

Present: Councillor Keith Weaver (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Biff Bean, Councillor Bill Bilton, Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor Kathleen Brothwell, Councillor Bob Bushell, Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor Geoff Ellis, Councillor Jim Hanrahan, Councillor Gary Hewson, Councillor Ronald Hills, Councillor Jackie Kirk, Councillor Rosanne Kirk, Councillor Helena Mair, Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Councillor Laura McWilliams, Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Councillor Neil Murray, Councillor Donald Nannestad, Councillor Lucinda Preston, Councillor Christopher Reid, Councillor Fay Smith, Councillor Hilton Spratt, Councillor Edmund Strengiel, Councillor Ralph Toofany, Councillor Pat Vaughan and Councillor Loraine Woolley

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Yvonne Bodger, Councillor Chris Burke, Councillor Sue Burke, Councillor Gill Clayton-Hewson, Councillor Andy Kerry and Councillor Naomi Twedde

30. Confirmation of Minutes - 25 September 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 be confirmed.

31. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ronald Hills declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest with regard to the agenda item titled 'Councillor Neil Murray - Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth'. His address was within the proposed area of development associated with the Western Growth Corridor.

32. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11 from Members of the Public and Provide Answers thereon

No questions had been received.

33. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12 from Members and Provide Answers thereon

No questions had been received.

34. Receive Reports under Council Procedure Rule 2 (vi) from Members

(a) Councillor Neil Murray - Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Further to his declaration of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Councillor Ronald Hills left the meeting room during the consideration of this item.

Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, provided Council with an update on the work of his portfolio.

Councillor Murray reported that economic growth remained at the heart of the Council's 2020 vision for Lincoln, stating that the Council recognised the importance of the Council playing a full role in the economic life of the city itself and its wider area. Lincoln was a thriving city with a great future and its economy was diverse, not over reliant on one economic sector. However, Councillor Murray made the point that not everyone in the city was sharing the benefits of growth and that there was much more to do to eradicate poverty in Lincoln.

It was noted that the portfolio was broad, with updates on the following key projects or service areas included as part of the report:

- Western Growth Corridor;
- Parking and Transport;
- Heritage;
- Planning Policy;
- Higher Education;
- Tourism;
- Supporting Lincoln Businesses;
- Park Ward Regeneration.

Councillor Eddie Strenziel was unsure in what form or format the proposed Western Growth Corridor consultation would take and therefore sought further clarity. Referring to the 118 market properties referred to in the report in relation to the Western Growth Corridor, Councillor Strenziel made the point that this was the start of 3,200 properties that were intended to be built as part of the scheme. He was not concerned with the 118 properties referenced in the report as, in his opinion, this would not place much of a strain on the existing infrastructure. However, the inclusion of additional properties over and above that figure would cause significant problems if the necessary infrastructure was not in place. Councillor Strenziel understood that the slip road originally planned for Skellingthorpe Road was not now being included in the proposed scheme and was concerned about consequential additional traffic on that road.

Councillor Murray confirmed that an email would be sent to all members of the Council to provide clarity around the consultation process. The reason that development was proposed in this area was due to the substantial money the government was putting towards infrastructure to support the provision of decent homes for people to live. He confirmed that a quarter of these homes would be social housing.

Councillor Bob Bushell said that it was good to see the city thriving, but made the point that not everyone was sharing the benefits of this in view of the fact that Lincoln was still a low wage area. All 324 local authorities had been assessed on this basis and Lincoln was the 259th lowest average wage earner compared to all other authorities in the country. He was therefore very pleased to see that the City Council had introduced the Social Responsibility Charter. In respect of working families, statistics showed that in the years 2014 to 2017 the number of people in poverty from working families had increased by over one million and that over 3 million children in the United Kingdom were now in poverty. Councillor Bushell also confirmed via information received from Citizens' Advice that the number of people from Lincoln in absolute poverty was increasing and that this was disproportionate in respect of children, women and people with physical health problems. A review led by the United Nations had also confirmed that, in the United Kingdom, 14 million people were in poverty, with 1.5 million desolate.

Councillor Bushell called this a disgrace, a social calamity and an economic disaster.

Councillor Murray agreed with Councillor Bushell's comments. There was lots going on in Lincoln with some fantastic development driven by the University of Lincoln and he agreed that this was not benefitting everyone in the city, but added that there was work taking place seeking to address this.

Councillor Rosie Kirk reported that she was a member of the Local Government Association and understood that the Government had been holding confidential meetings regarding the Brexit proposals without including representatives of local government. She asked what preparations had been made locally regarding the impact of Brexit, particularly in view of local government not having been represented or involved in key meetings.

Councillor Murray agreed that it was alarming for local government not to be included in these discussions. However, he was not surprised given that local authorities had lost 50% of their revenue as a result of the government's austerity measures.

Councillor Lucinda Preston agreed with the sentiments expressed by Councillor Bushell, particularly the United Nations review, stating that it was unjust and contrary to the values of the United Kingdom.

Councillor Murray thanked Councillor Preston for highlighting this point and was personally ashamed of the results of the United Nations review particularly given that the United Kingdom was one of the richest nations in the world. He added that austerity was a choice which had put a lot of people in the country into poverty.

Councillor Hilton Spratt agreed with the first two paragraphs of the Portfolio Holder's report but disagreed with his reference to a hopeless national government, stating that members should be looking at the successes of the country over the last few years. He cited the following as examples:

- reducing the national deficit;
- creating 2.5 million new jobs;
- implementing the lowest level of inflation in a generation;
- maintaining the lowest level of interest rates for the longest sustained period;
- maintaining mortgage rates at the lowest they had ever been, resulting in more people able to get onto the property ladder;
- maintaining a higher minimum wage.

Councillor Spratt queried a national policy based on borrowing £100 billion a year which he felt would lead to increased interest rates ultimately resulting in home owners and business owners suffering, adding that such a policy would ultimately bankrupt the country.

Councillor Murray made no apology for the political nature of his report and responded by saying that there were no successes to speak of in relation to the current government, which he said was a government in crisis. He cited the prison service, local government and railways as examples where privatisation had failed to make services cheaper and better.

Councillor Gary Hewson acknowledged that Lincoln's average wage showed a decrease over the last couple of years, which he felt was due to more people working in low paid jobs in the minimum wage scale. He therefore asked what the Council could do to encourage employers to pay the living wage as a minimum. Councillor Hewson also asked the Portfolio Holder what benefits he expected to see for the area as a result of the Park Ward scheme.

Councillor Murray confirmed that average wages in Lincoln had decreased, with the average being £21,285 in 2010 and £18,292 this year. Lots of people worked in public services, had temporary contracts and were on minimum wage and were struggling as a consequence. In respect of Park Ward, this was arguably the most deprived area in the city and a range of projects would be put in place in the ward to drive this important project forward.

Councillor Biff Bean, in respect of borrowing, claimed that over the last eight years the national debt had risen from £850 billion to almost £2 trillion. Councillor Bean also made the point that the Council relied on income from car parks as an important source of revenue. Understanding that this was a potential policy of the opposition, he queried how a policy of offering free car parking would impact this revenue income stream.

Councillor Murray reflected on the opposition's proposal to offer free car parking, which he hoped would be submitted as an alternative budget.

Councillor Tom Dyer, in relation to the national government, said that day to say spending was down and that the government was running a budget surplus, claiming that the country's current economic climate was as a result of the previous government. Responding to Councillor Bean, Councillor Dyer confirmed that his group's policy would be to introduce one hour of free car parking to encourage people to come into the city centre, which would cost approximately £130,000 a year. He reported that the removal of the Council's middle management would cover the cost of this deficit. Councillor Dyer highlighted that Lincoln had two growing universities and that the city was on the up. In respect of the Christmas Market, he hoped that the Council supported the event as much as possible and was concerned that the top floor of the Central Car Park was still not open. He therefore asked the Portfolio Holder when the top floor of the car park would be completed and operational. Councillor Dyer also welcomed investment into housing infrastructure but in respect of transport infrastructure associated with the Western Growth Corridor asked for reassurances regarding any detrimental impact to the area in that respect. He highlighted the recent announcement that the cap associated with borrowing against the Housing Revenue Account had been removed, saying that this was a positive step forward, and asked the Portfolio Holder what steps were being taken by the Council to utilise the lifting of this cap. In respect of the Social Responsibility Charter, it was reported to the Performance Scrutiny Committee that 30 local business had originally signed up to the Charter whereas this was now down to 16 businesses resulting in hundreds of people in the city now earning below the living wage. He therefore claimed that this was a failing policy.

