

**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 26 FEBRUARY 2019**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B M DOBSON (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs W Bowkett (Vice-Chairman), B Adams, Mrs A M Austin, G E Cullen, C Matthews, Mrs E J Sneath, Dr M E Thompson, A G Hagues and R H Trollope-Bellew

Councillors C J Davie and D McNally attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Justin Brown (Enterprise Commissioner), Ian George (Places Manager), David Hickman (Growth & Environment Commissioner), Matthew Michell (Senior Commissioning Officer (Waste)), Vanessa Strange (Accessibility and Growth Manager), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

63 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M A Griggs, R P H Reid and C L Strange.

The Chief Executive reported that having received a notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, she had appointed Councillors A G Hagues and R H Trollope-Bellew as replacement members of the Committee in place of Councillors C L Strange and R P H Reid, respectively, for this meeting only.

64 DECLARATION OF COUNCILLORS INTERESTS

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

65 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2019

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**66 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS
AND LEAD OFFICERS**

The Executive Councillor reported that he had been disappointed to hear further bad news about potential job losses in Boston's Tulip operation. Members were advised that there were 464 potential redundancies. However, it was noted that this was due to the loss of a contract from M&S. The Council would be working with the Job Centre and DWP to ensure that the job losses were managed. The Executive Councillor acknowledged that this was a difficult time for all concerned but there were promising signs from other food businesses in the south of the County and there was one site which was being actively promoted to a major food business. A proposal would be brought to this Committee to open up the Kirton Business Park further so that it could offer more job opportunities to people who lived in and around Boston.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions regarding the potential job losses at Tulip. An enquiry was made whether this just affected the Boston site and it was confirmed that it did but would not impact on other sites. Concerns had previously been raised about the narrowness of the specialist operation undertaken at the site as they had not prepared for the eventuality of losing a contract.

Members were advised that the examples of business closures in Boston showed why it was so important to go out and attract further investment in the county. The previous week, Team Lincolnshire had attended an event in London where around 50 local property businesses told their clients about the benefits of investing in Lincolnshire and in mid-March it was the MIPIM international property show. The Executive Councillor confirmed that he would be attending for one day and his diary for that day was already busy with meetings with local, national and international investors.

It was reported that in late March, work with Hunan would reach another level with a visit from the governor of Hunan province, accompanied by a group of business leaders who had identified genuine business opportunities that they wanted to pursue. A business to business seminar for those business leaders as part of the governor's visit was being arranged.

The better than expected half term weather had led to many visits to the coast and it was hoped that in turn those visits would lead to income to the county's coastal tourism businesses. There was an extra opportunity as the following day would be the launch of the Lincolnshire coast section of England's Coastal Path and hopefully continued good weather would lead to an excellent event. It was highlighted that Mablethorpe was not shown on the map that had been produced. It was reported that it was included within the booklet but officers had picked this up and were assured that Mablethorpe would be on future reprints. It was also included on the website.

67 THIRD CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received a report which provided an opportunity to consider the Carbon Management Plan (CMP) 2018 to 2023 before it was considered by the Executive on 2 April 2019.

The County Council had been working with the Carbon Trust on a third Carbon Management Plan (CMP) which had now been completed. The Council had successfully implemented two previous CMP's and this proposed CMP would continue to build on that success. It was noted that the target for the Carbon Management Plan 2 had just been exceeded. Work had taken place to ensure that the baseline being set was correct and the aim was to achieve a further reduction of 20% by 2023.

It was noted that this would be a "living" document and officers would be working with a number of teams across the authority to help it evolve over the coming years.

