic Planning thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and highlighted, summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the content of the report be noted, and the continued delivery of priority actions be supported.

**1510 EMPLOYABILITY AND SKILLS EVENTS - SEPTEMBER 2022.**

The Director: Economy and Environment submitted a report highlighting the success of the Jobs Expo and Discover events held in September 2022.



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The Director in her report explained that the council Events Team, working in partnership with colleagues and external organisations delivered a programme of employability and skills events in 2022 which had been attended by almost 7000 people; the most recent events being Jobs Expo and Discover held in September. Each event had been organised and delivered with a clear purpose and target audience identified:

**Jobs Expo:** all those of working age in either unemployment or looking for a career change encouraged to attend. Businesses attended the Jobs Expo with live vacancies they were looking to recruit too.

**Discover:** showcase careers and skills opportunities for young people aged 5-12 years through a free, fun and interactive hands-on event specifically designed for children. Due to the popularity of the first Discover event in March the September event was expanded to incorporate more venues including St Johns Market, Scunthorpe Central and Church Square Gardens.

The report stated that the Jobs Expo and Discover proved to be hugely popular with both attendees and businesses/providers who attended. Feedback had been overwhelmingly positive. At the Job Expo 722 job seekers attended, the highest number since the event resumed following Covid-19. Of the 135 people surveyed 54% said it was their first time attending the event and 82% classified themselves as not employed, looking for work. 64% of those surveyed stated they had found vacancies at the event they intended to apply for. The Discover event was attended by an estimated 1500 people with 27 activities on offer. The report also summarised the positive feedback received by those attending and exhibitors.

Councillor R Hannigan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Adults and Health thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the success for the Skills and Employability Events held in March 2022 be noted.

1511 **LITTER PLAN - THREE MONTHS ON**

The Director: Economy and Environment submitted a report highlighting the success of the Jobs Expo and Discover events held in September 2022.

The Director in her report explained that the council Events Team, working in partnership with colleagues and external organisations delivered a programme of employability and skills events in 2022 which had been attended by almost 7000 people; the most recent events being Jobs Expo and Discover held in September. Each event had been organised and delivered with a clear purpose and target audience identified:

**Jobs Expo:** all those of working age in either unemployment or looking for a career change encouraged to attend. Businesses attended the Jobs Expo

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with live vacancies they were looking to recruit too.

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Councillor R Hannigan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Adults and Health thanked the Director for her report and work carried out by her officers and summarised and commented upon key aspects of its content.

**Resolved** – That the success for the Skills and Employability Events held in March 2022 be noted.