

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY
 COMMITTEE
 2 DECEMBER 2016**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C L STRANGE (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs V C Ayling (Vice-Chairman), A M Austin, M Brookes, N M Murray, C R Oxby, C Pain and R A Renshaw

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

Officers in attendance:-

Brian Kane (Anglian Water), Sean Kent (Group Manager, Environment Services), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C J T H Brewis and A Bridges.

23 DECLARATION OF COUNCILLORS INTEREST

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

24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

25 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND SENIOR OFFICERS

The Executive Support Councillor for Development updated the Committee on 'The Big Food Debate' which he had attended had been held in Grimsby the previous week, and was hosted by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership. It was commented that it had been a very well attended meeting by representatives of the food processing industry and had received national press coverage. It was highlighted that three main points had emerged as follows:

- That farming and rural communities needed to rely far more on robotics. There were three food enterprise zones in the county, and these were working hard to replace the drudgery associated with the food processing industry. Businesses in Lincolnshire were world leaders in this field, and

were able to design the machinery but the application seemed to taking place in places such as Holland and Germany.

- There was a great need for apprenticeships. It was appreciated that not every child would go to university, but all young people wanted a worthwhile career.
- The value added in the agricultural sector. It was reported that every items sold in a supermarket for 60p, only 10p goes to the supplier. There was a need to shorten the supply chain between the producer and the consumer.

It was commented that there was a need for the Council to do all it could to promote the agri-food sector as a skilled profession.

26 WATER RECYCLING CENTRES UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of the situation regarding odours from the Ingoldmells, Spalding, Fishtoft and Boston Water Recycling Centres (previously Sewage Treatment Works). It was reported that Ingoldmells was first brought to the attention of the Committee in November 2012, with further reports in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Spalding was considered by the Committee in 2014 and 2015 and Boston in 2016.

Members were guided through the report by Brian Kane, Regional Treatment Manager, Anglian Water Services and 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 included the following:

- Sites were named according to where they received their sewage from, rather than where the site was located.
- In relation to odours in Boston, it was reported that this was due to the works, but from cake which had been stored as the weather conditions during the summer of 2015 had been inappropriate. It was queried why this amount of cake had been stored, and whether any other arrangements for storage should have been made. Members were advised that there were generally no odours from cake when it was left as it formed a crust which retained any odours, but it was when it was moved that the odours were released. During the time it was being stored, it had been moved around a lot.
- It was queried what the latest situation was with the power station which was going to be partly fuelled by some of the cake from Boston. It was reported that Anglian Water would instead be using the cake to produce their own bio fuel, as it was not worthwhile commercially for the power stations to use it.
- It was commented that it was positive that Councillor Skinner from Boston Borough Council had visited the site at Boston to see how odour issues were being tackled.
- It was noted that odour complaints were received across the Anglian region, but they were generally not about cake. It was noted that people often assumed that the cake was the cause of odours as it was very visual, but due to the way it was treated it would not generally cause odours. Members were advised that Anglian Water would always follow up on any complaints.
- In relation to Ingoldmells, it was reported that a lot of people did not complain any more as they did not see it as beneficial. There were concerns that

holiday makers would visit and then not return due to odour issues in the area. It was accepted that the situation had deteriorated over the past 6 months. The importance of getting people to complain if there were issues was highlighted, as it was useful evidence when trying to get investment there was a need to build up a business case.

- It was highlighted that odours had been particularly bad in the Spalding area and were blowing across towards the food processing factories. Members were advised to contact Anglian Water if they became aware of any issues in relation to odours in their areas. It was requested whether Brian Kane could look into this further and bring an update back to this meeting in March.
- It was queried whether, as the solid content of sodium nitrate had been identified as the problem at Ingoldmells, could this be the cause at Spalding as well.
- It was reported that Anglian Water was looking at installing an intelligent monitoring system which would give greater visibility of where there were any issues. This system would be implemented in the coming months.

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the report be noted.
2. That Brian Kane, Anglian Water come back to the meeting in March 2017 with an update on the odour issues in Spalding.

