

Present: Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Pat Vaughan, Councillor David Clarkson,
Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor Lucinda Preston,
Councillor Rachel Storer, Councillor Joshua Wells and
Councillor Loraine Woolley

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Martin Christopher

29. Confirmation of Minutes - 17 August 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

30. To Receive Minutes of Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee - 10 August 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee held on 10 August 2023 be received.

31. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

32. Change to Order of Business

RESOLVED that the order of business be changed to allow the report entitled 'Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee/Local Plan Annual Report 2022/23' to be considered as item number 4 on the agenda.

33. Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee/Local Plan Annual Report 2022/23

Toby Forbes-Turner, Planning Policy Manager:

- a) explained that the Joint Planning Committee reached its thirteenth year over the course of 2022/23. This year had seen the successful examination and adoption of the second Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- b) stated that the Local Plan (adopted in April 2023) set out the planning policies for Central Lincolnshire (including the City) and this involved allocating parcels of land for development as well as identifying land which should be protected from development.
- c) provided a breakdown of the AGM meetings which took place and considered the following:
 - 6th June 2022 – the Local Plans Team Annual Report, the Local Plan Budget and Update and the Local Plan Draft for Consultation.
 - 9th January 2023 – The Statement of Community Involvement
 - 13th April 2023 – Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Adoption, Local Plan Supporting Guidance and Update to CLJSPC Memorandum of Understanding and Standing Orders

- d) highlighted that in the coming year, the focus of the work would be around implementation of the plan, reviewing evidence, rebuilding the Local Plan Team following the end of the Peterborough SLA. This included:
- Working closely with Districts to ensure consistent and efficient implementation of the Local Plan. This would likely include the publication of additional informal guidance notes.
 - Working closely with Districts to address the emerging challenges from Biodiversity Net Gain which would become mandatory in November for major developments and small developments in April 2024.
 - Completing the recruitment to the team following the end of the Peterborough SLA in March, and developing a project plan for reviewing evidence.
 - Keeping up to date with changes to national policy and legislation.
- e) referred to paragraph 4.10 of the report and gave an overview of the changes to the Local Plans Team staffing.
- f) explained that a budget review had been undertaken of the future work programme of the joint committee and the structure of the Local Plan and summarised the budget position as detailed at paragraph 4 of the report.
- g) invited members questions and comments.

The committee considered the contents of the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted by members as a fair summary of activity of the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee 2022/23.

34. Portfolio Holder under Scrutiny - Customer Experience and Review

Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Portfolio Holder for Customer Experience and Review :

- a) presented a report to Performance Scrutiny Committee covering the areas:
- Customer Services
 - Audit Arrangements
 - Electoral and Democratic Services
 - ICT
 - Policy and Performance
 - Quarterly Performance Reporting
 - Annual Review of Performance Measures and Target Setting
 - External Audit on Performance Monitoring
 - Lincoln City Profile 2022/23
 - Census 2021
 - Project Management
 - Business Transformation
 - Website
 - Business Transformation – a Forward Look
- b) extended her thanks to the team of officers that supported her Portfolio for their hard work, dedication and commitment to supporting the residents of Lincoln.

c) invited members' comments and questions.

Question: Why had the number of individuals registered on the electoral register decreased from 62,292 in 2021/22 to 61,778 in 2022/23?

Response: An answer would be provided following the meeting.

Question: Why had the number of staff in Lincoln City Councils Welfare Team been reduced whilst the size of North Kesteven's Welfare team had increased given the demand that was placed on the service by City of Lincoln Council residents?

Response: The Welfare Team had not been reduced, there were some vacancies but recruitment was underway. There had been an increase in demand in Lincoln, however the work was spread across the whole of the shared services team.

Question: Was it possible to provide a more detailed breakdown of calls received for each service area?

Response: A breakdown was provided in the Performance measures but could be included in future within the body of this report.

Comment: The call waiting time in customer services was very good compared to other organisations.

Question: There were issues with recruitment in the Audit Team. Had officers looked at how other councils successfully recruited, and could we learn from this? Was it possible to use apprenticeships or similar schemes to 'grow our own'?

Response: These suggestions would be discussed with Officers to ensure that they had been explored. The work in the Audit Team was being covered appropriately in order to meet the requirements of the Council.

Question: Residents may not know what type of ID was required to vote. Could the council do more to ensure that residents were informed of the correct ID?

Response: Agreed that more advertising could be done, this would be discussed with Officers.

Question: There was a financial impact of having team vacancies and reliance on agency staff. Was there a plan in place to meet the long-term costs associated with this, if the Council continued to struggle to recruit?

Response: An answer would be provided following the meeting.

Question: Would the common risks identified via the combined assurance work be monitored to reduce the risk to the Council?

