

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

Report to Council by Councillor Jane Loffhagen, Chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee 2021-22

Chair: Councillor Jane Loffhagen

Committee members: Councillors Naomi Tweddle- [Vice- Chair], Bill Bilton, Matthew Fido, Gary Hewson, Helena Mair, Bill Mara, Adrianna McNulty, Clare Smalley, Calum Watt, and Pat Vaughan

Democratic Services Officers: Cheryl Evans and Victoria Poulson.

The Committee agreed that in addition to completing work on Community Integration from the previous year's project we would focus on two issues; Giving Young People a Voice in City of Lincoln Council Operation, and Working Toward Assisting with a Cultural Consortium. - see attached scoping documents, for details .These topics by definition overlap so are not always reported below separately.

I would like to thank Contributors, Committee members and Officers for their work on these issues .

The Committee met on 5 occasions. Detailed notes of these meetings are available to members and the general public should they wish for more information.

Community Integration

The Committee received presentations and/or undertook face to face discussions with the following :

- Ben Rollet from Voluntary Centre Services
- Sian Wade from Transform Lincoln [formerly the Active Faith Network]
- Simon Walters , Director for Communities and Environment, re the Councils response to the pandemic
- Paul Carrick - Neighbourhood Working Manager
- Councillor Sue Burke- Portfolio Holder for Reducing Inequality

Recommendations were:

- That the work of volunteers at vaccination centres be noted and recognised.

- That Community Groups were sometimes struggling with venues for activities especially when these incurred a cost.
- That the success of neighbourhood boards was patchy depending on various factors and this area needed continued investment from the Council.
- The contribution of The Active Faith Network was acknowledged
- That the Council could and should provide support, such as a shared vision of what an Integrated community would look like. The Council is very good at sharing values, communicating ambitions and bringing organisations together so could offer partnership and support to other charities and organisations to assist them to work together.

Response to the Pandemic

A report from both Simon Walters and Paul Carrick described actions the Council had taken during the pandemic. It was acknowledged that the Council had mobilised and took on new tasks very quickly and efficiently and that interventions were successful.

It was acknowledged that as a result of this, closer links were formed with different parts of the Community and that this is likely to be lasting legacy.

Presentation by Councillor Sue Burke

A detailed presentation was given on the impacts of working from home, the increased isolation for some groups, and that Lincoln had 420 of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

It was also noted that life expectancy in Lincoln was the lowest in the East Midlands - it was agreed that deprivation was a key factor in this and that continued work to alleviate poverty and isolation should be the focus of interventions.

Working Toward Assisting with a Cultural Consortium

The meetings heard from:

Simon Walters who introduced the topic, citing funding received by the University of Lincoln to bring together Arts, Community Groups and Young People.

Sukhy Johal MBE - Director for the Centre of Cultural Creativity , University of Lincoln,
Toby Ealden- Zest Theatre working with young people

It was acknowledged that culture and creative sectors play a major part in the local economy and are significant employers, assisted by the Town Deal Fund and local Heritage Action Zone designations. Resources had been allocated by Government and the Council to assist this .The Lincoln Culture and Arts Project

had been successful in securing funding and the futures of the Usher Gallery and Drill Hall had benefitted. Lincoln BIG has also been instrumental in these achievements.

There is a potential bid for Lincoln to be City of Culture in 2029

Simon. Zukhy Johal and Toby Ealden also attended a later meeting to give feedback on progress. This progress report stated that Zest Theatre had recruited, employed and trained seven youth facilitators aged 16-20 whom all were paid above the Minimum wage. They had also collected views about the city from over 1000 young people revealing their concerns which focused on:

- Inequality and combatting prejudice against marginalised groups.
- Climate crisis.
- Sense of place depended on where young people lived and their feelings of safety - young people from less wealthy areas did not use the City Centre as much or feel welcome in the uphill area.
- Parks were valued highly and play areas in particular need to be more numerous and better cared for.
- Family and friends - a need for events that engaged all age ranges.
- A desire to be able to be more creative.

Recommendations made included :

- That the Council look at use of Community Centres to assist with these projects.
- That City Parks be also considered as contributing to this.
- That St Benedict's Square be developed in consultation with Young People, as should other plans for Green Space.
- A bid for £2.9m had been submitted to the UK Shared prosperity fund, some of which was identified for outdoor safe space and family events.

Giving Young People a Voice in City of Lincoln Council Operation

Meetings heard from:

- Andrew Garbutt, Lincolnshire Youth Council
- Ben Lilley, Education/ Youth Dept, Lincs County Council
- David Sampher , Lincs County Council Youth Engagement Team
- Dr Sue Bond-Taylor - Senior Lecturer at Lincs University

It was acknowledged that the pandemic presented particular difficulties to younger people and that there were four phases to the work being undertaken, ranging from meeting over 1200 young people in a school setting to developing a detailed strategy - known as a Cultural Compact to embed views of and participation by Young People in the planning and future of the city.

Recommendations

- Policy changes were needed to consider mental health issues in all projects.
- Better use of Social Media would be helpful at all levels.
- Value should be given to the element of play for both Young People and adults to promote better mental health.
- That the gap between University students and other local Young People should be acknowledged and work done for projects to be more inclusive.
- That more work continue to create a permanent voice for Young People .

This is ongoing work and will need to be continued .

Councillor Jane Loffhagen

Chair of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee 2021-22