

**Present:** Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*),  
Councillor Pat Vaughan, Councillor Thomas Dyer,  
Councillor Adrianna McNulty, Councillor Neil Murray,  
Councillor Lucinda Preston, Councillor Anita Pritchard  
and Councillor Emily Wood

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Natasha Chapman

**57. Confirmation of Minutes - 5 December 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2024 be confirmed as a true record.

**58. Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee Minutes - 25 November 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024 be received.

**59. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**60. Portfolio Holder under Scrutiny - Inclusive Economic Growth**

Joshua Wells, Portfolio Holder for Inclusive Economic Growth:

- a) advised that this Portfolio was last scrutinised in September 2023 and since then he had enjoyed fully emerging himself in his new role as Portfolio Holder.
- b) presented his report to Performance Scrutiny Committee providing an insight into key activities and achievements and covered the following main areas:
  - Building Control
  - Car Parks
  - Commercial Development
  - Contaminated Land
  - Cultural and Events Activities
  - Economic Development and Growth (Charterholme (Western Growth Corridor) and Sustainable Urban Extensions
  - Heritage
  - Innovation and Inward Investment
  - Markets
  - Planning
  - Public Realm
  - Regeneration
  - Small Business Support
  - Tourism and Marketing
  - Transport

- c) highlighted the key stand out events that he had been involved with since he took on the role as Portfolio Holder, these were:
- Charterholme – the delivery of the first phase of infrastructure onto the site had now been completed.
  - Cornhill Market – a £5.9 million investment from the Government's Towns Fund programme through the 'Be Town Deal', £1.9 million from the City of Lincoln Council and £918,000 from the Heritage Action Zone resulted in major regeneration works and completion of the new Cornhill Market at the end of 2023.
  - Events in Lincoln – The brand for the events delivered by the City Council's events team and creating an all-year-round cultural experience for visitors of the City Centre and Uphill area. The programme was currently thriving with a lot of upcoming events e.g. Lincoln Festival of History and an awards ceremony drawing people into the city and working with stakeholders to help grow the events.
- d) extended his thanks to the team of officers that supported his Portfolio for their hard work, dedication and commitment to supporting the residents of Lincoln
- e) invited members' comments and questions.

**Question:** In relation to the current market, there had been a lot of reports received about it being shut Monday and Tuesday. What had been done about this?

**Response:** The opening times had been contentious with the stallholders. Officers were working closely with them and had successfully agreed some core opening times. There was a mixture of hot food and beverages, hot food being the most popular. In terms of being closed on a Monday and Tuesday, this was due to small local businesses not having the resource to open, however they did open on bank holidays and during school holidays on those days. There had been a lot of reports on social media which went back to when the initial idea developed on refurbishing it. A plan was fitted out with stalls, street food and retail elements and the market was promoted on that basis. A lot had changed since and the model was different now to what was expected at the beginning. One business was finding it difficult to trade in a sustainable way to which business support was being provided. This week officers commissioned some more marketing funding in promoting events.

**Question:** With regards to advertising, could the Racecourse on the West Common be used as a way of advertising events?

**Response:** The Portfolio Holder agreed to liaise with the relevant officer and feedback a response to the committee after the meeting.

**Question:** How else could the City Square area be utilised?

**Response:** Officers were looking at the signage in the area as a way to improve the flow of people around the city. The Cornhill Market was listed so it was restricted with signage. TV screens were displaying digital signage in the Market to promote the local businesses opening hours. Officers were liaising with the co-owners of the Waterside and Cooperative about signposting people where to go when they visited.

**Question:** What further communications could be done using Archaeology as a platform for more public interest?

**Response:** The promotion of Digs and the Lincoln Festival of History had massive growth potential. Arch and the Heritage Team had been given a bronze edge sword which had been declared a national interest. The proposal for hard hat tours in Greyfriars had recently been agreed as part of the history event, there were lots of exciting things happening as part of the event.

**Question:** In relation to staffing in Building Control, what measures were being put in place to support the two members sharing all of the workload?

**Response:** There were a shortage of officers throughout the country and due to the national policy changes, it forced previous officers to change direction career wise. Capacity was a problem and there had been challenges when positions were being advertised. Other options were being explored such as delivering as a function. Two service level agreements were in place with North Kesteven to cover out of hours and secondly to assist with additional support.

**Question:** What was the current position regarding the Judges Lodgings?

**Response:** Live applications had been submitted to discharge conditions.

**Question:** Could local business selling fruit, veg, meat and fish be brought to the market?

**Response:** It was very difficult to secure these sort of businesses. There was a pop-up stall on a Wednesday and hopefully with marketing work it could be promoted more. At the moment it was held only on a Wednesday but it could potentially be built up over time to longer trading hours. Good customer service feedback and also trip advisor responses were also positive.

**Question:** Had there been any progress on the new link road?

**Response:** The bridge had now been approved and was well underway with a completion date of 6 March 2026. A bid was submitted to Homes England for funding for the link road some years ago which was now on the priority programme for spending, it had made it through the gateway points and was at the final one before a decision was made. Details were being considered and officers were hopeful for a decision before June this year. If funding were approved as allocated in the programme, it would need to be delivered within 2 years commencing from September.

**Question:** In relation to Visit Lincoln taking up the 'Be Lincoln' brand for City of Lincoln:

- Were they paid by the Council directly?
- How much were the City of Lincoln Council contributing?
- How was their output being monitored?
- What analysis of new events had been done compared to previous events?
- How many people actually attended the events and travelled into the city for them?

**Response:** The Visit Lincoln branding was used for specific Lincoln events. In terms of the budget, the City of Lincoln Council paid £10,000 a year as a corporate member to promote the city. In addition, £40,000 was provided and monitored by an SLA (Service Level Agreement). This funded specific additional work including the Visit Lincoln website, alongside the promotion and marketing of events in the city. Within Visit Lincoln, the Be Lincoln brand was created and the Visit Lincoln brand was used purely for tourism.

**Question:** The Social Media reach wasn't great, was that because Visit Lincoln was the main brand for the events?

**Response:** The statistics were only City of Lincoln Council based; other partnerships would have their own data. The Festival of History reach (465,000) was based on the 6 weeks prior to the event. It couldn't be published before then due to pre-election period. It would be able to this year?.

**Question:** How would the pedestrian crossing be improved at the entrance to the Car Park?

**Answer:** Minor bollards and markings had been fitted to prevent pedestrians crossing the vehicle access point. and to separate vehicles from pedestrians.

**Question:** Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue had been called to deal with lift issues, had the faults been resolved now?

**Response:** The lifts were currently working and had been for some time and were continuing to be monitored. The Council were trying to resolve issues more quickly but often the fault was user error.

**Question:** Was there any provision for parents/child parking bays?

**Response:** The Portfolio Holder agreed to liaise with the relevant officer and feedback a response to the committee after the meeting.

**Question:** What was the current position regarding staffing within the Planning Team?

**Response:** Fortunately, the team were in a good position in terms of stability of workforce. There had been a turnover of staff the last few years but hopefully this would not change any time soon.

RESOLVED that:

1. Members outstanding questions as detailed above be responded to by officers as requested.
2. The content of the report be noted with thanks.

## **61. Annual Scrutiny Report 2023/24**

Jess Cullen, Democratic Services Officer:

- a) presented the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24 for comments, prior to being referred to Full Council for approval
- b) advised that within the Constitution it states that the scrutiny committees should produce an annual report to Council. Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees did produce individual reports to Council during the municipal year, however, the attached Scrutiny Annual Report summarised the work of the scrutiny committees for the full year and highlighted the key achievements made under scrutiny in 2023/24.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

## **62. Work Programme 2024/25**

The Chair:

- a) presented the draft work programme for 2024/25 as detailed at Appendix A of the report
- b) advised that the work programme for the Performance Scrutiny Committee was put forward annually for approval by Council; the work programme was then 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 2024/25.

RESOLVED that:

- a) An update report be submitted to Performance Scrutiny Committee on the first meeting of the new municipal year to review the options going forward regarding inspections on flats owned by Leaseholders.
- b) The work programme 2024/25 be noted.