

# District Councillor's December 2022 Report

**Serving the Hemswell Ward: Blyborough, Corringham, Glentworth, Grayingham, Harpswell, Heapham, Hemswell, Hemswell Cliff, Springthorpe & Willoughton**

## Cllr's Diary for Dec

- 5 Hemswell Cliff PC @ 7:30PM
- 6 Corringham PC @ 7:15PM
- 2 & 7 Workshops on Selective Licensing
- 15 Guildhall CP&R Guildhall@ 6:30pm

## January 2023

- 6 Corringham PC
- 9 Hemswell Cliff PC
- 11 Glentworth PC
- 13 Selective Licensing
- 16 Hemswell PC
- 17 Overview & Scrutiny
- 23 Full Council
- 25 WL Churches Festival Committee
- 26 Willoughton pc

## A Happy New Year

New Year Greetings to one and All in this period of rising cost of living especially regarding energy and cost of living For many it may have been a frugal Christmastide in comparison to previous years. Our thoughts should be with those genuinely less fortunate not just at home but in war torn countries and those countries subjected to terrible climate changes.

Next year will be one of hope as we face two huge developments in the way of solar farms, [ I include an article on Rolls Royce nuclear power stations which have the potential of providing 4 million homes with energy > see page.16

### Bite Size News

Did you know that WLDC spent £1.18 million pounds on consultants last year

I'm always tempted to think that consultants actually inform us of what we know anyway!

At the Nov CP&R meeting I asked what WLDC spent on addressing fly

And in May, the District & Parish Council elections are to be held.

And on the 6th of May, the Coronation which should give cause for great jubilation despite our socio-economic problems.

2023 may hopefully see Global Berry submitting their planning application and once they are at full strength, the business aims to employ 400 people, which is welcome news in these straightened times.

It is encouraging to discover some businesses wanting to invest in the Hemswell Ward such as ADM.

And the formal amalgamation of the excellent schools at

Willoughton and Hemswell Cliff has been warmly received.

And we look forward to the unfolding of plans for the former base at RAF Scampton. There is much to look forward. to

Below the proposed facade of ADM @Hemswell Cliff



tipping see page 4/5 for more information.

Gainsborough is to lose the HSBC Bank in the Market Place from 2nd of May 2023 due to increased online banking making the local branches surplus to requirements. This is the second bank within 12 months to

close, Barclay's in Silver St closed in 2022. We once boasted of several banks—Santander, Lloyds and Westminster, now we are left with TSB & the Halifax.

## The true cost of renewable energy

Having delivered his platitudes on climate change at Cop27, Rishi Sunak returns to a more pressing problem: how to keep Britain's lights on this winter. Last week it was revealed that the government has been wargaming a 'reasonable worst-case scenario' in which blackouts last up to a week. Whether those fears prove unfounded or not, there is a huge and growing hole in the future of Britain's electricity supply, with little to explain how it will be filled. The lights might not go out this winter, but there is a reckoning coming as Britain attempts to steer towards net zero.

Over the past decade the National Grid has succeeded in virtually ending coal power in Britain. The proportion of our electricity generated by coal fell from 29.5 per cent in 2011 to just 2.1 per cent in 2021. Most of the coal power has been replaced by wind and solar (up from 5.2 per cent in 2011 to 24.6 per cent in 2021) and by 'thermal renewables' – the filthy business of burning wood pellets made from trees in North America – which is up from 3.6 per cent in 2011 to 12.9 per cent in 2021.

What the electricity industry has not managed to do is to wean us off gas. We are pretty much where we were a decade ago, with gas accounting for 39.9 per cent of generation in 2021 compared with 39.8 per cent in 2011. This matters not just because it has exposed consumers to high wholesale gas prices in recent months, but because the government's path to net zero involves eradicating all fossil fuels and ensuring a carbon-free electricity supply by 2035.

Indeed, the price we are paying for gas-generated electricity is even higher than it need be at present because of the way we are now using it. We use gas-fuelled power to plug the gaps when intermittent wind and solar can't deliver the goods. Over the summer everyone from Boris Johnson to Extinction Rebellion was parroting the figure that wind power costs 'nine times' less than that of gas power. But this is a false comparison. The figure comes from an analysis by the pressure group Carbon Brief comparing the long-term, guaranteed, index-linked prices paid to renewable energy firms with the 'day ahead' prices which have to be paid to owners of gas power stations to fire them up for a few hours to make up a shortfall in supply. It is like comparing the cost of a season ticket on the train to the price of hailing an Uber in the rush hour on the day of a rail strike.

How many times this year have you heard advocates of green energy decrying the fact that consumers have been ripped off by our failure to shift to renewables even more quickly? Yet we really don't have an alternative to gas to make up for shortfalls in wind and solar. We could try to store renewable energy, but storage, in the form of batteries, say, or pumped-storage hydro-electric stations or some other emerging technology, is incredibly expensive. It costs around three or four times more to store a unit of electricity than it does to generate it in the first place.

