

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY  
 COMMITTEE  
 10 JUNE 2016**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C L STRANGE (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors Mrs V C Ayling (Vice-Chairman), C J T H Brewis, M Brookes, J R Marriott, C R Oxby, R A Renshaw, J W Beaver, Mrs M J Overton MBE and Mrs J M Renshaw

Councillors: C J Davie, R G Fairman, A H Turner MBE JP and W S Webb attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

David Hickman (Environment Commissioner), Brian Kane (Anglian Water), Sean Kent (Group Manager, Environment Services), Jasmine Sodhi (Performance and Equalities Manager), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A M Austin, A Bridges, N M Murray and C Pain.

It was noted that the Chief Executive having received notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, had appointed Councillors J Beaver, Mrs M J Overton MBE and Mrs J Renshaw as replacement members of the Committee in place of Councillors C Pain, A M Austin and N M Murray respectively, for this meeting only.

2 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND SENIOR OFFICERS

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The Executive Councillor for Development made the following announcements to the Committee:

- A meeting of the Coastal Development Forum had taken place as planned on Friday 3 June 2016. It was reported that it had been a very good session, and officers were collecting feedback and preparing an action plan. A report would be brought back to this Committee at a later date.
- The official opening of the new Gibraltar Point Visitor Centre would take place on 7 October 2016. Feedback so far was very good, and the Centre had been so busy that the café had already employed a further two full time staff.
- The Stamp End improvement scheme in Lincoln was progressing. This was an important scheme and was taking place in partnership Anglian Water and the City of Lincoln Council.

Members were informed that Stamp End was one of the main areas hit in the floods of 2007, and 200 people had been evacuated during the event. However, it was a complex scheme as there were numerous sub surface systems which had taken significant investigation to determine what the issues were.

The scheme would cost approximately £800,000, half of the cost was being met by Defra and the remainder was being funded by the Council, Anglian water and the Witham First Internal Drainage Board. There would be a number of landscape features and improvements to flood barriers in combination with pumping station improvements. It was noted that this was a complex water system, but it was essential that time was taken to design the right scheme. Work was already underway and it was expected to be completed within this financial year.

Members were advised that the Executive Councillor for waste and recycling had agreed to progress the building of a County Council owned Household Waste Recycling Centre at Boston. It was hoped that this facility would be open by April 2017. In relation to the facility at Kirkby on Bain, it was reported that it had been agreed to let a contract for a 1+1 period to allow time to investigate other options and put plans in place. It was reported that the cost of the Boston HWRC project would be £1.5m, however, this should be paid back in 5.3 years. It was an invest to save project. It was requested that a paper be brought back to the Committee in October on this project.

One member highlighted that Stamp End was a great area with potential for future leisure and recreation activities. It was requested that any schemes going forward should be considered for this area. The Executive Councillor for Development agreed to make a note of this for the future.

## 5 WATER RECYCLING CENTRES UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of the situation regarding odours from the Ingoldmells, Spalding and Fishtoft Water Recycling

Centres (previously Sewage Treatment Works). This report also provided an update on the Boston water Recycling Centre and an update of all Water Recycling Centres that recorded more than five odour complaints in 2015-16.

The Committee was guided through the report, and provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was queried whether officers would be having a closer look at Glentworth, as there had been 7 complaints received. Members were advised that all complaints had been received from one customer. The customer that was reporting the odours was not the closest property to the water recycling centre. Officers had spoken with neighbours who did not perceive any issue. This was a difficult situation, as odour loggers had been placed in the property, but the source of the odours could not be found. Anglian Water continued to work with this customer.
- It was queried whether the 30 minutes curfew where tankers were not allowed to enter Fishtoft in the morning and afternoon was enough time. It was reported that these times (around school drop off and collection times) had been agreed at a parish council meeting. However, it could be time to review these times.
- Members were pleased that there was a commitment to long term investment in Spalding.
- It was commented that rotting pipes made the septicity worse, and it was queried whether septicity damaging the pipes continued to be a problem. Members were advised that it was unclear if the pipes were still a problem as it was hoped to prevent septicity by dosing the water with nitrate. To replace the infrastructure would be very expensive.
- Odour suppression units were still used.
- Through the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, there were plans for 34,000 houses over the next 20 years, and it was queried whether Anglian Water would be ensuring that its infrastructure would be able to cope with the increase in sewage. Members were assured that there was a department which focussed on building and development and Anglian Water were aware of where new growth was planned.
- The Executive Councillor for Development advised that he was on Anglian Water's Customer Engagement Forum, and the County Council's relationship with Anglian water was very good, and they were one of the few water companies who engaged with the public sector.
- There was a massive agenda for growing the local economy on the coast, and there would be a need to plan this growth with Anglian Water for the coastal areas.
- In terms of growth, the cost of infrastructure was a big issue, and it was queried whether any of the £15m which was proposed for greater Lincolnshire through the devolution deal would go towards funding this new growth. There would still be a need for further negotiations with government.
- There were infrastructure pressures and demands, as there was a target for the number of new houses to be built in Lincolnshire. There would also be demands from companies across the UK looking to establish themselves in

Lincolnshire, and it was noted that there should be announcements later in the year. There was also confidence that Lincolnshire would remain a centre for the RAF. It was also noted that the growth agenda would continue in Lincolnshire regardless of the outcome of the EU referendum.

**RESOLVED**

That the contents of the report presented and the comments made be noted.

**6 COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN 2015 -2016 PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER FOUR**

Consideration was given to a report which provided key performance information which was relevant to the work of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee. The Council's Performance and Equalities Manager provided an online demonstration to the Committee of how members would be able to view the new style of reporting in a secure area on the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO) website. Members were advised that following approval from the Executive, this information would be made available to the public.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was queried whether a monthly reminder could be sent to all councillors on how to access the system.
- A significant amount of waste had been diverted from landfill, and the capacity of the Energy from Waste (EfW) facility had been increased to 170,000 tonnes. It was noted that there was a planned outage scheduled for a couple of weeks' time.
- In terms of performance, waste would continue to be collected, but the data was always four months behind, which made it difficult to forecast.
- In terms of the amount of household waste recycled, members were informed that the target listed was an aspirational one set by government in 2008.
- In terms of green waste composting, it was reported that this was very seasonal, and that there also tended to be a reduction when district councils started to charge for collection.
- It was reported that there had been a lot of compliments about the HWRC service.
- It was commented that the new system of viewing performance was easier to follow, and members thanks the Council's Performance and Equalities Manager.
- Concerns had been raised at North Kesteven District Council about the levels of contamination in the mixed recycling, and it was queried what happened to the material which was contaminated. Members were advised that Mid UK took 70,000 tonnes of recyclables for processing, but there was a charge to the County Council for non-accepted material, which would then be compressed into SRF to form fuel pellets.

