

**Present:** Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*),  
Councillor Tony Speakman, Councillor Thomas Dyer,  
Councillor Ronald Hills, Councillor Helena Mair,  
Councillor Liz Maxwell, Councillor Lucinda Preston,  
Councillor Pat Vaughan, Councillor Loraine Woolley and  
Councillor Fay Smith

**Apologies for Absence:** None.

**82. Confirmation of Minutes - 22 February 2018**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2018 be confirmed.

**83. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**84. Section 106 Contributions Update**

Nicola Collins, Heritage and Planning Enforcement Team Leader:

- (a) Presented a report which updated the Committee on Section 106 Agreements in respect of what had been collected and what contributions had been negotiated.
- (b) Reported that a Section 106 group made up of officers from across the Council met quarterly to monitor the contributions coming in to the authority and allocate them to the projects that the money had been collected for.
- (c) Highlighted that these projects had been identified by Portfolio Holders and chief officers through the delivery of their various service areas and in line with the relevant Vision 2020 initiatives.
- (d) Reported that Section 106 Agreement monies were collected once the development reached certain milestones and must be spent within a period of 5 to 10 years depending on the type of infrastructure it had been collected for.
- (e) Outlined the contributions negotiated up to the end of quarter three, December 2017, at paragraph 4.2 of the report which totalled £560,731.
- (f) Outlined the amounts allocated or spent on projects at paragraph 4.3 of the report which totalled £753,546.
- (g) Reported that the Community Infrastructure Levy would be collected and administered alongside Section 106 contributions.
- (h) Invited members' questions and comments.

Question: Why was there no reference to the NHS in the list of classifications for contributions negotiated or amounts allocated or spent?

Response: There had previously not been any requests from the NHS for monies as part of Section 106 Agreements, however, over the last few months the team had been approached by the NHS.

Question: How much Section 106 Agreement funding had been allocated to the Romangate development?

Response: Affordable housing and a play space were being delivered onsite so no contributions through Section 106 Agreement funding would be received for those elements. A commuted sum for offsite playing field provision of £841 per dwelling had been agreed which would be calculated when the number of dwellings to be built on the City Council's part of the site was confirmed.

Question: The same question was asked in respect of the old allotment site on Riseholme Road.

Response: There would potentially be funding arising through a Section 106 Agreement in respect of this proposed development, however, a planning application had not yet been received. Details around any potential for Section 106 Agreement contributions would depend upon the content of the planning application.

Question: Paragraph 4.2 of the report under contributions negotiated up to the end of quarter three showed £0 allocated to open spaces, yet in paragraph 4.3 under amounts already allocated or spent funding had been allocated to Boutham Park and Hartsholme Country Park. An explanation was sought.

Response: Open space was a different category to play space, with open space normally being provided onsite as part of development. In some circumstances, such as with Bunker's Hill, developers include play space as part of the development. Contributions through Section 106 Agreements are allocated to the Council should it adopt the play space and be responsible for its maintenance. Developers often managed play spaces themselves through their respective management companies, meaning that there was no Section 106 Agreement contribution necessary for that aspect of the development.

Question: In relation to play spaces managed by a developer's management company, were there any checks undertaken by the Council to ensure that they were adequately maintained?

Response: The Council would have no involvement with play spaces that it had not adopted as this would be the sole responsibility of the land owner or respective management company.

Question: The Community Infrastructure Levy was another means whereby contributions would be sent to the Council for it to then allocate funds accordingly. Had the Council agreed a mechanism for the allocation of the Community Infrastructure Levy?

Response: A report had been previously considered by members which calculated an approximate value of Community Infrastructure Levy funding that could be achieved should the housing identified in the Local Plan, up to the life of the Plan in 2036, be delivered. 15% of that funding would come back to the City of Lincoln Council, which equated to approximately £65,000 a year. It was emphasised that this figure represented a very optimistic position and would depend on the rate of delivery. It had not yet been determined how that 15% would be spent and a scoping report would be written setting out range of options. It was noted that this would be submitted to the Policy Scrutiny Committee for consideration prior to a decision by the Executive. The Community

Infrastructure Levy was a very complex process and it would take approximately three years for the fund to be sufficiently built up.

