

**REPORT UNDER RULE 2(VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

**Report by Councillor Bob Bushell, Chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee**

**Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council,**

I was delighted to take over the chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee (CLSC) in June 2018 when the previous incumbent was elected to be the Member of Parliament for Lincoln. Karen was passionate about the role of CLSC and continues to express a keen interest in its work.

When I started to write this report I thought it would be useful to remind Council of the purpose and Terms of Reference for the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee (CLSC).

Purpose of the Committee:

- To actively promote and strengthen the City of Lincoln Council's community leadership role of speaking up for the people of Lincoln on matters which affect their well-being.

Its Terms of Reference are:

- To engage and consult with Lincoln residents to assist the Council in being fully aware of their issues and concerns and aspirations so these inform the policies and decision of the Council, giving particular attention to the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- To engage with all relevant stakeholders including all public, private and third sector organisations, seeking to promote effective partnerships for meeting the needs of the City.
- To exercise the powers granted to the Council by Parliament for the scrutiny of the decisions of external organisations or groups whose decisions appear to have an impact on the people of the City of Lincoln and seek to influence these in the interests of local people.
- To enhance the transparency of local decision making by enabling elected members to have the opportunity to hold service providers to account for their performance.
- To scrutinise any emerging legislation which directly impacts on people in Lincoln, seeking to exert influences on behalf of local people.

- To respond, in collaboration with the Council's Executive to any Government or other external consultation process ensuring that the Council's voice is heard on all matters affecting the well-being of the City.

Since its inception CLSC has scrutinised a broad range of issues which affect the City and its residents. Some of the outcomes have been more successful than others but there is no doubt that issues of concern have been robustly scrutinised in an apolitical and non confrontational approach. Many organisations including the City Council are faced with significant funding cuts and due regard has to be taken of this being often a significant factor in services responding in the face of years of austerity.

Members will no doubt recall that the committee's first challenge post the 2018 General Election was to assist the Council in submitting a formal response to West Lincolnshire Care Commissioning Group's (WLCCG) proposal to close the Lincoln Walk in Centre on Monks Road. This matter received considerable attention in the local media and the general public had the opportunity to respond also. It was quite clear from our intelligence gathering and the public response that the Walk in Centre was extremely popular and well used. The initial reason for opening Walk in Centers was to provide easy access to healthcare, something that it was very successful at doing. WLCCG held a number of consultation meetings and delayed their decision making to facilitate the public response. The City Council's CLSC held its own meeting in the public arena and heard from a representative of the CCG and numerous witnesses across a range of interests all of whom were keen to put forward their opposition to the proposed closure. The formal response from the City Council was to request the CCG to delay the closure of the Walk in Centre until the alternative services they proposed (extended GP opening hours, upgrading of NHS 111) were actually in place and functioning at their optimum level. At the meeting of WLCCG in late September 2017 the Management board recommended closing the Walk in Centre but opted to delay the closure until after the winter period as it was acknowledged that current services were under significant pressure.

Members will be aware that The Walk in Centre finally closed its door on February 28th 2018 despite 94% of respondents to the consultation wanting it to remain open.

### **The second major issue under scrutiny by CLSC was the issue of Inclusive Growth.**

Members are aware that economic growth is one of the council's strategic priorities and it is recognised that economic growth should not be viewed in isolation but that it contributes towards and is a driver to achieving all of the strategic aims, reducing poverty and inequality, good quality affordable housing and an environment which is pleasant to live and work in.

Inclusive Growth is defined by the Organisation for Economic Growth (OECD) as;

***Economic growth that creates opportunity for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity, both in monetary and non-monetary terms, fairly across society.***

## What are the priorities for Inclusive Growth?

Who is benefitting from economic growth and what outcomes do we want growth to deliver?

- Connecting people up to the opportunities that exist in the labour market through better education, transport and employment support is vital.
- Boosting employers' demand for skills, shaping the occupational and sectoral make-up of the economy, and ultimately pushing up levels of pay and improving terms and conditions of employment contracts.
- Reducing poverty through jobs and improving the labour market must be the overarching priority towards creating a more prosperous economy combined with a more equitable society. Poverty is bad for growth according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It weakens the 'consumer engine'.
- A more pro-active approach to ensure growth is more inclusive and doesn't simply pass many places and people by.

An inclusive growth agenda seeks to enable people to fulfill their own potential and in doing so improve the potential of the economy they are part of. Poverty can generate a vicious circle whereby people are not motivated to invest in their own education, skills and careers if they perceive their job prospects are to be a low paid 'dead end' job, or worse still, no job. For every out of work person who moves into a job paid at the Living Wage the government gains on average £6,900. It reduces welfare spending and increases tax receipts. More than half the people living in poverty in the UK are in a working household. Many communities feel disconnected and do not feel the benefits of economic growth.

### There are two sides to Inclusive Economic Growth:

- **The supply side:** looks at inclusive growth from the individual's perspective. For example it considers how accessible jobs are, and what the quality of jobs is like.
- **The demand side:** looks at inclusive growth from the employer's perspective. For example, it considers what skillsets businesses need to grow, how health the economy is, and what sectors in the local economy support inclusive growth the most.

### Supply-side and demand-side policies:

To achieve inclusive growth, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) recommends pursuing both supply-side and demand-side policies in order to achieve a balance. In a study of other areas JRF found that focusing too much on one of these areas makes it harder to achieve inclusive growth.

### **Examples of supply-side policies:**

- Increasing the number of people available and ready for work
- Increasing people's skills to make sure they are more likely to secure employment, or progress in employment
- Remove barriers to help people get into work
- Making work more attractive

### **Examples of demand-side policies:**

- Identifying sectors in the economy that support inclusive growth, and creating more demand for them
- Ensuring training and employment programmes are visible to target groups and communities
- Identifying what skills the economy needs to grow, and using this to influence skills development
- Building closer public and private sector employer engagement and partnership focused on priority sectors
- Strengthening data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluating activities and frameworks

In its August 2017 study of inclusive growth in cities, JRF pointed to the need for more jobs and better jobs to secure inclusive growth. Better wages for those on low pay (e.g. earning below the Living Wage). More security for workers on temporary contracts and who would prefer to be on permanent contracts. Creating more work for unemployed people who are actively seeking work and who may be inactive but would like to be in the labour market. Creating more work for people who are underemployed and would like to work more hours.

Residents in Lincoln on average earn weekly **£345** - East Midlands - **£425** - Britain **£440.8**

Committee heard from numerous key witnesses over three meetings:

- Farhan Ahmed - University of Lincoln
- Martin Walmsley - City of Lincoln Council (The Network)
- Graham Metcalfe - Dept. of Work and Pensions
- Richard Locke-Wheaton - Linkage Community Trust
- Mark Taylor - Lincoln College
- Elaine Lilley - Education Business Partnership
- Ben Barley - Voluntary Centre Services (Lincolnshire Move)
- Barry Hepton - Bailgate Guild
- Fliiss Page - People Trainer at Tesco

As CLSC chair I also attended the Proud to be Lincoln Growth Conference held at Bishop Grosseteste University on Friday 16th March 2018. As a City Councillor it was very

pleasing to experience the positivity expressed by the numerous speakers and the pride that exists in Lincoln. It is clear that the council working in partnership with other organisations can achieve great things for Lincoln and future developments will I believe add to the progress that has already turned Lincoln into such a vibrant and pleasant place to live and work.

Attending the Inclusive Growth workshop it was an opportunity to hear feedback from businesses and other organisations. The feedback from this workshop will be fed back to the final meeting of the CLSC on this topic and will assist in formulating recommendations to be forwarded to the Executive for their deliberations.

I would like to express my thanks to committee who have taken such an active interest in both topics dealt with this municipal year and who have been like me so impressed with hearing from organisations who are already doing so much to contribute towards the inclusive growth agenda.

On behalf of CLSC I would like to thank Simon Colburn, Assistant Director (Health and Environmental Services) who assisted committee when considering the closure of the Lincoln Walk in Centre. Jessica Cullen, Democratic Services. My thanks also to James Wilkinson, (Strategic Development Project Manager), for his guidance on Inclusive Growth. Community Leadership Committee as a whole have had a lot of information before them this year and have risen to the challenge. I am grateful to committee members and the subs who have also contributed throughout. My sincere thanks also to Councillor. Naomi Tweddle CLSC vice-chair for her support and much valued contribution.

Bob Bushell  
Chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee