

Present: Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Tony Speakman, Councillor Thomas Dyer,
Councillor Paul Gowen, Councillor Ronald Hills,
Councillor Helena Mair, Councillor Liz Maxwell, Councillor
Loraine Woolley and Councillor Biff Bean

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Pat Vaughan

13. Confirmation of Minutes - 15 June 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2017 be confirmed.

14. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Helena Mair declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest with regard to the agenda item titled 'Economic Growth Report'.

Reason: Her husband worked as a local architect and was involved in the Central Market refurbishment. In the event that any discussion on these matters took place during the course of the meeting she would withdraw from the room at that stage. She left the room during the discussion of the Central Market refurbishment within the Economic Growth presentation.

Councillor Liz Maxwell declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest with regard to the agenda item titled 'Economic Growth Report'.

Reason: She was a landlord of property in the city and any pertinent issues might be discussed under this item. No such discussion took place, therefore she remained in the meeting.

15. Presentation: Human Resources - Corporate Performance Statistics- Thematic Review

Claire Burroughs, Human Resources and Work Based Learning Manager presented a power point presentation of Corporate Performance Statistics as of March 2017, covering the following main areas:

- Sickness levels:
 - short and long term with comparisons against East Midlands
- FTE equivalent vacancies
- Appraisals - 66% were completed
- Staff turnover
 - 55 leavers - top 3 reasons were resignation, retirement and redundancy

Members discussed the content of the presentation in further detail, raised questions and received relevant responses from officers as follows:

Question: Appraisals - assuming these were annual - what period did these figures cover and was there any budget available for identified training requirements or requests?

Response: The new system had been launched and it was proposed that all appraisals be completed by the end of June with some flexibility into July. Training budgets had been set up across the organisation.

Question: How did the budget compare to the needs of the individual?

Response: There had been no issues reported however further checks would be made as the appraisal system settled in.

Question: Stress seemed to be a common reason for sickness, was anything being done to look at the reasons behind this?

Response: Managers were encouraged to utilise stress risk assessments to understand the reasons and develop action plans accordingly.

RESOLVED that the content of the presentation and discussions held in relation to the Corporate Performance Statistics be noted.

16. Portfolio Performance Overview: Corporate Management and Customer Services

Pat Jukes, Business Manager, Corporate Policy:

- a. presented a portfolio performance overview of Corporate Management and Customer Services covering the following main areas:
 - Contextual data
 - Performance measures from the key basket of strategic measures
 - Benchmarking information from LG Inform
- b. advised that this approach was being used with the purpose of bringing out key contextual indicators about issues in the city overall related to the portfolio holder under scrutiny.

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail.

Members asked:

- The growth in the percentage of invoices paid within 30 days although small had not registered as improving, was there a reason for this?
- Should councillors have sight of targets before implementation as currently they were agreeing to them after they had been implemented?

Pat Jukes, Business Manager responded as follows:

- The growth in the percentage of invoices paid within 30 days would only register as “improving” when it fell outside of the tolerances which were carefully set to determine the strategic target as well as what levels of performance were unacceptable.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management and Customer Services responded as follows:

- That the point made about the Councillors seeing the targets, prior to implementation, was a good one and had been discussed with Martin Walmsley, Interim Assistant Director of Strategic Development. Targets reflected the standard of performance expected and it was important to get these correct. It was also vital to ensure that the targets were achievable

and were assessed at an early stage as there could be budget implications.

RESOLVED that the content of the portfolio performance overview of Corporate Management and Customer Services be noted.

17. Report by Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management and Customer Services

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management and Customer Services, Councillor Metcalfe:

- a. advised that along with wider Local Government community and the national political landscape , the context for the Council remained a very challenging one
- b. presented his report regarding activity and achievements within his portfolio, covering the following main areas:
 - Introduction
 - The Council's Priorities
 - Key Achievements in 2016/17
 - Progress on reshaping local government
 - Financial savings
 - Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
 - Complaints against the Council
 - Customer Services
 - Website Development
 - Procurement
 - Asset Management
 - Business Development and Information Technology
 - Emergency Planning and Business Continuity
 - Risk Management
 - Human Resources
 - Work Based Learning (WBL) - Apprenticeships
 - Audit arrangements
 - Electoral activity
 - Communications
 - Allotments
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Annual Report
 - Key Performance Results
 - Future Challenges
- c. thanked officers for their assistance with his portfolio.

Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management and Customer Services for his report and questioned him on various aspects of this:

- Question: There was cross party disappointment over the devolution result, what was the current situation?
- Response: Currently the Council was trying to establish what the Government's steer was going to be with no local agreement. There was great uncertainty at the moment however work was going on in the background to be prepared for any outcome.
- Question: In the report there is a statement saying that the Council will continue to be innovative and entrepreneurial, did this mean taking risks?

- Response: Traditionally the Council had been very risk averse but currently there was an entirely different set of circumstances. By achieving financial independence the Council might have to throw off some degree of caution as it was now necessary to increase income. Risks had been taken with the Transport Hub and the Council had been heavily exposed while it was waiting for the contribution from the Department of Transport. By being entrepreneurial the Council would be looking at investment opportunities i.e. buying/selling land and property.
- Question: The turnout for the County Council Election was 31.98% what are the thoughts on increasing the number of people registered to vote?
- Response: This was extremely important and Electoral Services were more pro-active than ever in encouraging eligible people to register. They used social media and strong links had been formed with the University. It was unfortunate but there would always be people who actively resisted registration.
- Question: Developers building new properties advised new buyers to register for council tax, would this be an ideal opportunity to include a welcome pack with instructions on how to register to vote?
- Response: This was a very good idea and could be explored but would be dependent on cost and resources.
- Question: Boston managed to turn Housing Benefit Claims around in 5 days. Why did it take Lincoln a month?
- Response: Prompt payment of Housing Benefit was extremely important as non-payment could lead to unpleasant side effects. Officers understood that Boston used a different process where applicants came in at the outset with all relevant information in support of their claims. New claims were promptly handled here and the Benefits team was not complacent, claimants were encouraged to use online systems to link into digital inclusion agenda and associated efficiencies for customers and the Council. The turnaround time was 23 days at the end of quarter one.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be received and noted with thanks.

18. **Economic Growth Report**

The Strategic Director, Major Developments:

- a. presented a report which gave an update on the progress of the Economic Growth projects as part of the new Vision 2020 programme; it had been agreed that Performance Scrutiny Committee would receive a report each quarter from one of the Vision groups
- b. identified the priority projects which were:
 - Lincoln Transport Hub
 - Western Growth Corridor
 - Park Ward Regeneration Scheme
 - Development of a Markets Strategy
- c. advised that the public consultation had started for the Western Growth Corridor and dates were being confirmed for 5 Community Workshops, an E Questionnaire had been devised and there had been 113 responses to date, which included a couple of emails and one letter

- d. explained the individual outputs and outcomes that existed for each project which were being collated into an overall package of measures along with a range of contextual indicators which would provide a picture of the local economy
- e. invited members' questions and comments

Members considered the content of the report, asked questions and received relevant responses from officers as follows:

The initial question and discussion concerned the Central Market and at this point Councillor Helena Mair left the room having disclosed a disposable pecuniary interest in the matter to be discussed.

- Question: The market refurbishment timescale appeared to be very long and traders had been moved out very early. Why was that?
- Response: The Council was waiting for updated proposals from the architect which would then need to be costed. The building had Grade 2 listing which affected any changes both to the inside and the outside and involved lengthier planning. It was regrettable that some businesses were unable to continue trading and discussions had taken place on what to do as an interim measure rather than wait for the 'full package'. As the building was listed all changes would have to go before Planning Committee and Lincoln Heritage. There would be some cosmetic work carried out in time for the opening of the new bus station.
- Question: What was happening with the outdoor fruit and vegetable stall?
- Response: The type of construction that the trader wanted was unacceptable and could not be funded by the Council. Funding streams were not easily available and the refurbishment for the whole scheme was being carried out without external funding. Further discussions would take place with the trader however the Council did not want to make promises that could not be delivered.
- Question: Doesn't the Market Charter for Outdoor Markets state that the Council should provide stalls?
- Response: The Council provides indoor stalls and temporary outdoor stalls but would not be able to provide a permanent chalet type construction for the fruit and vegetable stallholder. As stated previously further discussions would be taking place.