Question: Who made the decision to use funding from development within the city to contribute towards the cost of the bypass?

Response: All local authorities had committed to this via a Memorandum of Understanding, with the City of Lincoln Council's commitment agreed by the Executive approximately three years ago.

Question: Could Section 106 Agreement funding be used for repair and maintenance purposes on existing open spaces or play areas?

Response: The legislation stated that there was no flexibility in respect of allocating Section 106 Agreement funding and was solely for provision of new infrastructure.

Question: How did the classification table in paragraph 4.2 of the report and the £560,731 tie in with the £753,546 set out in paragraph 4.3 of the report in respect of amounts already allocated or spent?

Response: The table in paragraph 4.2 consisted of recently negotiated contributions and had not been allocated or spent due to the development not yet having been built or not having progressed enough for any payment triggers to be hit. Specific details in relation to the individual developments was provided at the meeting with regard to both tables in the report and it was agreed that this would be circulated to all members of the Committee. Future reports to the Performance Scrutiny Committee would include this level of detail.

Comment: The report made reference to a number of officer working groups and the Chair thought that members would be interested to see what the remit of all officer working groups were across the authority and who sat on them.

Response: The preferred approach would be for any member to liaise with the relevant Director should they require any information relating to a specific officer working group.

Question: Could a development on contaminated land potentially impact upon the Section 106 Agreement allocation?

Response: Initial discussions and negotiations that would take place between officers and the developer would highlight issues such as this. Planning policy would be applied to any development, with infrastructure forming part of that. A viability assessment would be undertaken for each development and this would outline all costs associated with the development together with a projected profit margin, with 20% being the nationally accepted profit margin in terms of viability. Planning policy would be applied to determine whether an application could go ahead on its merits, taking into account the viability assessment and any necessary infrastructure.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**85. Portfolio Holder under Scrutiny**  
**(a) Vision 2020 Portfolio Performance Overview: Environmental Services and Public Protection**

Pat Jukes, Corporate Policy Business Manager:

- (a) Presented a portfolio performance overview of Environmental Services and Public Protection which covered the following main areas:

- customer satisfaction regarding:
  - the number of complaints in respect of overflowing bins;
  - the percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents who were aware of the Council's food hygiene rating scheme for food businesses;
  - the percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents who were satisfied with the standards of hygiene in restaurants, cafes, shops and takeaways in Lincoln;
- the percentage of NO2 diffusion tubes in Lincoln that were showing NO2 levels within the national air quality objective for 2017/2018;
- volume of household waste sent for recycling, compost and re-use and percentage comparison with the East Midlands and local authorities within the East Midlands region;
- kilograms of non-recycled household waste per household compared to the mean for all local authority districts in the East Midlands over the last eight years and in 2016/17;
- decrease and increase in the number and type of crimes in Lincoln;
- crime severity in England, East Midlands and Lincoln;
- reported anti-social behaviour incidents;
- number of customer complaints split by electoral ward;
- number of cremations and burials carried out in Lincoln per year;
- quarterly performance measures;
- annual satisfaction measures from the Citizens' Panel.

(b) Provided contextual performance on Environmental Services and Public Protection as follows:

- in quarter 3, the Council's CCTV operators had handled 3,374 incidents;
- 53% of Citizens' Panel respondents in the July 2017 survey said that they felt safe in the city centre at night time;
- 98% of food supplying premises were fully or broadly compliant with guidance;
- the Lincoln Transport Hub had the first public changing places facility in Lincoln;
- Lincoln had been awarded three Platinum Awards, one Gold Award and three National Awards for the cleanliness and quality of its public toilet facilities;
- Lincoln had been awarded two Green Flag Awards for Hartsholme Country Park and the Arboretum;
- the percentage of household waste sent for recycling had stabilised over the last two years at around 38%, although this was at a lower rate than the East Midlands average;
- in the crime summary for Lincoln, nine categories were getting better and eight were getting worse, but overall there was a slight increase in total crime numbers of 128 in the previous year;
- there had been a drop in all electoral wards for the number of complaints received on fly tipping incidents.

(c) Invited members' questions and comments.

Comment: Further to last year's meeting of the Crime and Disorder Committee, the performance of the Police was under scrutiny. In challenging poor performance based upon the performance information available at that meeting the Police responded by saying that the statistics had probably been measured in

a different way to the other areas being compared to. It was concerning that these statistics were not a like for like comparison.

Response: This issue did need to be addressed, taking into account that Lincoln was an urban area whereas some of the other areas it was compared to in the statistical breakdown were rural areas. The East Midlands and England averages were also relatively low due to them including some rural areas, which made Lincoln appear worse. For the data to be considered as reliable the city of Lincoln should be compared with other urban areas. The key issue to be considered was whether the city felt safe.

Comment: It was concerning that serious crime in Lincoln seemed to be increasing year on year, which could have a detrimental impact on the Council's strategic priority in respect of 'let's enhance our remarkable place'.

Response: The data measure included as part of the presentation in relation to crime severity included the scale of sentences determined by the courts, so one aspect to explain a perceived increase in serious crime in Lincoln could be that the courts were prescribing longer sentences to offenders for some of the crimes included in the category of serious crime. It was noted that, as a county, Lincolnshire was one of the lowest areas in the country in respect of crime rates. However, it was noted that this did include the other six more rural districts. Some perception data had recently been made available from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office which showed Lincoln to be in the middle of the other districts in the county, with areas such as Boston and South Holland showing worse crime statistics than Lincoln.

Comment: A member was impressed with the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour team who had dealt with some recent issues very well, with good working in Carholme regarding the University and a noise reduction scheme being an example of a very positive outcome.

Question: In respect of household waste, how much was incinerated and how much went to landfill?

Response: The vast majority of waste went to the energy from waste plant where it was incinerated and turned into energy, with a very low percentage being sent to landfill. The statistics included as part of the presentation did not reflect this waste as being recycled or re-used due to the way in which the Government requested that performance be measured and reported.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**(b) Report by Councillor Fay Smith: Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Public Protection**

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Public Protection, Councillor Fay Smith:

(a) Presented her report and highlighted the activity and performance within her portfolio, particularly in relation to the following:

- waste and recycling;
- cleansing;
- public toilets;
- CCTV;
- public protection and anti-social behaviour;
- licensing;

- food safety;
- health and safety (enforcement);
- bereavement services;
- carbon reduction;
- air quality.

(b) Presented two short video clips to the Committee regarding waste collection vehicles and the safety of operatives. One of the video clips was promotional material from Biffa which included numerous examples of members of the public mounting footpaths with their cars to dangerously undertake or overtake stationary waste collection vehicles, putting operatives' health and safety at risk. The second video clip was footage from a camera on a waste collection vehicle in Lincoln which showed a member of the public mount a footpath with their car to overtake a waste collection vehicle. Police had used footage such as the examples provided to successfully prosecute drivers in other parts of the country although Lincolnshire Police would not currently use footage obtained to prosecute. Biffa was currently negotiating with Lincolnshire Police on this matter.

(c) Invited members' questions and comments.

Comment: The Biffa publicity video should be shared on the Council's social media platforms.

Question: Referring to non-recycled household waste it was noted that some areas in the city had been designated as red zones and that the trend was going upwards. Were there more areas in the city not recycling, or was this as a result of the same areas in the red zones not recycling?