Response: Common risks were identified as part of the strategic risk register. This monitored the risks and set out the work that would be undertaken to address them.

Comment Long term vacancies had an impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy if posts were filled with temporary agency staff.

Question: A recent visit took place to observe the customer contact centre. The Customer Service Advisors did an excellent job at handling the calls, however one call was received about a letter that had been sent out by a different department that the contact centre were unaware of and therefore could not fully answer the query. Had processes been put in place to address this issue?

Response: A document was being drafted to advise departments to liaise with customer services if they were expecting to receive a number of calls on a particular matter. Service areas often did contact customer services in advance, however, the document would improve processes to ensure that customer services could fully respond to queries.

Question: Was the Council being rewarded for taking part in the beta testing for the changes to the electoral registration system?

Response: An answer would be provided following the meeting.

Question: Was a Service Level Agreement with service providers in place to manage security risks in relation to cloud migration within the ICT Strategy?

Response: This was addressed on a system by system basis, and robust contracts were in place for each system.

Question: Had the ICT Disaster Recovery Plan been tested as recommended by the Audit Committee.

Response: A table top exercise would be undertaken in due course.

Question: Was the data set within the Lincoln City Profile compared with the Census for accuracy?

Response: Each data set within the Lincoln City Profile showed the source of the information. The most recent source was from the Census 2021. We could look at some other data sets to triangulate the information. It would be a worthwhile exercise for comparison.

Comment: There had been an increase in the number of complaints in relation to parking. It was important to continue to learn lessons from the complaints and to ensure that they were incorporated into processes.

Response: Recommendations made from complaints were monitored by the Departmental Management Teams. A section on complaints could be incorporated in future into the body of this report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted with thanks.

35. Portfolio Holder under Scrutiny - Inclusive Economic Growth

Councillor Naomi Tweddle, Portfolio Holder for Inclusive Economic Growth:

a) presented a report to Performance Scrutiny Committee covering the areas:

- Climate Change
- Inclusive Economic Growth
- Innovation and Inward Investment
- Cornhill Market and City Square
- Public Realm
- Regeneration
- Small Business Support
- Tourism and Marketing
- Infrastructure
- Heritage
- Development Management
- Building Control
- Planning Policy

- Car Parks and Parking
- Events in Lincoln

b) invited members' comments and questions

Question: How was the footfall at the Lincoln Live event monitored? Could the footfall of 60,000 people have included people who were walking past the event as well as those who were actively engaged with the event?

Response: The footfall was monitored by the CCTV system, which counted everyone who passed through the Cornhill. A lot of people walked through the event and engaged with it. There was a lot of social media engagement for the event, with a reach of 280,000 on Facebook. Satisfaction survey results were still being returned, there had so far been 150 responses with a 91% satisfaction rate. The survey results could be shared with members once they were collated.

Question: Could better footfall data be recorded for those stood watching the event?

Response: This would be discussed with Officers in the CCTV team for future events.

Question: Was there comparable footfall data for the city centre, which compared 2022 to 2023 over the weekend of Lincoln Live?

Response: This could be provided following the meeting.

Question: What was the district heat network proposal for the Western Growth Corridor?

Response: A heat map had been produced by Local Authorities to identify where heat was coming from. There were two companies interested in utilising the heat and providing a more sustainable heat network. A policy would be produced to provide information on the district heat network.

Question: Would it be compulsory for new properties to be linked to the ground source heat pumps?

Response: It was still in its early stages so could not be confirmed at the moment, however, we would expect it to be mandatory for properties on the Western Growth Corridor Development. Sustainable energy and heating was a good selling point.

Question: What was the current situation with funding for the spine road for the Western Growth Corridor?

Response: The project was on the programme for Homes England and discussions were taking place to obtain funding.

Question: If Homes England decided not to provide funding then how would the spine road be funded?

Response: There were some other options available such as securing investment via the development or the Strategic Highways Authority and paying back over time.

Question: The report stated that "the Council should look to the future with regard to the relationship between parking in the City and supporting and encouraging sustainable modes of transport. What did this mean?

Response: The Council would be looking at car parks and how sustainable transport could work alongside them to future proof the City. For example the structure of the old car parks needed to be considered as electric vehicles were significantly heavier.

Question: Would the Council be proposing to introduce an Ultra Low Emissions Style congestion charge as part of the sustainable transport objectives?

Response: No, there was no proposal to introduce this.

Question: How many people had visited the Visitor Information Centre since May 2023?

Response: The figures could be provided following the meeting.

Question: Had there been any issues regarding hospital visitors using the Greetwell Place car park?

Response: The staff at Greetwell place had the vehicle registration details of the tenants and their visitors. Spot checks did take place during normal working hours.

