

Minutes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in the Function Room, South Holland Centre, Market Place, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 1SS, on Tuesday, 19 October 2021 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

B Alcock (Chairman)
M D Booth (Vice-Chairman)

C J T H Brewis
T A Carter
J L King

G P Scalese
N H Pepper
P A Redgate

J Tyrrell
S C Walsh
D J Wilkinson

In Attendance: Councillors A M Newton, P E Coupland and J R Astill, the Assistant Director - Finance, the Head of IT (PSPS), the Leisure and Communities Manager, the Communications Manager, the Programme Manager, the Housing Project Officer, the Democratic Services Manager, the Democratic Services Team Leader and the Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors A C Cronin, J D McLean and A C Tennant

17 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

Although not a member of the Panel, Councillor Newton advised that she did not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but in the interests of transparency, declared that in relation to agenda item 5, she was a member of the PSPS board.

18 **ATTENDANCE BY SUPERINTENDENT MARK HOUSLEY**

Following the Crime and Disorder Partnership update to the Performance Monitoring Panel on 27 January 2021, Superintendent (Supt.) Mark Housley attended to answer Members' questions.

Supt. Housley thanked members for the invitation to the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel, and gave an overview of policing and crime figures in the area which included:

- Confirmation of the Command Team relevant to South Holland: the local leader and operational contact was Nick Waters; the Chief Inspector for Boston and South Holland was Amy Whiffen; the Superintendent across the East was Mark Housley.

Action By

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- Demand for emergency calls had increased.
- Crime had decreased by 3.9% in South Holland due to impact of Covid which had forced the closures of town centre shops and night-time economies.
- Violence had increased, particularly domestic abuse. The Supt. would investigate the reasons for the increase so issues could be dealt with earlier. Feedback would be given to the Panel when figures and trends were known.
- The busiest times for police had been during the rush hour, around 5pm – not late evening as had often been perceived.
- The response target time of twenty minutes had been considered reasonable for a rural area.
- Stop searches were few and only carried out where intelligence had been received, not random.
- Anti-social behaviour reports had reduced but it was acknowledged that this had been dependent on tolerance levels which was not controllable.
- Theft of motor vehicles and vans had been linked to two ATM thefts in the area.
- Burglaries had decreased.
- Data relating to suspects under warrant and individuals bailed was shared.
- The Supt. acknowledged that communication with victims of crime needed to improve.
- Demographic data, such as unemployment statistics and population ages, had been considered when crime prevention strategies were planned. This had included work to protect residents from fraud and rogue trader activity. High unemployment rates were linked to crime, but these were low in both Holbeach and Spalding at 6% and 4.8% respectively. Areas of deprivation were challenging and demanded a higher proportion of resources.
- The police strategy needed to be compatible with local ambitions.
- A review of resources included: PCSO numbers; the instigation of a Rural Crime Action Team; Roads Policing Team; 30 additional officers.

Members thanked the Superintendent for the update and made the following comments:

- Members questioned employment retention of police and whether the 20,000 recruited nationally would have made a positive impact.
 - Supt Housley replied that retention had been good and that leaver numbers were low outside of retirement. A benefit had been seen from the 1220

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recruitments in the area.

- Members commented that feedback from Parish Councils had highlighted there had been a lack of engagement from PCSOs in rural communities which impeded intelligence gathering and the exchange of information. PCSOs priorities were misplaced and had not been community based. How could this have been improved?
 - Supt. Housley acknowledged that engagement could have been improved. Strategies had been imposed rather than drawn from local needs which had been driven by measures to cope with austerity and funding cuts. There had been recent improvements in leadership – new Chief Officers - which valued partnership working and a wider engagement had been sought. The Superintendent would feedback comments and would report future actions taken to the Panel at a later meeting.
- Members asked whether criminal reports were able to be made confidentially.
 - Supt. Housley confirmed that identification was protected however full disclosure would be preferred to assist investigations and prevent future criminal activity.
- Members enquired whether a collaborative relationship had existed between Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire constabularies.
 - Supt Housley confirmed that this had been positive and that regional meetings had taken place.
- Members commented that the police pilot scheme ‘World Café’ at Sutton Bridge had been positive.
 - Supt Housley responded that communities were key to social cohesion with police enforcement the last resort.
- Members had been concerned that emergency calls had been answered by the Norfolk constabulary instead of Lincolnshire which had caused delays. This had been experienced in relation to hare coursing when an expeditious response had been critical. Members thanked Supt Housley for his work to reduce hare coursing in Lincolnshire.
- Members were concerned about increased harassment experienced by councillors, especially female councillors,