Councillor Murray reflected on Councillor Dyer's proposal to remove the Council's middle management, stating that these managers were really important in delivering services and support to the front line. He agreed with the sentiment that Lincoln was on the up but that this did not currently benefit everyone and that those who were struggling needed to be supported. In respect of the Central Car Park, the Council's contractor's sub-contractor had unexpectedly gone into

administration which was why there had been delays in finishing and opening the top floor of the car park. The Contractor was in the process of appointing another sub-contractor to complete the works, however, this would rely upon dry weather conditions. Regarding the Western Growth Corridor and concerns with infrastructure, this would be properly consulted upon as part of the statutory consultation requirements associated with the planning process, so reassurance was given that this element of the proposed development would be carried out properly. The Western Growth Corridor scheme sought to provide much needed good quality housing for people to buy or rent in Lincoln. Councillor Murray confirmed that he was currently in discussions with the Strategic Director of Housing and Investment regarding the lifting of the cap associated with borrowing against the Housing Revenue Account, the options available and how these could be taken forward. He added that it was a shame this cap had not been removed sooner. In respect of the Social Responsibility Charter, Councillor Murray was of the opinion that all members could do more to encourage employers paying the living wage, but added that the national government needed to improve things for everyone.

(b) Councillor Gary Hewson - Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Gary Hewson, Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee, provided an update report on the work of the Committee. The following key items of business considered by the Committee over the last year were noted:

- Portfolio under scrutiny sessions – each Portfolio Holder was required to attend the Committee throughout the year, provide an update on their portfolio and answer questions regarding their portfolio's performance;
- changes to the Strategic Plan Implementation Team reporting arrangements;
- Vision 2020 reporting arrangements;
- Christmas Market outturn report 2016;
- Human Resources corporate performance statistics;
- Lincoln Transport Hub;
- Housing Benefits overpayments;
- Christmas Market 2017;
- Homelessness;
- Central Market review.

Councillor Hewson reported that the Committee would continue to challenge issues and acknowledge successes as it always had done. The current system of monitoring performance measures was having to be replaced and officers were already working on developing a new system which should be in place by quarter one in 2019/20.

The work of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee was also noted, with the introduction of Universal Credit posing a number of challenges particularly in relation to rent arrears and an expected rise in loss of monies to the Housing Revenue Account. The Sub-Committee intended to look at Tenancy Agreements and the level of day to day repairs at forthcoming meetings.

Councillor Hewson highlighted a number of regional and national awards that the Council had achieved, together with being shortlisted for three Local Government Chronicle Awards. He said that members and officers should be proud of what the Council had achieved.

In closing Councillor Hewson thanked Rob Baxter, Financial Services Manager, and James Wilkinson, Strategic Development Project Manager, who would both shortly be leaving the authority, for their valuable contributions to the Performance Scrutiny Committee over the last year.

Councillor Eddie Strengiel was disappointed that the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 appeared to come across as negative in the report, whereas it was a positive piece of legislation involving new duties to help people which should be applauded. He questioned whether the new requirements caused a bigger problem or actually helped those who were potentially homeless. Councillor Strengiel also reflected on problems in the high street associated with rough sleeping, drug taking and antisocial behaviour in view of the fact that Lincoln was a tourist city and relied upon attracting people to visit. He originally applauded the introduction of the new Intervention Team which he thought would address some of these problems although in his personal experience nothing seemed to have really changed.

Councillor Hewson reported that, due to the changes in the requirements, more people were presenting themselves as homeless to the Council and the Council had a care of duty to those individuals. The majority of the issues Councillor Strengiel had referred to were policing matters and the Council was limited as to its powers that could be enforced. Councillor Hewson thought that the introduction of the Intervention Team would improve things on the high street and be very effective.

Councillor Thomas Dyer thanked Councillor Hewson for his chairmanship of the Performance Scrutiny Committee, adding that he had not been afraid to hold Executive members to account and that this was an important part of the democratic process.

Councillor Ronald Hills reiterated Councillor Dyer's sentiments and said that the Performance Scrutiny Committee was an important Committee which had always worked very well. He congratulated Councillor Hewson for chairing the Committee in an even handed and magnanimous manner.

Councillor Hewson thanked members for their kind words and added his own thanks to all members of the Committee for their valuable contributions.

(c) Councillor Adrianna McNulty - Chair of the Ethics and Engagement Committee

Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Chair of the Ethics and Engagement Committee, presented a report on the work of the Committee. Since September 2017 the Committee had considered a variety of reports, including the following items:

- a review of the Consultation Strategy;
- guidance on casework for Members;
- provision of mobile devices to Members;
- Member development, member succession and proposed training;
- Member induction;
- timescales associated with production and publication of minutes;
- National Democracy Week;
- polling district and polling place review;
- Code of Conduct – review of local and national cases;
- Social Media Guidance and Policy.

Councillor McNulty reported that she had been keen to promote the engagement aspect of the Committee's terms of reference since being elected as Chair. She was therefore very proud to have the opportunity to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and the Suffragette's through an informal event hosted by the Committee at the Guildhall. This had provided Members with a valuable opportunity to both remember and celebrate this important anniversary but also enable the Committee to engage with a range of different community groups from across the city.

Councillor McNulty thanked officers, members of the Ethics and Engagement Committee and the Council's Independent Person for their support since being elected as Chair of the Committee in May 2018.

Councillor Christopher Reid made reference to management of the Council's social media accounts following a concern he had raised at the previous meeting of the Committee in respect of the Council's engagement with its customers and responses to online 'trolls'.

Councillor McNulty confirmed that this matter was in hand.

35. Motion under Council Procedure Rule 14 - To Adopt Parental Leave for Elected Members

Councillor Lucinda Preston proposed a motion seeking the adoption of parental leave for elected members which she said would encourage more people to become councillors, increasing diversity and ensuring that the Council was more reflective of the city as a whole.

Councillor Laura McWilliams seconded the motion.

Councillor Strenziel supported the motion but questioned paragraph 3.1 of the proposed policy whereby members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance would continue to receive their allowance in full in the case of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave. He was of the opinion that the Special Responsibility Allowance should only be paid to the councillor undertaking the role for which the Special Responsibility Allowance was paid and that the member taking such leave should only retain their basic allowance.

Councillor Ron Hills questioned the date referred to in the policy from which a councillor ceased being a councillor should they not be re-elected following an election and thought that this depended on the date of the Council's Annual General Meeting and Mayor Making. It was noted that the date of the Annual General Meeting and Mayor Making did not have any influence on the date in respect of this issue.

Councillor Preston, in respect of Councillor Strenziel's comments regarding the Special Responsibility Allowance, disagreed with his suggestion and said that this aspect of the policy reflected parental leave principles of someone who was employed, undertaking a certain role at a certain rate of pay and not being disadvantaged as a result of taking parental leave.

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED

(1) That the Council notes:

- that analysis of the 2018 local election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 34% of Councillors in England were women, up 1% since 2017;
- of the seats that were up for election in 2018, 28% went to women, up just 3% from 2014 when these seats were last contested;
- as of summer 2017, only 4% of Councils in England and Wales had parental leave policies, according to research by the Fawcett Society;
- that the role of a Councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background, and that introducing a parental leave policy was a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become Councillors who may want to start a family to remain as Councillors;
- that parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender and that it should also cover adoption leave to support these parents who chose to adopt;
- the objective of the policy was to ensure that insofar as possible Members were able to take appropriate leave at the time of birth or adoption, that both parents were able to take leave and that reasonable and adequate arrangements were in place to provide cover for Portfolio Holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances during any period of leave taken;
- the policy set out Members' entitlement to maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave and relevant allowances.

(2) That the Council approves:

- the adoption of the Parental Leave Policy, as outlined in the Notice of Motion, giving all Councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting;
- that appropriate support was in place for Councillors with children and other caring commitments;
- the Policy to include provision for leave periods, basic allowances, special responsibility allowances, resignation from office and elections, as set out in the Notice of Motion.

36. To Consider the Following Recommendations of the Executive and Committees of the Council

(a) Gambling Act 2005 Triennial Review of Statement of Licensing Review

It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED that the City of Lincoln Gambling Act Statement of Policy be approved.

(b) Amendments to Representatives on Outside Bodies

It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED that the amended membership of outside bodies be approved.

(c) **Appointment of Strategic Director**

It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED that the appointment of Daren Turner as the Council's Director of Housing and Investment be noted.