27 COASTAL PATH UPDATE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with an update on progress with the Coastal Path. It was reported that Lincolnshire County Council continued to work with Natural England on the provision of the English Coast path with the sections from Sutton Bridge to Skegness and from Skegness to Mablethorpe already progressing. The section from Mablethorpe to the Humber was started in October 2016 with the first site meeting at Donna Nook in early December following an initial scoping meeting between the Council and Natural England.

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:

- A bridge on the River Steeping would be an expensive option, and it was queried whether there were any cost estimates for the provision of a wooden boardwalk. It was commented that that was the proposal that the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust was supportive of. However, it was noted that there would be a need to get consent before any detailed designs and costings were carried out.
- It was commented that a wooden boardwalk would be the most cost effective option in terms of maintenance.
- It was considered important to get agreement from landowners for the Path to cross their land.
- It was suggested that if a boardwalk could be put in all the way along these sections, they would become tourist attractions themselves.

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- It was confirmed that the end date for this work was Spring 2018.
- It was reported that Natural England had informed the Council what it required under the legislation, and the Council would need to come up with maintainable options which were financially acceptable.
- It was confirmed that Councillor Davie, as Executive Councillor for Development was already familiar with the scheme and had met with various high level officers.
- Maintenance was a big issue, as the Council would have a responsibility to ensure that people had access to these parts of the county and that they could access it safely.
- It was commented that this had been a remarkable piece of work, and to encourage landowners to open up their land for this coastal path was a considerable achievement.
- It was the opinion of the Committee that everything possible should be done to ensure that the project is moved forward.

RESOLVED

That the update report be noted.

28 QUARTER 2 - 1 JULY TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

Consideration was given to a report which provided key performance information that was relevant to the work of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee.

Members were provided with an 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:

- The performance data showed the seasonality around waste, particularly green waste.
- In relation to 'Tonnage of recycling material collected at the kerbside' it was noted that this was a contextual measure. This was about trying to get residual waste out of landfill, and with the opening of the Energy from Waste Facility there had been a significant drop in waste going to landfill.
- It was also noted that there was more material collected from the kerbside which was recyclable rather than going into landfill.
- The target for 55% of household waste recycled was a very aspirational target. However, if approval for Incinerator Bottom Ash (a by-product from the Energy from Waste facility) to be classed as recycling was given, then Lincolnshire would see a big improvement in its recycling target, about 6/7% could be gained.
- The good attitude of staff at Household Waste Recycling Centres was highlighted by members.
- It was reported that the capacity of the Energy from Waste facility was 170,000 tonnes, and the County Council was using in the region of 158,000 tonnes. FCC was sourcing commercial waste. It was reported that commercial and industry waste helped with the efficiency of the Energy from Waste Facility as

some of the kerbside waste collected did not burn as well, such as green waste.

- Members were advised that the value of some recyclables had dropped, and currently, due to the low price of oil it was cheaper to manufacture new plastic than to recycle used plastic. However, good quality (clean) paper always retained its value.
- Members were also reminded that the Energy from Waste Facility was classed as a recovery facility.
- It was highlighted that the value of recyclables was a global issue.
- District Councils were working to try and address the contamination in recycling, but authorities could only deal with what was presented at the kerbside. It was noted that a county wide campaign to tackle contamination in recycling was being developed.
- It was queried whether there was any conflict between people taking green waste to Household Waste Recycling Centres and Districts charging for green waste collection. It was noted that the County Council could not get involved in what the District Councils collected and had to deal with whatever waste was presented. However, members were advised that the Districts green waste bin schemes had been successful.

RESOLVED

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

29 ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which provided an opportunity for members 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.

It was suggested that that meeting of the Committee scheduled for 17 February 2017 should be moved to 3 March 2017 instead, so it could be held on the same day as the Flood and Drainage Management Committee, and the two meetings would be combined. Members were in agreement with this suggestion and it was confirmed that electronic appointments would be updated after the meeting.

It was requested that an update on the District Heating scheme be brought to the next meeting in January 2017.

RESOLVED

1. That the Work Programme as set out in Appendix A of the report be noted.
2. That the additional item noted above be added to the Work Programme
3. That the meeting scheduled to be held on 17 February 2017 be moved to 3 March 2017.

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The meeting closed at 11.30 am