



Scrutiny

Annual Report 2017-18

Introduction

During 2017-18 the City of Lincoln Council operated an Executive system, comprising the Leader and five other portfolio holders. Much of the decision-making within the Council takes place within the Executive. To improve the quality of the decisions made by the Council, a scrutiny structure remained in place under the local government modernisation agenda, which provided the opportunity for the remaining 27 non-Executive Councillors to challenge decisions made by the Executive, as well as to help the Executive in reviewing and developing new policies.

Background to Scrutiny

The scrutiny structure is:-

- Performance Scrutiny Committee
- Policy Scrutiny Committee
- Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee
- Select Scrutiny Committee
- Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

What Did We Achieve in 2017/18?

Main Scrutiny Committees were:

| Committee | Chair |
|--|---------------------------|
| Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee | Councillor Bushell |
| Performance Scrutiny Committee | Councillor Hewson |
| Policy Scrutiny Committee | Councillor J Kirk |
| Select Scrutiny Committee | Councillor Hewson |

With the exception of the Select Scrutiny Committee, the work programmes for these scrutiny committees were formally approved by the respective Committees in June 2017, and updated regularly throughout the municipal year. The Select Scrutiny Committee meets annually in order to consider crime and disorder, as well as considering any call-in requests made throughout the year.

This report identifies some of the key achievements made by the Committees. Current work programmes for scrutiny committees, can be found on the Council's website.

Sub/ Task Groups were:

| Name of Group | Chair |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee | Councillor Hewson |

This sub committee sits under Performance Scrutiny Committee and reports back to this meeting on a quarterly basis.

Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

The Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee considered two main topics as scrutiny reviews during 2017/18, as follows:

Proposed closure of the Monks Road Walk-In Centre

The Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee met at the New Life Centre to accommodate an anticipated larger number of public attendees than usual to consider the proposed closure of the Monks Road Walk-In Centre in order for a response to be made to the consultation process being undertaken by the NHS Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group.

The following external speakers were invited to contribute to the meeting:

- Sarah-Jane Mills – Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group
- Dean Graham – Public Petition Organiser, Change.Org
- Kudzai Muzangaza – Student Union President and Student Petition Organiser
- Sarah Fletcher – Lincolnshire Health Watch
- Wesley Shelbourne – Just Lincolnshire
- Kieran Sharrock – Lincolnshire Local Medical Committee
- Mark Hutton – Pharmacist

In considering the Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group's consultation into the proposed closure of the Walk-In Centre, the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee agreed to submit the following response to the Council's Portfolio Holder for Recreational Services and Health for his consideration.

Responding to the consultation question '*do you think the reasons given for why we are consultation on the Walk-In Centre are clear?*', the Committee put forward the following comments:

Members were concerned about the reasons outlined in the proposal and thought that they were not clear enough.

Members did not feel that the Equality Impact Assessment had been properly carried out in that it was only a work in progress, had not been made clear to the public and should have been readily available at the start of the consultation.

In response to the consultation question '*did you know that children under 12 can get an assessment on the same day at their own GP surgery if it is clinically appropriate to do so?*', the Committee put forward the following comments:

Members were aware of this, however, they were concerned that members of the public did not know this provision was available to them.

The Committee agreed upon general responses to the consultation document and expressed concerns about the following:

- individual members of the Committee had received an overwhelming public response that people did not support the proposal to close the Walk-In Centre;
- it was clear that lots of people experienced difficulties in getting an appointment with their GP on the same day;
- closure of the Walk-In Centre would mean losing immediacy of access to face to face services;
- there was a shortage of GP's currently and there would be a gap in provision if the Walk-In Centre closed;
- the alternative provision of Pharmacies was of limited assistance due to their restricted skill set to provide clinical treatment;
- much of the proposal was aspirational as the NHS was already in a position of crisis and debt, especially when taking into account recent closures of GP surgeries, frequent use of locums and a serious shortage in A&E staff. This already contributed to a pressure on services and closure of the Walk-In Centre would contribute even further to this pressure;
- people who were vulnerable, such as the homeless and those with mental health issues, were likely to be disadvantaged should the Walk-In Centre close;
- young and vulnerable people would be disadvantaged as a result of the Walk-In Centre closing in respect of access to sexual health services, particularly free emergency contraception. With regard to emergency contraception, some patients appreciated confidential advice and treatment away from the 'family' GP;
- it was difficult to accept that there would be no more than an average of two more appointments a day in General Practices as a result of the closure of the Walk-In Centre. There did not appear to be adequate evidence to support this assumption;
- the closure of the Walk-In Centre would deny many patients access to healthcare;
- the Walk-In Centre had been incredibly successful;
- there may be a case for exploring whether there could be more Walk-In Centres across the county;
- there were specific concerns regarding student access to healthcare services, particularly overseas students, should the Walk-In Centre be closed
- the timing of the consultation, particularly during the summer when students were away from the City;
- the 111 service was not a face to face service, so was not an alternative to the Walk-In Centre;
- the need for significantly greater levels of education in order that people properly understood and were made aware of existing services
- 25% of people in the city were unable to access online services, so any push to online services would result in limited access to a significant proportion of residents;
- provision of the Walk-In Centre in Lincoln was being perceived as delivering an inequitable service across the rest of the county.

The Committee was reassured by the Clinical Commissioning Group comment's at this meeting that it regarding the consultation as meaningful, with this sentiment being noted. Members were also reassured by the following:

- the ambition of the health service was to improve access to GP services in the future;
- it was intended that there would be more education and awareness of access to different healthcare services;
- there was a pro-active approach towards encouraging students to register with a GP in the area to ensure that they had regular access to healthcare services;
- the range of clinicians and trained staff would be increased in General Practices;
- further evaluation of routine appointments and same day appointments would be undertaken.

Despite these assurances, however, the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee felt that, in view of the fact that the above measures were not yet in place, closure of the Walk-In Centre was premature at this stage. Whilst accepting the need to make financial savings, members did not accept that it should limit access to healthcare. The Committee felt that there had not been enough work carried out on robust alternative services and was therefore of the view that the Walk-In Centre should remain open until such services were available and a further review carried out.

The Executive considered the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee's comments at its meeting on 14 August 2018. It was supportive of these comments and agreed to use the Committee's general responses to the consultation for the basis of the Council's official response to the Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group's consultation.

Inclusive Growth

The subject of this review tied in strongly with the Council's Vision 2020 objective 'Lets Reduce Inequality' and 'Economic Growth'. The Committee held regular meetings to gather information on this review and invited key partners relevant to the topic.

In August 2017, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation published a report called *Job creation for inclusive growth in cities*. Using this as a baseline study, the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of inclusive economic growth in the city and wider functioning economic area, by considering inclusive growth from both supply and demand perspectives. The supply perspective considered the impact of inclusive economic growth on the labour market and the demand perspective considered its impact on businesses and employers, in particular small and medium sized enterprises. The review took place over four meetings, culminating on 3 April 2018 with a number of recommendations for the Executive to consider on 29 May 2018. The following summarises the work of the Committee:

- 1) The first meeting was held on 7 November 2017 which scoped the Inclusive Growth Review. The Committee was advised that Lincoln's population increased at a fast pace between 2006 and 2016, increasing by 9.4% to 97,795 residents. Members discussed inclusive growth as a whole including its definitions and background studies; and discussed how important it was to economic growth as it brought more people into the economy and therefore increased financial inclusion and boosted economic productivity. The Committee heard evidence from Lincoln University and put in place a topic for each meeting until the end of the municipal year. These were:
 - 9 January 2018 – Labour Market and Case Studies
 - 6 March 2018 – Business Sector and Statistics
 - 3 April 2018 – Discussion and Recommendations
- 2) At the meeting on 9 January 2018 the Committee was presented with information on the supply side of inclusive growth. In particular, Lincoln's Labour market and economic activity. The Committee heard evidence from the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions), Linkage Trust, Lincoln College and Lincoln University about how they provide career opportunities and help people get into full time employment. The Committee was advised that there was a large difference in population size for Lincoln's nearest neighbours, ranging from 141,801 residents in Preston, to 80,537 resident in Hyndburn.