Comments by members and officers included:-

- It was noted that the replacement of fleet vehicles from diesel to electric was something which was being looked into. The use of electric vehicles was also included within the Lincoln Transport Strategy.
- The Council had been working on this for many years and had started the low carbon agenda for Lincolnshire. The heating system in Pilgrim Hospital had been funded by the Salix programme and the solar panels on fire stations had been in place for over 10 years.
- It was queried whether the whole organisation was talking to each other about carbon and also why electric charging points had not been included within the works taking place in the county offices' car park. It was noted that this was an on-going project and there been some good development over the past nine months. Senior managers had started to meet as a corporate group to look at these carbon management issues.
- Working in 'silos' would not be the right way to work on this and it was queried how members could help officers to avoid this. There was a need to start working on the reduction of carbon now.
- There was now a public appetite for this as people were aware and it was acknowledged that carbon emissions were an issue.
- It was noted that some of the business centres operated by the Council already had electric charging points for vehicles and some of the district councils were already embracing the electric charging agenda. It was thought that companies would invest in places that were looking to the future.
- There was a need to look at what could be done locally in terms of power generation. There was a need to embrace the opportunities that problems created.
- There was an issue of future proofing in that it needed to be done for 30 years rather than just a few years ahead.
- It was queried whether the figures in relation to the oil and gas prices on page 5 of the report could be checked as they seemed quite high. Officers confirmed that these figures would be checked.
- Members were advised that all alternative energy schemes which came forward would be considered. There would be a need to invest in local energy provision.

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- It was noted that in terms of the energy discussion, Andy Brookes would be bringing a report to the Committee on the energy strategy.
- In terms of schools, it was noted that a lot of work had been carried out on the fabric of the buildings. Teams had also gone into schools and discussed the impact of waste, recycling and energy waste on the environment.
- It was clarified that Salix was a government scheme which was run to help bodies like the Council to pump prime capital investment in projects to benefit the environment.
- It was suggested that there was, again, a need for a wider public information campaign.
- It was highlighted that the authority was looking to set up commercial companies to generate income and it was noted that Nottingham had set up their own water company and other local authorities had their own gas and electric companies.
- It was thought that there was a need for decisions to be made on a more local level and that there was a need to be more challenging to national government in relation to the future. Politicians needed to be braver and be champions for place.
- The Humber Estuary had significant amounts of industry and if it flooded it would be greatest economic loss to the country (outside of London) and it was asked what would be done to protect this area. It was reported that officers were closely engaged with the Environment Agency in terms of flood defences and what their role in growth promotion would be rather than just being static defences. This included the defence of areas such as Gainsborough.
- It was noted that delivering a strong economy was not a statutory function but particularly in terms of infrastructure the authority was doing good work with a much reduced budget.
- With regard to the work programme could this item be combined with the energy production item and officers advised that they would look into this.

RESOLVED

That the Committee support the recommendations to Executive to formally adopt the Carbon Management Plan 2018 – 2023 and its target of a 20% reduction in emissions from a 2016/17 baseline of 28,679 tonnes CO₂ by 2023.

**68 WASTE STRATEGY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE AND NATIONAL RESOURCES
& WASTE STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report which summarised the contents, with regard to municipal waste, of the new Resources and Waste Strategy for England. In particular, it identified the synergies between that national Strategy and the recently adopted Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) for Lincolnshire.

It was reported that four consultations had been released by national government since the publication of the agenda pack. It was noted that the deadlines for all of the

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consultations was the middle of May 2019. The consultations which had commenced were as follows:-

- Consistency in recycling from households and businesses – this would include a core set of materials for recycling; free garden waste collections; separate food waste collections; non-binding performance indicators for local authorities; alternatives to weight based metrics.
- Reforming the UK Packaging Producer Responsibility System;
- Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland for plastic drinks bottles, cans and glass bottles were also being considered for inclusion.
- Plastic Packaging Tax – this would be a tax on packaging that contained less than 30% recycled content.

It was highlighted that a report was due to be taken to the next meeting of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership which would include details of the consultations and it would be proposed that the LWP submit a response to all four consultations, partner authorities would also be encouraged to submit an individual response as well. There would be a need to look at options for how a county council response would be produced.

Comments by members and responses of officers included:-

- In terms of food waste collection it was queried how the council would make a business case for this and whether there was an expectation that district councils would need to come on board. Members were informed that the finances for this were better for urban areas rather than rural areas but that there could be significant savings from recycling food waste rather than it being included within the general waste collection.
- The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership would be looking in more detail at how separate food waste collection would work in practice and what the actual costs and savings would be. It was thought that overall there would be costs rather than savings but there would be other benefits to collecting food separately. It was noted that the national direction of travel seemed to be towards compulsory separate food waste collection.
- Another issue which would need to be examined would be what went into the energy from waste facility if food waste was removed from the waste stream and how this would affect the mix. The food waste would be processed separately through an anaerobic digester facility. This process would produce gas which could then be burnt for electricity or it would be fed back into the grid. The solids left over from this process could then be used as a compost product.
- In terms of the proposal to revert back to free green waste collections, it was highlighted that East Lindsey District Council only just covered the costs of the collection through the charge and the majority of people were happy to pay for it.

- In terms of all the recycling activities it made more sense to turn the material into energy. However, concerns were raised regarding fly tipping and how this would affect the waste stream.
- In terms of green waste it was noted that in Boston people were encouraged to compost their green waste but there was a lot of green waste which could not be composted.
- In terms of food waste it was queried whether residents should be encouraged to minimise food waste and if there should be a public education campaign about not buying more food than was needed, in a similar way to people gradually reducing the amount of plastic they used.
- In terms of the tax on packaging it was clarified that this was one of the proposals being consulted on.
- In terms of education and communication a session was due to be held that afternoon of officers involved with waste from throughout the county to discuss the communications strategy to accompany the waste strategy. Waste minimisation would be an important part of this.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that when people had a separate food waste collection they started to question how much food they bought and subsequently reduced food waste.
- One of the big flaws of recycling was that every authority in the country had a different method of collection and a different mix of recycling. It was suggested that there was a need for it to be the same throughout the country.
- It was highlighted that there was an animal feed company which asked for all of its plastic packaging bags to be returned to the company who would then recycle them.
- It was suggested whether a working group should be set up to draft a response to the consultations. Councillors B Dobson, Mrs W Bowkett and C Matthews volunteered to take part in the working group.

RESOLVED

1. That the report as presented by noted.
2. That the Committee receive additional information on any future consultations arising from the new Resources and Waste Strategy for England.
3. That a working group be set up to draft responses to the four consultations and the following councillors be noted as indicating they wished to participate - Councillors B Dobson, Mrs W Bowkett and C Matthews.

69 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

The Committee received a verbal update from Justin Brown, Enterprise Commissioner, in relation to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Review. It was reported that the review was about ensuring that the LEP was future proofed and had the right resources. The Boundary Review of the LEPs had taken place as the government was not happy that some areas overlapped. A proposed solution which had been put to government was that the Greater Lincolnshire and Humber LEP's could work together. Within Greater Lincolnshire there were around 200 private businesses and business leaders who contributed their time to help the LEP.

The LEP was asking for comments on the Local Industrial Strategy and was looking to future proof agricultural and food production as well as supporting people to live well for longer.

The LEP were building a local industrial strategy and would be looking at some of the same issues that members had been discussing earlier in the meeting. Officers would bring a discussion paper back to the Committee about the Local Industrial Strategy in early summer.

The LEP would be running a series of events between now and Christmas which would examine these issues in more detail.

RESOLVED

That the verbal update provided be noted.

70 UNDERSTANDING LINCOLNSHIRE'S HISTORIC TOWNS - THE LINCOLNSHIRE EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

Consideration was given to a report which detailed a project in progress to improve understanding of the historic environment of thirty market towns across Greater Lincolnshire. The project formed part of a national programme promoted and fully funded by Historic England. Its overall aim was to support more effective local planning and development by understanding heritage and cultural assets in relation to the historic development of their communities rather than simply as individual items without relationship to one another. It was expected that the project would take around three years to complete. A list of towns that would be included in the project had been attached at Appendix A to the report.

Members also received a presentation which provided further information and maps in relation to the Lincolnshire Extensive Urban Survey project.

Comments by members and the responses of officers included:-

- A countrywide survey was carried out to ascertain the views of the public about each area's strengths, such as rural villages, heritage, etc, and Lincolnshire scored highly within these areas.
- Was this project repeating work which had already been done? It was noted that South Kesteven District Council had just about completed its Local Plan which was about to be adopted but this would need to be refreshed again in five years. There was value around place and the role that heritage played in defining a place was important. This work would feed into the place making agenda. There was a need for a long term conversation about what should be changed and what should be protected for future generations.
- It was acknowledged that the information for the project did already exist. However, the problem was that it was not all in one place that people were

easily able to access. The final report would be lodged with the Historic Environment Team as well as a copy being sent to each planning authority in the county. This project was welcomed by all planning authorities and they were looking forward to the results of the work.

