



County Offices
Newland
Lincoln
LN1 1YL

8 April 2024

Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Tuesday, 16 April 2024 at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL** for the transaction of the business set out on the attached Agenda.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Debbie Barnes'.

Debbie Barnes OBE
Chief Executive

Membership of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee (11 Members of the Council)

Councillors I D Carrington (Chairman), M A Griggs (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A M Austin, A J Baxter, M D Boles, K H Cooke, I G Fleetwood, A G Hagues, H Spratt, G J Taylor and L Wootten

**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA
TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 2024**

Item	Title	Pages
1	Apologies for Absence/Replacement Members	
2	Declarations of Members' Interests	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 February 2024	5 - 14
4	Announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillors and Lead Officers	
5	World Heritage Site Proposal - East Atlantic Flyway <i>(To receive a report from Chris Miller, Head of Environment, which provides an introduction to the East Atlantic Flying Way Heritage Site Bid)</i>	15 - 20
6	Strategic Plan Objectives for the Visitor Economy in Lincolnshire <i>(To receive a report from Mary Powell, Place & Investment Manager and Justin Brown, Assistant Director – Growth, which outlines the Strategic Plan Objectives to support the Visitor Economy in Lincolnshire)</i>	21 - 34
7	Theddlethorpe Geological Disposal Facility Working Group - 6-monthly Update <i>(To receive a report from Justin Brown – Assistant Director – Growth, which provides a 6-monthly update on the progress of the Theddlethorpe Geological Disposal Facility Working Group. Edward Wright, Senior Adviser for Energy Opportunities – Infrastructure Investment, will also be in attendance for this item)</i>	35 - 40
8	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee Work Programme <i>(To receive a report by Kiara Chatziioannou, Scrutiny Officer, which enables the Committee to comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity is focussed where it can be of greatest benefit)</i>	41 - 46

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Please note: for more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements

Contact details set out above.

Please note: This meeting will be broadcast live on the internet and access can be sought by accessing [Agenda for Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 16th April, 2024, 10.00 am \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

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<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/search-committee-records>



**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
27 FEBRUARY 2024**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR I D CARRINGTON (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors M A Griggs (Vice-Chairman), A J Baxter, K H Cooke, I G Fleetwood, A G Hagues, H Spratt, G J Taylor and L Wootten.

Councillor D McNally was also in attendance.

Councillors C J Davie and R G Davies attended the meeting remotely.

Officers in attendance:-

Justin Brown (Assistant Director - Growth), Dan Charlesworth (Commercial and Procurement Manager), Kiara Chatzioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Angela Driver (Senior Enterprise Growth Officer), Samantha L Harrison (Head of Economic Development), Nicole Hilton (Assistant Director - Communities), Marianne Marshall (Strategic Communications Lead), Chris Miller (Head of Environment), Mary Powell (Place & Investment Manager), Tony Reynolds (Inward Investment Manager), Tim Smith (Business Change Manager - Transport Services), Vanessa Strange (Head of Infrastructure Investment), Jeannine Thornley (Senior Project Officer - Enterprise), Hayley Toyne (Visitor Economy Growth Manager) Tanya Vaughan (Senior Commissioning Officer), Chris Yorston (Head of Waste), and Jess Wosser-Yates (Democratic Services Officer)

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. A Austin.

54 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared at this point in proceedings.

55 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 January 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND LEAD OFFICERS

The Chairman welcomed the Executive's proposals on the final budget which were approved by Council on Friday 23 February 2024. Additionally, he congratulated Chris Yorston on his new role as Head of Waste, and thanked Mike Reed on behalf of the Committee for his support as the previous Head of Service.

The Executive Councillor for Economic Development, Environment and Planning informed the Committee of the passing of Lord Cormack and reflected on his work in Lincoln, particularly at Lincoln Castle and his successful campaign to prevent wind farm installation to preserve the views of the county. He also announced that the Manufacturing Conference was due to be held on Friday 8 March at the Lawns in Lincoln. The event was open to manufacturers across Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland and would explore a range of topics such as workforce pressures, artificial intelligence and sustainability. Finally, Members were informed that the Environment Agency had published its report on flooding from Storm Babet in Horncastle and was available via the Horncastle Town Council website.

Members noted the announcements, and raised the following matter:

- The Executive Councillor highlighted the importance of an increased labour market, and Members sought clarity on the number of residents in receipt of welfare. He subsequently noted that approximately, £5 million received state benefits nationwide and posited this could be reduced through working with those fit for employment given the Council's innovation within the employment sector.

57 VISITOR ECONOMY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report from the Place and Investment Manager which provided an update on the performance of the Visitor Economy in Lincolnshire. The Growth Manager – Visitor Economy was also in attendance for this item.

The Committee was informed that nationally, the visitor economy had experienced several challenges this financial year due to factors such as bad weather. Additionally, inflation and price increases caused uneven economic effects on the tourism sector in Lincolnshire; for example, accommodation bookings had fared moderately well however there was less secondary spending in shops and restaurants as visitors were cautious to spend. To relieve these pressures, it was noted the Council provided one-to-one support to tourism businesses and had also invested via the Tourism Commission.

The Visit Lincolnshire (VL) website continued to improve and attract visitors and investment into the county; a 19.3% clicking-to-booking ratio was reported

During consideration of the report, the following matters were noted:

- Local government continued to maintain an integral role in facilitating private sector growth.
- The Committee praised the VL website and the achievements of the visitor economy outlined in the report.
- Members agreed that increased costs and inflation were negatively impacting Lincolnshire's tourism industry, although welcomed mitigating provisions such as the £2 bus fare cap.
- The Place and Investment Manager raised that the VL Team consistently utilised free publicity where possible and prioritised attracting journalists into Lincolnshire which had been considerably successful.
- The VL Team was currently diversifying its approach by segmenting its audience by demographic; this enabled adverts to be more targeted in the way it promoted Lincolnshire to different audiences.
- The Head of Environment agreed to contact the relevant Officer regarding the repair of the Lincoln to Boston Water Rail Way
- The Committee was informed that many Lincolnshire residents utilised the VL website, however 30% of users were located in London.
- The website was used to plan visits, and work was ongoing to encourage people to continue using the VL website whilst in Lincolnshire to find events and attractions during their visit.
- It was clarified that the comments made by the Committee regarding the visitor economy would inform the Destination Management Plan currently being drafted by the Lincolnshire Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP). The Plan would be considered by the Committee once completed.
- *'Nature Tourism'* was an umbrella term used to refer to activities in nature, as well as environmental business approaches.
- Members sought detail on the dynamic between Destination Lincolnshire, the County Council and District Councils. They were informed that all maintained a close working relationship particularly during and following the Covid-19 pandemic and relied on each other for information sharing. Assurance was provided that work was not duplicated.
- The Council maintained control and ownership over the Visit Lincolnshire website for quality assurance purposes; attractions and businesses were able to be featured if they liaised with the Team. Additionally, the Growth Manager – Visitor Economy highlighted that a content schedule informed the VL website through social media data and vice versa.
- Members requested that further statistics on clicking data, demographic information and analysis be included in future reports.
- The Committee raised questions regarding the governance structure of the LVEP and were subsequently informed that the partnership adopted a cautious approach to mitigate potential financial risks. Additionally, it had established a task and finish group with political and business representation and was comprised of a representative from an upper tier authority (Rutland County Council) and three

District Councils (North Kesteven, City of Lincoln and East Lindsey). The LVEP had now received accreditation and were formally establishing its governance model.

- Previously, a joint ticket was available that granted access to both Lincoln Cathedral and Castle but had ceased due to difficulties regarding the handling of VAT due to the Castle being maintained by the Local Authority, and the Cathedral receiving charitable status. The Assistant Director – Communities informed that a Castle family pass was available, and the introduction of a ‘Lincolnshire Pass’ was currently being explored which would offer access to multiple locations in the county.
- It was noted that the Council rented out Lincoln Castle for events regularly, although the Crown Court had limited accessibility as the building prioritised its administrative functions rather than tourism.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Committee endorses the achievements of the visitlincolnshire.com website
- 2) That the Committee records its support for the Local Visitor Economy Partnership
- 3) That the comments made by the Committee on how to encourage the local population to engage with the website, be shared with relevant Officers for their consideration and further action.

58 GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2022-2024 UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report from the Enterprise Growth Manager which updated the Committee on the progress of activity highlighted within the International Strategy Action Plan and the broader Lincolnshire International Strategy.

Members were guided through the report and were informed that international trade was currently affected by multiple and successive economic challenges, which had reduced businesses’ reliance on foreign suppliers. Despite challenges, export trade had returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Members were also guided through the 18-point action plan as part of the International Strategy and were informed that a range of events had been held such as the Going Global Trade Conference 2023. Furthermore, a round table event was being held with eight large businesses to facilitate information sharing between established exporters and newer businesses. The Enterprise Growth Manager emphasised the importance of market research to ensure business costs and market goods were set at the correct price for different markets.

During consideration of the report, the following matters were highlighted:

- The Enterprise Growth Manager accepted that Brexit had changed administrative requirements for exporting into EU countries which had taken time for businesses to

adapt. Additionally, it was highlighted that Brexit was a catalyst to motivate businesses to diversify their markets.

- Members were informed that the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) did not provide granular data on Lincolnshire's exports and imports; the Committee expressed concern and posited that significant changes such as Brexit required sufficient DBT data to mitigate harms and to support businesses in identifying potential markets and opportunities. The Enterprise Growth Manager explained that historically, there was commercial sensitivity around data from DBT and His Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC); DBT could provide data on East Midlands, and the Council had lobbied to be provided with data pertaining to Lincolnshire.
- It was noted that the Action Plan would help the coordination of activity in a more economically sustainable manner.
- Members shared personal knowledge of local businesses supported or owned by foreign entities and questioned their relationship with the Council. The Committee was informed that the Council worked as a connector between support and businesses and had established multiple strategies with DBT to ensure all partners were connected; the Council also worked with the Chamber of Commerce to prevent and identify gaps in the Council's support.
- Internationalisation was included in the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution proposals and some Members expressed optimism about the potential future economic development.
- Local Government maintained a significant role in facilitating private sector activities.
- The work of TL fed into the work on international trade through international trade strategy and inward investment.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Committee records its satisfaction with the International Strategy Action Plan as reported
- 2) That the Committee will continue to showcase its support for the Growth Hub by highlighting services to business contacts and providing input to assist Officers to plan future International Trade support.

59 INWARD INVESTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

Consideration was given to a report from the Inward Investment Manager on the Inward Investment Strategic Plan for Team Lincolnshire (TL). It was noted that as of January 2024, progress was observed on the KPI's outlined in the report, particularly regarding advanced engineering and manufacturing sectors.

Since May 2023, the TL and Inward Investment Team had made several strategic advancements to align the Inward Investment Service, the support for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) businesses and the TL ambassadorial programme. The *Invest Lincolnshire* brand was also being established to supplement TL and its activities to ensure investors could easily identify and engage with relevant officers for support. Assurance was provided

that sector-based opportunities and collaborations under the Inward Investment Strategic Plan would be accessible moving forward.

During consideration of the report, the following matters were highlighted:

- The Strategic Plan extended support to Greater Lincolnshire, and the Economic Development teams worked well across all authorities.
- Members requested additional detail on the TL ambassadorial programme and were subsequently informed that ambassadors were typically reflective of the various sectors in Lincolnshire. Previously, the construction sector was over-represented in the programme.
- The Committee questioned whether TL had experienced any challenges since the launch of the Inward Investment Strategic Plan. Some businesses supported by the Plan were challenging in regard to access, skills and employment. Additionally, TL received enquiries from Europe, North and Central America and it was explained that these businesses were typically multinational and inevitably experienced different challenges than small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and local businesses.
- Members indicated that TL had satisfied the KPI's summarised on page 74 of the report; the Inward Investment Manager informed that TL's success was partly attributed connectivity due to collaboration with the TL ambassadors. More enhanced support was now available for businesses, and the modernisation of social media helped facilitate bespoke connections between support and businesses.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Committee notes the progress of the Inward Investment Strategic Plan
- 2) That the Committee endorses the proposed investment alignment of the Inward Investment Service, the support for Foreign Direct Investment businesses and the Team Lincolnshire ambassadorial programme to secure strategic supply chain investment within priority sectors.

60 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK - QUARTER 3 2023-2024

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Economic Development, Head of Environment and the Head of Waste which enabled the Committee to comment on 2023-24 Quarter 3 Performance for Economy, Flooding and Waste. The following matters were reported:

Economic Development

PI 69 Businesses Supported by the Council

- 1529 businesses were supported this quarter which exceeded the target of 1,154. This was attributed to a myriad of extensive programmes offered through the Lincolnshire Growth Hub, as well as low carbon supported digitalisation and scale up programmes.

- The Made Smarter industrial digitalisation programme had extended its support to micro businesses.
- The *Multiply* adult education programme had contributed to success in this Performance Indicator (PI), and a grant was now available for Multiply Champions.

PI 70 Qualifications received by adults

- 1376 qualifications were achieved by adults this quarter which exceeded the target of 900; this was partly attributed to multiple qualifications attached within a single course.

PI 71 Amount of external funding attracted to Lincolnshire

- This measure achieved £9,878,598 which exceeded the target of £7,643,791.
- Funding from DBT had contributed towards the performance of this measure, and it was assured that the Council continued to work alongside District Councils to deliver business support via UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).

Flooding

PI 72 Flooding Incidents Investigated

- There was no target set for this PI.
- The Head of Environment informed the Committee that the current cohort included October 2023 where Storm Babet had led to 723 properties to be internally flooded, and 504 suffered external flooding. 185 Section 19 Investigations (S19s) were commenced in Quarter 3 on the 723 properties that reported internal flooding.
- The statistics pertaining to Storm Henk would be included in the Quarter 4 report.
- Three external consultants had been commissioned to support the Flood and Water Team with the outstanding S19s, and aimed for them to be concluded by the end of August 2024.

Members noted the performance report for Flooding, and raised the following matters:

- Many of the historic S19s included in the report were almost completed, however the severity of Storm Babet had prevented them from sign-off.
- Members highlighted that near-misses negatively impacted residents and businesses; the Head of Waste echoed these sentiments and highlighted that a S19 could be actioned for a near-miss.
- S19s could include, and were not limited to, residential buildings, businesses, schools, and large masses of land.
- Once S19s had been completed, the information was circulated to other risk management authorities, the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards and Highways colleagues where necessary. This helped determine patterns and ascertain clusters of flooding before maintenance work was initiated.
- The Committee expressed its gratitude towards the Flood and Water Team for their hard work following recent storm events.

WastePI 161 Household waste collected (kilograms per household)

- This measure achieved 39% which fell below the target of 50%; this was welcomed as waste minimisation was the highest objective of the waste hierarchy.
- Members considered the extent to which economic hardship exacerbated throwaway culture.

PI 76 Recycling at County Council owned Household Waste Recycling Centres

- This measure achieved 72.9% which fell slightly below the target of 75% for this quarter. This was attributed to seasonal factors which led to less green waste in winter months.
- Members raised questions in regard to the new recycling contract and its impact on performance. The Head of Waste informed the Committee that the Council was working well with the new contractors and were exploring ideas about reusing good quality waste presented at certain waste sites.

PI 162 Household waste to landfill

- This measure achieved 0.31% which fell well below the annual target of 5%; resultantly the Head of Waste expressed his thanks to officers for their work in diverting waste from landfill where possible.
- Members questioned whether this target could be reduced and were subsequently informed that national recycling rates plateaued at 40-42%. There were multiple government schemes currently in consultation as there was a national recognition that progress in this area had stalled.
- The Council was the Waste Disposal Authority, and it was noted that the Waste Collection Authorities may be better placed to influence consumers to dispose of less.
- It would be necessary to liaise with manufacturers to manage consumer expectations regarding waste.
- This measure was complex to benchmark as other authorities varied on how they disposed of their waste which rendered meaningful comparisons difficult.
- Members explored whether they maintained a role to inform the public on disposal.
- The Committee agreed in principle to a site visit to the Lincolnshire Energy from Waste Plant.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Committee receives the report and its satisfaction be recorded in relation to performance achieved and assurances provided by Officers.
- 2) That the comments from the discussion of the performance indicators presented be forwarded to relevant officers and portfolio holders for their information and consideration.

61 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report from the Scrutiny Officer which enabled the Committee to comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focussed where it could be of greatest benefit.

From the proceedings of the meeting, an item on proposed objectives for the strategic plan would be added to the Work Programme, as well as an item on the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership. The Committee's request for a site visit to the Lincolnshire Energy from Waste Plant had also been noted.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be agreed subject to the above additions.