AT EH

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- and that reports to police had not been taken seriously.
 - Supt Housley was concerned that harassment reports had not being taken seriously and thanked members for the feedback. Each incident should have been investigated.
- Members thanked the police for the pilot scheme at Sutton Bridge but stated that youth anti-social behaviour had been observed when Parish meetings had taken place. A lack of police response had resulted in a hesitancy of reporting which in turn had distorted crime figures.
 - Supt. Housley confirmed that all reported crime had been recorded but they had been unable to respond where reports had not been made. Police and criminal justice could not provide all of the solutions and the importance of education needed to be recognised.
- Anti-social behaviour had been a problem in every parish and members questioned whether the multi-agency approach to crime prevention had been successful.
 - Supt. Housley stated that the multi-agency approach had been successful however agency budget silos had hampered progress. Some models had worked well: the Youth Offending Service and Complex Families model had seen reductions in youth offending. Increased respect was needed.
- Members asked what action had been taken with intelligence data provided to police regarding speeding blackspots. Lincolnshire speeding figures had been too high.
 - Supt. Housley responded that intelligence had informed plans and resources however enforcement had only prevented speeding when police had been present. Many speeders had been local residents and the solution had rested with education and engineering solutions.
- Members asked how Members could assist the police in a positive way.
 - Supt. Housley responded that a greater understanding was needed from the public, politicians and MPs in relation to what could be achieved with the limited resources that had been available. Morale within the police force had been at a low point and support and appreciation was needed.

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- Members requested the opportunity to shadow police in order to obtain a better understanding of their work and challenges.
 - Supt. Housley welcomed this.
- Members stated that hard-fought weight limits on roads had not been enforced. Members requested that police attended to observe the situation.
 - Supt. Housley agreed that the problem needed to be resolved however a police presence had not been realistic due to limited resources. Consideration of a different approach would be needed.
- Members stated disappointment that PCSOs had not engaged with them in relation to speeding issues, even when this had been directly requested.
 - The Supt. acknowledged that improved performance management and community engagement had been needed and the resource challenge had been reiterated.
- Members asked what initiatives the police had planned to put in place to protect South Holland's ageing population from crime.
 - The Supt. confirmed that plans were yet to be confirmed but constructive engagement with family members would be included.
- Members stated there had been confusion regarding roles and responsibilities of the police which had negatively impacted public perception. Communication with residents could have been improved and Parish Councils had been well-placed to assist.
 - Supt Housley agreed that improvements needed to be in place regarding communication and that continuous improvement had been an aspiration. Policing had changed and this had needed to be communicated better.
- Members expressed their support for the police. The Mini Police programme was praised, and a positive response had been noted. Was this programme going to be reinstated?
 - The programme was halted due to Covid but had been reinstated. A positive impact had been noted with a reduction in crime, for example: education and engagement had limited demand for 'legal

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highs' and removed the market in some areas.

- Members asked for clarification as to which emergency service the public should contact when an extortion attempt had taken place, such as gravel deposited on driveways.
 - Supt. Horsley confirmed that the public needed to contact the police by dialling 999 whenever they had experienced intimidating or threatening behaviour.

AGREED:

- a) That Supt. Housley be thanked for attending; and
- b) That improved communication and sharing of information between the Police, the Council and communities was required, and that Supt. Housley create a Community Safety workshop in due course which Members would be invited to attend.

AT

19 NORTHGATE SYSTEM

Following the Digital Work Programme update to the Performance Monitoring Panel on 18 March 2021, the Housing Project Manager and Housing Project Officer attended to demonstrate the capabilities of the Council's Housing system.

Officers introduced the system with a presentation, which included the following points:

- a dedicated resource need had been identified to improve the management of both customers and assets;
- an innovative approach had been taken. Officers had secured secondments to concentrate on the Northgate project so that greater effectiveness and efficiencies could be achieved. Throughout the project, officers had worked with PSPS colleagues in ICT, Customer Services and the Digital Team. The officers had also worked with Northgate which had created a new job schedule module;
- A 360 View had been adopted which had recorded and maintained holistic details of every property, this included: customer contact; customer applications; customer advice and support cases; tenancy management; property repairs; void works; planned maintenance programmes and contracts. The 360 view had also been used by Customer Services who raised and appointed jobs through the system;
- Further development was planned to enable customer online access.

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Officers stated that whilst the presentation had given an overview of the Northgate system, members had also been invited to shadow the team to obtain a greater understanding of its capabilities.

Members thanked officers for the presentation and confirmed that the implementation of the system had been much welcomed. The following questions were raised:

- Members asked whether the system had the facility to send reminder notifications of planned work to residents.
 - Officers confirmed that a new piece of work was planned around notifications for residents, which had included the facility for SMS and email messaging.
- Members asked whether the online system had been accessible for all residents.
 - Officers responded that contact had currently been restricted to telephone calls and the online system had not yet been implemented.
- Members asked whether the diary management system had raised any scheduling issues, such as missed appointments, and had the job allocation process taken longer.
 - Officers stated that the Customer Contact Centre had been connected to a shared diary system which had been easier to use than the previous spreadsheet process.
- As the system required a wider description of each potential task, members questioned whether the input process had been longer. Had time been saved?
 - Officers confirmed that the input process had reduced from five minutes to one minute and that workers had given positive feedback. Considerable time saving efficiencies had been experienced.
- Members asked if workers had been able to complete jobs which were not as originally reported.
 - Officers confirmed that engineers had been able to update incorrect details on the system which enabled the completion of each job.
- Members asked whether the Northgate system recorded all aspects of the property.
 - The officers confirmed this was the case and stated

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that over 4.8 million data lines relating to properties and assets had been programmed. All elements had been itemised, and details included install dates and repair condition.

- Members questioned the sophistication of the system in relation to time allocation of each job. What happened when a job had been completed earlier than expected?
 - The officer replied that Northgate was an agile system which recorded actual time of jobs rather than specified scheduling. Completed jobs were recorded so availability of workers had been evident within the system.
- Members asked whether the system had been capable of routing the scheduling of workers to maximise travel efficiencies. Had this been monitored?
 - The officer confirmed that the system had been able to route engineers to jobs through the most efficient means. The system had been live for eight weeks and data sets would be monitored when the system had been running longer.

AGREED

That officers be thanked for their work on the system and for their presentation, and that a further update be provided in six/eight months.

AT, CD

20 ICT AND DIGITAL WORK PROGRAMME 2019-2022 PROGRESS UPDATE

Following the Digital Work Programme update to the Performance Monitoring Panel on 18 March 2021, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Communications, the Programme Manager – Commercialisation, the Communications Manager and the Head of ICT and Digital (PSPS) attended to present an update on the ICT and Digital Work Programme and answer questions.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Communications gave a short introduction and confirmed that the programme had been signed off in 2019. The request by the Performance Monitoring Panel to review the work programme had been a useful exercise and the strategy would be reviewed further as part of his Portfolio Holder responsibilities.

Officers introduced the report and confirmed it had been written

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from a Programme and Project Management perspective, and included commentary which related to:

- SHDC and PSPS staff resources. The officer noted that there had been a nine-month delay between the proposed start date and the achievement of agreed South Holland staff resources to undertake the work;
- the Covid pandemic and associated response from both the South Holland resource and the shared strategic resource which had championed the programme of work;
- the place-based resilience forum approach taken by Breckland District Council and South Holland District Council. The strategic working process became fully Breckland-focussed and had been place-based at Breckland;
- an analytical report from South Holland's perspective of the Programme and Project Management approach taken which reflected the separation of the strategic partnership with Breckland in 2021, which had not been anticipated at the outset.
- a summary of financial information. The officer noted that the South Holland team had been seconded to the Digital team as part of the interim South Holland management's formalised approach in response to the pandemic;
- South Holland's resourcing challenges: the digital skill set had not existed within the council and there had not been a post in South Holland's establishment to fulfil project delivery or day to day functionality;
- an exploration of what 'digital' meant to South Holland;
- commentary on the impact of Covid;
- an analysis of the programme's delivery approach. A fully scoped programme of activity from SHDC, which included resources, had not been robust enough which had a negative impact on the programme;
- The officer highlighted that sections 10.5 and 10.7 of the report had related to South Holland and not PSPS;
- The report noted areas for consideration and reflection, such as section 10.11, which the Portfolio Holder needed to take forward.

