



Executive statement 2023

Friday 19 May 2023

ClIrr Martin Hill OBE **Leader of Lincolnshire County Council**



Our AGM is a time to reflect on the last year and all we have achieved as a council. The past 12 months have shown once again that in Lincolnshire, we have continued to deliver for our residents and have made significant accomplishments in every area of council business.

Yes, we face ongoing difficulties as global challenges continue to affect local services, and this will be the case for some time. But our successes clearly point to strong leadership and a highly dedicated and resilient staff working within the council. This report also highlights the important role we play in improving life for those living in the county.

In February we delivered our budget for the next year and I outlined how our careful planning ensured we had sufficient contingencies to cover the significant and unexpected costs we saw last year. This has meant we have been able to deliver what we said we would deliver, including £11.4m of savings within the planned budget.

We continually evolve as an organisation, looking at new and improved ways to reach our goals. We are a strong council with nationally recognised services and will continue to build on our successes. The transformation and smarter working programmes within the council continue to achieve budget savings or reduce future costs, while improving outcomes.

We've had the responsibility of additional government grants to support our residents this year and have ensured these have been fully utilised. This includes £10.9m from the household support fund and £2.7m from the holiday activity fund, to support households meeting the challenges of the cost of living. We have also co-ordinated the £12.3m received during the year, to support the Homes for Ukraine programme.

Our external auditors are still completing work to finalise our accounts, but have given positive feedback on our financial governance and value for money. **This council has delivered on our ambition to provide good value services for residents.**

In spite of growing construction and inflation costs, our strong financial management has meant we have been able to continue investing in our county. This includes major road schemes, our special school programme and new and improved business centres. Through new procurement and commissioning commitments, we are also making sure that external providers not only provide value

for money, but also benefit our environment and our economy. **This council has delivered on our ambition to create thriving environments for residents.**

This AGM report outlines the hard work across our service areas to protect our people, places and communities. There are so many examples of how we look after the needs of the public. Be that through health, care and safeguarding, preventing unsafe practices, responding to emergencies or giving children a great education. **This council has delivered on our ambition to enable our residents to enjoy life to the full.**

The last year has seen significant progress made on establishing a devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire. The government has reinforced that this is the mechanism for forward-thinking and future-focussed counties to get more funding, autonomy and responsibilities. We are committed to speaking up for Lincolnshire; to make sure that with our partners, we put a clear case to government for devolution; to secure investment that will boost our economy and bring higher skilled better paid jobs. We are now in discussions with the government about a deal for Greater Lincolnshire and although we must ensure we get this right, I am confident that there will be positive progress this year. **This council has delivered on our ambition to support high aspirations.**

As we move forward with our devolution plans, we are able to clearly demonstrate to those in Westminster that we understand the needs of our residents and businesses. We can show that we spend money responsibly and effectively. Most importantly though, we have consistently delivered on what we have set out to do.

I am incredibly proud of this council's achievements again this year, and I know that our hard work and dedication will continue to be at the heart of our success.

Cllr Patricia Bradwell OBE

Children's services and safer communities



Lincolnshire was one of 75 local authorities chosen for the government's Start for Life and Family Hubs programmes. This will bring extra funding to enhance the support provided through our children's centres and via our early help teams.

The Children in Care Transformation Programme continues to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children. Work has started on a new six-bedroom children's home in Louth, which will provide high-quality facilities for children aged 12 to 18. Alongside a second new home in Lincoln, this will mean that fewer children will need to be placed in homes outside the county, keeping them close to their local community.

Our short-break children's home, Strut House, has relocated to the St Francis Special School site and has been customised to provide high-quality respite facilities. Recently, Strut House was rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted for the 12th consecutive year.

Our youth offending service has recently been inspected by HMI and as well as involving our staff, it also includes a number of partners: Police, district councils, Probation, NHS, OPCC, MOJ. I would like to thank everyone who was involved in the inspection and I am very pleased to report the service was rated outstanding.

Our Holiday Activities and Food programme continues to grow and the feedback from parents, schools and the young people themselves shows it's making a real difference. The project team have successfully secured additional funding to support oral health and obesity for the next programme in the summer holidays.

Our health visiting service has been focusing on recovery and restoration of the Healthy Child Programme and has continued to offer families face-to-face contacts in their homes and children's centres.

The disruption in schools caused by the pandemic has had a major impact on children's learning. Although schools worked tirelessly during lockdown to help students continue to make progress, there has been an impact on attainment levels. We have also seen since covid, more young children struggling with the transition into school, so focused work is taking place in children centres with 3- and 4-year-olds to ensure they are ready to learn.



Our £100m special schools improvement project continues to make progress. Following the opening of the new Boston Endeavour Academy and an extension to Bourne Willoughby Academy, improved facilities have recently been completed at schools in Lincoln, Spilsby, Louth and Spalding.

The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership has added 'serious violence' to its priority areas, alongside fraud, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol-related issues, and reducing re-offending within our communities. £191,000 of government funding has been secured to deliver a new homicide prevention programme around the use of knives and other weapons and a further £40,000 of partnership funding will be used to increase crime analysis.

£1.7m of government funding and partnership contributions has been allocated for a new domestic abuse victim support service, which is being delivered by EDAN Lincs. This will provide independent domestic violence advisers, community outreach work, support for adults and children and an online self-help advice service.

In the area of adult learning 1,350 courses have been delivered to 5,700 residents, reaching adults who experienced little success at school, and as a result, lack confidence. Through innovative

curriculum design and high-quality teaching, we have made a substantial impact on our learners' lives. The new Multiply programme has engaged with over 700 residents to improve adult numeracy skills, empowering adults to feel confident in everyday maths. Many local businesses and organisations are working with us to increase the reach of this work.

In collaboration with the Lincolnshire Public Sector Compact Group and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP, the second Lincolnshire Apprenticeship Awards took place on 18 May. I was delighted to present nine awards that recognised the achievements of apprentices, employers and training providers.

Our county has welcomed just over 1,220 Ukrainian refugees through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Working in partnership with the district councils, the public and third-sector organisations, we continue to support our Ukrainian guests and their hosts. As of 23 March, nearly 1,000 guests are still living in the county.

Cllr Wendy Bowkett

Adult care and public health

Adult care services are implementing a number of new initiatives to improve services to residents.

Lincolnshire Community Health Service and the council's own occupational therapy teams have been working together to provide a single contact point for community referrals in the south-west of the county. Sharing the responsibility for waiting lists, this has offered a clear pathway for people to see the 'right person, right time, first time'.



A new initiative in acute hospitals, the Community Wrap Around Service, has benefited older residents who may have fallen or sustained a minor fracture and lost confidence in returning home from hospital. At the end of March 2023, almost 65% of those receiving the service did not require ongoing support, demonstrating the positive impact it has made.

In Gainsborough, we are providing drop-in sessions for the public in collaboration with health, housing and other partners. Residents in Gainsborough now have better access to advice and support when they need it.

The in-house day service for people with a learning disability has continued to implement its service plan, 'living life to the full'. Highlights in the past year have included the creation of an externally grant funded job coaching service, a new Arts Council-funded community arts programme for service users and carers in Boston, and increased respite opportunities for carers. Over a hundred service



users have also taken part in a range of community volunteering opportunities across the county.

The new integrated daytime and out of hours Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Service went live last year and is working successfully with partners to support people in mental health crisis and, where possible, avoiding the need for admission to mental health inpatient care.

Demand for safeguarding intervention continues to increase. The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adult Board (LSAB) is developing its second prevention strategy, 'Keeping People Safe,' which promotes working together to improve collective well-being and preventing abuse and neglect.

A voluntary external peer review of the mental health service in February 2023 commended the relationship between partners, the embedding of strengths-based approach to practice and the effectiveness of social work assistants. An action plan is in place for areas needing improvement.

There are several key successes to highlight in Public Health this year. Firstly, our integrated lifestyle service, One You Lincolnshire, has out-performed national benchmarks in all areas. An impressive 56% of clients have managed to quit smoking, higher than the target of 50%, and 43% of clients

achieved the target level of exercise, easily surpassing the 13 to 18% success rate nationally.

A new two-year pilot for a Child and Family Weight Management service builds on this success and ensures that children and parents can access services to help them lose weight and stay healthy.