The Committee also explored a number of case studies from across the country where inclusive growth initiatives were spurring economic growth whilst enabling more people to progress into employment, and access better quality jobs. Members considered Newcastle's Working City Plan which was delivering a range of capital investments across the city whilst ensuring these benefited young people, such as through creating apprenticeship opportunities. Additionally, the Committee heard about Bradford Skills House which had been created to bridge the skills gap between local employers in key sectors and residents; and about the Bristol City Fund which was convening stakeholders to mobilise local investment into priority areas such as housing and employment.

- 3) At the meeting on 6 March 2018 the Committee was presented with information around the Business Sector of Inclusive Growth. The Committee heard evidence from the Education Business Partnership, Voluntary Centre Services, Bailgate Guild, Tesco Ltd with regards to the size comparison between businesses in Lincoln and the types of jobs including skill levels. The key information heard at that meeting was:
 - Fulfilling sector demands and the fact that social mobility was an ongoing issue
 - The importance of the Living Wage and how it was key to local businesses
 - The large multi-lingual customer base within Lincoln and the language barrier which often proved difficult when providing training

- 4) At the meeting on 3 April 2018 a presentation was provided to recap on the key findings of the Inclusive Growth review to date, and highlighted the outcomes of the Lincoln Growth Conference on 16 March 2018. As a result of this review, led by the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee, a dedicated inclusive growth workshop was held which included a range of external attendees, with the Chair also being in attendance. The purpose of the workshop was to provide additional evidence from employers which would aid the Committee's review. At its April meeting the Committee discussed the key points from the various sources of evidence and developed a series of recommendations to the Executive as follows:

Supply Side

- Continue to support the Living Wage; and promote the city council's Corporate Social Responsibility Charter prior to its launch in summer 2018.
- Engage with the Education Business Partnership to identify ways to promote their mentoring and National Citizens Service programmes
- Continue to support work experience placements across the board i.e. plumbing/manual work at the city council as a way for young people to gain practical 'hands on' experience.
- Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee considered reviews into (a) the challenges surrounding transport to work and education; and (b) the coverage and availability of advice and support to people accessing help such as Personal Independence Payments.

Demand Side

- Convene partners in the city to identify similarities in investment priorities and explore potential opportunities to pool or coordinate resources.
- DWP and Planning Services to explore if there were any opportunities available to encourage local employment.
- Explore the skills and training needs of small businesses
- Work with organisations such as the Lincolnshire Open Research and Innovation Centre which aims to share learning and good practice across the business community of Lincolnshire

The Committee also recommended that the findings of this inclusive growth review be considered in any future economic or industrial strategies produced by the Council. This could include, for example, supporting initiatives that may help people work flexible around childcare responsibilities.

These recommendations were endorsed by the Executive.

Performance Scrutiny Committee

As part of the Performance Scrutiny Committee's remit, it held regular 'portfolio under scrutiny' sessions, where portfolio holders were invited to report on service achievements under their portfolio. Members were then able to ask questions about the performance of these service areas. The consideration of portfolio reports included the provision of a template for reports which places a focus upon providing performance information relating to the member's portfolio. By doing so, the Committee is able to focus on the performance of a portfolio with fewer diversions into detailed analysis of policy issues.

A regular report was provided in the form of a Portfolio Performance overview presented by the Policy Unit to the relevant Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting with the purpose of bringing out key contextual benchmarking indicators about issues in the city overall in relation to the portfolio under scrutiny. This process helped promote effective scrutiny of the portfolio holder's report.

PSC worked from a defined subset of the full IMPS data formally agreed by members and the Corporate Management Team representing the key operational activities to be monitored by the Committee.

In addition to the regular scrutiny of portfolio holders, the Scrutiny Committee received reports in the following areas:

- Quarterly financial monitoring to provide members with a summary of actual income and expenditure compared to the revised budget and appropriate allocation of any surpluses to reserves.
- Quarterly performance update reports to ensure regular monitoring of the Council's operational performance as a key component of the Local Performance Management Framework.
- Quarterly progress reports on strategic projects against their milestones as well as a summary of the projects delivered during the year in order to monitor that value for money was achieved. The last one of these was received in Q4 as from this point project reporting will be through the four Vision Group and the High Performing Service reports only (see below)
- A quarterly review of the Strategic Risk Register - what improvements or issues have been identified.
- A report on Treasury Management and Actual Prudential Indicators as a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures under regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.
- An annual report detailing progress made by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee.
- An update report on Section 106 contributions.
- Income and arrears monitoring reports providing updates to members on the position with regard to amounts of monies owed to the City Council as at 1st April.
- Revenues and Benefits performance updates providing members with an update on performance in the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service.

- The City of Lincoln Annual Report 2017 was presented to Performance Scrutiny Committee on 17 August 2017, which highlighted the authority's key activities and outcomes over the past year, covering our four strategic priorities as well as an important strand of work focusing on delivering high performing services. This included preparations undertaken for new projects, and actions taken by the council to put it on a 'strong footing' in future years.
- The Lincoln City Profile 2016 was presented to Performance Scrutiny Committee in October 2017, which acted as the evidence base behind the City of Lincoln Council's strategic priorities. It also provided information to help the Council continue to target resources where they were needed most.
- A report on the financial and performance position of the Housing Repairs Service at the end of the 2016/17 financial year was received by members of Performance Scrutiny Committee on 25 January 2017. It was highlighted that there continued to be a strong commitment to improving the quality and efficiency of the service and that this was a key aim in the 2017/18 financial year. Members thanked officers for the concise details along with thanks to the housing repairs service for their achievements recorded in the report.

Members this year were introduced for the first time to the reporting arrangements for Vision 2020 projects. Vision 2020 was approved by Council on 10th January 2017, containing four strategic priorities as well as a strand focusing on high performing services, covering:

- Let's drive economic growth
- Let's reduce inequality
- Let's deliver quality housing
- Let's enhance our remarkable place

Under each priority were a number of actions that would be delivered between 2017 and 2020 to work towards delivering Lincoln's ambitious future.

These projects were reported to the Performance Scrutiny Committee at a rate of one strategic priority per quarter, to enable a specific detailed focus on one topic area at a time, whilst ensuring all four strategic priorities were reported within a one year period. Proposed reporting arrangements were presented to the Committee in June 2017. The reports were aligned as much as possible to portfolio holder reporting dates during the year, and would be much closer in the municipal year 2018/19 once embedded. This process took the place of themed reviews in the main, although Members were entitled to request scrutiny of any specific area of the Council's responsibilities if they so wished at any time.

Members took part in the budget review process for the scrutiny of the proposed budget and Council Tax for the 2018/19 financial year and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-2023. undertaken in two separate stages; firstly all members were invited to a briefing session to afford all members the opportunity to gain a greater understanding and awareness of the Council's financial position, thus aiding further scrutiny of the budget and in the case of the opposition party if desired the preparation of an alternative budget. This was followed by a more traditional scrutiny process undertaken to review in more detail the MTFS and the robustness of the proposed budget options and Council Tax for the 2018/19 financial year. This was undertaken in a committee format as the Budget Review Group with the appropriate governance arrangements in place.

The Committee held scrutiny reviews during the 2017/18 year in respect of:

Christmas Market Outturn Report 2016

Performance Scrutiny Committee had played a large part in monitoring the operational/performance costs of the Christmas Market for several years. Members were provided with a detailed report for the 2016 market at its meeting held on 13 July 2017.

Members were extremely satisfied and recorded their thanks and praise to be given to the team for a job well done. It was the first time that the Christmas Market had managed to pay for itself and it was agreed that it had been an excellent event.

Human Resources Corporate Performance Statistics

Members received a presentation on HR Corporate Performance Statistics at its meeting held on 13 July 2017, covering sickness levels, FTE equivalent vacancies, appraisals, and staff turnover.

Lincoln Transport Hub

Members received an update report in October 2017 on the operating parameters and operating budgets for both the Lincoln Central Bus Station and the Lincoln Central Market Multi Storey Car Park.

Housing Benefits Overpayment

Members were updated on the recovery of Housing Benefit Overpayments at its meeting held on 23 November 2017, outlining the value of overpayments raised so far in 2017/18 and how it equated, in percentage, to the total value of Housing Benefit paid. Details of an action plan for 2017/18 and 2018/19 were outlined to the Performance Scrutiny Committee. It was highlighted that during 2016/17 the Housing Benefit Section actioned 23,927 change in circumstances for City of Lincoln customers.

Christmas Market 2017

Members received a Christmas Market Stalls/Budget Brief Pre Event Report at its meeting held on 23 October 2017.

At this stage the 2017 market was forecast to make an operational surplus of £89,090 which was a projected £26,840 under achievement against the budgeted surplus of £115,930, mainly due to the significant increase in police and security costs.

On 25 January 2018 an Interim Christmas Market 2017 Outturn report was also received by members, giving updated details on operational and budget matters.

On 12 July 2018 the Christmas Market 2017 Outturn Report was presented to members, providing the Performance Scrutiny Committee with key financial performance in relation to the 2017 Lincoln Christmas Market.

Central Market Review

A report was given by Kate Ellis, Strategic Director, Major Developments on the current position with regards to the review of the Central Market.

Substantial construction work had taken place in the Sincil Street area for the Transport Hub and redevelopment by the Lincolnshire Co-operative Society in the Cornhill Quarter.

A reduced income target for 2017/18 was expected to be met following additional stall lettings in City Square, with the potential of a small surplus to offset the increased expenditure incurred as a result of a range of activities to support market traders and businesses in the area during the construction works on the Hub.

The Strategic Director explained that 2018/19 would be the year in which the retail assessment, the outcome from the Lincoln Business Improvement Group review and the options for the market would be explored and funding options investigated.

Key Changes 2017/18 Looking Forward

The reporting arrangements for Vision 2020 projects in future would replace the reviews held in 2017/18 (detailed above), although Members could request adhoc reviews to be presented to the Performance Scrutiny Committee at their discretion as and when they felt it necessary.

Policy Scrutiny Committee

During 2017/18, the Committee met eight times, principally to scrutinise decisions due to be taken by the Executive or Council. The Committee provided its insights and recommendations on a variety of topics, which were suitably reflected in the eventual decision-making process.

The Committee scrutinised the following topics in particular detail:

Review of Neighbourhood Working Service

The Committee was presented with the Neighbourhood Working Service Business case which set out the current strategy, work programme and resulting structure of the Neighbourhood Working Service deployed in specific areas across the city. Members were presented with a number of options for taking the service forward. The business case evaluated each of the options and proposed a preferred option for the future of the Service. The Committee was asked to make comments on the proposals to submit to Executive for consideration.

The Committee considered the recommended option:

- Reduction to one team focussing intensely in one area of the city only.

- Delivering a one year package of support through the third sector to ensure sustainable active neighbourhood boards
- Delivering a saving of £177,000 per year.

Members discussed the proposals and submitted the following comments to Executive for consideration:

- It should be made clear that the primary driver for the review of the service was to save money.
- Members of the committee recognised the financial savings and understood the position of the council and, whilst had some concerns, were in agreement with the revised proposal which was shaped by the two rounds of consultations.
- Could the St Giles Matters Access Centre remain open?
- Members would like to see a dedicated phone line to be available in the area to assist residents accessing services.
- What would happen to the areas that were not covered by Neighbourhood Working.
- It was important that officers of Service Manager level or above attended the Neighbourhood Working Board meetings when required.
- There were concerns over how much involvement would be needed from Councillors to run the Neighbourhood Boards.
- There were concerns regarding setting up Neighbourhood Working in the Sincil Bank area.

The Executive considered the comments from the Policy Scrutiny Committee and supported the suggestion to provide a dedicated free telephone line made available at St Giles Community Centre to replace the provision currently in the St Giles Matters building and so assist residents with accessing services.

Proposals for the Review of Existing Public Space Protection Order

The Committee was advised of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which prohibited the possession and consumption of alcohol and so called 'legal highs' within the designated area of the City. They were presented with the proposals to review the PSPO and asked to comment prior to consideration by Executive.

Members of the Committee:

- discussed the PSPO that was currently in place and noted the positive impact it had made on the City.
- considered the data held by the City of Lincoln Council and Lincolnshire Police and the outcome of the public consultation.

Following the discussion members recommended that the Executive approved the renewal of the PSPO in its current form.

In addition to these key topics, the Committee also scrutinised the following items and forwarded its comments for consideration by the Executive:

- Information Security Policy

- Waste Collection Enforcement Policy
- Review of Mutual Exchange Policy
- City Centre Public Realm Strategy
- Animal Welfare Policy (Inc Welfare Statement)
- Procurement Policies
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Establishment of a Wholly Owned Housing Company
- Proposals for Revision of Public Health Funeral Provision
- Lincolnshire County Homelessness Strategy 2017-2021
- Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter
- Regulation 7 Direction on Lettings Boards
- Discretionary Rate Relief Policy
- Lincoln Community Lottery Update
- Private Housing Health Assistance Policy
- Empty Homes Strategy
- General Data Protection Regulation (Data Protection) Policy

The Committee also received regular updates from the Health Scrutiny Committee.

Select Scrutiny Committee

The principal functions of the Select Scrutiny Committee are to meet as the Crime and Disorder Committee and to consider any requests for the Call-In of Executive decisions.

The Call-In process allows scrutiny members to challenge a decision made by the Executive or any of its individual portfolio holders, prior to the implementation. This gives the Select Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to examine a decision where particular concerns have been raised and respond accordingly.

During 2017/18 the Committee considered two requests for the Call-In of an Executive decision in relation to the Transformation of Birchwood Leisure Centre and the Western Growth Corridor. The original decision taken by the Executive in both instances was upheld.

The Committee met on one occasion sitting as Crime and Disorder Committee on 12 September 2017 considering the following items:-

- Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Services
 - Lincoln Business Improvement Group
 - Lincolnshire Police- Lincoln Performance Overview
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Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of Performance Scrutiny Committee. It was established in 2008 to increase engagement between backbench Members and Tenant Advisory Panel representatives. The Sub-Committee has continued to meet and tenants on the Committee consider that it has helped them

have their say when scrutinising housing matters. The Committee met four times during 2017/18 and considered many reports which included the following topics:

- Post Implementation Review of Servitor
- Draft Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders 2016 -2017
- Housing Revenue Account Final Out Turn 2016/17
- Housing Investment Programme 2016/17
- Post Implementation Review of St Botolphs Court Modernisation Project
- Supported Housing Update
- Tenant Involvement Strategy 2018-2021
- Lincoln Tenants' Panel Annual Report

The Committee also effectively scrutinised Housing performance on a quarterly basis and received regular updates on the progress of the Lincoln Tenants Panel.

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