- There was an Officer Working Group, made up of representatives from the district councils, which was working on how to address the contamination.
- It was commented that it had previously been explained that the quarter 2 performance of the waste sent to landfill, had been due to planned maintenance at the EfW, but it was queried what the costs associated with that had been.
- In terms of the recyclables contract, each of the 7 districts specified what recyclables they would collect.
- It was commented that the market for recyclables was cyclical, and was dependent on demand. The big problem was that companies were able to dictate what they would accept according to what the market value of the materials was.
- It was confirmed that districts were concerned about the increase in rejected recyclable materials since the new contract had been in place, particularly when rejected material was converted to pellets for fuel as it was felt that there was an incentive for more material to be rejected.
- Members were advised that the better the quality of the product that was collected, the better the quality of the product produced. It was also noted that the county council had concerns regarding the contract as it had to pay for the rejected material. It was also reported that an audit of the Lincolnshire waste Partnership was being carried out, and once that had been undertaken the report would be brought back to this Committee.
- In terms of CO<sub>2</sub> reductions from County Council activity, it was queried how much of the reduction was due to not having as many building, and schools becoming academies. Members were advised that all schools were still included regardless of whether they were academies. As the portfolio reduced, then so did the emissions, but this was part of the Carbon Management Plan.
- It was reported that the flooding incidents measure was a context measure, and reflected how often and how much rain had fallen during the year, which was out of the control of the County Council, but it gave an indication of how much resource had had to be diverted to this issue.
- In terms of flood alleviation schemes, the authority was part of the flood alleviation consortium, and undertook a range of flood alleviation activities with a range of partners, so that resources could be planned better. However, flood risk schemes were often fairly complex.
- There were a number of schemes which had been commenced within the year, but had not yet been completed such as the Stamp End scheme.
- It was reported that all of the resources which had been allocated had been used appropriately. It was suggested that maybe the whole programme should be measured over 6 years, as this could give a more accurate picture.
- In terms of the Stamp End project, the County Council was the lead authority, but was also one of several partners, and successful completion was dependent on other authorities. All of the 24 schemes were still on programme, but the Stamp End project had taken up a significant proportion of this year's resources.

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- It was suggested that there was a need to make the measure more meaningful, and it was more interesting to know how many properties had been protected by the schemes.
- It was queried whether where there were single properties were at risk, could the owners be spoken to about how they could help themselves.
- It was commented that in this country, we were not very good at embracing better designed properties and building properties that were flood resistant. There was a need to plan for better design and better quality housing.
- Members were advised that in relation to changing to a more meaningful measure, this was an internal measure which was put into the business plan the previous year. If a more appropriate measure could be suggested, this could be taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for inclusion from Quarter 1.
- It was noted that 6 complaints had been received this quarter, and 2 of them related to the removal of green waste services in Mablethorpe.

#### RESOLVED

That the comments made in relation to the performance information presented be noted.

## 7 UPDATE ON SCORE PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which updated members on the SCoRE (Schools Collaboration on Resource Efficiency) programme as it drew to a close, specifically on the success of the investment in boiler room improvements and behaviour change programmes.

The Committee was shown a video clip which was produced by some of the schools which took part in the programme and showed how some of the aspects of the programme had been implemented.

Members of the Committee were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was commented that this was a good news story, and suggested that a way should be found for this to be continued, as the savings that schools would be able to make would be significant.
- It was positive that children were becoming conscious of how they could save energy.
- It was commented that there was enthusiasm for this project from both children and teachers.
- It was suggested that the Committee support Doug Robinson and his team to continue this project.
- One member commented that they had attended a schools energy event near Spalding, and the enthusiasm from all schools that took part was high.

Some of the figures from the programme highlighted to the Committee included the following:

- 230 out of 360 schools in Lincolnshire took part
- 763 children were now Carbon Ambassadors
- Schools that had been through the SCoRE programme saw a 12% reduction in their electricity bills, compared to non-SCoRE schools who had a 15% increase in electricity bills
- SCoRE schools had a 34% reduction in gas used, compared with only a 20% reduction in non-SCoRE schools
- Additional investment triggered by the programme was valued at £2.2m
- The programme would save about £1m per year
- This programme would be going forward as part of the Schools Offer so schools would have the opportunity to buy in this service if they were an academy. However, it would be free to maintained schools.

It was suggested that officers write a letter to government, on behalf of the Committee, highlighting the important of programmes such as this..

#### RESOLVED

That the significant benefits and savings achieved by the SCoRE programme be noted.

#### 8 DISTRICT HEATING - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the District Heating project, the purpose of which was to utilise heat which was produced by the Energy from Waste (EfW) facility in North Hykeham.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was commented that in order to put the correct infrastructure in place, there was a need to know what type of business would be using it.
- Discussions were held in the planning stages of the EfW with Siemens, but the project was 6 months behind what Siemens needed at that time. However, further work with them in the future had not been discounted.
- Teal Park had been promoted as an industrial estate for small scale retail, which was not the best kind of business for this product.
- North Kesteven District Council and City of Lincoln Council were part of this process.
- One issue with Siemens was that they did not need the heat which was produced 24/7.
- The main purpose of the EfW was to divert waste from landfill, the production of heat and electricity which could be sold were a bonus.
- It was commented that the cheap heat which was available should be a massive selling point for attracting industry.
- There was a need for something massive to take the heat being produced.

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- There were exciting projects being carried out in Sheffield and Southampton where there were similar EfW facilities. It was also noted that heat from Nottingham's EfW was being used by Nottingham Arena
- It was commented that Lincoln's EfW was quite detached from the city, and not ideally situated for the heat to be taken up by other businesses.
- Members were advised that there were still some real opportunities, the growth agenda was still happening.
- It was suggested that the Committee look at this again in a few months to see if any progress has been made.

RESOLVED

That the comments made in relation to the District Heating project update be noted.

## 9 CLIMATE LOCAL ANNUAL REVIEW 2015

Consideration was given to the 2015 annual review of the Action Plan required following the signing of the Climate Local commitment in August 2012. The Climate Local Action Plan demonstrates Lincolnshire County Council's continuing commitment to both reducing its carbon footprint and adapting to the effects of climate change.

It was reported that actions had progressed under all six overarching themes:

- Increasing local resilience to climate change
- Building a low-carbon sector and supporting green jobs
- Creating an accessible Lincolnshire with low carbon transport system
- Reducing energy consumption in our own activities
- Promote energy and resource efficiency and alleviate fuel poverty
- Reducing waste to landfill

Members were advised that the report highlighted progress in 2015 and added planned future action.

The Committee was pleased with the contents of the report and requested that officer keep up the good work.

RESOLVED

That the Climate Local Annual Review 2015 be noted.

## 10 UPDATE ON LINCOLNSHIRE ENERGY SWITCHING SCHEME (LESS)

It was reported that the Lincolnshire Energy Switching Scheme (LESS) was a joint exercise by Lincolnshire County Council and District Councils to promote and facilitate collective switching, potentially reducing households' energy bills.



Members were advised that to date there had been 7 completed rounds; the current round acceptance phase was open until 28 June 2016, and the report detailed the numbers involved and the savings made.

The Local Government Association Framework under which the scheme was run had now expired. HELP had signed an agreement with Peterborough City Council to continue the scheme.

Members were informed that 11,000 residents had signed up to the scheme and had offers made to them, however, only 3,000 had taken up the offers. Those people that had switched had saved a significant amount of money.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was confirmed that the Council would not be liable for any financial issues with the energy companies, and the Council's role was to facilitate the process. It was easier to get better deals if people got together in large numbers.
- It was commented that small private companies would always give better service to loyal customers.

#### RESOLVED

1. That comments made in relation to the report be noted.
2. That the Environmental Scrutiny Committee support the continuation of the Lincolnshire Energy Switching Scheme.

#### 11 ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which enabled the Committee to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit. Members were encouraged to highlight items that could be included for consideration in the work programme.

It was suggested that the September meeting should be cancelled and the agenda items moved to the October meeting. It was also confirmed that the October meeting would be held at the Energy from Waste facility.

Members were also reminded that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 29 July 2016 would be joint site visit with the Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee. The Committees would be visiting a number of sites in the south of the county including:

- CaNeBuZo
- The North Level District Internal Drainage Board Pumping Station at Tydd Gote
- Cross Keys Marina

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It was suggested that a minibus be booked to leave County Offices at 9.30am, a full itinerary would be circulated to members shortly.

Other items to be added to the work programme for future meetings included the following:

- A further update from Anglian Water in 6 months' time on the Water Recycling Centres
- Update on the Boston Household Waste Recycling Centre
- Update on continued investment in street lighting, including the use of new technologies.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the work programme as set out in Appendix A of the report be noted.
2. That the additional items highlighted to be added to the work programme for future meetings.

The meeting closed at 12.55 pm