If we are going to get anywhere near de-carbonising the electricity grid, we will have to invest in energy storage, at huge cost. At present we have the capacity to store less than an hour's worth of the country's electricity demand, yet in winter conditions can be both windless and overcast for days at a time. The grid was built to transport electricity generated in coal plants close to where it was consumed. Wind and solar farms tend to be distributed in more remote locations, by contrast, so the grid itself will have to be reconfigured, again at huge cost. We are also going to need a massive increase in overall generation capacity as road vehicles and central heating systems are forced to switch to electric power. A switch to renewable energy will be very far from cheap.

And at the moment, we are going in the wrong direction. Overall generation capacity available to the National Grid actually fell from 77.9 GW in 2019 to 76.6 GW in 2021. Moreover, wind and solar farms are not performing in the way which was hoped. Last year alone, the available generation capacity of wind power grew by 5.3 per cent and solar by 2.8 per cent. Yet the amount of electricity actually generated by wind, wave and solar plunged by 9.3 per cent, largely on account of low wind speeds. This is a problem which the wind industry has yet to grasp: there is a long-term declining trend in wind speeds over the UK – and indeed throughout most of the world. This is an aspect of climate change which gets little coverage, perhaps because it conflicts with the lazy and incorrect narrative, perpetuated by the former chairman of the Environment Agency among others, that Britain is facing more 'violent' weather.

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Sooner or later, something is going to have to give. The ‘Road to Zero Carbon’ report published by the National Grid ESO last year provides little comfort. ‘The concept of baseload is now gone,’ it declares, likening the National Grid of old to a train and the renewables-based National Grid of the future to a more manoeuvrable sports car. In this green future that they imagine, demand will be matched to supply via something called ‘dynamic containment’ – or surge pricing, as the rest of us might call it. But how much will electricity suppliers have to charge to manage demand at times when the supply of wind and solar energy frequently collapses to 5 per cent or less of what it can reach in windy and sunny conditions?

We can only guess, but here’s a clue from the wholesale markets. In September last year, thanks to low wind speeds, electricity suppliers were forced to pay wholesale prices of £2,500 per MWh to persuade gas power stations to enter the market – 50 times average prices at the time. In July, they briefly had to pay Belgian electricity suppliers £9,724 per MWh to prevent the lights going out in London.

At present, consumers are not directly exposed to these kind of price surges, because they are absorbed by retail suppliers of electricity. But it is the intention that in the future consumers will be charged variable rates for electricity via their smart meters.

That, then, is the future to which we can look forward: not one where the lights necessarily go out, but where we are forced to pay through the nose if we want to keep them on in unfavourable weather conditions. The price of green energy is a form of terrible segregation, where the rich will have access to light and heat, and those who need it most, the poor, will shiver in the dark.

Ross Clark The Spectator 12 Nov 2022



## Consultants at WLDC cost over 1 million

WLDC hires consultants occasionally. The justification for this is as follows;

- The Council hires consultants to bring in people with a particular set of skills. In 2020/21 these have been mainly experts in their field or have had previous experience of similar projects.
- As third parties, consultants are also able to approach challenges facing an organisation from a fresh perspective and are able to provide an opinion expressed by an expert.
- Unlike internal staff engaged on projects, who still have day-jobs, consultants are able to dedicate all their time and efforts to the project, which means that they are helpful in keeping a project going. Managers may also wish to hire consultants to collect data to help them decide what to do, or to offer a creative solution to a problem.
- By utilising the Council's standardised Project Documentation consultants are able to develop a plan with a structured methodology that captures the accumulated lessons of previous projects. This may also be important in increasing confidence that the project will meet the expectations of its sponsors and partners.

2020/21 consultants cost WLDC the eye watering sum of £1,018k.00, in 2019/20 consultants cost £781k with an increase of £237k or 23%. The question is are consultants worth their money and how do we evaluate their worth?

## Fly tipping under the microscope — scourge of modern living

The scourge of modern society is 'fly tipping' both across WLD & nationally which is the bane of the life of landowners and the Highways authority. It is anti social carried out domestically and commercially instead of going to the Recycling Centre—domestically it is 'free' whereas commercial waste is chargeable. Fly tipping is become an ever increasing problem which in the rurality is despoiling the countryside.

What is it costing the rate payer?

How many hours is devoted to the service of cleaning up?

Private landlords, in particular farmers, who are innocent victims have to remove the debris themselves incurring costs on their businesses whereas debris left on public land is removed on the rates.

Certain areas are victims to fly tippers, such as a Glentworth or the back road from Heapham to Harpswell

The number of prosecutions cameras in the past 5 years at WLDC

For years, we have rightly penalized those found to be fly tipping and their public exposure and fines act as a deterrent however on experience it is not working as fly tipping continues and the miscreants appear to never get caught. What we do is 'reactive' is there another way we may tackle this problem

At CP&R in November which deals with finance, I asked for the cost of the fly tipping service which came as a written answer there is so much more we could do through joint working with LCC and the recycling centres. On an experimental basis of 12 months could we explore opening up the Recycling Centres without charge to businesses, to everyone in order to reduce the level of fly tipping, I am not naïve to believe that such a radical measure will eradicate the problem but I think it may reduce the level and therefore reduce the cost to the rate payer of cleaning up fly tipping across the district. And at the same time come to an agreement that all Recycling Centres should be used by people of Lincolnshire in the interests of the environment. In other words instead of adopting a reactive policy we explore a preventative approach because fly tipping may be caused through people's laziness or as I suspect because of the charges at Recycling Centres which is being resisted by the commercial sector and those who are not 'commercial'

2018 / 19 – cost £65,547 number of incidents 1112, of which 25 were commercial ( 2.24% commercial )

2019 / 20 – cost £60,366 number of incidents 894, of which 49 were commercial ( 5.48% commercial )

2020 / 21 – cost £258,027 number of incidents 2894, of which 95 were commercial ( 3.28% commercial )

2021 / 22 – cost £147,381 number of incidents 1880, of which 87 were commercial ( 4.62% commercial )

2022/ 23 – cost £78,740 number of incidents 916, of which 87 were commercial ( 9.49% commercial )

You will see that, in line with national trends, flytipping increased dramatically during Covid, there are a number of factors which caused that increase. That said, rates are returning to pre-Covid levels. In terms of the cost of collection, please be aware this is a nationally generated calculation which presumes we would have a team who just do fly-tips and collect each one individually, then return to base, then collect the next one, etc. It in no way reflects the actual cost, which in our case is difficult to calculate as fly-tips are collected by the street cleansing team alongside their other duties. It is relevant to note that we have once again been nominated as Best Performer for Street Cleansing at the annual APSE benchmarking awards, our submission shows that we provide the service at the lowest cost per household of all those authorities who provide data. We have 15.6 FTE who work in the street cleansing service.

Fixed Penalty Notices issued are shown below;

18/19 - 22

19/20 - 17

20/21 - 8

21/22 - 9



## UK Shared Prosperity Fund – spotlight on Rural

WLDC was successful in obtaining £795, 821 towards targeting rural needs; It has long been acknowledged that the rurality is the ‘ Cinderella’ when it comes to services which the urban areas such as our cities and town on the whole enjoy or receive.

The Rural Fund provides capital to:

*‘Support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams.*

*To support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy’*

It is part of the Government’s ‘ Levelling Up; [whatever that may mean] It is an acknowledgement that the rurality has great potential if the infrastructure and flexible planning regulations are in place thereby making a greater contribution to the economic prosperity of WLD but to the nation as a whole. The Government Funding cannot eradicate the problems facing the rurality, it’s a drop in the ocean

**Community Broadband and Connectivity Funding Stream**

Capital grants for provision of pipable capable digital infrastructure at a rural level for community use (eg

- Village Halls
- Pubs
- Post Offices

when you consider the landscape of WLD, however it can make invaluable inroads in addressing rural

**Farm Diversification ( Non Agricultural)**

Capital funding for diversification of farm businesses outside of agriculture to encourage start up occasions to start up of new businesses to use the existing existing farm buildings into other commercial businesses

**Agri-Tech Business Development**

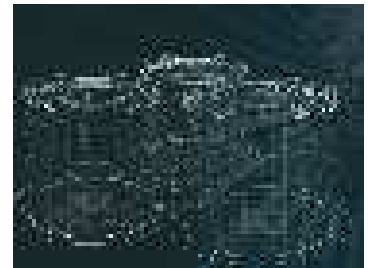
Capital funding for small scale investment into micro and small enterprises in rural areas to add capital funding for new infrastructure, investment in growth and productivity enhancing technology and infrastructure

needs and has the potential to draw down other funding from these ‘money pots’, which we are told are out there!.

### Total WLDC allocation £795,821



National Grid have recently launched a consultation process on proposals for the 'Zero Carbon Humber' vision, and one of the latest consultation processes is the Humber Low Carbon Pipeline. As the National Grid are working to deliver the vision of becoming the UK's first net zero carbon cluster by 2040, they want to want to hear views so they can shape and refine their plans and ensure the communities living and working around the Humber region have a chance to inform and potentially influence them.



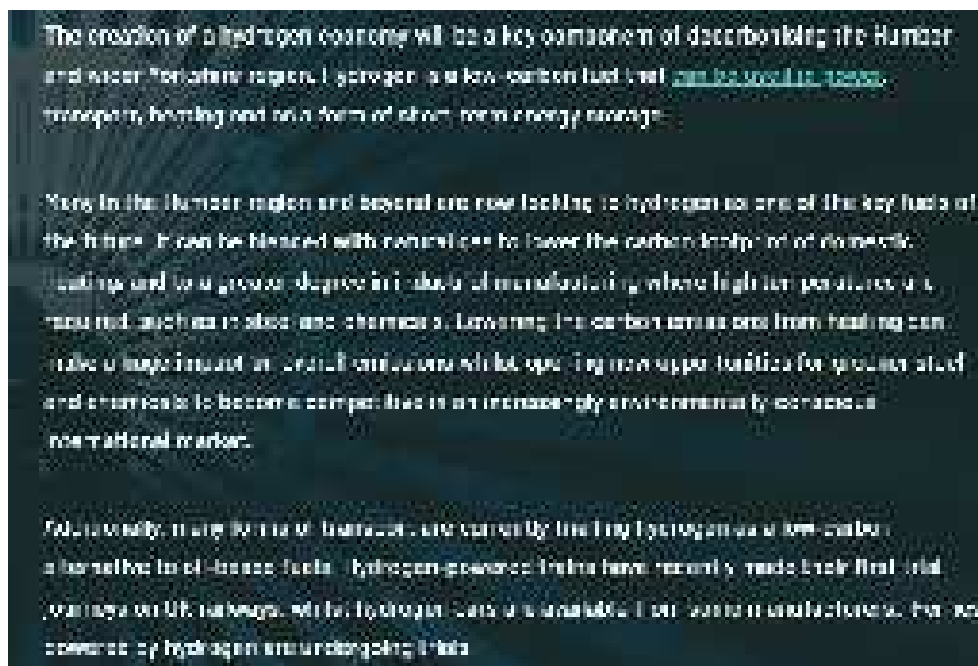
The consultation response submission and further information about the project, can be found here: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/our-businesses/national-grid-ventures/humber-low-carbon-pipelines>

This round of consultation will run from **31 October to 29 November 2022**. The consultation is open to everyone and all comments will be considered.

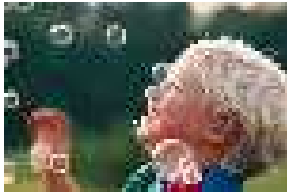
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## Council supports broadcast engineering charity to create a new museum.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Plans to exhibit a large collection of historical broadcast equipment and vehicles in Hemswell Cliff have moved a step closer thanks to West Lindsey District Council.

The Broadcast Engineering Conservation Group (BECG) have purchased the Old Sergeants' Mess building in the village, which used to be owned by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

RAF Hemswell was sold by the MOD in the mid-1980s. The former operational building was sold as a commercial and industrial space. Sadly, for the past 12 years the Sergeants' Mess building stood empty and became an eyesore, acting as a hot spot for anti-social behaviour.

The charity purchased the site in November 2021 and have been working hard to transform the building. It is now turning it into a museum for its large collection of historically valuable broadcast equipment and outside broadcast vehicles. One of the charity's preserved television cameras was used to televise our late Queen's Coronation in 1953.

West Lindsey District Council was approached to help fund the replacement of the broken windows at the site in a bid to protect it from further damage, especially over the winter.

Cllr Paul Howitt-Cowan, ward member for Hemswell Cliff, welcomed the investment. He said: "For many years, West Lindsey District Council has been working closely with the community to guide and focus development to support local residents. I am delighted to see this beautiful old building beginning to regain some of its former glory. The regeneration works are already having a positive impact on the community as the building, which occupies a prominent position in the heart of the village is much improved and we are delighted that the charity are positively contributing to our cultural and heritage offer in the district.

Sally Grindrod-Smith, Director of Planning and Regeneration at West Lindsey District Council said: "Hemswell Cliff is an important area for employment growth in West Lindsey with its excellent connectivity to the important A15 corridor and the UK Food Valley. We are working hard to deliver the Food Enterprise Zone to bring new jobs and opportunities to the area. We were pleased to support the Broadcast Engineering Conservation Group in their efforts to regenerate this key site within Hemswell Cliff which will bring benefits to both our businesses and our community'.

Paul Marshall, BECG Chairman, thanked the Council for its support on the project so far.

He said: "Over the years it was empty, our building had suffered from leaking roofs and well over 150 broken window panes. Thanks to help from West Lindsey District Council, the windows are now all repaired and we're ready for the winter with our building once again watertight and dry throughout."

**For more information about the charity and to get involved visit:**  
[www.becg.tv](http://www.becg.tv)

**Notes to Editors**

**For further information contact:**



## More help on the way for the poorest

Millions of the lowest-income households across the UK will get up to £1,350 from the Government in 2023/4 to help with the cost of living.

The new £900 cash boost for over eight million eligible means-tested benefits claimants, including those on Universal Credit, Pension Credit and tax credits, starts in Spring and will go direct to bank accounts in three payments over

the course of the financial year. There will also be a separate £150 for over six million disabled people and £300 for over eight million pensioners on top of their Winter Fuel Payments.

- £301 – First Cost of Living Payment – during Spring 2023
- £150 – Disability Payment – during Summer 2023
- £300 – Second Cost of Living Payment –

during Autumn 2023

- £300 – Pensioner Payment – during Winter 2023/4
- £299 – Third Cost of Living Payment – during Spring 2024



## Cold Weather Payment for cold snap

You may get Cold Weather Payments in this area due to recent plummeting temperatures if you are receiving;

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Support for Mortgage Interest

The payment is £25 for 7 consecutive days of cold temperatures.

## Outstanding Planning matters in the Hemswell Ward

Several Planning matters remain unresolved namely;

### Glentworth

Elizabeth Close, the controversial built and the site remains empty.

### Hemswell Village

The controversial Forge, this is now subject to legal.

### Hemswell Cliff

ADM has applied for a new façade and this remains unresolved. In my opinion there are good grounds for non determination and go Appeal.



## Trinity Arts causes concern over its Doors

Inflation has pushed maintenance costs for Gainsborough's Trinity Arts Centre to nearly double the budgeted amount.

£50,000 has been approved for the replacement of fire doors in the listed building, although some councillors struggled to believe the sums.

Only £30,000 had originally been budgeted by West Lindsey District Council for the work.

Inflation and the specialist work was blamed for bumping the price up.

The initial bids were received were between £50,000 and £80,000, but councillors were told this was as good as they were going to get.

Emma Foy, Director of Corporate Services, said: "There have been challenges this year due to huge inflation around construction and fewer suppliers in the market willing to tender. Everyone is very busy.

"It is very important that we do this work for health and safety reasons. We didn't want to re-tender, as this may increase the price even further."

The price was queried by several councillors at the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee who were stumped by the cost.

The work included 20 internal and external doors & Cllr Howitt-Cowan said that the listed building compounded the cost, as the doors will have to be hand made to comply with its heritage status. The church was originally built in 1843 and the external doors were most likely the original ones.

Council leader Councillor Owen Bierley (Conservative) said: "Health and safety is an absolute priority. I fully recognise how busy contractors are.

"The quotes are only valid for 60 days, so we should take the decision and get on with the work."

Councillor David Cotton (Liberal Democrats) added: "It's a Grade II listed building. As soon as you touch a listed building, it adds £20,000 to the cost straight away because of the specialist work."

Councillor Mandy Snee asked what the council was doing to control costs.

"We've had this issue before where we've tendered and then had to ask for more money. I agree we've got to get fire doors in place. But how do we ensure that this doesn't happen time and again?" She said.

Council officers said that in future, all items in needing replacement and renewal on the Strategic Assets Management Programme would be revisited to ensure the pricing was up to date.

**West Lindsey District Council says it remains committed to the ‘once in a lifetime opportunity’ of purchasing RAF Scampton.**



West Lindsey District Council says it remains committed to the ‘once in a lifetime opportunity’ of purchasing RAF Scampton. The £300 million redevelopment plans could see a hotel, restaurants, a runway and a museum built on the land.

The historic air base near Lincoln is set to fully close by the end of the year, with the Red Arrows having already relocated to RAF Waddington.

The council is currently looking for a partner to regenerate and develop the site. Councillors met behind closed doors on Thursday night due to the sensitivity of the potential purchase. The Corporate Policy and Resources Committee unanimously voted to continue work towards acquiring and regenerating RAF Scampton.

It was described as a ‘once in a lifetime opportunity’ for the district. However, councillors said they recognised the scale of the challenge ahead. A statement issued by West Lindsey District Council says: “This important decision is the next step towards protecting and enhancing the history and heritage of the site, whilst supporting the opportunity to provide economic and community prosperity.

“There is still much work to do to find a suitable regeneration and development partner and this exercise is subject to a live procurement process.

“A final decision will be made at a future meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.”

The Ministry of Defence announced in 2018 that the base would be closed as a cost-cutting measure. The invitation to bid for the redevelopment contract is published on the [Pro Contract website](#). It lists a variety of aspirations for the site, including arts and entertainment buildings, a hotel, accommodation, shops, restaurants, a runway and a museum. Submissions for expressions of interest closed in August. The final Red Arrows jet left the air base in October 2022, after making it their home for decades.

