

**Present:** Councillor Calum Watt (*in the Chair*),  
Councillor Matthew Fido, Councillor Jackie Kirk,  
Councillor Hilton Spratt, Councillor Rachel Storer,  
Councillor Emily Wood, Councillor Rebecca Longbottom  
and Councillor Clare Smalley

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Joshua Wells, Councillor Debbie Armiger,  
Councillor Martin Christopher, Councillor Jane Loffhagen  
and Councillor Naomi Tweddle

**5. Appointment Of Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Calum Watt be appointed as the Chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

**6. Confirmation of Minutes - 8 February 2022**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

**7. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**8. Cultural Consortium Update**

Councillor Calum Watt, Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee, opened the first meeting of the Municipal year and provided the Committee with a brief introduction to guest speakers and the topic of discussion which was an update on the creation of a Cultural Consortium.

Simon Walters (Director for Communities and Environment) introduced the item with an overview and background on the purpose of the discussion which was to receive an update on the creation of a cultural consortium following a successful award of funding to the University of Lincoln, which would bring together arts, community groups and young people, with a view of supporting these groups to develop cultural programmes throughout the city.

The Committee received a presentation from Toby Ealden (Zest Theatre) accompanied by Lachlan Madin, a young person involved throughout the consultation process and Suhky Johal MBE (Director of the Centre for Culture and Creativity, University of Lincoln) During consideration of the presentation, the following points were noted:

- The creation of a Cultural Consortium was a joint commission between the University of Lincoln and the City of Lincoln Council and funded by Arts Council England
- The desire was to become nationally renowned for cultural offers to enable a bid for City of Culture in 2029
- Zest Theatre were commissioned to implement expanded practise and facilitate the consultation for the benefit of young people in Lincoln

- Consideration was given to the mental health crisis faced by young people, compounded by the pandemic and NHS Digital 2020 suggested that five pupils in every classroom had a probable mental health problem
- The consultation process aimed to engage 10% of Lincoln's aged 10-19 population and ran from January – March 2022
- Zest Theatre interviewed, employed and trained seven youth facilitators, aged 16-20 to co-facilitate workshops and all were paid above the National Living Wage
- 1,094 young people were engaged throughout the process which resulted in engagement of 8.7% of Lincoln's population aged 10-19, based on 2018 census data
- 66% of participants were aged between 10 and 13 and 23% were aged between 14 and 19
- Post-pandemic pressures placed on schools facilitated the age difference during the consultation process and this was due to exam targets for older age ranges which resulted in restricted access to older teenagers for workshops
- Consideration was given to students that lived outside of the City and RAF Waddington were engaged to provide a voice for temporary residents within which Lincoln formed part of their identity
- Steering groups were led by Year 6 students at St. Peter at Gowts and Level 3 Performing Arts students at Lincoln College which totalled 62 young people
- Young people were asked 'When you think of Lincoln, what do you think of?' and sense of place featured significantly in the responses with the Cathedral and the City's history which ranked in the top twenty responses
- It was noted that McDonald's provided some of the only clean, colourful and warm public space where young people were allowed to exist within the City
- McDonald's provided the city, and Lincoln's Cultural Compact, with an example of what was needed from a safe space for young people and had committed to employ a Youth Worker in every branch across the country by 2024
- The perception was that Lincoln did not change or innovate such as other areas and a negative perception of the city came from social, cultural and political awareness
- Young people understood that much of the anti-social behaviour experienced occurred as a result of poverty or boredom and should be dealt with by way of help to those affected, not further sanctions or restrictions
- There was a strong desire for equality and equity across the city and this underpinned the Maxims derived from the qualitative data

Toby Ealden (Zest Theatre) and Lachlan Madin presented the Maxims to the Committee in summary of seven key themes derived from qualitative data. During consideration of the presentation, the following points were noted: -

- The key themes that arose proceeding to the creation of the Maxims included equality, environment, place, space, relationships, creativity and mental health
- Mental health did not feature as a standalone Maxim however the topic was laced throughout all of the Maxims

### **1) 'Everyone Together'**

- The young people of Lincoln recognised and were deeply concerned by the inequalities they saw and experienced within their city which included racism, gender inequality, LGBTQ+, poverty, homelessness, neurodiversity and mental health
- Marginalised groups found Lincoln an uncomfortable experience and was echoed by black, Asian and immigrant communities. Young people themselves felt they were a marginalised group
- Young people were passionate about equality but wanted equity within the City and recognised the important role of arts, cultural experiences and festivals in the creation of unity. Class and socio-economic groups were explored
- Data was collected from private schools to more disadvantaged areas to create a breadth of voice

### **2) 'Save Our Planet'**

- The young people of Lincoln recognised and were deeply concerned by the climate crisis issue and felt despondent that adults did not respond with action
- Young people had an articulate awareness of the causes, consequences, and the environmental solutions
- Young people had the energy and vision for change

### **3) 'Place To Feel Proud Of'**

- The definition of 'place' varied between young people and their experience of Lincoln varied depending on where they lived
- Participants from areas of the city with a defined identity or boundary line, tended to have a more hyperlocal focus when talking about place – especially those of primary school age
- There were young people from Ermine, St. Giles, Hartsholme and Sincil Bank that expressed that they had never been into the city centre - the Castle and the Cathedral felt incredibly out of touch to these young people
- Young people from working class backgrounds did not feel safe or welcome in 'posh' uphill areas of the city
- Young people's sense of place was tangibly affected by their feelings of poor public transport, feeling unsafe, boredom, poor job prospects and poor retail offer
- There was a strong desire to be connected to older people and a desire for a sense of community which was felt during Lincoln Christmas Market

### **4) 'Make Space'**

- Young people were faced with a mental health crisis that was compounded by the pandemic
- NHS Digital suggested that five pupils in every classroom had a probable mental health problem
- Young people were in an increasingly marginalised group, particularly when it came to accessing space outside of the home

- Teenagers felt they were ignored when it came to planning and design of public space
- It was felt that space in Lincoln for children was needed for them to feel safe to create, explore and breathe
- Parks and playgrounds were important but young people felt frustration about dull, broken and under stimulating equipment
- Parks and playgrounds presented Lincoln Cultural Compact with an opportunity to engage communities

## **5) 'Moments With Our Loved Ones'**

- The relationships young people had with their loved ones were important and gathered the most response
- Young people did not discuss this theme with peers during verbal conversation and instead chose to express feelings through private written activities
- There was a high value placed on these relationships but also how they caused pressure and could be difficult to manage
- Very few positive comments were received about technology or digital experiences, this often created more stress and pressure in young people's lives
- Young people felt a need for events and cultural experiences that engaged all age ranges to create meaningful moments that supported these much-valued relationships

## **6) 'Release Our Creativity'**

- Children and young people felt there was a potential for endless creativity but felt they were held back
- Lack of confidence, lack of access, mental health, the influence of friends and adults all created significant barriers to creativity and young people's ability to share their voice
- There was a desire to co-create more opportunities for Lincoln to become more creative and for young people to lead the way, share their world and inspire their communities

In conclusion of the Maxims, for Lincoln's Cultural Compact to make meaningful impact on young people it needed to adopt a co-creation process; actively listen, acknowledge what was heard, empathise, and then respond by releasing young people's creativity through co-creation.

The Chair thanked the guest speakers for their work, informative update and presentation and welcomed comments and questions from the Committee. As a result of the discussions between Members, Toby Ealden, Lachlan Madin and Suhky Johal, the following points were made: -

- The foundation of co-creation was for an idea to be shared with those in a position of authority to include young people through social engagement
- Consideration was given to the level of responsibility between adults and young people and the idea of sharing the responsibility was explored.

- An understanding that adults had the authority to implement ideas further to contribution from young people and to provide them the opportunity to take onboard consequence and benefit
- It was noted that political education could be improved among young people in an attempt to involve everybody and to provide the best for local communities
- Young people felt a level of apathy because they did not feel their voice would be recognised nor anything would change. Young people were also under severe pressure
- Due to low participation in local elections, the democratic engagement process had not been demonstrated well to young people by adults
- The radical approach taken was necessary to ensure that the concept was not merely taken to policy makers but careful consideration was given to what this concept would look like in years to come
- The ideology was to create a city rather than follow the path of others
- Consideration was given to promotion of existing cultural events to ensure the creativity of Lincoln was not missed
- The education system had removed a great deal of cultural education from schooling however the Department of Education had considered the reintroduction nationally
- The division between 'uphill' and 'downhill' areas of the city was considered and although the design could not be changed, it was noted that youth clubs provided a place to engage with young people more permanently
- The cultural symposium scheduled for August 2022 was amended as some of the comments received were so raw that there was a fear they would be lost in the policy process for a broader range of stakeholders

Simon Walters (Director for Communities and Environment) provided further information within which the following points were noted:-

- Consideration was given to engagement with other sectors such as the third sector, private sector the Police and the National Health Service (NHS)
- Demonstrative projects to include young people would be used to alter the design of a cultural symposium prior to presentation to other sectors
- With regard given to St Benedict's Square, an area frequented by young people, we needed to codesign with young people to create a dual-purpose space that would align with Vision 2025
- Creation of festivals and events in neighbouring areas for individuals that did not come into the City could be assisted with funds from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- A bid had been submitted to the UKSPF for £2.9m over three years
- An element of £130K capital was for the creation of outdoor safe space and a further £130K for two years to create family events, artistic installations within the city centre and outreach work in areas that did not get the exposure culturally
- The decision on the UKSPF bid would be made by the Governance Board, not just City of Lincoln Council but wider partners
- Engagement with other sectors would take place further to working projects in progress to demonstrate lateral thinking and the power of a collective and collaborative approach with all organisations within the city

As a result of the discussions between Members, officers and guest speakers, the following points were made: -

- Consideration to how we developed young people's expectations was important and how we delivered what was being asked for whilst providing young people ownerships and input
- Clarity was provided to young people that the democratic and funding processes took time and the importance of patience explained to ensure trust was formed based on truths
- Empowering young people with the tools to be able to have the confidence in the autonomy of what Lincoln might be
- As an agricultural county, the management of expectations was important but raising expectation was also significant
- The idea of Green Space within the city was well received but strong structure and the involvement of young people was important
- Possible private sector funding could be considered and from something small, development could proceed with the assistance of strategic partners
- Similarities were drawn with Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) funding and the experimental work around young people, building strong ethics to consider the process, not the project
- Both the vicar of St. Benedict's and all religious communities were included throughout the process of HAZ funding for the frontage of St Mary LeWigford to support and create
- It was noted that we could learn to give more thought to what something felt like instead of viewing the function of an object only, a craft that could be learnt from young people
- Essentially, building trust was integral to taking young people on a journey
- Lincoln BIG would be heavily involved with a small steering group formed. In addition, Visit Lincoln provided work with £180K from the Government Welcome Back fund
- Members discussed the possibility of private sponsorship and Pride was used as an example of collaborative private sector sponsorship from Siemens, Anglian Water, City Council and Teaching Unions
- Lincoln was not considered culturally ethnically diverse with a total of 98% of residents identified as white on the last census data available
- Recognition was given to the work at the University to integrate cultural religion as inroads to reconnecting everybody
- The Lincoln Mosque as a cultural centre to engage with the Islamic community would hold an annual open day however this was delayed due to Covid-19
- To create a permanent voice for young people, more work would be commissioned over the summer and results would be determined from that work
- The young people involved throughout the commission were directly employed through Zest Theatre and all were paid above the National Living Wage
- Zest Theatre would find out in October 2022 if they had been successful in the core funded model and Arts Council Funding would be made known by late October 2022 with major developments related to Simon Walters

The Chair thanked Simon Walters, Sukhy Johal, Toby Ealden and Lachlin Madin for their attendance and contributions to the discussion and for their inspiring update.

## **9. Work Programme 2022/23**

Consideration was given to the Committee's work programme. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Committee's meeting in August be moved to September.

The Chair advised that further to scoping discussions with officers, the focus of the Committee's work programme for the remaining municipal year would include work with LocalMotion for the creation of an anti-poverty in truth commission, Community Policing and Suicide Rates in Lincoln.

Discussion took place regarding the presentation of the Poverty Truth Commission and it was agreed that the item would be brought before the Committee in September 2022. It was agreed that remaining work would be considered under the work programme update during the Committee meeting in September.

Discussion took place regarding the presentation of Community Policing and it was agreed that the item would be brought before the Committee in October 2022.

The Chair confirmed that the Committee's work would include a focus on suicide rates in Lincoln. It was agreed that this item would be brought before the Committee in December 2022.

Following discussions, it was agreed that Toby Ealden and Sukhy Johal would update the Committee on the creation of a cultural consortium in January 2023 as significant progression was expected by that date.

The Democratic Services Officer confirmed the work programme for the municipal year and it was agreed that should the need arise; a meeting would be scheduled in February 2023.