A new Strength and Balance Service is also being delivered by One You Lincolnshire aimed at reducing the risk of falls in older adults and building confidence. And a successful first 'Ageing Better' conference was held in September resulting in twelve actions to support residents to prepare for and enjoy life as they get older.

CLlr Lindsey Cawrey

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, emergency planning and culture services

Last year, our fire crews continued to provide an effective response to emergencies across the county. This was despite prolonged hot, dry weather conditions which created an unprecedented demand on the fire and rescue service. The four-month summer period saw similar levels of activity that are expected in a full year. At the height of demand on the hottest day on record, major incident status was declared in Lincolnshire, as with much of the country, when all available appliances were committed.

We have made good progress with recommendations made during our HMICFRS inspections. The concern over how we carry out fire protection inspections has been lifted thanks to the development of our personnel. Preparation for the upcoming full inspection is underway, and the results will give a good indication on progress.

The council's commitment to ensuring our firefighters have the equipment and facilities they need continues, with investment at Grantham fire station where work is underway to upgrade the training and station facilities. We have now purchased Waddington Training Centre, securing the future of the site for training and development within the service.

In November last year, fire and council personnel took part in a national flood exercise. FloodEx22 was facilitated by our emergency planning and business continuity team on behalf of the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF), testing the multi-agency response to coastal flooding. Over four hundred people took part with Lincolnshire being awarded 'Best LRF in the UK' by the national planning team.





Our Urban Search and Rescue team supported the national response to the horrific earthquake in Turkey, with a team of four officers and a search and rescue dog. The team were directly involved in the rescue of eight people that were trapped under buildings within the Haytay area. The four officers were nationally recognised for their courage and commitment over the ten-day deployment.

Rescue capabilities will be on display later this year when Lincoln will host fire services from across the country for the UKRO challenge. The Lincolnshire 'festival of rescue' will offer residents and visitors the chance to see highly trained firefighters competing in professional rescue challenges – including rope rescue, water rescue and car extrication.

The festival of rescue will utilise many sites in uphill Lincoln including Lincoln Castle, which along with the newly renamed Lincoln Museum and Usher Art Gallery, were all successful in winning Visit England's Welcome Accolade this year. The awe-inspiring art installation, Gaia, attracted 32,000 visitors to the Lincoln Museum between March and May.

The Little Library Start Challenge was launched in June, and we also had an amazing Summer Reading Challenge across libraries which saw over 3,000 children take part. Business Bubbles at Lincoln and Spalding libraries have successfully opened, providing space for start-up businesses to meet with clients and benefit from free WiFi, printing and access to business software. During the summer we worked in partnership with the local community in Holbeach and South Holland District Council to create a successful pop-up museum on Holbeach High Street, called Memory Lane.

Cllr Daniel McNally

Waste and trading standards

The last twelve months has presented some interesting challenges in waste services. In the summer we opened our newest Household Waste Recycling Centre Tattershall, replacing the one at nearby Kirkby on Bain with a larger, more modern, site that allows us to process materials more efficiently. This is the first recycling centre that we are operating 'in house', without contracting out the management, and the site and staff have received much positive feedback.



Another big success has been the continued roll-out of the separate purple-lidded bins for paper and card. This project is now complete in Boston, North Kesteven, West Lindsey and East Lindsey and has produced a total of 14,000 tonnes of separate fibre up to February 2023. The quality of the material is exceptional at 98.5% pure fibre, and the paper mill processor reports that this is the highest quality material presented to them by any authority in the country.

Alongside the roll-out of the purple-lidded bins in each district, we've worked hard through our 'Right Thing Right Bin' campaign to improve the quality of mixed dry recycling too. The average contamination rate was 31% before this project started and this has now fallen to 14-16%. The project team which delivered these changes has also produced a programme of engagement with schools and community groups. Over 250 primary schools in Lincolnshire have now been contacted and so far staff have visited 21 schools with excellent feedback. This type of engagement will hopefully benefit the county in dealing with some of the changes we face in waste disposal, including anticipated upcoming statutory changes in the new Environment Act.

