

**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY  
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
 27 NOVEMBER 2018**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B M DOBSON (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors Mrs W Bowkett (Vice-Chairman), B Adams, Mrs A M Austin, C Matthews, R P H Reid, Mrs E J Sneath, C L Strange and Dr M E Thompson

Councillors: C J Davie, D McNally and E J Poll attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Andy Gutherson (Acting Executive Director for Place), David Hickman (Growth & Environment Commissioner), Mary Powell (Commissioning Manager (Tourism)), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer), Vanessa Strange (Accessibility and Growth Manager) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G E Cullen and M A Griggs.

It was noted that the Chief Executive had reported that having received a notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillor R B Parker as a replacement member of the Committee in place of Councillor G E Cullen, for this meeting only.

42 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

There were no declarations of members' interests at this point in the meeting.

43 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2018 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

44 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND LEAD OFFICERS

The Executive Councillor for Economy and Place welcomed the Committee to one of the Council's network of business centres and advised that occupancy levels at the centres were running at roughly 85% which was just about the right level. There was an ideal occupancy level to ensure viability of a business centre, but as a council

managed network, it was also possible to maintain some spare capacity to help businesses who needed premises at short notice.

It was noted that the Executive Councillor had circulated an Economic Development newsletter the previous week.

The peripheral nature of the coast was highlighted, as was the amount of time it could take to travel to the coast, however, despite the challenges of distance, the Executive Councillor was pleased to report that confidence and investment in the coast was strong.

It was highlighted that there were a number of thriving businesses on the business park, and plans to extend the business park were continuing. The Council's economic development officers had met with two significant businesses who were considering purchasing substantial plots of land on the Countryside Business Park, and some smaller units which would give growing local businesses access to modern premises were also being designed. A report about the business park would come to the scrutiny committee early in 2019.

The Committee was informed that neither of the two businesses were tourism business, and although the area was predominantly a tourist area there was growth in the manufacturing and service sectors. However, tourism remained the heart of the economy on the coast, and the council had been working closely with tourism operators to extend the season, and support a shift towards higher quality tourism, including the sort of tourism which was often typified by the expression "green tourism". This area was home to the Coastal Country Park which was becoming increasingly recognised, and it felt as though the centre of gravity of the Lincolnshire coast was changing, and the Coastal Country Park would soon be its centre.

The Executive Councillor noted that he had briefed the Committee before about the North Sea Observatory, and it was hoped that one of the future scrutiny meetings would be held there. It was noted that visitor numbers continued to increase and it would be in the spotlight at the Architects' Journal awards where it was a finalist for Public Building of the Year and again when the deputy chairman of Natural England came to open the Lincolnshire leg of England's Coastal path in early February 2019.

It was queried whether there were plans to landscape the outside of the North Sea Observatory, and members were advised that the banking had been designed to be natural and wild, but there would be further work carried out. It was also noted that significant work was underway at Anderby Creek.

Disappointment was expressed that the number of apprenticeships nationally had dropped by 20% and it was queried whether this was an issue in Lincolnshire. It was not thought that Lincolnshire was significantly below the trend in terms of apprenticeships, and work was ongoing with the government in relation to training models for seasonal work so people can train during winter months, rather than summer months when they may find it more difficult to be away from the workplace, particularly for smaller businesses. It was also noted that there was less of a spike in

unemployment figures in October, as a lot more people were now on annual contracts.

#### 45 DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Consideration was given to a report which invited the Committee to consider the Draft Statement of Community Involvement. It was reported that the County Council was under a statutory duty to review its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) by 2019. It was noted that the current SCI was last updated in 2014 and set out how the County Council would engage and consult the public and stakeholders on the preparation of draft minerals and waste policy documents and during the determination of planning and related applications.

The Committee was advised that a proposed draft SCI had been prepared for public consultation commencing in January 2019 for a six week period, subject to the approval of the Executive.

