

CORPORATE PLAN SUCCESS FRAMEWORK 2021/22 - QUARTER 4

COMMENTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At its meeting on 30 June 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the report and unanimously agreed to support the recommendations to the Executive.

In response to questions from members of the Board, the following points were confirmed:

- In relation to concerns raised about the ambition “Enable everyone to enjoy life to the full” and how achievable this was for all residents in Lincolnshire, the Deputy Leader of the Council agreed to raise this with the Leader of the Council and recognised that this ambition would not be applicable to all residents in Lincolnshire but for those that needed additional support.
- *PI 44: Days lost to sickness absence per FTE* - There had been an increase in mental health illness amongst Council staff since the Covid-19 pandemic. A range of measures had been put in place to support staff through staff networks, the Public Health team and HR. The Smarter Working Policy ensured bringing teams together could be maximised to help support colleagues. In addition, it was important to ensure that new starters to the Council were supported.
- *PIs 36 – 39: Waste & Recycling* - The headline figures for household waste recycling indicate that recycling rates were falling which was a concern. This was a reflection of changing habits during the pandemic where people were more at home and their approach to managing waste had changed. The rollout of the separate paper and card collections in three district areas was bringing benefits in terms of an upturn in the recycling rates and improved quality of the waste. There was a need to continue to improve and look at other initiatives to increase recycling rather than have waste go through the Energy from Waste plant. The Environment Act would bring further expectations and responsibilities on the Council as the waste disposal authority and the districts as the waste collection authorities in terms of how other elements of waste, such as food waste, were disposed of. The Council was waiting for revised legislation and guidance from the government and the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee would be kept informed of these developments. In response to a query on whether more in-depth data on recycling could be provided, it was agreed that the presentation of the information would be looked into to make these performance reports and the performance reports to the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee more effective for Members.
- *Activity A23: Advocate for investment in our transport and energy infrastructure, digital connectivity and schools, championing active, sustainable* - it was clarified that the work involved would be to deliver a report to help establish the Council’s evidence, based on an understanding of the infrastructure requirements. The challenge of finding a supplier to deliver this work reflected the challenges that exist in the wider marketplace which needed to be taken into consideration when planning future project timelines.

- *Activity A28: Champion Lincolnshire as a destination of choice to visit, live, relax, work and do business* - the handover of the Cluster Hub building at the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone had been delayed due to supply chain issues. The handover of the building was now scheduled for early July.
- *PI 32: Percentage of superfast broadband coverage in residential & business premises* – it was recognised that those areas of Lincolnshire which still did not have access to superfast broadband were at risk of being left even further behind with the roll out of ultrafast and gigabit broadband.
- *PI 43: Total number of contacts received* - there was now a focus on early intervention measures since the complaints team had been brought back in-house. This was resulting in an increase in the number of complaints being resolved early which was not specific to any one area of the Council. The complaints process was continually being reviewed and the complaints team would continue to be supplemented with some short-term support to enable further improvement in the early intervention approach. Further information on the complaints process would be provided at future meetings of the Audit Committee. A copy of the Ombudsman decision notice which had contributed to the increase in the number of complaints would be circulated to the Board.
- *PI 2: Percentage of pupils in outstanding or good schools* and the 16.6% of pupils not in outstanding or good schools. Some of those schools were part of the Lincoln Anglican Trust, which was run by the Church of England. The Council had raised concerns about this Trust with the Department for Education historically and one secondary school within the Lincoln Academy Trust had been judged inadequate, and a new sponsor was sought by the Department for Education who could not find another sponsor, and as a result this would delay the school being able to improve. Across all schools, the pupils were fairly evenly split between primary and secondary schools, and a breakdown of these figures would be provided to the Board. In addition, inspections of schools were paused during the pandemic and those schools not judged good or outstanding have had to wait a long time to be reinspected and to have the judgement changed to reflect any improvements in the school. The Council's role in school improvement has changed significantly over the last few years and the Council was increasingly focussed on ensuring schools were inclusive of all children such as those with SEND and in receipt of multiple fixed term exclusions.
- *PI 1: Percentage of schools that are judged good or outstanding* – Lincolnshire's figures were skewed by the large number of small rural primary schools, which limited the amount of per pupil funding they received, and the selective education system in Lincolnshire. Ofsted applied the same criteria for good and outstanding to every secondary school regardless of whether they were selective or non-selective which meant that some of the benchmarking for non-selective schools could be challenging when there was a cohort of children at the higher end who were being educated in another school in the same area. There was a range of other measures which also needed taking into account when considering the performance of children.