Question: What was the budget for the 2024/25 Lincoln Events Programme?

Response: The budget had not been set yet and would be confirmed in January 2024. At the moment we were working to the same budget as 2023/24, if more money was required it would be requested via the budget process.

Comment: The temporary traffic lights for the Western Growth Corridor works were not in sync.

Response: Smart cameras were used to keep the traffic flowing, if someone ran the red light, it took time to re set and caused delays on the timer. The camera re set due to safety reasons.

Question: What did 'digital city' mean?

Response: The Council had been working with partners to encourage investment into upgrading digital connection speeds, coverage, accessibility and affordability. This was an ambition of the Council and a huge amount of from companies was required investment to achieve this. This digital strategy would be refreshed in due course.

Question: Tourists tended to focus on the Cathedral and Castle rather than other heritage sites in the City. How could we better promote other heritage assets?

Response: Work was being undertaken to look at how we could make the best use of the heritage assets in the City. There was a lot of scope and potential and this was an area of focus.

Question: Could more information be provided on the City Centre Greening?

Response: A piece of work was ongoing to look at improving existing green spaces and also the creation of new city centre greening. A consultation would be undertaken in due course.

Question: Who was responsible for implementing the district heat network?

Response: It would depend on the business. The Councils role was to facilitate businesses where it made sense to do so.

Comment: There had been good feedback from the Lincoln Live event and it was good to give local artists an opportunity to perform.

Response: It was important to support local artists.

Question: There was a poor quality of services/events on offer at the Cornhill, who owned the land and ran the events?

Response: The Council owned the land and it was leased to Lincoln BIG. For the

summer holiday period, BIG had leased the area for 3 years to a Lincoln company who have placed activity in the area. There was one year left on the lease and concerns had been expressed to Lincoln BIG regarding the quality of the events on offer.

Question: Was the Western Growth Corridor currently on schedule and within budget?

Response: Yes, it was a fixed price contract and was ahead of programme.

Question: When was the work on the Western Growth Corridor bridges due to commence?

Response: The work would commence in June 2024 and would be completed in 2025.

Question: The central market was due to open in September but was still not complete. When would it open?

Response: There was 6 weeks of rain which delayed the external work. The market would open in time for the Christmas trading period.

Question: Would there be an opening ceremony for the market?

Response: Yes, there would be an opening ceremony and invites would be sent out shortly.

Question: How were the objectives in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy being monitored and achieved?

Response: There was work ongoing to develop some KPI's based on the data which would be published in due course.

Questions: Had residents been involved in the Council Parking Strategy consultations?

Response: The Citizens Panel had been sent a survey on the car park strategy, there had also been consultation with car park users. There had been a good response rate and the results were currently being collated.

Question: Could a wide range of genres be included in the Lincoln Live event such as folk music and brass bands?

Response: Yes, a wide variety of music would be considered for future events.

Comment: It was important for the report to include performance measures. Could some more performance measures be developed?

Response: Proposals for performance measures could be developed and presented to a future Performance Scrutiny Committee. It was difficult to identify measures on economic development as success was often around the outcomes.

Question: The overall percentage utilisation of all car parks was showing red, what did this mean?

Response: The graph showed that the income from car parks was ahead of budget, however the utilisation of the car parks was not at the same stage as before the pandemic.

Question: Had the introduction of the residents car parking scheme in the Sincil bank been assessed to see the impact on car park usage in the City?

Response: The residents parking scheme was implemented on 1 September

2023. Anecdotally more parking season tickets had been issued however this had not been reconciled yet.

Question: How much did it cost to equip staff to work from home?

Response: There was an initial significant investment to equip staff to work from home at the start of the covid outbreak and hence was funded at that time. The council continued to see the benefits of that investment,

Question: What was the impact of staff working from home and would it continue?

Response: The workforce and organisation development team was undertaking a piece of work on this. Nationally those Councils that offered hybrid working had better staff recruitment and retention rates.

Comment: There was a lack of performance data included in the report in relation to the UKSP Fund, Towns Fund and the Western Growth Corridor. This needed to be reported to Performance Scrutiny Committee.

Response: These would be incorporated into the quarterly monitoring report once appropriate measures had been agreed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted with thanks.

36. Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

Claire Turner, Democratic Services Officer:

- a) presented the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2022/23 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 2022/23.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

37. Work Programme for 2023/24

The Chair:

- a) presented the draft work programme for 2023/24 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 2023/24.

The Chair requested that the report on the proposals for performance measures be scheduled into the work programme on 7 March 2024.

RESOLVED that

1. The work programme 2023/24 be agreed.
2. A report on the proposals for performance measures be scheduled into the work programme for the meeting due to be held on 7th March 2024.