Committee chairman Councillor Anne Welburn previously said:

“We see that the successful redevelopment of the site of RAF Scampton could contribute significantly to the ‘Levelling Up’ of economic and social outcomes across West Lindsey, Lincolnshire and beyond.

“The importance of this site both in terms of heritage and social history cannot be overstated.”

*Scampton’s location to  
Lincoln ensures a  
bright future ahead*

## Leadership Skills Celebrated

Inspirational manager recognised as finalist at national awards ceremony.



West Lindsey District Council's Building Control Manager has been presented with a certificate in recognition of his leadership skills.

Phil Westmorland was nominated for the award by his team at the Council for the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) Leadership Award 2022.

This accolade is given to exceptional leaders across the country and was presented at the LABC Annual Conference Gala Dinner held at the Belfry Hotel in Birmingham. The award itself was dedicated to Jim King: a dedicated servant to public service building control who sadly passed away in 2021.

Following an extensive judging process Phil was selected as a finalist, having fully encompassed all the criteria needed to receive this, which included:

- To be an excellent role model
- To Inspire others to work collaboratively and creatively.
- To demonstrate initiative.
- To positively influence and support others in the LABC network.

Paul Round, one of Council's building control surveyors, who has undergone lots of training and development during his time at the Council, commended Phil's leadership.

He said: "Phil creates a work environment which is very open and honest. I feel there is never a daft question. If I didn't need to know the answer, then I wouldn't be asking it. He always makes time whether its Face to face, via Microsoft Teams or over the phone to discuss what I am working on and the questions it has generated. I have learnt a massive amount since working for Phil at West Lindsey District Council. His leadership and approach to our team has allowed me to get to where I am today."

Phil's ability to inspire and educate the developing members of his team was the biggest factor for his nomination, but his ability to navigate the ever-changing Building Control industry is what made Lizzie Robinson, Change Support Officer, agree he deserved a nomination:

"Phil was my first ever boss in Local Government, when I was a fresh faced 18-year-old temp helping out with some administrative support. He inspires me every day to do my best, and has guided the team through a very uncertain period, whilst still maintaining very high standards of work."

Upon receiving the award, Phil said: "Having a brilliant team makes it all the easier. It is really heart-warming, and just a little surprising to be thought of so highly."

The Local Authority Building Control team at West Lindsey has received lots of recognition lately, with their market share skyrocketing to above the national average due to their reputation for delivering a consistently good service to our residents.

Control team - [building.control@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@west-lindsey.gov.uk)

## **Guildhall Christmas and New Year Opening Hours**

Management Team recently agreed opening hours for Christmas and New Year. This year, face to face and telephone services at the Guildhall will close at 3pm on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December and Friday 30<sup>th</sup> December. Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> will be normal working days. The Guildhall will be closed on the Bank Holidays on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and Monday January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023. The exceptions to those arrangements are;

### **CCTV**

The CCTV office will be operating 24/7 over the Christmas and New Year period.

### **Crematorium**

Lea Fields Crematorium will be closed from 16:30 on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022 and will reopen on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 08:30. On Friday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2022 the office will be closed from 16:30 and will reopen on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 at 08:30.

### **Trinity Art Centre**

Trinity Arts are open on Christmas Eve, but not on Christmas or Boxing Day. Panto finishes on 31<sup>st</sup> December and they will be closed on New Year's Day.

### **Operational Services**

Waste collections for w/c 19<sup>th</sup> December will be carried out as normal. For the following week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> December, collections will be a day behind normal, culminating in Friday 30<sup>th</sup> collections taking place on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> December. South West Ward sack collections will take place on normal days. Things return to normal w/c January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023.

### **Solar Projects Update**

Progress on the four solar NSIPs (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects) continues. We now have a dedicated webpage, where updates and key documents will be uploaded. This also provides links to useful websites that detail the individual projects and NSIP process. This is available here: <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/planning-building-control/solar-development-proposals-west-lindsey>

updates to the four solar NSIPs:

**Gate Burton Energy Park (Low Carbon)** - 500MW solar and energy park on approximately 684Ha of land, 4km to the south of Gainsborough.

This is expected to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), the Government Agency responsible for NSIP decisions, in January 2023. Low Carbon are currently proposing some localised changes to the site boundary. They are undertaking "targeted consultation" to those communities close to the boundary changes, running 3 November to 13 December.

**Cottam Solar Project (Island Green Power)** - 600MW solar park across three sites in WL, totalling 1,270Ha.

Expected to be submitted to PINS in January 2023. Between one month and a week before submission, PINS will normally send a letter to relevant local authorities to advise them of the likely submission date of the application. The letter is to inform the relevant local authorities that, upon submission, the Planning Inspectorate will be requesting a representation from them on the adequacy of the applicant's pre-application consultation. The Local Authority will have 14 days to submit an "Adequacy of Consultation" response.

**West Burton Solar Project (Island Green Power)** - 480MW Solar project across three sites within WL, totalling 788Ha in area.

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Expected to be submitted to PINS in January 2023. Following the recent withdrawal of West Burton 4 from Bassetlaw District, we anticipate potential changes to West Burton 3 (WL), and expect further public consultation to take place in December.

**Tillbridge Solar (Tillbridge Solar Ltd) - Approximately 1,400Ha of land to the west of Hemswell and Glentworth including Harpswell Springthorpe.**

Expected to submit to PINS in Q3 2023. Following consultation, including comments from WL, PINS have now given their Scoping Opinion – the scope of environmental information that Tillbridge Solar Ltd will be expected to provide within their Environmental Statement (ES). Statutory public consultation is expected in Q1 2023

### **Private Rented Sector Workshops**

As part of the ongoing work to develop our approach in the Private Rented Sector, Councillor Workshops will take place on **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 10.30am (via MS Teams)** and **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 5 pm at the Guildhall (face to face).**

### **Annual Strategic Away Day, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Each January, the Council holds a Strategic Away Day at which Members are invited to hear speakers on a variety of subjects, and to enable discussion about key topics, issues and challenges relating to our district.

Pleased to announce that this year's Away Day will be held on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 from 9.30am – 4pm at Riseholme Hall on the University of Lincoln's Riseholme College Park campus.**

This year is centred on a rural theme of "What next for West Lindsey? Exploring the social, political and environmental challenges for the agricultural sector and our rural communities" and we are delighted to be joined by a number of high profile speakers from organisations such as the National Farmers Union, Lincolnshire Rural Support Network, Sir Richard Sutton Estates, Lincolnshire Agricultural Society, the Environment Agency and the Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology (LIAT).

The morning session will focus on the main issues and challenges faced by the agricultural sector and rural communities within West Lindsey, In the afternoon, Members will have the opportunity to discuss some policy solutions, after hearing about the work of organisations in relation to managing water in the environment; supporting education, food, farming and the countryside within local communities; and finally, LIAT's work to secure the future of food and agricultural activity through research, education and technology.

A lunch of local produce will be provided and Members will have the opportunity to take a guided tour of Riseholme College Farm to see the innovative work of LIAT at first hand. The farm is situated on the College Park Campus site and the tour will take approximately 30 minutes.

### **Member Workshop to be held – Vision Work/Devolution –**

As you may be aware, work has been ongoing between Districts, County and Unitary Authorities to produce a 2050 Vision for Greater Lincolnshire, alongside the Devolution work.

The in-person workshop will be held on **Wednesday 14th December, in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall at 6:00pm until 7:30pm.**

## Empty Retail Outlets In Gainsborough

Following the Nov Policy & Resources meeting it appeared that there was a disparity in the figures from officers regarding the number of empty shops it has been confirmed that the number of empty commercial / retail properties in the town centre are as follows:

Market Centre:

Curtis Walk 2  
Market Street 2  
Church Street 5  
Lord Street 7  
Market Square 6  
Silver Street 8  
Bus Station / Arcade Area 5

**Total 35**

There are several others which have been missed off the list so the number is greater than the one shown. The number also increases significantly if you also include other areas such as Trinity Street, Hickman Street, Bridge Street, North Street, Spital Terrace.

### The Coronation of the King on the 6th of May 2023

Hopefully, communities in the Hemswell Ward will mark the Coronation of King Charles III, which comes within a short time of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



And whether a monarchist or not, the event provides an opportunity for communities to get together in different & innovate ways. I have asked WLDC to explore the possibility of funding similar to the funding available for the Platinum in 2022, although the setting of the precept is an ideal opportunity to factor in funding to help these celebrations.

I personally support 'tangible ways' in which to mark such events & despite our straightened circumstances, we should be encouraged to celebrate a once in a life time event which is of national significance.

Your District Cllr was to be found distributing food parcels on Christmas Eve in the Hemswell Ward

Cllr Howitt-Cowan may be contacted;

kenmare01@outlook.com

01427 612017

On the 31st of Jan Paul marks two years since becoming an Independent, after serving as a Conservative for the past 11 years; he was first elected in 2010 to represent the Hemswell Ward.

It his intention to retain the seat and continue representing the people and interests of the Hemswell Ward for the next 4 years.

## The Scramble to be Independent on Energy SMR's may help

As the West scrambles to roll out a revolutionary form of nuclear reactors, there are fears the market will still be at the mercy of Putin, as Russia has a tight grip on fuel needed to power it. But an expert has told Express.co.uk that Rolls-Royce, which is developing its own type of reactors, may help the UK break free from Putin's clutches with its own reserves of nuclear fuel. Small nuclear reactors (SMRs) are a groundbreaking new type of power station which differs from traditional nuclear in the sense that these are much smaller, easier to build, cheaper and quicker to deploy.

But there are concerns, in the US for instance, over the current availability of the fuel needed to power these innovations, known as high assay low enriched uranium (HALEU), given the only company selling this commercially at present is TENEX, a branch of the Kremlin-controlled nuclear giant Rosatom. HALEU is enriched to levels of up to 20 percent, as opposed to the five percent or thereabouts for the uranium which powers most traditional nuclear plants. The Russian monopoly on HALEU is something the US has reportedly been concerned about for some time.

But while the US plans could be in jeopardy because of this, Dr Paul Dorfman, an Associate Fellow from the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of Sussex, explained to Express.co.uk that Rolls-Royce, which is championing the UK's drive for a nuclear revolution, may not have the same problem. He said: "It is probably likely that Rolls' (new reactors) will run on normal five percent uranium, and that can be dealt with via the UK uranium supply which is non-Russian, and UK enrichment, which is also home-based. Rolls-Royce says its SMRs will be around the size of two football pitches and will be capable of powering half a million homes.

The Government is hoping to build up to 16 of these reactors within the next 25 years, and included this in its energy strategy unveiled in April as a key lifeline that could help Britain eventually wean itself off Russian fossil fuels. It came after Russia laid bare its tight grip on the European energy market after curtailing deliveries to Europe, sending global wholesale gas and electricity prices soaring. Nuclear energy, an alternative clean power source, was presented by the Government as a means to boost its energy security and independence, with Rolls-Royce's nuclear reactors having a roll to play in the future UK energy mix. However, given Russia has a monopoly over uranium supplies, there are questions as to whether the UK energy strategy will do what it says on the tin.

Rolls-Royce SMR CEO Tom Samson said in response to the April energy strategy: "The Rolls-Royce SMR remains the fastest route to market for new nuclear deployment in the UK and we welcome this Government's clear commitment to turbo-charging nuclear deployment.

"By providing an early commitment and working in series, Rolls-Royce SMRs will be able to contribute to the bold vision set out by the Prime Minister for energy security and de-carbonisation. Rolls-Royce SMRs offer an affordable, sustainable and secure low carbon future for the UK and an export opportunity to realise the aims of Global Britain if we act now."

*West Burton, is I believe, ring fenced for development as an SNR providing energy for 250, 000 homes.*

### OFSTED

**A third of Lincolnshire schools failed Ofsted or were relegated on their previous inspection, which I find most concerning.**

**2 schools in our area are Queen Elizabeth School which was relegated in 2001 [personally not surprised however with the appointment of a new Head I thought it unfair to carry out such an inspection]. The former TVA in Gainsborough was judged Inadequate and although not surprised it is most alarming especially for parents with children there**





# Together We Are Stronger

Over 80 people attended the Love Lincolnshire Wolds Conference, representing businesses from across the Lincolnshire Wolds and surrounding area.

West Lindsey District Council and East Lindsey District Council invited businesses to be part of an incredibly exciting opportunity to help drive the vision of the Love Lincolnshire Wolds partnership. The event was held at Market Rasen Race Course. Business expert and author Clare Bailey supported the event and discussed the opportunities that businesses can take during the current climate, and how collaboration can be key to success.

A panel of local experts were also invited to talk about a range of topics which covered tourism support, digital marketing, campaign marketing, how to make sustainability a reality, creating bookable experiences and cycle tourism. Speakers were also challenged to provide two top tips that delegates could go away and implement as an action from attending the event

Tourism consultants, Keith Blundell and Richard Smith from TEAM Tourism also delivered a workshop that encouraged businesses to prioritise four core propositions, developed through consultants and research, which would then feed in to the refreshed Destination Management Plan. This plan will then help focus what both Councils, and the partnership should work on over the next 5 years.

Throughout the morning it was clear that working together was key to driving the success of the area as visitor destination. Businesses were also invited to be part of the Lincolnshire Wolds 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year, which celebrates the designation of the Lincolnshire Wolds as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which was declared on 17 April 1973.

The morning concluded with a Q&A session followed by lunch and an opportunity to network with fellow businesses. Feedback from the day was positive with many businesses keen to take the opportunity to network again in person, plus find out about what is happening in terms of the development of the visitor economy of the area.

Work on the Love Lincolnshire Wold Destination Management Plan is still ongoing and will be shared once it is made available. For more information about Love Lincolnshire Wolds visit [www.lovelincolnshirewolds.com](http://www.lovelincolnshirewolds.com).

For the latest news on West Lindsey District Council, visit [www.west-lindsey.gov.uk](http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk). For regular updates follow **@WestLindseyDC** on Twitter or search **West Lindsey District Council** on Facebook.

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