

**Present:** Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*),  
Councillor Helena Mair, Councillor Thomas Dyer,  
Councillor Ronald Hills, Councillor Rebecca Longbottom,  
Councillor Lucinda Preston, Councillor Pat Vaughan and  
Councillor Loraine Woolley

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Laura McWilliams

**50. Confirmation of Minutes - 21 November 2019**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2019 be confirmed.

**51. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**52. Portfolio Holder under Scrutiny - Reducing Inequality**

Cllr Rosie Kirk, Portfolio Holder for Reducing Inequality, presented a report to Performance Scrutiny Committee and highlighted the following key achievements:

- Two Syrian refugee families were welcomed into Lincoln during March 2019 as part of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS)
- So far 67 local organisations had signed up to the Social Responsibility Charter
- The Lincoln Community Lottery celebrated its 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary in August 2019. Within that year the lottery had raised over £57,000 for local good causes in and around the City
- The Universal Credit Support Team helped 1,743 Lincoln residents to make (or maintain) their UC claim digitally in 2018/19. In the same year the team also provided 822 Lincoln customers with Personal Budgeting Support. This support helped customers to access almost £700,000 in UC and related benefits
- Additional benefits claimed by Lincoln customers who sought the advice and assistance of the Welfare Team in 2018/19 totalled a weekly value of £44,421. Over the full year these additional benefits amounted to £2,309,894.
- The highly successful four-year Assisting Low Income Households (ALIH) project led by City of Lincoln Council ended in September 2019. 327 learners took part in the project, with 94% successfully achieving the employability course.
- The Intervention Team had worked with 103 different individuals since the start of the project in October 2018 and had logged in excess of 704 actions on the case management system
- The CCTV Team had provided over 800 evidential DVD's to Lincolnshire Police over the past year for use in the judicial process, including a number of high profile cases.

Invited members' comments and questions.

Comment: Members commented that the report from the Portfolio Holder and Officers was fantastic.

Question: Members asked how incorporating the Green Agenda in the Social Responsibility Charter was progressing?

Response: The Green Agenda had already been incorporated. A forum was set up every 6 months to report updates on the progress and changes. The Council had good relationships with the companies that had signed up to the charter.

Question: Members asked how long a customer may have been NEET at the point when they first contacted The Network?

Response: Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits agreed to try and find out this information and feed back to the Committee.

Comment: Members commented that the work the Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team had done was fantastic.

Question: Members asked whether Lincoln Neighbourhoods together was City wide and covered every ward?

Response: Some wards were not covered such as Carholme and Hartsholme and there were some neighbourhood boards that needed more support.

Question: Members were impressed with the figure from The Lincoln Lottery and asked what was being done to progress this further?

Response: The Lincoln Lottery was advertised through social media but was advertised more through word of mouth. Charities that had benefitted would be publicised.

Question: Members asked whether there were any assessments that had taken place regarding how well statutory bodies were performing such as Citizens Advice?

Response: A liaison meeting had taken place between officers and Citizens Advice today, - such meetings take place regularly. The Council no longer received funding from Central Government to support Universal Credit. Claimants for Universal Credit would be made an appointment and seen by Citizens Advice, although sometimes vulnerable claimants would be seen by the Council if they presented at City Hall.

Comment: Members commented that the report on Universal Credit was a great credit to the Council and was a fantastic piece of work. Members gave thanks to officers for helping Council Tenants keep their tenancies while waiting for Universal Credit payments.

Question: Members asked how big the businesses were that got Business Rate Relief?

Response: One of the Businesses was big and the others were small in comparison. The Policy was put in place to attract businesses to the City and included relocations or expansions.

Question: Members asked whether there had been an evaluation of the effectiveness of refugee families coming into Lincoln?

Response: This was being reviewed nationally. Lincoln welcomed more families if needed as this was beneficial to the families and to the communities in which they would be placed.

Question: Members asked whether there was a long waiting list for Universal Credit?

Response: There was still a minimum of 5 weeks for payments being processed.

Question: Members asked whether there was scope to roll out CCTV into other areas such as Witham?

Response: There needed to be a rationale for more cameras to be placed through crime etc. There had to be a solid case put forward.

Question: Members asked what the figures were for deprivation within the City?

Response: The 2019 figures were already released. These would be sent to the committee.

Question: Members asked for more information on how individuals were put forward for the skills and training funding?

Response: This was a very good project and further funding opportunities were being sought. Individuals were identified through benefit claims, referrals from Job Centre, employers were approached and referrals from staff.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the figures on deprivation within the city for 2019 be circulated to committee members
- b) the content of the report be noted.

### **53. Reduce Inequality Vision Progress Report**

Angela Andrews, Chief Executive and Town Clerk, presented Performance Scrutiny Committee:

- a) with an update on progress towards the Reducing Inequality strategic priority contained in Vision 2020 along with a Position Statement (Appendix A) and a Project Monitoring Table (Appendix B).
- b) Explained that there were 18 projects currently being monitored in the work programme for Reducing Inequality. A summary of the position of these projects was as follows:
  - Completed projects:
    - Promote access to a range of financial products
    - Friends against Scams
  - Projects flagged as green:

- Reduce incidences of suicide
  - Promotion of bulk energy switching to lower energy bills for residents
  - Encourage businesses to embrace corporate social responsibility
  - Sincil Bank Revitalisation Programme
  - Promotion of Pension Credit
  - Severe Disability Premium
- Projects flagged as Amber:
    - Maximise any opportunities for income generation as part of the national Apprenticeship Employer Levy
    - Work with training providers, businesses and partners to increase opportunities for local people to access training and employment (college courses)
    - Providing a central hub of support for young people through The Network
    - Maintaining support for people moving to Universal Credit

c) Invited Members' questions and comments.

Comment: Members commented that often middle aged customers were disadvantaged and lack in technical experience when it came to the use of the public computers. These customers required help and guidance.

Response: Digital advocacy was an issue. More work needed to be carried out in communities to help point customers who need assistance to other services that would help them.

Comment: Members commented that a glossary for the abbreviations used within Appendix A was needed.

RESOLVED that the progress made within the Vision Group Reducing Inequality be noted.

#### **54. Sincil Bank Review of Activity**

Paul Carrick, Neighbourhood Manager – Sincil Bank:

- a) presented Performance Scrutiny Committee with an update on the interventions delivered in Sincil Bank over the past twelve months.
- b) Explained that the strategy for delivering the vision for Sincil Bank was based around delivering projects and initiatives along themed areas, creating and enhancing links to services and work carried out in the area across the council, by its partners and third party organisations, existing or emerging within Sincil Bank. As agreed at the SRG on 7 October 2019 these were:
  - Streets for People and Gateways
  - Greening
  - Community Hubs
  - Skills and Enterprise
  - Homes
- c) Highlighted additional Council led initiatives in the area:

- Empty Homes
- Housing Standards
- Investing in our Homes

d) Invited members' questions and comments.

Comment: Members felt that the range of projects that were taking place was amazing and appreciated the amount of work that went into these.

Question: Members commented that the Historic England Scheme will make a difference aesthetically. What were the milestones for this project as the completion date was originally set for 2024?

Response: There were three elements to the project:

- Physical Interventions including improving shop fronts
- Engagement with the local community
- Cultural Programme

Officers were to forward this information to members of the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

Comment: Members commented that the Travelodge was a good business opportunity but had nothing to do with the Sincil Bank Project.

Response: The Travelodge was part of the development of the area and linked to employment within the area.

Question: Members asked how many community surveys were sent out as there was only 302 responses received? Members also asked for examples of the questions asked?

Response: Officers agreed to send a copy of the questions that were sent to residents to Performance Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that:

- a) officers were to forward the milestones for the Historic England Scheme to members of the committee
- b) officers were to provide a copy of the questions sent to residents to members of the committee
- c) the progress of the project to revitalise Sincil Bank was noted.

## 55. **Scrutiny Annual Report**

Clare Stait, Democratic Services Officer:

- a) presented the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2018/19 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 do produce individual reports to Council during the municipal

year, however, the attached Scrutiny Annual Report summarises the work of the scrutiny committees for the full year and highlights the key achievements made under scrutiny in 2018/19.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

**56. Work Programme 2019/20**

Clare Stait, Democratic Services Officer:

- a) presented the draft work programme for 2019/20 as detailed at Appendix A of her 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 2019/20.

RESOLVED that the work programme 2019/20 as detailed at Appendix A to the report be noted subject to the following amendment:

- a) the Asset Management item scheduled for the next meeting be removed.