Councillor Helena Mair returned to the meeting.

- Comment: With regard to the Western Growth Corridor the initial launch appeared as a 'whimper', most people didn't know anything about it and after digging in the website the consultation was due to end on 31 July 2017. This doesn't seem very fair on local residents. What was more concerning was that in October members that sat on the Planning Committee would be asked to make a decision on a flat drawing
- Response: The consultation had been planned for a while but the Council was unable to promote this until after the General Election. The Communications Office did put out a press release but for some reason this had not worked. It had been realised that this had not been ideal and lessons had been learnt. The first consultation event attracted 70+ people. Other public consultation and engagement events had been arranged and would be publicised on the website. After these events had taken place the concerns would be identified and where possible any adjustments would

be made. Work had already taken place over 2 years identifying issues and producing key solutions.

- Question: Do you think that the questionnaire should have had closed questions which would have been easier?
- Response: The questions were open ended to allow people to give honest and detailed responses, with closed questions the Council could be accused of leading people in their answers
- Comment: Although the methodology was applauded it was felt that none of this information was out there in the public domain. Confusion exists over the closure date of the online questionnaire. There was a requirement to see the campaign 'beefed up' in order that people were made aware of what was happening.
- Response: The online questionnaire would be open until Monday 18 September 2017. The dates for the engagement events would all be confirmed by week commencing 17 July 2017. The Communications Office would be assisting with the publicity of these events and getting the information onto social media. Open Plan would collate and identify issues and concerns from the completed questionnaires.
- Question: Had the flood risk been taken into account for the development?
- Response: Yes this has been taken into account and the Council has been assured by experts that the development would not increase the flood risk.
- Comment: In no way was there an attempt to be awkward, stubborn or malicious but it was imperative that everything was done properly before any plans came before the Planning Committee with expectations of plans being approved without any issues.
- Response: It was expected that there would be changes to the original plans as a result of the engagement events, workshops and questionnaires as this was a major planning application.
- Question: With regard to the Vision 2020 update report and the quotes stating 'within budget' in order to be able to judge performance it would be helpful to have the figures involved.
- Response: This was the first report of the Vision 2020 "Strand" report, the next report would have the budget figures and would be of better quality. This first report was to ascertain what the committee wanted to see and the comments received had been very helpful.

RESOLVED that the content of the report and comments made by members be noted and the report be referred to Executive.

19. Christmas Market Outturn Report 2016

The Assistant Director, Health and Environmental Services:

- a. presented a report on the financial performance of the 2016 Lincoln Christmas Market
- b. provided an overall performance summary which demonstrated an operational surplus of £25,555 over budget for the 2016 Christmas Market
- c. explained that there had been approximately 260,000 visitors to the market and there was an increase in the usage of 18%, in comparison to the previous year, in the Park and Ride system
- d. reported that there had been 200 stalls and the income had increased by 8% from the previous year

- e. continued that £25,000 had been approved as a carry forward to create an equalisation reserve to mitigate further losses if required
- f. informed that, with the emerging issues with regard to the 2017 Christmas Market in relation to the recent terror events, the team was liaising with Lincolnshire police on developing additional measures which would come at a significant cost. Officers were working to ensure that as far as possible these costs were met within the overall Christmas Market budget.

Members were asked for any comments and questions about the report:

Comment: Members were extremely satisfied and wanted it recording that 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 all in all it was an excellent event.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

20. Work Programme for 2017/18

The Democratic Services Officer:

- a. presented the work programme for 2017/18 as detailed at Appendix A to her report
- b. advised that the work programme for the Performance Scrutiny Committee was regularly updated throughout the year in consultation with the Performance Scrutiny Committee and its chair
- c. reported that items had been scheduled in accordance with the existing work programme and officers' guidance regarding the meetings at which the most up-to-date information could be reported to the committee; the work programme also included the list of portfolio holders under scrutiny
- d. requested any relevant comments or changes to the proposed work programme for 2017/18

RESOLVED that the work programme 2017/18 as detailed at Appendix A to the report be noted.