Members were advised that all of the districts would have their own Statement of Community Involvement, and would set out how the authority would carry out consultation on planning matters. It was noted that it was part of the policy documentation, however, on this occasion there were not too many changes being proposed. The main change was around the increased use of social media. It was reported that the Council had a duty to notify people, not to consult with them, and the use of social media, particularly in relation to bigger applications, would ensure wider notification, as advertising functions on Facebook could be used to reach more people. However, responses to these Facebook posts would not be accepted as representations. They would still be required to be made directly to the authority.

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

- It was commented that it was believed that this was the right way forward, particular with the decline of the printed word, the more people that could be made aware the better. However, it was important that if people did have concerns they were submitted through the right processes.
- It was confirmed that that if there were any objections, they should still be submitted via e-mail or letter. It was also noted that the process for submitting representations would be made clear in the post.
- It was commented that one of residents' main issues with planning applications was that they had not received a letter about the application, and a lot of time was taken up with this rather than the residents setting out their concerns. Therefore it was important that the difference between notification and consultation was set out.
- It was noted that it was the intention that a link to the planning application would be included with any notification circulated via social media.

RESOLVED

That the Committee support the recommendations to the Executive as set out in the report.

46 INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE - REPORT  
GLOBAL WARMING ABOVE 1.5°C

Consideration was given to a report which provided an overview of "Global Warming above 1.5°C" (the report) which was released in October 2018 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report was commissioned by the UN to understand the impacts of 1.5°C, in comparison to 2°C, of warming on a global scale and aimed to strengthen the global response to climate change, alongside the challenge of sustainable development, and the need to eradicate poverty.

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

- It was commented that this was a valuable document and the messages needed to be put into a form that could be promoted with the public. If many people made small changes, this could make a difference. It was queried whether there was a beginning of a strategy to get this into the wider domain.
- Members were advised that officers were looking at what other authorities were doing. For example, Manchester had started a carbon literacy programme and were engaging with members of the public, to have those conversations around simple things that people could do every day.
- It was requested whether a strategy could be brought back to this Committee in three months.
- It was highlighted that there would be challenges around water management and how sufficient supply would be provided to the agricultural sector. However, there was already some good work going on through the Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership, the LEP, catchment partnerships particularly in the south of the county.
- It was commented that the next generation was much more interested in how some of these problems would be solved. It was thought right that something should come back to this Committee in future.
- These were issues where community leadership could play a role. It was important to create a legacy, and it was suggested that this needed to be circulated at school level, to start to change people's behaviour.
- It was noted that work had started on this with the publication of the revised Waste Strategy, as part of this was about trying to educate the public. It was commented that an authority could have many strategies, but it was about getting the messages through to the public and the work which had been done previously with schools was good, and there was a need to build in ways of reaching young people.
- It was also considered important that other generations did not miss out on the messages, due to concentrating on promoting messages to children.

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- It was important to educate people about the importance of properly insulating their home, particularly those on low incomes. Pressure was being put on private landlords to ensure that properties were insulated.
- It was highlighted that the report stated that limited warming to 1.5°C was theoretically possible, however, doing so would require unprecedented changes, and it was queried what those changes would be. Members were advised that this referred to changes in the way that all sectors of life were approached. There would be a need to decarbonise transport and industry. The decarbonisation required for industry would be massive. However, there were a lot of businesses for whom low carbon technology could be a game changer, and those businesses which were innovative would thrive.
- The importance of message management was emphasised. For example, if the message with the street light switch off had been that the authority wanted to reduce its carbon and save energy, there may have been a different response from the public.
- It was noted that the off shore wind farms were starting to produce a lot of energy.
- It was suggested that there was a need for building companies to start incorporating technology such as solar panels into new houses. However, it was noted that was a national government issue, and was currently not in building regulations. If it did become a national requirement for solar panels/flood resilience to be incorporated into new build properties, then the price of these technologies would come down.
- It was a positive step for the Council to aim to be more carbon neutral
- There was a need to think about the things which could be done in Lincolnshire, and it was commented that the authority should be doing everything practicable possible for a greener future. Members were informed that there was work going on in relation to this which would come to this committee in due course.
- There was a need to ensure the appropriate infrastructure was in place before any switch to renewable technology took place. If people were given the choice, it was thought that they would switch.
- There was a need for good homes to be built that were flood resilient and energy efficient.
- It was noted that if there was going to be a media strategy, it was important that the messages were good, for example, how much carbon had been saved.
- It was queried whether a list of five things that a person could do to help reduce carbon could be put together which could be included in newsletters that councillors sent out to their residents.
- It was noted that the authority was about to start engagement work on a new transport strategy for Lincoln, and this would include options for how people could get around the city in a way which used less carbon.
- It was suggested that the way forward would be for a strategy that was strong for local people but was also recognised nationally. There was a need for Lincolnshire to lead, rather than have requirements imposed on the authority and other organisations.