In our Trading Standards service, over the last year we've seized 394,993 illicit cigarettes and 54kg of hand rolling tobacco. To further disrupt sales of these illegal products, 14 applications for closure



orders have been granted for 11 premises, and for the maximum three-month period. Working with landlords we have secured a further eight evictions and nine individuals have been successfully prosecuted for offences related to illicit tobacco, including a custodial sentence of 16 months.

The dangers of illicit cigarettes were highlighted in our 'Operation June' campaign. This marked the 10th anniversary of the death of resident June Buffham who died in a house fire caused by an illicit cigarette. The campaign was supported by Trading Standards and fire services nationally and was awarded a Chartered Trading Standards Institute Hero Award for the best Trading Standards Project.

Following concerns raised nationally about an increase in the availability of non-compliant disposable electronic cigarettes – or vapes – Lincolnshire Trading Standards issued guidance to over 100 businesses identified as likely to be selling such products. The service is now seizing more and more oversized illegal vapes containing too much nicotine. Underage test purchases for these products is also concerning for the team – with around 27% of these tests resulting in a sale. Some 47 investigations have been initiated against businesses selling illicit tobacco and illegal vapes.

A vaping workshop is being delivered in schools covering all aspects of vaping, including the law relating to capacity and strength and who can legally purchase them. It also covers the health

aspects of using vapes as a smoking cessation aid and nicotine addiction. Over 4000 pupils have attended a workshop this year.

The service has responded to 10 confirmed cases of avian influenza in the county. It has also responded to 75 complaints and enquiries about this, mainly relating to compulsory housing requirements for birds, introduced nationally in response to the outbreak.

We also continue our battle against rogue traders operating in the county, and in one of the service's biggest cases to date, Trading Standards secured its longest custodial sentence of 6 years and 9 months against a rogue trader who defrauded at least 23 consumers across the East Midlands.

Clr Richard Davies **Highways, transport and IT**

Roads and transport are without doubt, one of the main subjects residents talk to us about as county councillors. We are facing an uphill battle in maintaining our roads while facing reduced government funding and increasing costs. However, as a council this year we have allocated additional funding from our budget and delivered on our commitment to ensure our communities are better connected.

We received 47,064 fault reports from the public and have repaired around 42,000 potholes with well over 90% of these repairs being issued as saw cut, overbanded 'permanent' repairs. In addition to that workload, there were thousands of reactive jobs carried out for things like lines, signs, vegetation, drainage and enforcement issues. We have recently been allocated an additional £7m from the government for pothole filling. This will help us do more, but we will continue to lobby for the re-instatement of our highways maintenance funding.

We are progressing well on our new road developments. Works continue on the Grantham Southern Relief Road which will significantly reduce pressure on traffic in the centre of the town. We have now completed the new A1/A52 junction and installed the bridge piers that will take the new road over the River Witham and railway line. In the autumn, the bridge beams will be pushed out across the piers – a major milestone.

Progress on the North Hykeham Relief Road is going well with Balfour Beatty appointed as





the design and build contractor. Since their appointment, a series of public engagement events have taken place, updating the public on all aspects of the project including its construction, environmental mitigation measures, and the final form of the road to be submitted for planning approval. Works are programmed to start in late 2025 for a three-year build period.

Across the county, we continue improvement works including our £20m programme of Levelling Up projects to the A16 corridor between Boston and Spalding – a key route for the agri-food industry. The first two projects are now underway near Boston, including major improvements to Marsh Lane Roundabout and active travel in the area. These works will be followed by improvements to

Spalding's A16/A151 Springfield Roundabout and A16/B1180 Greencell Roundabout, as well as active travel upgrades in Spalding.

We are committed to working towards a sustainable and integrated travel network where we look for opportunities to develop public transport, walking and cycling as part of our approach. Our support to bus operators remains essential in the challenging environment of rising costs and a post-covid slump in passenger numbers. Our 35 demand-responsive CallConnect transport services were used by 300,000 passengers over the last year, and we provided £3.5m in financial support to extend commercial bus routes.

Across the county, we arrange educational travel provision for over 19,000 pupils to and from school. Public transport services have the ability to work for residents and provide economic benefits for Lincolnshire.

It's important that county residents and businesses can benefit from electric charging points and are not disadvantaged in choosing to own, rent or use electric vehicles (EVs). We also want to take opportunities presented by visitors to the county wanting to charge an EV.

Following a successful bid to the government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot fund, the council as the lead applicant, is working with Midlands Connect partners to deliver more electric car charging points for residents across the region. We're also working with Midlands Connect on a number of other workstreams, including building the case for future road improvements, freight, logistics and decarbonisation. The decarbonisation work will support us with Quantifiable Carbon Reductions (QCR) – expected to be a central pillar of local transport plan guidance due out in the summer.

The Local Transport Plan was adopted in early 2022 and work is underway looking at railway station accessibility, freight and alternative fuel options in the transport sector. We continue to engage with train operators to get the best possible service provision for the residents of Lincolnshire and will continue to push the conversation for improved services where they're needed and influence decision-making.

Of course, helping residents stay connected isn't just about travel. We're progressing work so residents and businesses have the infrastructure they expect for digital connectivity. Our broadband contract with Quickline to deliver 8000 rural premises with ultrafast broadband is due for completion by the end of the financial year, with more than 4000 premises already covered.

Project Gigabit is a government project to deliver gigabit capable broadband to rural areas that are deemed to be non-commercially viable to existing providers. Commercial investment in full fibre,

ultrafast and gigabit-capable connections, is moving rapidly and well above what we would have envisaged two years ago. We expect in excess of 220,000 premises to be upgraded by commercial investment by the end of 2025.

Cllr Sue Woolley

Registration and coroners, community engagement and NHS liaison

The registration service continues to experience high demand for birth and death appointments. Our ceremony offering continues to develop with more venues such as The Usher Gallery becoming licenced for weddings and civil partnerships. There is also a stronger offer for customers as we improve our online service such as appointment bookings and online payments becoming available via the council's website.



The coroner's service has experienced its busiest year on record with 3,300 deaths being referred and hearing over 500 inquests. The service continues to make good progress against backlogs and the average time to inquest continues to fall.

In December, the Chief Coroner granted approval for us to recruit a permanent Senior Coroner for Lincolnshire and I'm pleased to announce Mr Paul Smith, previously Acting Senior Coroner, has been confirmed as the Senior Coroner by the Lord Chancellor. We continue to await an outcome from our business case submitted to the Ministry of Justice to create a Greater Lincolnshire Coronial Service.

Chairing both the county's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), has enabled local health and care partnerships to be further strengthened. Aligning the HWB and ICP meetings has enabled us to connect work and avoid duplication across the two, as we maintain and develop our local arrangements.

Lincolnshire has launched its interim Integrated Care Strategy as required by national guidance. It sets out the local ambition for our system, which is: **For the people of Lincolnshire to have the best possible start in life, and be supported to live, age and die well.** In addition, we have refreshed the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy to reflect the introduction of Integrated Care Systems from July 2022.

The HWB published a new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in March 2023. It's an interactive and dynamic online resource available as part of the Lincolnshire Health Intelligence Hub,



and assesses the current and future health and wellbeing needs in the county.

In October 2022, the Health and Wellbeing Board published its third Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA), outlining the present and future needs for pharmaceutical services in Lincolnshire. It is used to identify any gaps in current services or improvements that could be made in future pharmaceutical provision.

CLlr Colin Davie

Economy, environment and strategic planning

There have been a number of new programmes of support for our county businesses that have developed in the last year, helping our county economy recover from recent difficult times. This coincides with changes to how many business support programmes are funded going forward.

The Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub continues to provide vital support for our business community. We have secured new funding streams and incorporated new digital technology programmes for county enterprises. Since the launch of the Growth Hub, over 43,000 businesses in the county have been supported.

Through the national Made Smarter programme, we have been able to support our vibrant manufacturing sector to adopt new technologies and boost their productivity. We look forward to continuing this work. The creative industries are one of the fastest growing sectors of the UK economy and our Create Growth programme will provide a robust support package to help creative businesses access investment to grow. Our recognition of this important sector also includes the production of a Digital Lincolnshire brochure, designed to help these businesses to collaborate and grow.

We have seen a steep rise in the number of enquiries and resulting investments in the county, which have been the direct result of us showcasing our strengths to new and existing investors. Investment propositions have been produced including for our agri-food, low carbon energy, logistics, engineering and manufacturing and defence and security sectors.

We continue to provide adult learning opportunities linked to our key sectors to help our businesses grow. Our Multiply programme is supporting smaller businesses by providing grants for Multiply champions to improve numeracy skills and productivity in the workplace.

We have enhanced the digital capability of our www.visitlincolnshire.com website, which is the platform for everything we do to promote



Lincolnshire. It is performing extremely well, with 16.5% of visitors clicking through to a booking link or for more information. New areas are continually added to the site such as bird watching and film locations. The website also has a specific area offering training for businesses through toolkits and video masterclasses.

The Secretary of State has now formally designated the line of the new England Coast Path National Trail and we will now begin the process of establishing the route on the ground. The government's target is for the whole coastal path around England to be walkable by the end of this Parliament. This will present significant opportunities for those in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Our business premises portfolio is another vital element in our support to small businesses, and in September, we launched the latest addition to this, The Hub, at the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone (SLFEZ) near Holbeach. The Hub complements our five business centres in



Gainsborough, Lincoln, Market Deeping and Skegness and a range of other commercial premises across the county.

Another plot on the SLFEZ has been sold this time to a local control and automation supplier providing services to the food and beverage sector. The site has also seen the launch of the University of Lincoln's National Centre for Food Manufacturing. At the opposite end of the county in Gainsborough we have sold a plot to a specialist provider of security system design services, a former tenant of our Mercury House business centre, to build their own bespoke facility.

We continue to implement our Green Master Plan with a range of projects including net zero parishes, schools engagement and tree planting schemes, as we continue to work toward net zero by 2050. Climate change will present challenges in future years, with sea level rise and an increase in the likelihood of flooding. We are committed to working with Anglian Water, wider partners and stakeholders to ensure that water is managed in the best possible way, and we are taking action to protect our communities.

£1.44m was allocated for flood risk and drainage improvements, and schemes in Kirton and Scothern have been completed with further works planned in Cherry Willingham this summer. We have also secured imminent funding for the flood alleviation scheme in Long Bennington, helping to protect more than 50 properties. This is in addition to a wider scheduled programme of flood and drainage works at 33 locations across the county. £7m of national funding has been provided for Project Groundwater across the Greater Lincolnshire area, which we are leading. This will help us better understand the risk from groundwater flooding.

Cllr Richard Butroid

People management, legal and property services

As with most councils, we are currently managing a number of workforce challenges including shortages in some of our key roles. As part of our people strategy, we have introduced an attraction and retention framework to support council services in the short, medium, and long term. One success from this has seen a significant investment in the number of apprentices in areas like social work, with the council's apprentice levy expenditure set for a record high of 92% and more than 300 apprentices.





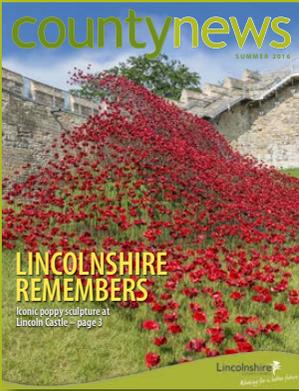
We have also made improvements to the council's employee offer, such as the introduction of electric and hybrid cars as part of our new salary sacrifice offer and additional support for employee health and wellbeing initiatives.

Our culture and leadership stock-take has now been completed. This is part of our continuous improvement on a journey to be an 'employer of choice'. Whilst the workforce market continues to be volatile, we have so far managed to stabilise voluntary turnover and agency spend and seen a reduction in sickness absence.

Our property team continues to work across the organisation to make improvements to our buildings where needed, and to ensure we have the right facilities for the council and our residents. This includes the major programme of work on our SEND schools with three significant projects completed in 2022/2023 at Bourne Willoughby Academy, Spilsby Eresby School and Louth St Bernard's School.

As part of the Smarter Working initiative, work is gaining momentum to optimise our property estate to ensure colleagues have the right office accommodation to successfully undertake their valuable roles.

A further £4.8m capital receipts were achieved in 2022/23, towards a total target of £14m by the end of 2023/24.



Lincolnshire
 COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future

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