

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 20 February 2024 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)
Councillor Jacob Flear (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Trevor Bridgwood
Councillor Lynda Mullally
Councillor Maureen Palmer
Councillor Roger Pilgrim
Councillor Moira Westley
Councillor Karen Carless

Also Present: Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Trevor Young

In Attendance:
Nova Roberts Director of Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services
Sally Grindrod-Smith Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Ady Selby Director - Operational & Commercial Services
Ele Snow Senior Democratic and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Jeanette McGhee

Membership: Councillor Karen Carless was appointment substitute for Councillor Jeanette McGhee

33 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 16 January 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

34 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

35 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

With no comments or questions, the Matters Arising Schedule was **DULY NOTED**.

36 PRESENTATION ITEM - PROGRESS UPDATE: CULTURAL STRATEGY

The Committee heard from the Director for Planning, Regeneration and Communities regarding the progress of the Cultural Strategy. This had been requested, and passed by unanimous vote, at the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024.

The Committee heard that the Peer Challenge in 2020 had recommended:

“The Council should therefore consider a Cultural Strategy to understand the work that is needed in order to maximise the benefits and to achieve a clear strategic position.”

The Cultural Research Report in June 2021 identified cultural activity already taking place across the district and identified key themes for future work. The Cultural Strategy Action Plan in September 2021 identified five priority work streams and a Cultural Events and Marketing Officer fixed term role was established and recruited to. It was explained that the Director of the Centre for Culture and Creativity at the University of Lincoln, and the Midlands Chair of Arts Council England had supported the Council to develop the brief to tender for the provision of services for the delivery of a Cultural Strategy. In the summer of 2022, Tom Flemming Consultancy was appointed after a competitive tender exercise. In September 2023, a session was held for all Members to explain the background, development and purpose of the Cultural Strategy with the intention of it being presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee for final approval.

With regard to the Leisure, Culture, Events and Tourism Member Working Group (LCET), it was explained that the group had oversight of the development of the Cultural Strategy. Objectives of LCET were:

- To work together to actively promote the district’s strengths and to maximise opportunities.
- To ensure the work undertaken across leisure, culture, events, and tourism is co-ordinated and aligned with corporate priorities.
- To lobby, influence and challenge the wider organisation to highlight the importance of the work of the group.
- To market the district as a location for major events and festivals.
- To champion activities in relation to leisure, culture, heritage, events and tourism.

The Committee heard that the group met monthly and was supported by Officers from across the relevant council service areas. LCET fell under the parentage of the Prosperous Communities Committee and, as with all Working Groups, had no direct decision-making powers, instead feeding into the work plan of the parent committee.

With regard to the next steps for the Cultural Strategy, the Director – Planning, Regeneration and Communities explained that having received feedback from Members following the session in September 2023, and via LCET, the following steps had been identified:

- Strategy to be updated to reflect feedback
- Finalisation of an Executive Summary
- Final review by Leisure, Culture, Events and Tourism Group
- Prosperous Communities Committee receive the Cultural Strategy for consideration and approval
- Funding secured for Cultural Development Officer – move to recruitment
- Delivery of action plan

The Chairman thanked the Director for her presentation and invited questions or comments from the Committee. Members expressed their support for the approval of the Cultural Strategy and recognised the potential benefits for the district. Events such as the Illuminate festival were praised and highlighted as being well received by the community. A Member of the Committee enquired as to the involvement of Ward Members to ensure a district-wide approach, as well as how other areas of 'culture', being such a broad term, could be at risk of being overlooked. He provided examples such as the strong biker community in Lincolnshire, the area's armed forces history and the waterways.

In response, it was explained that involvement from Ward Members was always invited and strongly encouraged, as was involvement with Town and Parish Councils. It was necessary to sustain the funding for cultural events, with the strategy providing the foundation for that, and to then enable the extension of all cultural events across the district.

The Chairman invited to speak Visiting Member Councillor L. Rollings, Deputy Leader and Chairman of LCET. She thanked the Committee for their comments and expressed her support for the views expressed. She also thanked the Chairman of the Committee for his work over previous years to develop the cultural offering in the district. She recognised that the term 'culture' covered such a breadth of area and highlighted the desire for the Cultural Strategy to incorporate the grass-roots level work that was already happening across the district, enabling activities in communities and recognising the opportunities already out there. She expressed to the Committee the need for there to be the recognition of local talent, and understanding of how the local communities managed their own events. The need for the Cultural Strategy to progress was well recognised, in order to build those foundations across the district.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Rollings for her comments and summarised to the Committee that the strategy provided the philosophy of what the Council was doing, underpinning all of the threads that had been discussed, and stated it was key for the strategy to be in place in order to open opportunities to secure funding which would in turn build and grow the cultural offering in West Lindsey.

In looking at the Committee to offer support to the progression of the Cultural Strategy, the Chairman read aloud two recommendations. Having been proposed and seconded, the Chairman took the vote and it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) the Cultural Strategy be included on the Prosperous Communities work plan for a future meeting; and
- b) the terms of reference for the Leisure, Culture, Events and Tourism Member Working Group be reviewed for approval by the Prosperous Communities Committee.

37 PREPARATION FOR PRESENTATION ITEM 26 MARCH 2024: ROLL OUT OF THE PURPLE-LIDDED BINS

The Chairman introduced the item and explained to Members it was a discussion item in preparation for their presentation from Rachel Stamp, Contract Management and Performance Senior Officer from Lincolnshire County Council, at the meeting on 26 March 2024. The Chairman explained to Members that scrutiny was seeking an update on the roll out of purple bins across Lincolnshire, and there would be an opportunity for Members to ask questions and make comments ahead of the next meeting.

The Director of Operational and Commercial Services presented background information to the item, explaining that the roll out the purple-lidded bins in West Lindsey took place in April 2022, following a decision from Members in November 2021 to give residents the opportunity to separate paper and card from other recyclables, as the Council aimed to produce a cleaner product from residents' recycling and to prevent contamination. He then highlighted the following salient points:

- West Lindsey was the third district council in Lincolnshire to make this decision along with Boston Borough Council and Kesteven District Council.
- The initiative provided better and improved environmental outcomes for West Lindsey and linked with the Council's Joint Municipal Waste Strategy objectives which were to improve the quality of recycling and produce a common set of materials produced across Lincolnshire and contribute to the recycling target.
- The purple bin collection was operated on an alternate fortnightly basis to the blue bin at no additional cost to residents.
- The collaborative work effort between West Lindsey and Lincolnshire County Council, the authority for waste disposal, was successful and officers from both authorities worked hard to bring the scheme forward, from officers working on the ground supporting the roll out, as well as the customer service support available to residents.
- The Council had tested and successfully implemented Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the first time, with a web bot used to answer residents' questions, to reduce demand and respond in a timely manner to residents.
- There were some issues with embedding the scheme and the change for residents recycling, for example there were instances with bins being rejected, but the

service was now embedded in the district with cooperation from residents and was operating business as usual now.

- In terms of dry paper and card contamination, contamination had been reduced from 30% to under 10%.

Members listened to the presentation and observed the increase in cardboard and paper packaging from online deliveries to residents and this was being left as there was not enough room for this to fit in residents' bins. The Director of Operational and Commercial Services responded that the team made every effort to collect overspill cardboard left out by residents on collection day. However, if this had been left outside and become wet it would not be possible to be collected as this would contaminate the waste collection load. He advised that residents should break down and fold cardboard packaging as much as possible to fit inside their bin.

In preparation for the next meeting, Members and officers discussed possible questions to pose to Lincolnshire County Council. Members proposed the following questions:

- What has the impact been of the roll out of the purple bins on a county-wide scale?
- How does West Lindsey compare to other councils in the district in terms of quality and quantity of product from waste collections?
- What has been the impact on residual waste rates? Has pressure reduced from the waste plant in North Kesteven?
- Will Lincolnshire County Council continue to support with commerce and engagement with residents following the conclusion of the project to ensure that contamination is kept to a minimum?
- Has Lincolnshire County Council achieved their own corporate objectives from the scheme? What is the financial impact of the scheme and has it generated additional income for the Council?
- What can we do to promote in the Southwest Ward which still use sack collections?
- What is the impact on the overall recycling rate for Lincoln and how does this compare to the national benchmark?

The Chairman thanked the Director of Operational and Commercial Services for his input and invited Members to send any additional questions to the Senior Democratic Services Officer to be included in preparation for the presentation from Lincolnshire County Council at the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 26 March 2024.

38 FORWARD PLAN

With no comments or questions, the Forward Plan was **DULY NOTED**.

39 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Chairman suggested that the Committee could receive updates regarding the Health Scrutiny Committee. This was noted to be included in future agendas.

With no further comments or questions, the Workplan was **DULY NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 7.18 pm.

Chairman