## RESOLVED

1. That the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee endorse the decision to join the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 2020 Commitment.
2. That a report come back to a future meeting of this Committee setting out a Strategy for how Lincolnshire residents could help to reduce the amount of carbon emissions in the County.

47 VISITOR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN: PROMOTING TOURISM

Consideration was given to a report which provided members with an opportunity to comment on the progress made against the priorities in the visitor economy action plan. Members were advised that the visitor economy action plan had identified the need to invest in better promotion of the county to potential tourists. Officers had been working with partners to modernise the [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) website and to prepare good quality material in order to market the natural coast in Lincolnshire. It was reported that [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) had been re-launched and was working well and promotional material for the natural coast was close to publication. All districts and the county council had contributed to the re-design of the website through the Tourism Officers' Group.

Members were informed that the design had been entirely driven by recently commissioned research whose over-arching message was that potential visitors did not know about Lincolnshire. The website aimed to be inspirational and act as a gateway, passing interested visitors onto more detailed websites for further information. As indicated by the research, messages were simple and used uncomplicated geographical areas of Coast, Countryside and City. There was also the addition of Inspiration which covered themes such as walking, cycling and aviation heritage.

The Committee received a short presentation which highlighted some of the newly designed pages of the natural coast website.

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

- The visitor figures for 2017 had been very positive.
- A Tourism Operators conference was being organised for March 2019
- It was commented that Lincolnshire was a huge county to cover, but there were a lot of good things for people to see. It was acknowledged that the service had a small budget to cover all the activities it needed to.
- It was confirmed that the county worked with all districts and the city Council through the Tourism Officers Group, and it was now working better than it had done previously.
- It was also highlighted that Lincolnshire Heritage Forum was developing a new website, and it was hoped that the County Council's website would signpost to it.

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- It was noted that the new visit Lincolnshire website would only link to other quality websites.
- There was a need for local groups, pubs and hotels to promote what they did so they could be included on the website.
- It was noted that there would not be any advertising space on the new website as it was there to act as a gateway.
- According to the survey, 81% of people were looking for a tourism offer that included what Lincolnshire's natural coast had to offer. Therefore the growth in Lincolnshire's tourism would come from that sector.
- It was confirmed that Chambers of Commerce were involved in these conversations.

RESOLVED

1. That the progress that had been made against the priorities in the visitor economy action plan be noted.
2. That the publicity material for promoting the natural coast be noted and supported.

48     LINCOLNSHIRE REMEMBRANCE PROJECT

Consideration was given to a report which summarised the outcomes achieved through completing the Lincolnshire Remembrance and Memories and Memorials project. The project was commissioned by the Council's Places Team using match funding to level in resources from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Armed Forces Covenant. It was noted that an important part of the project consisted of working with communities across the county to support commemoration activities throughout the World War 1 centenary project.

