

**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
24 MAY 2022**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M A Griggs (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors M D Boles, I G Fleetwood, A G Hagues, H Spratt, G J Taylor, L Wootten, K Clarke, A J Baxter and M D Boles

Councillor Davie attended the meeting as an observer

Officers in attendance:-

Chris Miller (Deputy Head of Environment), Dan Clayton (Sustainability Manager), David Hickman (Head of Environment), Jason Cooper (Transport and Growth Manager), Justin Brown (Assistant Director – Growth), Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Nicole Hilton (Assistant Director - Communities), Samantha Harrison (Head of Economic Development), Simon Murphy (Senior Project Officer) and Thomas Crofts (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I Carrington (Chairman) and R Wootten.

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government Committee and Political Groups) Regulation 1990, Councillor K Clarke was replacing Councillor J Killey for this meeting only.

2 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in proceedings.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 APRIL 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND LEAD OFFICERS

The Chairman expressed thanks to Councillor Wootten for his past chairmanship of the Committee, and to David Hickman, Head of Environment, for his services to the Council.

Chris Miller, Deputy Head of Environment was to assume David's responsibilities and continue his support to the Committee.

Councillor Davie, Executive Councillor for Economic Development, Environment and Planning, made the following announcements:

- Thanks was given to Councillor Wootten for his past chairmanship of the Committee and Councillor Carrington was welcomed to the Chair.
- Thanks was given to David Hickman, Head of Environment, for his services to the Council.
- Businesses and communities faced challenging times ahead as inflation continued to put pressure on finances.
- The Committee was updated on the following projects:
 - Over 100 manufacturing companies had attended the Greater Lincolnshire Manufacturing Conference, which had ran networking and workshop events for local companies with an emphasis on sustainability, carbon capture and net zero technologies.
 - The number of Lincolnshire apprenticeships were growing and proved the value of growing our own talent, with the successes of apprenticeships having been recognised at an award ceremony hosted last week.
 - Workshops on accessing Council contracts were currently being hosted at the Businesses Exp at the Lincolnshire Showground to help encourage and educate local businesses on bidding for Council schemes.
 - The Business and Innovation Centre was due to be completed in July 2022.
 - The This is Lincolnshire project had been launched, which aimed to help support local pubs in diversifying their hospitality- offers.

Members noted the announcements, and the following comments were raised:

- The number of apprentices had increased across Lincolnshire. Specific date was to be made available to the Committee.
- Support to local pubs was welcomed and Members agreed that it would be useful to see a report on the impact of This is Lincolnshire project in the future.
- Members noted the impacts of the increasing cost of living and saw devolved powers as a means to scaling up local support.

5 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN V - ZERO CARBON TARGET

Dan Clayton, Sustainability Manager, and Jason Copper, Transport & Growth Manager, presented a report on how the new Local Transport Plan V assisted in meeting the Council's Net Zero Carbon targets and the how it aimed to reduce transport related carbon dioxide emissions. The following was reported:

- Following the report presented to the Committee in January on Lincolnshire carbon emissions, it was requested that this report before the Committee today give further detail on the impact of transport.
- Transport accounted for one third of all carbon emissions in Lincolnshire.
- Transport emissions had stayed constant since 1990 whilst other sectors had managed to reduce their emissions. Population increases, larger car sizes and additional demand for home delivery services had counteracted advances in decarbonisation within the transport sector.
- Lincolnshire's rurality also contributed to transport being a large carbon emitting sector. Rurality also posed a barrier to switching to electric vehicles, as new infrastructure required greater resourcing.
- The Local Transport Plan V was adopted by Council in February 2022, with the following workstreams included:
 - Investment into electric vehicle infrastructure.
 - Creating better access to train stations.
 - Creating more efficient use of rail and water freight.

During consideration of the report, the following comments were raised:

- Train services were found to be a big issue in tackling transport emissions – services were often inefficient and unreliable in terms of passenger density and timetabling, and tickets were very costly.
- It was important that additional infrastructure needed to be considered in supporting greater train use to prevent towns and roads being too frequently bisected by trainline barriers.
- Further consideration was needed regarding home charging of electric vehicles, especially for housing without private driveways.
- Concerns were raised regarding future tax implications of moving towards private electric vehicles and whether the electricity grid was capable of sustaining such increased demand.
- New railway stations would help people access the existing rail network more readily.
- Increasing cycle infrastructure was welcomed and was an important part in decarbonising transport.
- The timings of Council meetings could better accommodate the use of rail by the public and attendees.
- Cross-border emissions were calculated as part of extrapolated data based on average journey times taking through Lincolnshire.
- Encouraging the use of electric bikes featured as part of the broader strategy.
- As well as encouraging efficiencies in long distance freight, shortening supply chains was another important aspect in reducing transport emissions.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee note the report and comments made.

2. That the Committee's comments be passed on to the Executive Councillor for Economic Development, Environment and Planning and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, for their consideration alongside the Green Master Plan targets.

6 GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2022-2024

Justine Brown, Assistant Director – Growth, and Samantha Harrison, Head of Economic Development, presented a report on the draft Greater Lincolnshire Internationalisation Strategy and accompanying action plan. The following was reported:

- The Greater Lincolnshire Internationalisation Strategy looked to establish partnership working between the Council and the private sector to facilitate the growth of local businesses.
- The Council sought to help businesses grow by supporting them to access international markets – offering 1-2-1 advice and access to specialists in different areas of business.
- The Strategy also sought to cement the Council's joint working with the Chamber of Commerce and the University of Lincoln.
- It had been found that barriers preventing small businesses accessing international markets were due to widely held perceptions of high setup costs and a lack of demand.
- The Business Lincolnshire website was being used as a portal for businesses to access relevant information and further content such as publicising successful case studies and a peer support network were being developed.

During consideration of the report, the following comments were raised:

- Members welcomed the Council taking a proactive role in facilitating economic growth in the context of uncertain times.
- Offered support included helping businesses access EU markets following Brexit.
- Lincolnshire's food sector remained strong despite economic challenges.
- Some businesses were cautious to expand into unfamiliar territory due to the reassures of the pandemic. Support was needed to help encourage growth.
- Advice to business owners was best targeted to experts in a given area but who were not necessarily experts in international trade.
- Business engaged in international trade largely focused on other English-speaking countries, support needed to be targeted at helping businesses to explore other markets, especially emerging markets.
- Members noted that local markets should not be forgotten, especially in the context of reducing carbon emissions.

RESOLVED

3. That the Committee support the Greater Lincolnshire Internationalisation Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2024.
4. That the Committee note the report and comments made.

7 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by Kiara Chatzioannou, Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the content of its own work programme for the coming year.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be approved.

The meeting closed at 11.42am.