The meeting adjourned at 12.36pm and re-convened at 12:51pm

Note: Councillor A Hagues left the meeting at 12:37pm

Note: Councillor A Baxter left the meeting at 12:50pm

62 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**RESOLVED**

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it is considered to contain exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

**63 LOCAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE (LEVI) PILOT - CONTRACT
PROCUREMENT**

Consideration was given to the exempt report, and the Committee raised a number of questions which were answered by the Officers present.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT as set out in the report.
- 2) That the Committee's comments be passed on to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT in relation to this item.

The meeting closed at 1.11 pm

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Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	16 April 2024
Subject:	World Heritage Site Proposal - East Atlantic Flyway

Summary:
To provide Scrutiny Committee with the requisite information concerning the proposal to include the East Coast Flyway on the UK Tentative List of World Heritage Sites

Actions Required:
The Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

- 1) Recommend to the Executive Councillor for Environment, Economy & Planning that the County Council supports the proposal to add the East Coast Flyway to the UK Tentative List of World Heritage Sites
- 2) Recommend that assistance to the project leads, government and other agencies is given by officers of the County Council as and when appropriate.

1. Background

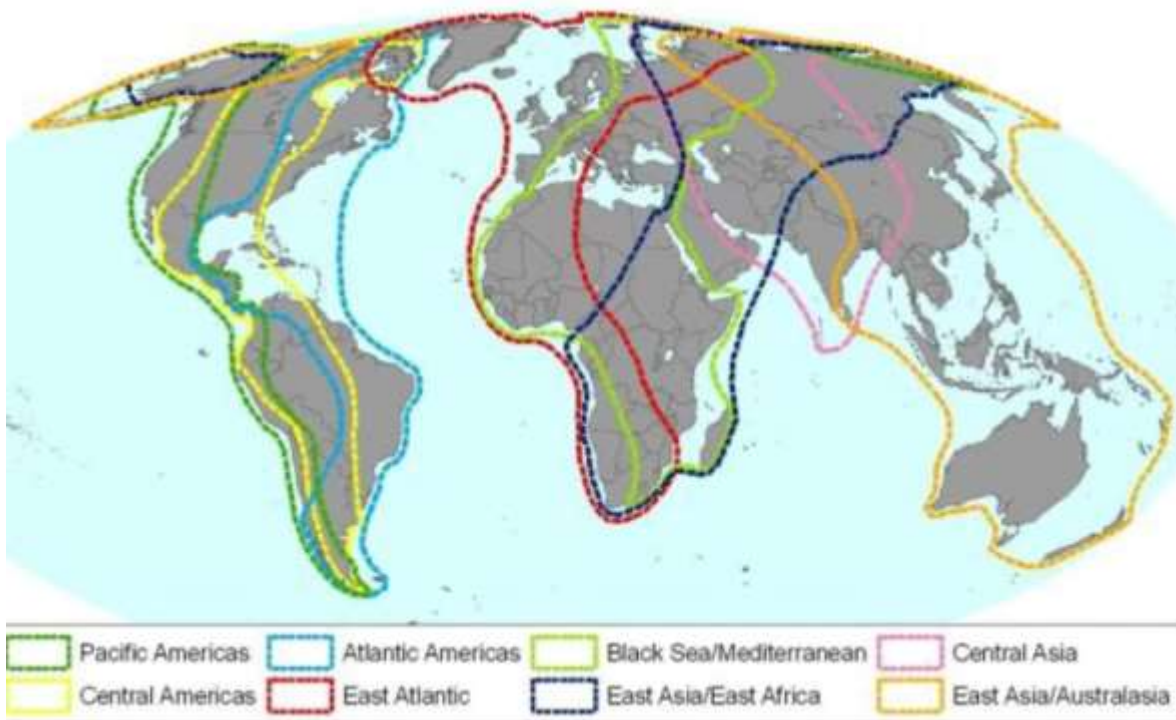
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) operates the selection of World Heritage Sites based on the principle of sites that contain "cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity".

To be selected, a World Heritage Site is nominated by their host country and determined by the international committee to be a unique landmark which is geographically and historically identifiable. A site can have a cultural or natural significance or a mixture of both. In the UK there are 33 World Heritage Sites of which 28 are cultural, 4 are natural and 1 is mixed. Of the 5 containing natural significance 2 are in overseas territories (Gough and Inaccessible Islands and the Henderson Islands). The mixed site is St Kilda, an island off northwest Scotland and the remaining sites are Giants Causeway in Northern Ireland and The Jurassic Coast of Devon and Dorset

1.2 Proposal

Led by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), National Trust and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and with initial support from Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent County Councils, Coastal Partnership East, Babergh District Council and the Crown Estate, the proposal is for the England East Coast Wetlands (shortened name: East Coast Flyway) to be considered as a World Heritage Site.

The East Coast Flyway is part of the much longer East Atlantic Flyway, one of the 8 major migratory routes linking the north – south routes for billions of birds each year.



Assessment as to qualification for such a status by UNESCO is based on whether a site is of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and must meet at least one of the following ten criterion :

Cultural

- i. To represent a masterpiece of human creative genius
- ii. To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design
- iii. To bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living, or which has disappeared
- iv. To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history

- v. To be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change
- vi. To be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance

Natural

- vii. To contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance
- viii. To be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features
- ix. To be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals
- x. To contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation

In the case of the East Coast Flyway the proposal is that the area meets criterion (x) and that the site has OUV under criterion (x) because:

- 1) It is a world class complex of diverse coastal wetlands supporting globally important migratory waterbird populations on the wider East Atlantic Flyway making it a critical site within the world's eight major flyways
- 2) It plays a crucial role as a global exemplar of coastal adaptation and nature conservation management on a top flyway site in the face of a changing climate. Its mid-way location in the East Atlantic Flyway makes this a vital rung in the ladder for migratory birds that depend on it as a global staging area to moult and refuel, as well as its importance for breeding and wintering birds.

This coast is critical to the East Atlantic Flyway in terms of overall numbers of waterbirds (1 million in winter alone, many more on passage), 29 internationally important waterbird populations, including 6 globally (near) threatened species. The site hosts world-leading examples of coastal adaptation with 23 different sea defence 'managed realignment' projects and multiple restoration initiatives created during the last 30 years. These demonstrate how coastal adaptation can achieve multiple public benefits including for flood protection, habitat restoration, recreation, well-being, tourism, fisheries, water quality, and carbon storage.

The proposed boundary of the site is defined by existing nature conservation areas which collectively cover almost 170,000 hectares (ha) of the coast. This area includes large expanses of coastal grazing marsh, as well as around 85,000 ha of intertidal habitats that support over 155 different bird species. Across the upper shore, the intertidal areas include around 17,500 ha of saltmarsh habitat with some tidal reedbeds, while lower down the shore there are around 67,500 ha of mud and sandflat.

The area that will be considered as part of the site is the collection on existing designated Special Protection Areas (an EU designation for the protection of wild birds) and as shaded yellow below:

- Humber Estuary 37,630 ha
- Gibraltar Point 422ha
- The Wash 62,044 ha
- North Norfolk Coast 7,862 ha
- Breydon Water 1206 ha
- Halvergate Marshes 1433 ha
- Benacre to Eastern Bawents 471 ha
- Minsmere to Walberswick 1998 ha
- Alde-Ore Estuary 2404 ha
- Deben Estuary 981 ha
- Stour and Orwell Estuaries 3673 ha



- Hamford Water 3533 ha
- Colne Estuary 2720 ha
- Blackwater Estuary 4403 ha
- Dengie 3134 ha
- Crouch and Roach Estuaries 1848 ha
- Foulness 10942 ha
- Benfleet and Southend Marshes 2284 ha
- Thames Estuary and Marshes 4802 ha
- Medway Estuary and Marshes 4686 ha
- The Swale 6510 ha

1.3. Process

To be considered for World Heritage Site status the UK Government, through the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), will invite applications for inclusion on the “UK Tentative List” once every ten years and consultation on the applications ran from March to July 2022. In determining the new Tentative List in April 2023 the Government has selected five new sites and retained two from the previous list:

- Birkenhead the People’s Park [Cultural]
- **East Atlantic Flyway – England East Coast Wetlands [Natural]**
- The Flow Country [Natural]
- Gracehill Moravian Church Settlements [Cultural, Transnational]
- Little Cayman Marine Parks and Protected Areas [Natural]
- York [Cultural]
- The Zenith of Iron Age Shetland [Cultural]

The East Atlantic Flyway, a migratory bird route over western parts of Europe including Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent, joins the UK’s list in recognition of its vital importance to bird populations and wildlife. The area sees huge transient bird populations pass through every year as the seasons change.

DCMS -April 2023

After one year of inclusion on the Tentative List the proposal must be fully worked up to complete a Nomination Dossier to contain all relevant information for UNESCO to consider. This is completed in three stages:

- Preliminary assessment by UNESCO
(Quality check/guidance on further work if needed)
- Technical Evaluation of the Dossier by DCMS
(Quality check)
- Submission to UNESCO
(UK can submit one nomination every two years)

In total this process can take up to 6 years in duration.

1.4 Benefits of World Heritage Site Status

At a UK scale designation will aid in the UK meeting its International Agreements on biodiversity and habitat protection and recognition and the status is considered by the public to be an important accolade enabling conservation through awareness and valuing habitats at a landscape scale. The status will enable greater access to funding and will link local communities in the role they play in:

- the management and protection of Outstanding Universal Value
- Issues of ecosystem sustainability and maintenance of biodiversity
- coastal adaptation

By bringing people regulators, stakeholders and communities together with a common purpose.

The status will act as a framework for collaborative working across 21 interconnected internationally important wetlands as part of a single globally important site and will place the Outstanding Universal Value at the heart of decision making and will be creating a lever for investment in people, eco-tourism and infrastructure.

What the status will NOT bring is any greater level of legal protection than is already afforded by existing habitat designations.

2. Conclusion

The East Coast Flyway is a globally important part of migratory superhighway for millions of birds and can be considered of significant importance on the global stage and protecting, restoring and enhancing this coastline could and should unlock new economic benefits for landowners and communities.

It is already understood that the east coast of England is going to be potential subject to significant change and working with nature will create the greatest benefits for people, nature and the climate through integrated adaptation strategies that will reflect the need for habitat and biodiversity protection alongside flood protection for coastal communities.

Environment Considerations

It is considered that there will be no adverse impacts to the environment through progression of the proposal to World Heritage Site status. Benefits are expected to be positive in terms of biodiversity protection and enhancement, habitat protection and opportunities for adaptive coastal change

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

n/a

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Chris Miller - Head of Environment, who can be contacted on 01522 782070 or chris.miller@lincolnshire.gov.uk.



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	16 April 2024
Subject:	Strategic Plan Objectives for the Visitor Economy in Lincolnshire

Summary:

This report gives an update on the strategic priorities of Lincolnshire County Council's Visit Lincolnshire team. This is influenced by the analytics of the www.visitlincolnshire.com site, tourism research and our business support work with the visitor economy.

It shows the substantial progress made by VLS to promote Greater Lincolnshire to visitors. The website needs to constantly evolve and develop to meet consumer requirements.

Actions Required

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

- 1) Note the current progress of the Visit Lincolnshire Team and website
- 2) Note the 2024/25 development plan and priorities as outlined in the report
- 3) Endorse the strategy for www.visitlincolnshire.com

1. Background

The vision of Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) tourism team is to achieve an ambitious and sustainable tourism sector in Greater Lincolnshire which grows, increases in value, and provides jobs, investment, and quality.

Our strategic aims are to ensure:

- All businesses in Greater Lincolnshire are aware of www.visitlincolnshire.com (VLS) and use it to promote and increase their business.
- All businesses in Greater Lincolnshire have the opportunity to understand and access the full range of support offers.
- www.business.visitlincolnshire.com (BVLS) offers easily accessible advice and toolkits that new and existing businesses will find useful and constructive.
- That our two websites keep up with visitor trends and business challenges encouraging businesses to grow through embracing change.

To address our challenges we must be future focused, adapting to a continually changing audience and using the analytics of VLS to understand what the visitor wants and how they use the site. We will address future sustainability so that Greater Lincolnshire flies the 'Green Tourism' flag, using our Green Tourism toolkit and accompanying training. We will set Product Development priorities and determine where finite resources should be focused (2024 priorities below).

Our action areas are:

- Ensure that VLS is beautifully curated, and inspires, informs and presents all aspects of the Greater Lincolnshire tourism offer.
- Product development on VLS is a constant, showcasing Greater Lincolnshire's strengths so it is easily accessible to the consumer.
- Provide advice that meets identified business needs and work to embrace digital opportunity.
- Consider a post 2024 sustainable business model and address commerciality without damaging VLS brand values.
- Attract large scale investments to continually improve the offer.
- Work with the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) to create a strong partnership and a joined-up approach to tourism in Greater Lincolnshire.

VLS has its own strategy (Appendix A) which details its vision and objectives; content, tone and brand values.

Product Development Priorities for 2024

- a) **Nature Tourism:** Walking, cycling, bird and seal watching and nature reserves will be gathered together under the umbrella of Nature Tourism. This gives us the opportunity to better promote new developments such as the King Charles III England Coast Path which will have a high profile area to match the Viking Way as our two flagship walks. The expansion of the Saltfleetby/Theddlethorpe National Nature Reserve to become the Lincolnshire Coronation Coast National Nature Reserve; the National Trust's development of a reserve at the old Sandilands golf course within the Coastal Country Park; re-wilding at Boothby Wildlands and at Doddington Hall; completion of the last two Bird Trails giving full county coverage. All showing that Lincolnshire has a lot to offer.
- b) **Market Towns:** The website analytics show that many visitors are searching via the towns of Lincolnshire. We will increase the content, ensuring that we get across the individuality and personality of each town. There will be more business entries, particularly retail and places to eat.
- c) **Segmentation/Packaging:** Our two main markets are 50+ Empty Nesters and Families with children. Through segmentation we will present Lincolnshire appropriately to different markets. Through better search functionality visitors will be able to put together their own itineraries and packages.
- d) **Getting Here and Getting Around:** Improvements to where we are, ease of access and getting round whilst in the county.

- e) **Rebrand the Green Tourism Toolkit:** It will become the Green Hospitality Toolkit as the existing content is applicable to a wider variety of businesses than just tourism. It will see additional case studies added, particularly covering the retail sector.
- f) **Update Digital Business Support:** www.business.visitlincolnshire.com contains our support to business and includes over 70 video masterclasses. The site launched in 2022 but digital is a fast-changing subject and we need to ensure our content is up to date and that our businesses are responding to the demands of our visitors.
- g) **Experiences:** Working with businesses to encourage them to develop ideas, inspiration and packages.

Destination Lincolnshire is leading a Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland and we await its completion. Our work will be aligned to the LVEP policy and emerging devolution conversations.

Our contribution to the county’s tourism includes operation of www.visitlincolnshire.com as an “*attract and disperse*” website, delivery of business support to a wide range of SMEs in the tourism sector, both 1:1 and backed up by www.business.visitlincolnshire.com , and product development based on nature tourism.

2. Conclusion

The work we have delivered to date and the strategic role we undertake will enable us to continue to develop the sector and to increase the number of high spending staying visitors to the county, focusing on our strengths of city, coast, and countryside. We are committed to working in partnership with Destination Lincolnshire and see that the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) process as an enhancement of our support to the Visitor Economy Sector. The Environment and Scrutiny Committee is invited to review and endorse the activity to date and the proposed future plans.

3. Consultation

- a) **Risks and Impact Analysis**
n/a

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Visit Lincolnshire 2024 Website Strategy

5. Background Papers

No background papers within 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Mary Powell, Place & Investment Manager, who can be contacted on 01986 805018 or mary.powell@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

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2024 Website Strategy visitlincolnshire.com

1. Introduction
4. Analytics

2. Background
5. Content Strategy

3. Vision, Aims, Objectives

1. Introduction

Visit Lincolnshire is the visitor facing destination website for Greater Lincolnshire owned and managed by Lincolnshire County Council. The website sets the scene, brand values, and visitor expectations of the county. A beautifully curated shop window enticing you to visit and explore.

We **showcase** the best of Lincolnshire as a whole and then signpost visitors to more localised sites.

This is our **attract** and **disperse** strategy.

The website is well on track to hit **2 million pages views** for 2023, and we have a global audience.

We **inspire** tourists to visit and **inform** them of what to do when they get here.

It makes planning a visit to Lincolnshire **easy, accessible, and bookable**.



2. Website Background

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has been active in tourism since the early 1990s. Our strategic objective has always been to increase the number of higher spending staying visitors to the county, and that remains the case today.

LCC undertakes a strategic place leadership role, we inspire through our award-winning attractions, we provide a platform support for all visitor economy businesses (website entries, business support, development programmes), we actively undertake an **attract and dispersal** strategy to enhance the visitor experience, this includes local, national and international visitors.

We have had periods where we invested heavily in promotion of city, coast and countryside, in product development, and now after the Covid lockdowns our investment is in supporting businesses and in high level promotion. Fundamentally, business support and promotion retains that strategic objective of increasing the number of higher-spending visitors to the county.

The website has always had a gateway role, inspiring and attracting, and then encouraging website visitors to relevant local websites. As LCC, we are of course, a tourism operator in our own right with heritage and countryside assets.

There is a history of three unsuccessful attempts since 2010 to give third party operators the chance to manage the website on our behalf, so there is a huge risk attached to asking any other operator to run the site. In 2020 as the pandemic took hold, we knew we needed a website that would both Inspire and Inform. Considerable investment was made in the new website which LCC is now running, with support from our web builder on SEO and it is outperforming all previous attempts. Our preferred approach therefore is for LCC to continue to manage the website, and to create a small reference group, led by LCC to set the direction and content of the site. The team live and breathe the site, it's the cornerstone of our visitor facing communications and is continually tweaked, updated and championed.

A Tourism Commission Output

During lockdown the LCC Visitor Economy Team continued to provide a strategic steer and set up a Tourism Commission (TC) which included the existing Destination Management Organisation (DMO) and visitor economy businesses of varying sizes, types and geographical spread. The aim was to come up with a series of recommendations of short and medium term that those businesses felt were most needed in the circumstances. LCC business recovery funds were then allocated to deliver those recommendations focusing on Product Development, Skills, Marketing & PR and Infrastructure.

Through the Tourism Commission work, LCC has completely redeveloped www.visitlincolnshire.com . We have run successful programmes called Hospitable Boost and Hospitable Green and have developed a Green Tourism Toolkit to help ensure that the visitor economy businesses are equipped with the skills and resources to enhance their resilience, sustainability and survival.

The website runs on the latest version of the platform Wordpress, version 6.3.1 (as at Dec 2023), and the Elemental content building system.

What problems are we trying to solve?

- Lincolnshire is not on people's list to visit – therefore they don't know to look for the website
- Lack of awareness, no perception of Lincolnshire (either good or bad)
- People think it's flat and boring
- People want what Lincolnshire has, they're just oblivious that we've got it.

- Not enough accommodation; not enough quality or branded accommodation
- Perception that our offer for families is not good enough
- Food offer often not very sophisticated, of quality or on trend
- No perception of where the county is or how to get to it.

2022 research shows that in a three word cloud, that positively and overwhelmingly Lincolnshire is **Friendly, Historic and Peaceful**. Other positives were Quiet, Pretty, Calm, Old, **Safe**, Rural, Happy.

Some less positive words used (in much smaller numbers) were that the county is **Underwhelming, Boring and Outdated**.

Regarding the statement that information about the area was “easy to find and access” - 26% completely agreed, 45% agreed to some extent. Therefore 71% of the respondents thought that information was easy to find and access to some extent.

28% of respondents disagreed with the statement.

The 2022 research also said that 93% of visitors were repeat visitors. Although there may be some lockdown bias with this figure being so high, Lincolnshire has always been known for its loyal repeat visitor figures. This is both a strength and a weakness. The positive is that once we get visitors to Lincolnshire they like it and want to return; negatively we’re not attracting enough new visitors, making us perhaps overly dependent on our repeat visitors.

3. Our strategic objectives for the Website

- That it is the first port of call for visitor information on Lincolnshire
- That it maintains its position in top two of search engines
- That it presents a beautifully curated view of the county
- That it attracts and increases the number of higher spending staying visitors to the county
- It is honest and helpful and we are proud of it. Authentic.
- That it is easy and simple to find what you’re looking for and to make a booking
- That it is as useful in the pre-planning stage as it is when the visitor arrives
- That new quality content is constantly being added and repurposed
- Through segmentation we encourage people to find what interests them
- That it brings business to the Lincolnshire Visitor Economy, including retail and leisure
- That our partners will want to work with us because the website delivers as proven by its analytics
- We link and add value to partner / districts sites and aim that this is reciprocated.
- Used by external and internal visitors and residents.

Lincolnshire: Product Positioning & The Power of Three

City, Coast and Countryside - maybe not unique to Lincolnshire, but it is a simple shorthand and jump-off point.

Countryside

Lincolnshire is very rural, in parts very traditional and perhaps a slower pace of life. The rolling hills of the Wolds, the flat Fens with its big skies and the Lincoln Edge, a continuation of the Cotswolds and sharing many similarities. Walk the Viking Way to cover it all.

Lincolnshire's heritage includes charming market towns and medieval villages. There are castles, country houses, museums, aviation heritage and working windmills. All in the friendliest and most peaceful of settings.

City

A beautiful historic city full of heritage and culture - home to the magnificent Lincoln Cathedral and Castle, ancient walls, and medieval architecture. It is no wonder that Lincoln is a popular location for a city break in the UK. Wander along the picturesque, cobbled streets and take in the spectacular sights of Lincoln's historic architecture. The city is full of fun attractions and activities for the whole family to enjoy plus lots of delicious places to eat and drink.

Though steeped in history and home to magnificent architecture – Lincoln also has a younger, vibrant, exciting side. Welcoming thousands of students each year into its relatively new, but already award-winning university. Student culture pulses through the very veins of our historic city.

Coast

A perfect blend of traditional seaside resorts and a beautiful natural coastline.

Lincolnshire is the proud home to some of the greatest traditional English seaside resorts in the country with Skegness, Cleethorpes and Mablethorpe. You'll find plenty of things to do, places to visit and fun-filled activities and attractions to entertain the whole family.

For those in search of a relaxing coastal stroll, look no further than Lincolnshire's Natural Coast. Free in every sense, Lincolnshire's Natural Coast offers miles of clean wide sandy beaches away from the bustle of the holiday resorts. Walking, cycling, bird watching or just soak up the wide open spaces.



Our Vision for the website:

A beautifully curated, expertly delivered, online platform that adds value to all Lincolnshire businesses by inspiring and attracting consumers to our product offer; and converting them to purchase / consume; and extend their stay.

Our Tone of Voice remains true to brand values – authentic, trustworthy, quality.

Non hyperbolic

VisitLincolnshire.com.....

.....is **THE go to, top of mind, fully accessible destination website for Greater Lincolnshire.**

.....represents the very best of Lincolnshire online.

.....showcases the county to millions of potential visitors and inspires them to come here.

.....informs and focuses the visitor – creating product awareness and inspiring purchase / consumption intent.

.....is a first point of contact for the trade / industry contacts

Visit Lincolnshire is the visitor facing brand that visitors recognize, owned and managed by Lincolnshire County Council.

The Visit Lincolnshire website is the website that all our guests and visitors see when they type into a search engine, for example, "holiday in Lincolnshire", "I want to visit Lincolnshire", "things to do in Lincolnshire" etc. It is a high performing site.

It sets the scene, entices and inspires people to visit - and then importantly points them to further information on specific destination websites - for example Visit Lincs Coast, Visit Lincoln, Love Lincs Wolds, Discover NE Lincs etc, or individual business websites.

Visit Lincolnshire (and therefore LCC) collaborate with ALL district tourism officers, and the LVEP Destination Lincolnshire, to publish visitor information for our county-wide destination website.

To avoid confusion Destination Lincolnshire is a community interest company. The Destination Lincolnshire brand is not visitor facing. As well as being a membership organisation, they are also an LVEP (Local Visitor Economy Partnership); and therefore have a contract to represent the county to Visit England. Destination Lincolnshire do also own and operate visitor facing brands, such as Visit Lincoln, but importantly Destination Lincolnshire itself is a business brand.

Behind the scenes, all of the agencies and stakeholders involved in county tourism collaborate and work together to amplify and champion Lincolnshire as a great place to visit. There is a big job to do and room for all. It doesn't matter at which point a business enter this support eco-system, we work together to signpost and introduce them to the most suitable solution.

Our Mission...

Is two fold: **Inspire and Inform. Attract and Disperse.**

In a visitor landscape where customers have little preconceived perception of Lincolnshire – Visit Lincolnshire sets the scene, brand values, and expectations of the county. A beautifully curated shop window.

Our Aims:

Raise awareness of Lincolnshire as a visitor destination - therefore

Increasing the volume of visitors and the **value** of visitor spend

Our (macro) Objectives being that visitors:

Are Welcome.....Inspire a purchase decision to visit Lincolnshire (trial and pipeline)

Stay... convert day to overnight stay

More people stay.... DEI, widen demographics

Stay longertrip duration and seasonality / extend season

Spend more..... increase value and volume of product, up sell and cross promote

Return.....repeat purchase

Refer.....testimonials and advocacy, social proof

Our (micro) objectives:

Drive eye balls to the website

Keep visitors on the site (sticky content) and then disperse (convert)

Bring visitors back to the website

How will we achieve this:

Content Creation – rich, engaging, inspiring content, editorial and visitor centric.

Visitor Experience – intuitive and sticky.

Product Showcase – and increasing product listings.

Widening Reach – audience targeting and segmentation including all digital marketing.

Maximising SEO – A hard working, optimised and localised site attracting visitors organically.

Review, monitoring and evaluation of objectives.

Implement [Maximising Outputs](#) process.

4. Analytics

2023

www.visitlincolnshire.com (VLS) has seen excellent growth in 2023. The website has achieved an increase in user traffic up 61% in 2023 compared to 2022. Search engine optimization is excellent and it appears first or second in most searches.

The website saw 1,257,024 page views Jan-Dec 2023. Page views peaked in August with 167,216 during the height of the summer period, coinciding with the school summer holidays.

This success can be attributed to the optimised and continuously added/updated event pages. The introduction of this strategy to support the existing Things To Do listings has vastly boosted value and interest in the website.

Optimised pages for popular attractions and destinations such as Stamford also direct a significant amount of constant traffic to the website. The average conversion rate of visitors clicking through to a booking link or for more information is around 19.3% across the site and has been at that level for the last two quarters of 2023. This figure has consistently been at a healthy 13-15% since 2021. The rise in this figure is pleasing and shows that www.visitlincolnshire.com is delivering business and providing the potential visitor with what they want.

95% of all traffic is from across the UK, with 4% from the Lincoln area and 35% from the London area. Top four overseas countries are USA, Australia, Netherlands and France.

5. Content and Brand Values

- We Inspire and Inform
- Our brand is strong, valuable and must be protected at all cost. It represents a huge amount of equity and we should never muddy the waters.
- Photographically beautiful – lovely presentation to challenge the non-perception of Lincolnshire and people not knowing what we are and what we've got.
- Ease of Use – clearly and thoughtfully presented, we curate the information so you slip easily from an area or attraction to accommodation booking and places to eat. You're presented with a whole offer.
- Tone – should be friendly (see 2022 word cloud). See example below - conversational
- Honest – we don't over-sell, the reality has to match what is promised. Lincolnshire won't be for everybody – our ideal should be to match our visitors with what they want.
- 'Community' of businesses and how we take them with us
- How does Lincolnshire reflect on you, the visitor? You talk about your holiday to your friends and you want it to reflect well on you. Aspirational
- Special, insider knowledge

Tone Example – taken from Birding in the Wolds

[Louth Lud Valley Birdwatching - Visit Lincolnshire](#)

This copy was written by Lincolnshire Bird Club. It's engaging and helpful, expert but not patronising and doesn't present birdwatching as not for you. Insider tips are very appealing: a pub to go for a drink, a good café, advice on seeing a particular bird. But all managed in a relatively low word count. The Bird Trails work to a template, so that authorship across the Bird Trail family can be in many hands (RSPB, LWT, NT, LBC) but works overall with the same tone. It should feel like a friend has been and is giving you advice on where to go. Should not be over-familiar, gushing or cloying.

"It's easiest to park in a town centre car park and walk to Westgate Fields along Westgate, checking out the church spire for peregrine as you go past, and on your way back. At Westgate Fields walk along the river side and watch the river and small mill lake for teal, gadwall, kingfisher and grey wagtail. A little further on the alder trees around the river provide great winter feeding for tit and finch flocks and are worth scrutinising for siskin, redpoll, treecreeper and nuthatch though goldfinch and chaffinch are much commoner. At the far end of Westgate Fields turn right and walk along the river to Hubbards Hills. At the entrance there are toilets, a car park and a delightful café which remains true to its Edwardian roots. The farmhouse adjacent has a front garden feeding station which is great for nuthatch and stock dove. The lake in Hubbards Hills is always worth a look for mainly mallard and moorhen but also mandarin occasionally and grey wagtail regularly. Walk to the far end of the hills along the river and choose to walk back up the stairs to the left along the top of the valley or explore the footpaths into the Wolds further around Hallington and Raithby. Return back the way you came and perhaps stop off at the Wheatsheaf Pub at the church end of Westgate where you can sit outside at the back with a well earned pint and watch for peregrines. Peak time is February to July but they are present all year round."

Templating is key to new areas: keeps content beautiful; simple but helpful; ease of use; not messy or random.

Developing Future Content

Our content must always be beautifully presented and curated.

It must also be underpinned by market researched, 'visitor first' understanding. What gap in the market is this content filling / serving? How can we demonstrate this, and understand return on investment.

- Monetising can dilute the brand, so care needs to be taken.
- Importance of the analytics
- We shouldn't be afraid of doing some controlled testing on an area of the site – even if it fails we will learn from it.

Corner stone content

Cornerstones: Now and evolving

Nature Tourism – walking, England Coastal Path (KCIIECP), Viking Way, reserves, bird watching, sustainability, dark skies, rewilding, glorious beaches

Engaged and Activated – tours, trails, experiences, itineraries, stories to tell and places to be.

Heritage and Culture – special sites, world class immersion and interpretation, exhibitions, challenging perceptions, quality food culture, roaring skies and aviation pride.

Nature Tourism: continue to develop the content on Walking, Cycling, Bird-watching and Nature Reserves including developing projects; but then draw it together under a Nature Tourism umbrella.

- Finish birdwatching trails, Coast and Wolds trails complete, Fens and Lincoln Edge still to do.
- Include further walks from Districts.
- Relaunch improved Viking Way early 2024
- New area for KCIIIECP 2025, including links to paths that lead from it
- Developing product: re-wilding at Doddington Hall; Lincolnshire Coronation Coast National Nature Reserve (Saltfleetby/Theddlethorpe); Sandilands reserve (NT)
- Nature notes for children
- Waterways

Towns: Users are searching via towns, so we need to develop and enhance the presentation of Lincolnshire towns as good for our SEO. History of towns, Out and About Towns website. Stories.

Experiences: need to encourage businesses to develop packages. Product should be promoted on its emotional and experiential merits, in addition to functional attributes. tailored experiences and itineraries

Diversity, accessibility, inclusivity.

How to find us / Travel Page

Active Tourism, Ancestral Tourism, Weddings, Business Tourism, Food, Film Tourism, Itineraries and Bucket Lists, Overseas visitors.

Future considerations:

Interaction and tailored experiences and content – wizards, apps, push notifications, incentives.

Commercialisation – Leveraging performance and power of the brand.

Perception of 'Visitor' - Business Tourism, Weddings, Film tourism etc

Optimising content: Reasons to come, Must Do's for Segmented Groups: whether we do as bucket lists or itineraries, but the tone would fit the group. Develop template. Our two most important groups are Families and Older Couples. But we'd like to cover younger couples and teenagers as well. Could do a Why Visit Lincolnshire? Or a top 10 of must visits.

In keeping with our brand, product should always be beautifully presented and photographed. This is expensive, but bearing in mind Lincolnshire's non-perception image problem vital. Start by re-ordering photographic collection: Birds, Cycling; Water Rail Way, England Coastal Path, Viking Way Folders have already been done. Prepare Folders for Aviation Heritage, Walkers by Age, Children; Active Sport e.g surfing, water skiing, horse riding; Heritage; Shopping; Eating/Food. This exercise will highlight where we have a shortage of resources over and above the developing projects that will need new photography on completion.

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Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	16 April 2024
Subject:	Theddlethorpe Geological Disposal Facility Working Group – 6 Monthly Update

Summary:

This paper is the regular update to councillors on the proposals for a Geological Disposal Facility at Theddlethorpe. It recognises that since the previous meeting there have been three main developments in the sector locally:

- 1) Establishment of a programme of Community visioning for Mablethorpe, Withern and Theddlethorpe which will help to provide an evidence base for significant additional investment by government if the Geological Disposal Facility goes ahead.
- 2) Undertaking of public opinion surveys on geological disposal in the area by Nuclear Waste Services.
- 3) Continued liaison with STEP Fusion as they start to implement their siting programme in West Burton, Nottinghamshire, and wider sector development which includes economic opportunities for Lincolnshire businesses and communities.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the contents of the report.

1. Background

Geological Disposal Facility

At its meeting in November 2021 the Executive of the Council agreed to three recommendations in a paper concerning a geological disposal facility. These were that the Executive:

- 1) Approves acceptance by the Council of the invitation from Radioactive Waste Management (now Nuclear Waste Services (NWS)) to join a Working Group to explore the potential for a geological disposal facility in eastern Lincolnshire;

2) Approves the Council taking up membership of any subsequent Community Partnership that may be formed; and,

3) Identified a Councillor to represent the Council on the Working Group and subsequent Community Partnership. Councillor Martin Hill OBE was identified as the Councillor to represent Lincolnshire County Council (LCC).

The Environment and Economy Scrutiny is asked to remember two critical points regarding Geological Disposal Facilities (GDF):

- Firstly – joining the working group does not mean that LCC supports the concept of a geological disposal facility.
- Secondly – the working group is not where any decision about locating a geological disposal facility would be taken. It is the local community, through a Public Test of Support, who would determine whether a geological disposal facility should be located in the area.

LCC's involvement in a working group and subsequent community partnership has been concerned with ensuring appropriate communication of the facts relating to geological disposal facilities, their impact and potential benefits for local residents, businesses, and organisations, so that when local people make a decision via the Test of Public Support, they are fully informed.

Visioning

The Community Partnership (CP) have acknowledged that the creation of a community vision is important in the process to a test of public support. As one of the most important workstreams of the CP, over the next 18 months the development of a community vision will be a significant piece of work. One significant aspect of the vision is that it must be driven by local people, and the CP have plans to allow and enable the sharing of feedback for several months about the proposed areas within the vision.

Of particular interest to LCC is that the community vision is seen by government as the strategic basis for the consideration of investment in Significant Additional Infrastructure – i.e. roads, flood protection, potentially rail services. This vision is to be funded by NWS, but led by the CP, and intended not to be dependent on a GDF. LCC are represented on the visioning sub-group by officers who will support the CP in achieving an effective and inclusive visioning process to enable residents and businesses to have their voices heard.

Draft visioning statements have been generated by this CP visioning subgroup, and will be developed through engagement with the community:

Overarching Mission Statement:

To create a community led vision, that maximises opportunities for the future, with a view to improve & enhance our Place, our Economy, our Education & our Environment. A vision that celebrates our valued strengths & aims to improve our weaknesses to benefit the lives of all.

Four 'headline' visioning statements:

- 1) Our Place** - To create a Resilient, Sustainable connected Coast & Countryside, that is a thriving & vibrant place to Live, Work & Visit, a unique destination of choice.
- 2) Our Economy** - To create sustainable all year round employment, harness innovation & maximise all opportunities to reinvigorate our Coastal & Countryside economies, to benefit all.
- 3) Our Environment** - We aspire to protect & enhance our natural & built environments, to create thriving communities, living together in harmony within our natural landscapes.
- 4) Our Education** - To forge new relationships & partnerships, to improve education & skills based employment opportunities to improve the lives and social mobility for all.

Public surveys

Since March 2022, NWS have commissioned a company called Yonder to oversee regular surveying of residents over the age of 16 within the wards of Mablethorpe and Withern and Theddlethorpe. For each survey, limited scale face-to-face interviewing, of up to 250 people has been conducted by Teamsearch – an independent research agency with expertise in in-person face-to-face surveying – on behalf of Yonder.

This is an NWS commissioned activity and therefore whilst NWS have shared the relevant results with the community partnership, the CP have no influence or involvement on this work. However, In February 2024, the CP agreed to lead a much more detailed local general public engagement plan, to be delivered from June 2024, and also to conduct its own annual survey to monitor public opinion.

LCC is working with the CP to ensure that their work builds upon the existing information, and outcomes are addressed before any Test of Public Support.

Current headline takeaways from the NWS Yonder work are that:

Public Awareness, Understanding, and Engagement with information about geological disposal have all decreased amongst respondees between Mar-22 and Nov-23. When questioned on their understanding of what a GDF is, 20% of respondents provided the correct answer, this indicates that understanding of the geological disposal proposal should be increased for the community to make an informed decision.

When asked what information they wanted to receive regarding the siting process, people most wanted information on: Safety, House prices, and General information on geological disposal. However, 40% of respondees wanted no more information about the siting process.

Towards a test of public support, the community partnership must ensure that adequate information about these concerns is available, particularly on safety and potential risks. Not only must it be available, it must also be sufficiently communicated and understood. There is an important role for LCC to play in ensuring that the issues regarding safety, both positive and negative, are properly understood.

To receive further siting information, respondents' top three preferred organisations to hear from were the Relevant Principal Local Authorities (LCC and ELDC), Local businesses,

and Environmental groups. The CP was placed 6th, and NWS was 15th. Respondents most wanted to receive this information via Post, Websites, and Social media.

The biggest perceived benefits of a hypothetical GDF were: Increased employment opportunities, Improved transport, and Community grants.

The biggest perceived disadvantages were: The impact on house prices, The danger of transporting radioactive waste, and The danger of waste within a GDF.

The preferred uses of community grant funding were on Youth facilities, Coastal erosion protection, and Flood protection.

Before a test of public support takes place, more information must be made available about all the potential benefits and risks of a GDF. As a member of the community partnership, and as a relevant principal local authority, LCC can work with the community partnership to understand the community perspective in more detail. Subsequently, requesting that NWS provide sufficient from their studies on the local suitability for a GDF. As a general consensus now exists globally that geological disposal is the most appropriate method for disposing of nuclear waste, it is also key to examine what lessons can be learnt from the 20 geological disposal programmes being developed globally.

STEP Fusion and wider sector developments

LCC is also engaging with wider developments in the sector to maintain visibility on where there may be complementary opportunities and combined challenges.

A major development is the UK Atomic Energy Authority's (UKAEA) Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) fusion plant at the West Burton site in Nottinghamshire, close to the Lincolnshire border. LCC is represented on the strategic steering group by Cllr Hill, and officers continue to engage closely and frequently with the UKAEA on the development of this programme. The government has now established UK Industrial Fusion Solutions (UKIFS), who will now lead the delivery of the prototype plant through to commercialisation beyond 2040. Visioning activities have been launched for the site and surrounding area, with good engagement from Gainsborough and throughout the county.

LCC has also been well represented in wider discussions such as transport, sustainability, skills and education, and supply chain opportunities in Lincolnshire. For both the construction and operation of a facility at West Burton, an increase in the transport of materials and personnel will be considered. LCC officers will push to develop an understanding of how this may connect with logistic facilities and urban centres within the county, such as nearby Gainsborough.

Officers are also working towards a detailed understanding of what skills are required and how these match the skills and training provision available locally. Other initiatives which may complement this are being considered, such as wider sector developments which may have an interest in Lincolnshire, and the recently announced package of public and private investment to support Destination Nuclear's 40,000 expected new jobs in Britain. LCC is also engaging with local businesses who are already looking at growing

opportunities in the nuclear sector, who LCC is now working with to uncover what a wider nuclear supply chain could look like in the county.

Sustainability and bio-diversity net gain are also key priorities for the site, such as how the STEP programme may consider and support the natural character of the West Lindsey environment within the Trent and Belvoir Vales Natural Character Area.

Additionally, officers are also engaging with multiple other players in the nuclear sector who have recognised potential within Lincolnshire. With current national focus on both Small Modular Reactor and Advanced Modular Reactor development, many developers are considering sites for both power plants and manufacturing facilities within the country, including Lincolnshire.

Great British Nuclear, the government's delivery vehicle for coordinating the UK's nuclear industry towards the national net-zero target, has an existing competition to look for an SMR developer to develop a fleet of reactors in the country. There are currently six companies shortlisted in the competition, bidding to construct their small modular reactors in the UK. If successful, these companies may also look to develop manufacturing facilities in the UK. Lincolnshire's strength in advanced manufacturing, and particularly in power engineering, may make it an attractive location for the manufacturers of components or SMR facilities.

To also consider what the wider potential nuclear supply chain looks like in Lincolnshire, LCC will continue to engage with the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing and Research Centre (NAMRC) in Rotherham. The NAMRC help manufacturers to be 'Fit for Nuclear' supply chain accredited, and already work with multiple 'Fit for Nuclear' companies in the county, with more currently being considered. LCC is also building relationships with those companies who already separately form part of a nuclear supply chain, and will continue to look at inward investment opportunities.

It is worth noting that whilst many opportunities are developing from the nuclear sector, the vast majority of these advanced manufacturing and engineering supply chain opportunities do not involve any nuclear material on their sites.

2. Conclusion

In summary, LCC is continuing to engage with the Theddlethorpe Community Partnership, to ensure that all residents, businesses, and organisations get an accurate picture and full information about what a GDF could mean for Theddlethorpe. Our role is to get the assurance that all views are heard so that when local people make a decision via the test of public support, they are fully informed. LCC will continue to push for greater information in order to understand the technical aspects of a GDF. Considering both the potential benefits and risks of a GDF, particularly with respect to safety. With at least 20 countries intending to develop geological disposal as the best solution for disposing of radioactive waste, it will be key to fully explore both locally relevant concerns, whilst also learning from those international programmes.

Officers are also maintaining an overview of other developments in the sector, such as the STEP fusion programme, the development of Small Modular Reactors, Advanced Modular Reactors, and the potential supply chain opportunities within the county.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

n/a

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Edward Wright, Senior Adviser for Energy Opportunities, who can be contacted at edward.wright@lincolnshire.gov.uk



Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham, Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director - Resources

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	16 April 2024
Subject:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Summary:

This item enables the Committee to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the year to ensure that scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit. The work programme will be reviewed at each meeting of the Committee to ensure that its contents are still relevant and will add value to the work of the Council and partners.

Actions Required:

Members of the Committee are invited to review the work programme and highlight any additional scrutiny activity which could be included for consideration in the work programme.

1. Background

Overview and Scrutiny should be positive, constructive, independent, fair, and open. The scrutiny process should be challenging, as its aim is to identify areas for improvement. Scrutiny activity should be targeted, focused and timely and include issues of corporate and local importance, where scrutiny activity can influence and add value.

All members of overview and scrutiny committees are encouraged to bring forward important items of community interest to the committee whilst recognising that not all items will be taken up depending on available resource.

Members are encouraged to highlight items that could be included for consideration in the work programme.

2. Work Programme

16 APRIL 2024– 10:00am			
	<i>Item</i>	<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	Introducing East Atlantic Flying Way Heritage Site Bid	Chris Miller, Head of Environment	Scrutiny Report

16 APRIL 2024– 10:00am		
<i>Item</i>	<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
2	Strategic Plan Objectives for the Visitor Economy in Lincolnshire Mary Powel, Place & Investment Manager Justin Brown, Assistant Director, Growth	Scrutiny Report
3	Theddlethorpe Geological Disposal Facility Working Group – 6-Monthly Update Justin Brown, Assistant Director, Growth	Scrutiny Report 6-monthly update on the work of the Theddlethorpe Geological Disposal Facility Working Group

28 MAY 2024– 10:00am		
<i>Item</i>	<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	Draft Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Preferred Approach Adrian Winkley, Minerals and Waste Policy and Compliance Manager	[Pre-decision Scrutiny] (Executive Decision, 4 June 2024)
2	Adoption of Carbon Management Plan 4 Chris Miller, Head of Environment Dan Clayton, Sustainability Manager	[Pre-decision Scrutiny] (Executive Decision, 4 June 2024)
3	Waste Transfer Station Improvements Chris Yorston, Head of Waste	[Pre-decision Scrutiny] (Exec Cllr Decision 3 -7 June 2024)
4	LCC Business Centres and Economic Development Portfolio - Performance Report Simon Wright, Regeneration and Portfolio Manager	Annual Position/Performance Report
5	Transition of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) Justin Brown, Assistant Director -Growth	Scrutiny Report
6	Campervan and Motorhome Tourism in Lincolnshire- Working Group Justin Brown, Assistant Director -Growth Hayley Toyne, Growth Manager Visitor Economy	Scrutiny Report/ Outputs from Working Group review

09 JULY 2024– 10:00am		
<i>Item</i>	<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	Adult Learning Provision 2023-24 and Plans for the 2024-25 Academic Year Thea Croxall, Adult Learning & Skills Manager Jenny Riordan, Principal Officer for Learning and Skills	Annual Position Report

09 JULY 2024– 10:00am			
<i>Item</i>		<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
2	Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub Annual Performance and Future Business Support Landscape	Samantha Harrison, Head of Economic Development	Annual Position Report
3	Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Performance Framework 2023 - 2024 – Quarter 4: <i>Economy, Flooding and Waste</i>	Samantha Harrison, Head of Economic Development Chris Miller, Head of Environment Chris Yorston, Head of Waste	Quarterly Service Performance Monitoring Report

10 SEPTEMBER 2024– 10:00am			
<i>Item</i>		<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	Broadband Programme – Annual Position Report	Stephen Brookes, Broadband Programme Manager	Annual Position Report
2	Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Performance Framework 2024 - 2025 – Quarter 1: <i>Economy, Flooding and Waste</i>	Samantha Harrison, Head of Economic Development Chris Miller, Head of Environment Chris Yorston, Head of Waste	Quarterly Service Performance Monitoring Report
3	Sutton Bridge Place Making - Update Report	Mick King, Head of Economic Infrastructure	Project Update Scrutiny Report

15 OCTOBER 2024– 10:00am			
<i>Item</i>		<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	Town Centre Improvements Action Plan Update	Vannessa Strange, Head of Infrastructure Investment Mandy Ramm, Funding and Investment Manager	Progress Update/ Scrutiny Report
2	Agri Sector Supports Action Plan Update	Vannessa Strange, Head of Infrastructure Investment Nicola Radford, Senior Commissioning Officer- Growth	Progress Update/ Scrutiny Report

26 NOVEMBER 2024– 10:00am			
<i>Item</i>	<i>Contributor(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>	
1	Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Performance Framework 2024 - 2025 – Quarter 2: <i>Economy, Flooding and Waste</i>	Samantha Harrison, Head of Economic Development Chris Miller, Head of Environment Chris Yorston, Head of Waste	Quarterly Service Performance Monitoring Report

3. Items to be Programmed.

Topic	Est Date
Alternative Fuels	TBC
Climate Change Impact	2024
Elements of Environment Act- (Waiting for Gov Guidance/Updates)	2024
Food Waste Collection- (Waiting for Env Act Updates)	W/S 2024
Green Technology Grant	TBC
Historic Places Team Strategy	TBC
Horncastle Industrial Estate extension – Progress Update	TBC
Lincolnshire Reservoir– Progress Updates	2024
Adoption of Local Nature Recovery Strategy (inc. Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership Update) <i>Pre-Decision Scrutiny</i>	28 Jan 2025 Executive Decision – 4 th March 2025
Motorhomes & Campervans Working Group	W-S 2024
New Burdens Doctrine – Funding for Net Additional Costs	TBC
Property Green Agenda – potential guest presentation facilitated by Sustainability	TBC
Verge Biomass Management	TBC
Waste Performance Targets - Setting of Targets	TBC

A= Autumn, W= Winter, S=Spring, TBC= To be confirmed

4. Site Visit

The Committee is due to visit the Lincolnshire Energy from Waste North Hykeham site on 23rd May 2024 following agreement at the Committee’s last meeting on 27th February 2024 were Members expressed their interest in developing greater understanding about the recycling process and performance scrutinised quarterly in meetings.

5. Conclusion

Members of the Committee are invited review and comment on the work programme and highlight any additional scrutiny activity which could be included for consideration in the work programme.

6. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Forward Plan - Decisions relating to the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee.

8. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Kiara Chatziioannou, Scrutiny Officer, who can be contacted on 07500 571868 or by e-mail at kiara.chatziioannou@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

Forward Plan - Decisions relating to the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee

MATTERS FOR DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	PEOPLE/GROUPS CONSULTED PRIOR TO DECISION	HOW AND WHEN TO COMMENT PRIOR TO THE DECISION BEING TAKEN	KEY DECISION YES/NO	DIVISIONS AFFECTED
Waste Transfer Station Improvements [1029445]	Between 03-07 June 2024	Executive Councillor: Waste and Trading Standards	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee	Head of Waste, E-mail: chris.yorston@lincolnshire.gov.uk	Yes	All Divisions
Draft Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Preferred Approach [1028138]	04 June 2024	Executive	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee	Minerals and Waste Policy and Compliance Manager, E-mail: adrian.winkley@lincolnshire.gov.uk	No	All Divisions
Adoption of Carbon Management Plan 4 [1032498]	04 June 2024	Executive	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee Council departments internally	Head of Environment E-mail: chris.miller@lincolnshire.gov.uk	No	Park
Adoption of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy [1032499]	04 March 2025	Executive	Statutory Consultation – Council Departments internally; wildlife organisations; ALL Greater Lincolnshire local authorities; GL Local Enterprise Partnership; landowner organisations Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee	Head of Environment E-mail: chris.miller@lincolnshire.gov.uk	No	All Divisions