The Committee received a presentation which provided further detail in relation to some of the project work which was carried out. Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to information contained within the report and presentation and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- Heritage was a good vehicle for people to have a sense of place and better health and wellbeing was part of that as it encouraged people to go out in their local area.
- It was commented that it was a very interesting and informative presentation.
- It was also noted that the pack of leaflets which had been produced as part of this project was very good. It was confirmed that this project would link to Visit Lincolnshire. The Voices of the Great War exhibition produced for Poppies: Wave in 2016 had been offered to community groups around the county.
- Both projects engaged groups and individuals in thinking about and caring for aspects of their local heritage, made connections between different generations and enabled young people to participate in civic processes as a way of looking after the heritage.
- The legacy of the projects included the tangible assets of the Lincolnshire Remembrance database on Lincs to the Past and the new trails and websites

which had been produced. However, the process of participating in the projects particularly for the young people had created new understandings of the sacrifices made, enhanced and built new skills and encouraged a new connection with and pride in the place where they live.

- It was queried whether parish councils could take on the renovations of war memorials, and it was reported that most were already looked after by parish and town councils.

#### RESOLVED

1. That the outcomes and successes of the Lincolnshire Remembrance Project to support volunteers in recording war memorials be noted.
2. That the extent to which the Lincolnshire memories and Memorials project had engaged and worked with young people to produce trails, websites and learning resources which they had shared with their local communities be noted.
3. That the County Council's continued role in commissioning and supporting heritage activities be endorsed.

#### 49 ENVIRONMENT QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MEASURES (1 JULY TO 30 SEPTEMBER 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.

It was highlighted that the two indicators that had not been met related to the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, which was now out of date and was in the process of being fully revised. The draft new strategy was currently going through the final approval process and would be submitted to the County Council at its meeting on 14 December 2018 for approval.

The following was noted in relation to the performance indicators:

- Flooding incidents within a property – this related to where there was internal flooding, and not necessarily external flooding. It was noted that fewer incidents had been reported, but this was not something to be complacent about as it had been a hot summer, with a lot of dry months this year.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from county council activity – it was noted that this was slightly ahead of target, this was due to the Council reducing emissions slightly faster than those for the county as a whole.
- Waste – work was underway to revise the set of indicators for this area through the new waste strategy, and it was planned to replace them with more up to date and appropriate indicators.

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

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- Page 86 – this showed a decline in the volume of recyclable material collected at kerbside, and it was queried how much of an impact the reduction in recycling was having. However, members were advised that the issues were more around the quality of the recyclate collected rather than the quantity as there were high levels of contamination.
- It was noted that contamination was a big issue, as well as the decline in the amount of waste recycled, and it was queried what could be done about it, as there was a need to recognise the changing reality of the world.
- It was queried how the council could influence the manufacturing and packaging to reduce the waste.
- It was also noted that it was not necessarily the production of it which was the issue, but how to then dispose of the plastic was the issue, as not all plastics were able to be recycled.
- It was suggested that this may be a suitable subject for a scrutiny review group.
- It was commented that an unknown factor was the market for recyclables.

RESOLVED

That the performance against the indicators be noted.

50 ECONOMY QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MEASURES (1 JULY TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2018)

Consideration was given to a report which showed that the four economic development indicators had been met during quarter 2. It also proposed an increase to three of the indicators for 2019/2020 financial year.

It was noted that performance had been exceeded and it was recommended that the targets be increased to provide an opportunity to stretch activities.

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

- It was highlighted, that in terms of apprenticeships, it would be useful to see a trend, and have some feedback on apprenticeships within the County.
- It was noted that Lincolnshire had a low wage economy, but it would be interested to see what the distribution of average wage increases was across the county. It was suggested that this would provide recognition of whether the created jobs were increasing the average wages for people.

RESOLVED

1. That the progress made in achieving the Economic Development indicators for 2018/19 be noted.

2. That the Committee recommends to the Executive Councillor for Economy and Place that an increase in the indicators for 2019/20 be approved.

51 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

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

It was noted that there were some substantial items already on the agenda for the meeting in January 2019, and members were advised that these would be reviewed in the pre-meeting.

It was confirmed that it was planned to bring a report to the Committee in future regarding the skills agenda, and information on apprenticeships would be included in this.

The Chairman thanked all the officers for attending and for bringing the presentations.

RESOLVED

That the work programme as presented be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.25 pm