Members considered the presentation and made the following comments:

- the original programme had been drafted at a high strategic level without an accompanying detailed business case or scoping exercise which had negatively affected its delivery;
- the complexity and resource requirements had not been fully appreciated at the outset;

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- Members expressed disappointment that allocated funds for the digital post had been inadequate, and in addition that the budget had been spent. Investigations were needed to understand why a monitoring process had not been in place. It was appreciated some achievements had been made and that the unforeseen impact of Covid had absorbed resources which had affected delivery of the programme.
 - Officers explained how resources and skills had been utilised during Covid and what had been delivered. This had included:
 - a work model which focussed on web trends, social media analytics and customer relationship management which informed customer need during the pandemic. communication with customers had switched from telephone-based enquiries towards web and social-based enquiries;
 - bespoke content which provided support to both customers and businesses including the distribution of Business Support/Discretionary grants;
 - project working with PSPS which had included website content; Goss updates; and the Northgate system;
 - commencement of the website accessibility programme;
 - improvements made to online contact forms.
- Members queried whether the PSPS Non-Base Contract Costs within Appendix A related to the member of staff supplied.
 - The officer confirmed that the non-contract spend related to recharge for the web developer.
- Members acknowledged that the Digital Programme had produced some results and queried why reimbursement from central Government Covid funding had not taken place.
 - The officer confirmed that recovery of monies had taken place through the Covid scheme. There had been two elements of funding: the first stream 'relieved cost pressures' such as IT work carried out which enabled agile working; the second funding stream contributed to 'costs above core budgets' such as overtime paid to staff working in the Grants team. The funding had not been available to cover base costs which had already been allocated in

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council budgets.

- Members had requested the expeditious reporting of issues when projects had encountered difficulties;
- Members stated the council's strategic ambitions relating to digital achievement needed to be transparent;
- Members asked for clarification of the difference between what constituted digital content and infrastructure.
 - Officers responded that the digital aspect had been cloud hosted on the Goss platform and had linked back to infrastructure already hosted by PSPS, such as the Northgate system. The responsibility of content delivery belonged to respective service managers.

- It was stated that governance had been missing from the delivery process and needed to be included in future strategic projects;
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Communications responded that lessons had been learned. Some work had gone well and there had been an aim to improve. Outstanding work from the original strategy would be reviewed to ensure relevance. Governance would be integral to the process.

- Members reiterated the importance of governance and expressed disappointment that comments from the Performance Monitoring Panel had apparently not been influential;
- Members questioned whether service areas possessed the required expertise to deliver website content. Work had been required to improve the interaction with the general public.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Communications confirmed that service areas were responsible for content whilst PSPS provided the infrastructure. It was also confirmed that comments from Scrutiny panels would be considered and that Portfolio Holders were accountable for their decisions.

- Members asked whether resilience had been included in the strategy.
 - Officers replied that resilience had been considered. Mitigations had been in place which reduced the impact of network failure.

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- In conclusion, Members stated that a clear route forward for the ICT and Digital Work Programme was required and requested that a paper be prepared by the Council which detailed the following points:
 - a clear explanation of what 'Digital' means to the authority;
 - the human and digital resources required to deliver an ICT and Digital Work Programme;
 - the responsible person for the preparation of the paper and a specified timeframe;
 - how and by whom the programme would be delivered;
 - the project implementation timeframe;
 - how the needs and expectations of the authority would be managed during the interim period.

JS, JW, AT

AGREED:

That the comments of the meeting be noted and taken forward.

(The meeting ended at 8.51 pm)

(End of minutes)