Response: There were numerous reasons for people not recycling, whether that be due to a lack of interest or a lack of understanding, which was difficult to address. People often placed recyclable waste in black bags and non-recyclable waste in the recycle bin, causing the whole bin to be rejected due to contamination. It was acknowledged that people were confused as to what items could be included in the recycle bin, however, due to austerity, Councils had reduced the amount of time and resources dedicated to education and enforcement. The County Council also had a problematic disposal contract which gave opportunity for wider interpretation of contamination, with this contract subject to change in 2020. This could mean that the items collected in the recycle bin may be subject to change when the contract was renewed. Education had to be linked to the County Council's disposal contract to avoid any confusion and it was also noted that the City Council was a committed partner of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership, with any educational activity needing to be consistent and properly programmed in accordance with that Partnership. It was considered that any deviation from a partnership approach in this respect would be a detrimental step for the authority and that particular arrangement. The industry was also changing and the new County Council contract was likely to reflect this, with reference made to the recently announced plastic bottle deposit schemes in the national media.

Comment: It was disappointing that the Council was one of the best recycling authorities in the county in 2009/10 for it to now be amongst the worst performers in this respect. The City Council should be performing much better in this area and competing with authorities such as North Kesteven District Council and West Lindsey District Council. The energy from waste plant was full to capacity and its performance had been consistent. There were known areas that could be

targeted in Lincoln to improve performance very quickly through education, guidance and help. The City Council should do something itself rather than feel obliged to wait for the County Council.

Response: A graph of total non-recyclables for all authorities in Lincolnshire for 2017/18 was circulated which indicated that each authority's performance fluctuated throughout the year, with the City Council showing good levels of performance in January, May and July but poor levels of performance in February and June. Every authority experienced fluctuation such as this and on any given month an authority in Lincolnshire could perform well or poor based on the performance information that had been collated. If the Council decided to do some independent educational work there was a risk that the messages included as part of that would need to change relatively soon after it was rolled out, which could lead to additional confusion and even more contaminated recycle bins. It was also acknowledged that some authorities in the county had different collections and could accept different items in their recycle bins to that of the City Council. The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership was seeking to refine this in order that there was more commonality across the county and on this basis the Council would be remaining supportive of the partnership approach.

Question: Who provided the performance figures and where did they come from?

Response: The figures were collected as part of a national data set. The additional information circulated at the meeting was simply a more detailed analysis of the national higher level data.

Question: Was there no way to look at small pockets in the City and target some educational activity in the short term to at least attempt to improve performance?

Response: There was limited resources for literature or visiting people's homes. The District Council members of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership had expressed the same frustrations regarding contamination and had lobbied hard to commence some publication activity. The County Council had, with reasonable grounds, effectively blocked this in view of decisions yet to be taken on the imminent new disposal contractual arrangement. This programme of education and information sharing activity needed to be centrally managed through the partnership arrangement in order to achieve a long term solution. The County Council had confirmed its commitment to addressing this issue when the position was clear, and would undertake publicity at the appropriate time.

Comment: Members should consider attending an open day at the energy from waste plant to witness how energy was re-used and turned into energy, which may be of interest.

Response: A public open day would be held on 2 June 2018.

Comment: An update should be submitted to the Committee in six months in respect of recycling performance.

Comment: There were no litter bins on Sincil Street, the Cornhill or at the Central Bus Station.

Response: It was noted that the Council was restricted in respect of litter bins at the Transport Hub for security reasons. With regard to Sincil Street and the Cornhill, the recent development works at these locations may have led to bins being removed and not replaced. This would be investigated with a view to ensuring that there were adequate litter bins in place.

Comment: Instances of graffiti had been reported in the south of the City whereby several private houses had been targeted.

Response: Officers were aware of incidents in that part of the city but upon cleaning and removing the graffiti it had been put back the next day.

Question: How would graffiti be addressed?

Response: It was difficult to witness someone carrying out graffiti and this particular perpetrator had not been caught on CCTV. The Council was looking at installing CCTV in the Sincil Bank area of the city which it was hoped would have a positive impact. It was noted that graffiti occurred elsewhere in the city and not solely in Park ward.

Question: If there was litter on the ground around litter bins, should street cleaning staff be required to pick it up as part of emptying the bins? There had been instances of this occurring in Witham ward.

Response: In these circumstances the litter should be picked up. The member was asked to report this to the Assistant Director who would address the issue.

Question: How often were the streets cleaned in Lincoln and how often did litter picking take place?

Response: Streets outside of the city centre were swept on a monthly cycle and litter picking took place on a fortnightly cycle.

Question: Dog waste bins were due to be replaced with normal bins, which dog waste could also be placed into due to the fact that litter bin waste and dog waste were collected by the same vehicle. Would all dog bins be replaced with normal litter bins?

Response: A review was taking place across the city and every bin location would be reviewed. If there was a need to increase capacity in some areas then this would be done as part of this scheme. In some circumstances it may be necessary to remove a litter bin and a dog waste bins that were located in close proximity to each other and replace these with one larger litter bin, so as to avoid unnecessary street clutter. It was suggested that a social media campaign should be launched to support this scheme in order that it was clear to members of the public that dog waste could be placed in litter bins. Adequate signage would also be important which would make it clear that bins were multi-use.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **86. High Performing Services/Towards Financial Sustainability Annual Report**

Angela Andrews, Chief Executive:

- (a) Presented a report which updated the Committee on progress with the Vision 2020 objective of maintaining 'professional high performance service delivery' since the launch of the Vision in January 2017.
- (b) Reported that the Council's Corporate Management Team sat on the new High Performing Services Board which had been in place since May 2017 to consider a holistic view of the important indicators of progress and performance across the organisation.
- (c) Reported that a key aim was to develop and deliver innovative programmes of work which would allow the authority to protect and invest in the public services its customers relied upon. The first of these programmes was the Towards Financial Sustainability programme.



- (d) Reported that the Towards Financial Sustainability programme, in the current 2017/18 financial year, would over-achieve the £3.5million savings target by £30,390, with a further £33,310 savings possible by year-end subject to finalised business cases. Further plans in development for the next phase would be considered by the Executive for approval for 2018/19.
- (e) Reported that the second programme had been developed from the ten High Performing Services projects identified in Vision 2020, as well as a number of projects highlighted throughout the year as areas of general performance that could still be improved. These were set out in Appendix B of the report, with eight projects on target and two having been completed. Six further activities, set out in part (ii) of Appendix B, had been added throughout the year from various sources such as quarterly performance reports, audits on services, risk registers and opportunities within the business development work plan. Of the six other activities, five projects were on target and one had been identified as an area of concern. This related to levels of staff sickness, with further work having been commissioned by HPS to understand the underlying issues.
- (f) Reported the following areas for improvement in relation to High Performing Services:
- there remained a £250,000 financial target to achieve either through savings or new income streams;
  - the High Performing Services board would focus the skills of the Business Development Team to those Vision 2020 projects requiring support;
  - a focus would be given to equipping staff with the right skills and tools to deliver success, and the physical and mental resilience to work through change.
- (g) Reported that the following had been delivered in respect of High Performing Services and Towards Financial Sustainability:
- the phase 4 programme had been completed and the financial target had been achieved for 2017/18;
  - the Council had proposed a new and innovative programme for delivering income and savings for the next Medium Term Financial Strategy, as well as a programme for improving the Council's performance and services delivered to its customers;
  - significant levels of staff welfare support had been introduced over the last year, which should start to show results in decreasing sickness levels in 2018/19;
- (h) Highlighted that the asset rationalisation strand covered a review of the Council's existing assets and also sought appropriate opportunities for investment to bring in additional new income streams. Two successful opportunities realised earlier in the year through direct reports to the Executive were:
- the purchase of two areas of land in central Lincoln in October 2017, currently being operated as two car parks with the City of Lincoln Council now acting as the landlord;

- the purchase of land and property in central Lincoln in February 2018 which would be the new Lincoln Travel Lodge, with the City of Lincoln Council being the owner/landlord.
- (i) Reported that the Council's Strategic Property Manager had developed a further asset management programme of longer term opportunities which could be followed up if deemed appropriate and circumstances were correct at that time.
- (j) Reported that commercialisation was a strand aimed at developing commercial opportunities from the Council's existing services or assets. This year concentration had been on looking to develop the authority's advertising offer in the new facilities available at the Central Bus Station.
- (k) Reported that the cost reduction, shared services and demand management aspects of the Towards Financial Sustainability programme were considering a range of service reviews, from shared services to contract reviews. Discussion had taken place with neighbouring authorities on possibilities of sharing further services, with a good track record already demonstrated in respect of the highly successful Revenues and Benefits Shared Service, as well as the central hub creation with the Department for Work and Pensions and other partners. There was also potential to consider expanding the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service into new areas, which would be investigated further. Other options that had been explored and had been agreed to progress or had already commenced were:
- review of the Lincoln BIG TIC contract for 2019;
  - restructure of financial services, commencing March 2018;
  - Council Community Lottery to take over and expand some of the small grant funding. Work was already underway with an expectation of the first lottery draw in August 2018;
  - determination of final savings arising from the Birchwood Leisure Centre refurbishment.
- (l) Invited members' questions and comments.

Question: In relation to the purchase of the two car parks, was the borrowing arrangement on a fixed term basis?

Response: Yes, the interest rate was fixed.

Question: The term 'asset rationalisation' suggested a streamlining of assets, whereas the Council's asset rationalisation strand included the purchase of assets such as the car parks and Travel Lodge. Would officers consider changing this term?

Response: The point was understood. The asset rationalisation stream sought to ensure that all current assets were made best use of and were achieving the best possible rate of return. Asset disposals were happening as part of this work stream as well as the purchase of land or property to provide additional revenue income for the authority. Consideration would be given to renaming the work stream. A suggestion of asset optimisation was noted.

Question: The new appraisal system had ensured that 86% of staff had completed their appraisals by January 2018, but had they all been completed now?

Response: The Council was committed to ensuring that appraisals took place throughout the authority and Directors undertook checks to ensure that they were carried out.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **87. Vision 2020 - Remarkable Place Progress Report**

Simon Walters, Director of Communities and Environment:

- (a) Presented a report which provided the Committee with an update on progress towards the 'Let's enhance our remarkable place' strategy priority in Vision 2020.
- (b) Reported that the Remarkable Place Vision Group led on delivering the Council's aspirations under the 'Let's enhance our remarkable place' strategy priority which included:
  - let's show the world what Lincoln has to offer;
  - let's cherish and enhance our natural environment;
  - let's preserve the unique character of our city;
  - let's deliver a rich and varied cultural experience;
  - let's provide interesting, exciting and vibrant places to enjoy.
- (c) Reported that the position statement attached to the report at Appendix A captured the 'day to day' work by the Council that was integral to delivering this strategic priority. This ensured that the current baseline was understood for delivering the priority and to recognise how staff across the authority had a role in delivering Vision 2020.
- (d) Highlighted that a Remarkable Place project monitoring table was appended to the report, which provided an overview of the projects being delivered in the first phase of the strategic priority.
- (e) Highlighted a number of key achievements in the first phase of Vision 2020, as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report.
- (f) Reported that of the 15 projects included as part of the priority, one had already been completed, ten were on track for delivery, two had slightly slipped their milestones and two had either stalled or intentionally been put on hold to prioritise resources elsewhere. Those projects that had slightly slipped their milestones were:
  - the Birchwood Leisure Centre renovation project. Despite completion of the internal works and successful opening to the public, a number of works to the outside of the building were ongoing. This, in part, was due to discovery of asbestos in a number of locations;
  - the CCTV installation project. Despite successful implementation of the new CCTV system, the free public Wi-Fi system for the city centre had not yet become operational due to a need for further work to ensure General Data Protection Regulation and other data protection legal requirements compliance. A suitable partner company had been identified and was awaiting confirmation that the system they proposed was acceptable to the Council.

