

Minutes of a meeting of the **CABINET** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priors Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 7 June 2022 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

G A Porter (Leader)

P E Coupland (Deputy
Leader)
C N Worth (Deputy
Leader)
J R Astill

A Casson
R Gambba-Jones
R Grocock

E J Sneath
G J Taylor

Cabinet Support
Members:

A C Beal, N H Pepper

The Joint Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive (Communities), the Assistant Director (Leisure and Culture), the Head of Delivery, the Communities Manager, the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Assistant.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors C J Lawton, A R Woolf and T A Carter.

In Attendance: Councillor A M Newton (Independent Group Leader), Councillor B Alcock (Chairman, Performance Monitoring Panel).

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2022 were agreed and signed by the Leader.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were none.

3. QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC UNDER THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION (STANDING ORDERS).

There were none.

4. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS WHICH HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO CALL-IN.

There were none.

Action By

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5. TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANELS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE OR THE BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROCEDURE RULES.

There were none.

6. FINAL REPORT OF THE SOUTH HOLLAND CENTRE TASK GROUP

Consideration was given to the report of the South Holland Centre (SHC) Task Group which presented the Task Group's final report for consideration.

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor B Alcock introduced the report and noted a small error on page 23 of the report which stated that there was 5 members of the Task Group – there had been 6 members with one co-optee. He advised that the Task Group had been set up after the Centre had been closed for a long time due to the Covid pandemic, had no manager in post and an audience that was nervous to return to the venue following Covid. At the present time, the Centre was back in business. Councillor Alcock apologised for the delay in bringing the Task Group's report to Cabinet and stated that this had been due to the sudden loss of the food and drink provision within the Centre in April.

Councillor Alcock advised that the Task Group had felt the facility had a wider role to play in the wellbeing of the district. He stressed the importance of the cultural role the Centre played, which gave a challenge in terms of how to improve the reach of the Centre.

He added that there had been encouraging signs that new ideas were available across the partnership and the feedback received from external professionals was positive.

The facility may not be able to avoid some public financial support, but the aim should be to continue to minimise the subsidy required.

Councillor Alcock advised that the five main recommendations of the Task Group would help to move the Centre forward and the sub-recommendations clarified in more detail as to how those main recommendations could be implemented.

He thanked all of the Task Group members and officers who had provided information and support to the group to assist with their

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work.

The following points were raised by those present:

- Members thanked the Task Group for their comprehensive report and for the time taken to produce the report.
- The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Facilities highlighted the following points:
 - Some of the conclusions made within the report had already been addressed and work had been ongoing at the Centre since it's re-opening.
 - The staffing restructure agreed at Council in July 2021 was needed as the previous model was unsustainable - a new Manager had been appointed in December 2021, and the new structure and the team was working well in a challenging environment.
 - There had been a phased re-opening of the Centre in an uncertain Covid recovery period and the Manager was investigating commercial opportunities in light of rising utility costs and the increased cost of living for residents, which could impact on their ability to visit the Centre.
 - Function Hall hire had increased in recent weeks, and it was pleasing that audience numbers for films and shows were also starting to increase.
 - Plans for the Centre were flexible and box office opening hours had been extended to include Tuesday and Saturday mornings following public feedback.
 - The South Holland Centre was an asset for the district, and it needed to encourage a new audience to come into the building.
 - The Centre was on target, delivering, and in a far better place financially than it could have been following Covid.
 - Numerous sections of the local economy were starting to reopen and rebuild within the town centre including the South Holland Centre
 - It was pleasing that there would be a partnership approach going forward.
- It was noted that the financial information was interesting as the cost to taxpayers had reduced significantly over the years. There were many venues across the country that had been forced to close and it was a credit to the team at the South Holland Centre for keeping the venue going.
- Concern was raised that whilst Arts Council funding was good it was very prescriptive in the requirements of shows

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to be held and those particular shows often did not pull in large audiences.

