



**EXECUTIVE  
2 JUNE 2021**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M J HILL OBE (LEADER OF THE COUNCIL)**

Councillors Mrs P A Bradwell OBE (Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement) (Deputy Leader), Mrs W Bowkett (Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Public Health), R D Butroid (Executive Councillor for People Management, Legal and Corporate Property), L A Cawrey (Executive Councillor for Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services), C J Davie (Executive Councillor for Economic Development, Environment and Planning), D McNally (Executive Councillor for Waste and Trading Standards) and Mrs S Woolley (Executive Councillor for NHS Liaison, Community Engagement, Registration and Coroners)

Councillor R B Parker (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board) attended the meeting as an observer

Officers in attendance:-

Debbie Barnes OBE (Chief Executive), Justin Brown (Assistant Director Growth), James Drury (Executive Director Commercial), Glen Garrod (Executive Director - Adult Care and Community Wellbeing), Michelle Grady (Assistant Director – Finance), Nicole Hilton (Assistant Director - Communities), Heather Sandy (Executive Director of Children's Services), Professor Derek Ward (Director of Public Health), Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

**1      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R G Davies.

**2      DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS**

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

**3      ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS**

The Leader of the Council welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Executive of the new Council term.

**4      MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 7 APRIL 2021**

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 5 COVID-19 UPDATE

The Director of Public Health provided an update to the Executive in relation to the current situation with Covid-19 in Lincolnshire as of that morning. Key points included, that the rate of infection in England was just under 29 cases per 100,000 of population, in comparison to Lincolnshire's rate of 19.4 cases per 100,000 of population, which was below the England rate.

In the seven days to 30 May 2021, there were 130 new cases of Covid-19 reported across the entire county, which was a relatively small number, and the majority of these cases were in younger, working age adults. A small increase across secondary school age children had been seen after 17 May 2021. However, the half term holiday was providing a break in transmission and so rates were coming back down.

It was highlighted that the previous day (1 June 2021) was the first day that the UK had not reported any deaths from Covid-19 since 2020. It was also noted that Lincolnshire had not recorded any Covid-19 deaths in the preceding seven days. There was a suggestion that the link between infection and hospital admissions had been broken.

In relation to hospital admissions, there were currently two people in ULH hospitals with Covid-19, however, neither patient was in intensive care or required a ventilator.

An update was also provided on the prevalence of the Indian, or Delta, variant in Lincolnshire. It was reported that in the last two weeks of May, approximately 300 cases of Covid-19 were reported in Lincolnshire, of these approximately 100 were sent for sequencing, and of that number, about 1 in 5 were found to be the new variant. It was acknowledged that Lincolnshire was behind the curve, but it was expected that the Delta variant would become the dominant in Lincolnshire, but this could be within a couple of weeks, a month or a little longer. However, the key question was whether it would drive increased hospital admissions. The messages remained the same in relation to "Hands, Face, Space" and also people were encouraged to take up the vaccination when they were called.

In response to the update, a question was raised in relation to whether people were presenting with more serious symptoms of Covid-19, and what was the evidence in relation to the effectiveness of the vaccine against the delta variant. The Executive was advised that there was some early evidence that the Delta variant was not quite as affected by the one dose and would provide 30 – 40% after one dose, in comparison the vaccines gave about 60% immunity against the Kent (Alpha) variant after one dose. However, after both doses, the levels of immunity against the variants was broadly similar. It was also highlighted that the majority of admissions to hospital were those that had not received either dose of a vaccine. There was only a very small number of people in hospital with this variant who had received both doses.

At the time of the meeting, around 75% of the adult population of Lincolnshire had received one dose, and almost 50% had received both doses.

In terms of the timescales around the final easing of restrictions on 21 June 2021, there was an expectation that the data would be clear enough by the end of the week, and there would be a clear view from government by the end of the following week on whether the UK should progress to Step 4 of the Roadmap.

## **6      THE USHER GALLERY**

The Executive received a report which provided an update on the plans for culture and heritage in the context of the post Covid-19 recovery planning and sought comments on these plans.

The current situation in relation to the Usher Gallery in Lincoln was summarised and it was highlighted that notification was required from the City of Lincoln Council by 1 July 2021 of their intentions regarding the termination of the Collections Management Agreement and the associated plans for the future of the Usher Gallery. It was outlined that that the proposal of the County Council was to seek a sustainable commercial management agreement and to also broaden the use of The Usher Gallery.

Following discussion by the Executive, the following points were noted:

- Visitor numbers to The Usher Gallery were very low, and there was a clear need for improvement to make it a more attractive offer.
- There was agreement that the public buildings (museums, library, castle) needed to offer something that residents and visitors to the area would want to go and see. It was highlighted that the gallery was located next to The Collection, which had attracted some fantastic exhibitions, and so should be complementing that offer.
- It had been discussed pre-Covid-19 that there were changes needed to improve the offer of The Usher Gallery.
- The report presented was welcomed by the Executive and there was support for a solution to be found.
- There was a need for the Gallery to be able to meet its running costs, like Lincoln Castle did, and a similar model should be explored.
- It was commented that the art, watches and clocks which were part of the Usher Collection were of high quality and were for the people of Lincolnshire.
- The vision was to upgrade the whole of the cultural offer, and to ensure that the Usher Gallery was offering something that people wanted to visit. This had been achieved very successfully

The Leader advised that he had been corresponding with the Usher Trust on this issue, who may be willing to offer some financial support.

## **7      HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES**

The Executive received a report which sought to provide information about the use of a booking system at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) introduced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and requested the views of the Executive prior to a decision as to whether the system should remain.

The report set out the background to the introduction of the system and factors which had to be considered in the early stages of the pandemic to enable the HWRC's to be able to reopen safely. The report also highlighted the increase in complaints received during this period, and provided an update on fly-tipping. It was highlighted that there was a perception from residents that the initial closure and reopening with the introduction of the booking system had led to an increase in fly-tipping incidents. However the data did not support this view and there was no demonstrable correlation.

The report also summarised the different approaches taken nationally during the pandemic and also provided feedback and observations from external HWRC contractors.

During discussion by the Executive, the following was noted:

- The HWRCs booking system and separately, fly-tipping had been common issues raised by residents during the election, and there was a perception that the closure of the HWRCs had led to an increase in fly-tipping. Officers advised that at the start of the pandemic, there had been a requirement to close all HWRCs, and the booking system was only ever intended to be a temporary measure to manage the flow of people through the HWRCs and allow them to open safely.
- The booking system was created and implemented in a relatively short turn around and was subject to review and adaptation.
- It was also highlighted that the vast majority of people had utilised the system without issue or concerns (in excess of 500k bookings) and positive feedback reported that they had felt safe on site, and with fewer people waiting they had not felt rushed whilst they were visiting the site.
- It was queried how sites could ensure that trade waste was kept out of the HWRCs if the booking system was removed. It was acknowledged that the booking system had enabled greater control of this. Consideration was being given to various mitigation measures, including retaining the permit system for vans, but simplifying it to make it easier to use.
- It was highlighted that the service had traditionally been one of low complaints and that the increase had been as a direct result of the introduction of the HWRC booking system, particularly during the period when waste streams were limited to specific days.
- It was highlighted that recycling rates at HWRCs were very good, and there was a need to make these services as convenient as possible to use.
- Concerns were raised that the removal of the booking system could see a return to managed access and long queuing to gain access to sites. Officers were to look at possible mitigation, however, it was recognised that for particularly busy sites, this was a likely outcome. The Executive Councillor for Waste and Trading Standards

would be submitting a report containing proposals to the relevant scrutiny committee in due course.

## 8 LEVELLING UP FUND

A report was presented to the Executive which provided an update in relation to the Levelling Up Fund. It was reported that the County Council had the opportunity to make two bids into the funds that the government had made available for regional growth – the UK Community Renewal Fund and the Levelling Up Fund. The report set out the basis on which bids would be made and outlined some of the projects which would be funded if the bids were successful.

Comments made by the Executive during discussion included the following:

- Schemes to be funded if the applications were successful would need to be 'shovel ready' and able to be completed within two years;
- A response in relation to both bids was expected before the summer recess.
- The details of the bid would be made public once they had been finalised.

## 9 VISION FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

The Leader of the Council set out the vision for the coming four years and highlighted some of the issues which would be priorities for the Executive over this time, which included the following:

- Transport – supporting and improving the equipment and fleet and lobbying for the A1 to be upgraded through Lincolnshire;
- Environment – a challenging target had been set for reducing carbon emissions. In terms of recycling, the separate paper and card collections were to be rolled out across the county. A government decision in relation to the collection of food waste was awaited.
- Greater Lincolnshire – a commitment had been made to work with all partners to ensure that Greater Lincolnshire was recognised. Devolution remained an ambition.
- Roads, potholes and maintenance of highways remained a high priority and the Council would be lobbying to ensure that the £12m lost from the highways funding was restored.
- Fly-tipping – the Executive Councillor for Waste and Trading Standards would be developing proposals to deal with this issue.

## 10 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

A report by the Executive Director – Resources, was received which requested that the Executive make appointments to a number of outside bodies for the forthcoming quadrennial. It also sought the delegation of appointments to the Leader and Executive Councillors listed in Appendix B and C of the report.

RESOLVED

1. That the Executive approves appointments to those bodies listed in Appendix A to the report, and delegates to the Leader of the Council authorisation to allocate the remaining places to opposition members following consultation with Group Leaders;
2. That appointments to organisations as detailed in Appendix B of the report be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with Group Leaders;
3. That the appointment to organisations as detailed in Appendix C of the report be delegated to the Executive Councillor listed, in consultation with Group Leaders.

The meeting closed at 11.53 am