Those projects that had stalled or intentionally been put on hold were:

- the project to explore options for a new leisure village. This was intentionally placed on hold to prioritise work on Birchwood Leisure Centre and Lincoln Transport Hub;
  - the Christmas lights replacement project. Despite successful delivery of phase one, talks were ongoing to secure agreement with partners regarding funding of phase two.
- (g) Highlighted that a monitoring table was attached to the report at Appendix C which provided an update on the Sincil Bank regeneration project. This was a large programme of work which cut across all four strategic priorities but was most closely aligned to the strategic priority of 'let's enhance our remarkable place'. The scheme had seen a number of successes over the last year, including development of the partnership-led Sincil Bank Place Shaping Strategy. Overseen by the Sincil Bank Revitalisation Partnership, three working groups had been created to drive forward the recommendations made in the Place Shaping Strategy.
- (h) Reported that, of 17 projects associated with the Sincil Bank regeneration project, 14 were on track for delivery and three had some slippage on their milestones which were:
- the Portland Street houses in multiple occupation and Hermit Street project. This had been delayed following a dispute with a landlord regarding access rights which had delayed the project until a resolution could be identified;
  - the project to remove the damaged safety barriers at the High Street and Portland Street junction had been delayed due to Lincolnshire County Council prioritising resources to repair pot holes;
  - the project to identify a suitable community use of the former playground site at Archer Street had been delayed due to partner capacity issues.
- (i) Invited members' questions and comments.

Comment: There had been lots of meetings in the community with regard to the Sincil Bank regeneration project and the community was really onside with what was being proposed for the area. The work being undertaken with the community was really commendable.

Question: In relation to the project to improve biodiversity in green spaces, were there any objectives in place as to how the volunteering aspect of the project could be improved? In addition, a comment was made that the planning process was not always as 'green' as it could be which sometimes did not assist with the wider objective of improving biodiversity in green spaces.

Response: All wildlife sites in the city had been surveyed and in total Lincoln had 50 individual wildlife sites allocated in its Local Plan, which accounted for 26% of the makeup of the city. The last time this assessment took place was 2006 so a lot of work was taking place to establish what had changed at each site since that last assessment. This had fed into management plans for those sites, which in turn would feed into the Council's volunteering scheme to ensure that necessary works could take place as part of a programme of works. It was agreed that a list of the 50 wildlife sites would be circulated to members.

Question: Would the survey works be undertaken in a few months? There were lots of other green spaces in the city that were undeveloped. Were these being looking into and was there anything the Council could do with them in respect of biodiversity?

Response: A few months for the surveys to be completed was optimistic and it would take some time to ensure that each site was properly surveyed. This would be done as quickly as possible. In respect of the planning process, conversations should be taking place before the submission of a planning application to offset any detrimental impact associated with wildlife sites or other green areas.

Question: With regard to the city centre master plan, could something be done about empty shops to make them look more aesthetically pleasing?

Response: Lincoln BIG was seeking to address this issue. The city centre master plan would be rolled out this year, which would become a supplementary planning document providing it with more weight in planning terms.

Question: Would the Council achieve its offer of free Wi-Fi in the city?

Response: Most of the infrastructure was in place to achieve this, however, a number of issues needed to be addressed in response to the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations to ensure that the Council was compliant. It was anticipated that free Wi-Fi would be available in the summer.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and referred to the Executive for consideration.

**88. Draft Work Programme for 2018/19**

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

**89. Announcement by the Chair**

Councillor Gary Hewson, Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee, took this opportunity to thank Councillor Tony Speakman for his contributions in his role as Vice-Chair, with this being his last meeting of the Committee following his decision not to stand in the City Council elections in May 2018. Councillor Hewson praised Councillor Speakman's knowledge and commitment as Vice-Chair, adding that he put a lot into the role and that he would be missed. On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Hewson thanked Councillor Speakman for everything he had done for the Council.

Councillor Speakman responded by saying that he had enjoyed his time on the Committee, which provided members with a valuable understanding as to how services were being delivered and their respective performance. He praised the good quality of reports from officers which he said helped members make better decisions.