- Boston's heritage had been well researched but the information was not together. Those that were actively involved in the heritage aspects of the town were aware of this project and would welcome community engagement with the wider public as part of the project. It was commented that it was very important that people valued where they lived and a sense of ownership was important. A sense of wellbeing could have the further effect on the economy of a place as it would make people who lived there encourage others to come and visit.
- It was commented that joining up Lincolnshire's heritage was very important and it was queried whether the presentation slides could be released to members so they could send them on to town and parish councils.
- It was interesting how the town of Holbeach had developed over time and that these changes were an important part of the town centre's regeneration and it could be used to plan for the future. This would be a really interesting project.
- This project was welcomed and that every market town in Lincolnshire had its own unique selling point but that they had never been brought together all in one place.
- A member commented they were excited about the project and had lived in Wainfleet for 27 years. There were also a lot of sites in Spilsby which were not promoted as they should be.
- It was important to engage with the public that lived in each of the towns. People were now caring more about their environment and wanted it to look nice. Members were pleased to be involved with this project and it tied in well with the high street vitality working group.
- How could market towns get involved? Members were advised that the Project Officer had been in touch with all parishes involved and press articles and radio broadcasts had also gone out.
- The grave of Matthew Flinders had been found during excavations of a train station in London and that as he was from Donington could a case be made to bring his remains back to the county? It was noted that this had been raised by some of the executive members and officers had been tasked with looking into this. Members were advised that the government of South Australia had already put in a bid for his remains to be taken to Australia.
- Would this happen in three years' time at the end of the project? It was hoped that the results would be embedded within the thinking of planners. Officers were aware of the legacy of this work and ensuring that it lived on.
- Could civic societies take on the document at the end of the project? Members were advised that they would be involved in some way. Officers would be giving talks in the towns to the civic and historic societies.
- £230,000 had been received to fund the project and it was hoped to obtain other resources to assist with the education aspect of the project.

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the report on the Lincolnshire Extensive Urban Survey project and supported the work being undertaken.

71 ECONOMY QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES 2018/19 (1
OCTOBER - 31 DECEMBER 2018)

Consideration was given to a report which showed that the council was over-achieving against its four indicators for economic development.

It was asked whether these reports gave members the information they needed and if it was useful to look at particular sectors in more detail, or jobs by district, etc.

Comments by members and the responses of officers included:-

- It was noted that there were five European Regional Development Fund projects which had been approved for grants. How would these projects be funded after 29 March 2019? Members were advised that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would replace the European grants and it was expected that there would be a government programme which would be at the same level as the European grants.
- Civil servants were working on agreeing how much money should go to each country (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and also determining the priorities for what the money would be used for.
- Borrowing would be used to fund the Shared Prosperity Fund and it would only be able to be used to fund capital projects.
- The Committee should hold a workshop session to look at the performance indicators and whether they were set at the right levels.

RESOLVED

That the performance information presented be noted and that the performance indicators and targets be considered at a later date.

72 ENVIRONMENT QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES 2018/19 (1
OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2018)

Consideration was given to a report which described progress against the indicators in the council business plan. It was noted that one indicator was reported in quarter four, one would be reported from quarter two, while two indicators had not been met. Two of the measured indicators would have data available in the following quarter and a further three showed measured progress.

Officers were looking to redevelop the indicators around flood risk and waste.

In terms of flooding, it was noted that the county continued to have very few surface water incidents, as ground water levels had not really recovered from the dry months

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over the summer. There was a possibility that if they did not recover there could be a drought situation later in the year.

Comments by members and the responses of officers included:-

- In terms of water reserves there had been discussions about a new reservoir being built in the south of the county and it was this still being planned? This was part of a longer term initiative and it was hoped to establish a much stronger partnership. There was a need to have a very different view of water resource management throughout the region.
- Was desalination part of the water management plan?
- Reduction of leakage from the system, water wastage, desalination and water storage facilities would be included within the water management plan.
- It was noted that most of Lincolnshire's water came from Nottingham or Rutland and that desalination was very expensive within the existing system. However, there were a couple of universities working on his issue.

RESOLVED

That the performance information as presented be noted.

73 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which provided an opportunity to consider and comment of 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 reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would be taking place at the North Sea Observatory and the agenda items would be slightly amended from that set out in the work programme.

RESOLVED

That the work programme as presented, be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm