

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT
 BOARD
 27 APRIL 2023**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R B PARKER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors T J N Smith (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Brockway, M Brookes, I D Carrington, P M Dilks, C S Macey, C E H Marfleet, N H Pepper and E W Strengiel

Councillors: M J Hill OBE, H Spratt and M A Whittington attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Andrew Crookham (Executive Director Resources), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer), Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer), Michelle Andrews (Assistant Director – ICS), Matthew Garrard (Head of Policy), Arnd Hobohm (Serco Contract Manager), Daniel Larkin (Policy Officer), Lee Sirdifield (Assistant Director – Corporate) and Ian Blindell (SERCO)

127 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R J Kendrick and Martin Kyle (Parent Governor Representative)

Debbie Barnes (Chief Executive) and Councillor R Butroid's apologies were also noted.

128 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

129 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 MARCH 2023

RESOLVED:

That minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

130 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

There were no announcements.

131 CONSIDERATION OF CALL-INS

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None had been received.

132 CONSIDERATION OF COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR ACTION

None had been received.

133 REFRESH OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy which invited the Board to consider proposed updates to the Corporate Plan which was agreed by the County Council in December 2019, to ensure that it reflected successful delivery and remains relevant and responsive to evolving challenges and opportunities over the ten-year lifetime of the Plan. The Board were invited to provide feedback in advance of the plan being submitted to the meeting of the county Council on 19 May 2023 for approval.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- Concerns over the inadequate space within newly built accommodation were highlighted.
- The Board acknowledged aspirations to create a thriving environment but highlighted a need for improvements in areas such as green spaces, parks and transport links and to embed the Corporate Plan into systems to make improvements for residents.
- Members also highlighted the lack of available and quality healthcare provision in Lincolnshire. Members were assured that since the development of the Integrated Care System in Lincolnshire, the Council had greater levels of influence on joint working and would continue to work closely with health partners on these issues.
- Assurance was provided the updates to the Corporate Plan sought to make measurable progress by setting specific measures which could be performance managed. Officers would work with colleagues in the performance team to review measures with the Council's success framework, which was aligned to the Corporate Plan, to ensure the framework was meaningful.
- Officers acknowledged the difficulties in measuring the success of 'high aspirations and other key priorities highlighted within the plan, given that they were not quantitative measures. Assurance was provided that the wording of the key priorities would be reviewed with the communications team to ensure the wording was appropriate in and ensure targets were attainable and measurable.
- Members welcomed the high aspirations within the plan whilst acknowledging that Lincolnshire County Council did not have direct control of achieving all targets, for example educational targets within academised schools and addressing climate change through planning matters. Whilst it was recognised that these could not be achieved alone, the Board was reassured that the plan sought to highlight what success should look like for Lincolnshire Officers would continue to work with partners to achieve these aspirations with partners.

- A lack of provision for high skilled, high value jobs within Lincolnshire was highlighted. Members were advised that part of the Corporate Plan ambition was to achieve a devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire which would exert a greater influence on national providers and provide a direct influence on infrastructure and place a focus on obtaining skills that Lincolnshire required for future economies, helping to achieve aspirations set out in the plan.
- Members emphasised the benefits of setting out ambitious plans and aspiring to make a difference to the lives of residents.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes and feedback provided by the Board be taken into account by officers in finalising the refreshed Corporate Plan in advance of its submission to the meeting of the County Council on 19 May 2023 for approval.

134 PERFORMANCE OF THE CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRACT

Consideration was given to a report by the Serco Contract Manager, which invited the Board to consider an update on Serco's performance against contractual Key Performance Indicators specified in the Corporate Support Services Contract during the review period October 2022 to March 2023.

On behalf of Serco, Ian Blindell updated the Board on key achievements and priorities for Serco throughout the period, which included supporting with business world ERP platform implementation and working in collaboration with Council service to ensure a smooth transition; supporting the Digital delivery project between Serco and the Council which was progressing well and on schedule and the creation of a digital access channel which supported online carers to create online support plan. The Board noted that Serco had already invested significantly in work around social values to support for citizens of Lincolnshire, including 550 volunteered hours to charitable organisations across the County; supporting three individuals to employment and providing over 100 mobile data sims to help support Lincolnshire's most vulnerable residents.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- Mitigation was a last resort and decisions to put measures into mitigation would be approached in stages and on a monthly basis, with performance continuing to be recorded throughout those periods.
- The Board was assured that Officers regularly analysed performance data in detail which could be provided to the Board on request. The Board was reassured that substantial failings would be reported. It was agreed that quantitative data which set out the impact of targets in mitigation be included in future reports.
- Members were supportive of IMT KPI 19 having been placed into mitigation to focus on work of the retrieval of licenses for Microsoft Office 365 which benefitted the Council.

- Members welcomed the current 100% target service level for text messages responded to within one working day and 90% of emails responded to in one working day. It was clarified that an acknowledgement email or text would count as a response.
 - It was acknowledged that there had been a gradual decline in the overall number of calls received by the service centre.
 - It was suggested that the addition of a County Councillors' option to the service desk would be beneficial.
1. That assurance be given to the performance of the Corporate Support Services Contract;
 2. That the next update to the Board be scheduled for 26 October 2023;
 3. That a meeting between Officers and Councillors be scheduled to consider key issues highlighted by the Board during consideration of the report.

135 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND, GRANT SCHEME UTILISATION 2023-2024

Consideration was given to a report by the Assistant Director – ICB, which invited the Board to consider a report on the Household Support Fund Grant Scheme Utilisation 2023-24, which sought approval for the preferred option for how Lincolnshire could utilise the County's allocation of the household Support Fund. The Board were invited to consider and provide feedback on the report prior to a decision by the Leader of the Council between 5th and 12th May 2023.

The Board supported the recommendations to the Executive and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- In relation to tranche 1, 2 or 3 of the Household Support Fund, there was no option to provide funding to support longevity or financial planning, and support and advice for families and other households. However, there is some leniency in tranche 4 of the grant, and the Council is working with the district councils to look at how to link into other advice and support systems. In addition, people that had access to this support throughout the tranches had also been offered access to other information, advice and support by the partners distributing the fund, such as around food preparation, planning and budgeting, which was funded by other sources.
- All elements of the previous tranches of the Household Support Fund grant had been fully utilised.
- The application-based process would enable any household that did not fit into the identified cohorts to apply for assistance if they are in need of some additional support.
- The indices of multiple deprivation would be used to determine how much each district council would receive. The funding would be allocated on a percentage basis based on the multiple deprivation that reflected the whole county and would ensure this would be weighted towards areas of deprivation.

- All partners that were supporting the distribution of this funding were absorbing costs where they possibly could. Some organisations, such as early year providers and voluntary sector organisations, had found it difficult to absorb those costs and therefore the Council had tried to attribute administration costs within the grant to support them, but keeping these as low as possible to ensure as much of the funding as possible was provided to vulnerable households.
- There was a range of monitoring mechanisms in place as the County Council is the accountable body for this grant. The funding to district councils was retrospective, and therefore the district councils would commit the funding and once they had been evidenced how it had been spent, the funding would be allocated to them by the County Council. In the previous rounds, the County Council received monthly reports from each district council over the period of the grant detailing their spend levels. As the tranche 4 grant was for a 12-month period, it was anticipated that there would be quarterly reporting. In addition, information has to be provided to the Department for Work and Pensions in relation to the type of households being supported. A regular management information report is submitted by the County Council, which is approved by the Section 151 officer and the lead officer for management of the grant.
- With regards to the funding for children eligible for free school meals, it was estimated that this would be approximately £75 per pupil in the summer term, and then there would another round in November so that it covered two academic years. This would mean that current Year 11 pupils would be eligible for the summer term allocation and children joining reception from September would be eligible for the November allocation. In relation to the housing benefits scheme, the district councils would have their own decision-making process to go through to determine how that funding would be allocated. The ambition was to match the national cost of living payment of around £900 for those households eligible for housing benefit only, as those households had not benefited from the national scheme.
- The Board requested further details on the underspend of allocated grant funding for the Government's National Tutoring Programme within Lincolnshire.

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendations to the Leader of the Council be supported;
2. That the comments made during the discussion, as detailed above, be passed on to the Leader of the Council as part of his consideration of this item.

136 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES

Consideration was given a report by the Chairman of the Environment and Economy, which detailed the recent work of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee and its forward work programme, as set out at appendix A to the report.

The Chairman of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee highlighted the Committee's concerns over the lack of supply of the National Grid and its flexibility to take

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locally generated renewables, particularly small and medium scale renewables and the impact this could have on economic development in Lincolnshire.

The Chairman of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee reported two changes to the work programme;

- The report on the outcomes from the Motorhomes and Campervans Working Group had been deferred from the 30th May to the 12th September;
- Lincolnshire County Council's Carbon Report for 2022-23 had been added to the agenda for the meeting scheduled for 23 October 2023.

The Board also noted that the Theddlethorpe investment fund was currently oversubscribed, and the partnership would allocate the money for this fund.

Consideration was then given to a report by the Chairman of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee, which detailed the recent work of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee and its forward work programme, as set out at appendix B to the report. The Chairman of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee reported two changes to the work programme:

- the Grantham High Street Fund – Station Approach scheduled for the 22nd of May had been deferred to the 11th of September.
- A report on the Bus Service Improvement Plan – Refresh would be added to meeting on the 11th of September.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- Improvements to Caistor high street were welcomed.
- The need to ensure that the timings of multiple schemes of highways works within one area work were aligned was emphasised, particularly with reference to value for money and consideration of disruption to residents.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Board was satisfied with activity undertaken since 26 January 2023 by:

- a. The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee; and
- b. The Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

2. That the Board was satisfied with the planned work programmes of:

- a. The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee; and
- b. The Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

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The Board noted the report.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm