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

**4<sup>th</sup> July, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Walker (in the Chair)  
Councillors Abel, Beasant, Bramley, Brookes, Cairns, Callison, Cracknell, Fenty, Freeston, Furneaux, Goodwin, Harness, Jackson, James, Lindley, Mickleburgh, Nichols, Nici, Parkinson, Patrick, Procter, Rodwell, Rogers, Rudd, Shepherd, Sheridan, Shreeve, K.Swinburn, S.Swinburn, Watson, and Woodward.

<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Rob Walsh	Chief Executive
	Simon Jones	Monitoring Officer
	Sharon Wroot	Director of Resources and Governance
	Paul Windley	Democratic and Scrutiny Team Manager

NEL.18 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillors Barber, Barfield, Green, Hasthorpe, Hudson, Hyldon-King, Pettigrew, Silvester, Wheatley and Wilson.

NEL.19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Shepherd declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item NEL.20 as a trustee of Foresight, owners of the property housing the Skills Hub, and left the meeting prior to consideration of this item.

Councillor Furneaux declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item NEL.20 as his partner was employed by Foresight, and left the meeting prior to consideration of this item.

NEL.20 **COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICES**

The Council received a petition for debate asking for the Council to reconsider its decision to close the Community Learning Services at the Skills Hub.

The Monitoring Officer advised Council on the consideration of exempt information relating to this item, which had been included on the agenda for this meeting for consideration following exclusion of the press and public.

The Mayor invited Mr Dick Appleton, as the petition organiser, to present the petition. Mr Appleton noted that his autistic daughter attended the skills hub and commented on the wonderful work of the service. He was concerned that there was nowhere else suitable for her to go to receive the same standards of tuition and felt that everyone had the right to access lifelong learning. He was also concerned that, despite the poor Ofsted inspection reports, management still remained in place and he felt that the vulnerable would suffer the most from the decision to close the service. He noted that the previous administration had now acknowledged that they were not given enough facts in taking the decision and he hoped that the Council would now take an honest, open, non-political view on the future of the service.

Council considered a motion, proposed by Councillor Patrick and seconded by Councillor Rodwell, submitted in accordance with the Council's Constitution, and requested by six Members of Council, as follows:

Council will note the recent Cabinet decision to close the Community Learning Services (CLS) that provides much needed educational support and opportunities to some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Council will also note the recently submitted petition from the community with the aim of saving CLS as it stands.

The decision to close was not taken lightly, and we never wanted to see it happen. However, following that decision, new information has surfaced that might provide an opportunity to maintain the services in whole or in part as it is now.

This council resolves to:

Receive the petition to save CLS with our assurance that we support the petitioners in their aims.

Call upon the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Skills and Housing and the Director of Children's Services to pause the closure decision and to maintain the service as much as possible in its form prior to the decision to close. This will enable a further period of consultation to be made available to existing and recent service users and their families.

Further to this, a select committee will be formed to investigate:

- How the decision to close the CLS came about
- What new material considerations can be brought to light in this matter
- If it is viable and desirable for the service to continue and in what form.

When concluded, the select committee will report back their findings and recommendations to Cabinet.

As much as the business of the select committee should be conducted in open session as possible.

The motion was debated, during which Councillor Cairns moved the closure motion "that the vote be put". This was seconded by Councillor Abel, and the Mayor put this closure motion to the vote. The closure motion was declared carried and Councillor Patrick's motion was put to the vote. A recorded vote was held in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Standing Orders. The votes cast were recorded as follows:

For the motion

Councillors Beasant, Goodwin, James, Mickleburgh, Nichols, Patrick, Rodwell, Rogers, Rudd, Sheridan, Walker and Watson (12 votes).

Against the amendment

Councillors Abel, Brookes, Cairns, Callison, Cracknell, Fenty, Freeston, Harness, Jackson, Lindley, Nici, Parkinson, Procter, Shreeve, K Swinburn, S Swinburn and Woodward (17 votes).

Abstention

Councillor Bramley (1 vote).

The motion was declared lost.

The Mayor noted that there had been no requirement to exclude the press and public for consideration of the above matter and, therefore, there was no further business to be considered at this meeting. The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.