- Members had received some questions from members of the public regarding requests for tourist information– what was the plan for tourist information at the South Holland Centre going forward?
 - Officers responded that there had been some issues with the direct phone lines to the Centre – this had now been rectified and there was an answer machine facility available if the Centre was not open. There were plans in place for more literature to be available on site and on the website. It was confirmed that there were few tourist information requests coming through and it was noted that the South Holland Centre was not a fully staffed Tourist Information Centre.

- The Chairman of the Task Group noted that the recommendations were part and parcel of bringing the South Holland Centre into the forefront and acknowledged that currently the Centre was a work in progress. Previously, governance had not been strong enough and the Performance Monitoring Panel should have scrutinised this earlier than it had. It was obvious that the promotion of the Centre needed to be better, and it was common agreement amongst Task Group members that suggestions were the direction in which the Centre needed to go in.

- Tourism had been raised as an area for improvement at the Spalding Town Centre Steering Group and it was hoped that tourism in South Holland would improve with help from officers within the partnership with tourism expertise.

- The building had been looked after while it was closed and a maintenance plan for the Centre was being worked through at the present time. The spend on the building had been decreasing year on year which was good for the taxpayer. The Task Group had highlighted work that would be undertaken but not everything could be done at once due to difficulties appointing contractors to carry out the work.

- It was recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Facilities lead a Cabinet Task Group, working with officers, to ensure a realistic timetable was drawn up to implement the Task Group's recommendations

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that were outstanding.

- Covid had provided the building with a new start, and the partnership approach would make available entertainment and tourism experience and expertise, to assist with the running of the Centre. There were serious concerns about the marketing of the Centre, and this had to be addressed in order that the Centre could become more commercially successful.
- Members asked for reassurance that every enquiry from the public was logged so that the authority was aware of what the Centre was not offering, and questions could then be asked as to why that offer was not available.
 - Officers responded that every query was logged on a manual spreadsheet and that new digital business intelligence methods were being used by the team.

DECISION:

- That the recommendations (1 to 6) as set out in section 7 of the of the Task Group's Final Report are approved ***for consideration by a Cabinet Task Group***.
- That a Cabinet Task Group be set up and led by the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Facilities to ensure a realistic timetable was drawn up to implement all the Task Group's recommendations ***where agreed***.

Wording in bold and italics are amendments made at the meeting of Cabinet on 19 July 2022.

(Other options considered:

- *Do nothing – none of the task groups recommendations would be approved.*

Reasons for decision:

- *To ensure that Cabinet is fully briefed on the task group's findings and identifies the appropriate recommendations which should be taken forward for further review.)*

7. SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Community Leadership which sought to approve the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, Conservation and Heritage introduced the report stating that Safeguarding covered a broad range of topics and to safeguard residents, there needed

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to be collaboration with other statutory services including adult social care, children's social care and Lincolnshire Police.

Agencies worked together through countywide strategic partnerships including Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Safer Lincolnshire Partnership. SHDC needed a policy that was clear on the responsibilities for a district council, across services.

The key parts that the policy needed to cover to ensure that the Council was complying with their statutory duties were:

- Having clear roles and responsibilities
- Recognising abuse or concerns
- Using Professional curiosity
- Being clear on how to report a concern and escalate if needed
- Recruitment and training
- Responding to allegations
- Supporting Staff
- Audit
- Appropriate Record Keeping and Information Sharing

The updated policy and procedures had an overarching framework for the Council which covered these areas and supported the Council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and demonstrate competence and compliance. The policy had been presented to the Policy Development Panel on 24 May 2022 and amendments had been supported.

The following points were raised by those present:

- Hate and Mate crime was very serious as there could potentially be multiple victims over a period. Did the Lincolnshire Safeguarding boards work with similar boards across the borders in Cambridgeshire or Norfolk?
 - Officers confirmed that there can be cross border working for individual cases and that learning and best practice was shared across areas and boards.
- Concern was raised about the public perception of safeguarding - members had experienced frustration from residents who had attempted to report their concerns to relevant agencies, only to be advised that relatives needed to be involved for the concern to go any further. There needed to be a lower-level arrangement for residents to be able to raise their concerns about people within their community who did not necessarily need to be referred to social services.

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- Members asked whether the Council gave any advice to community groups who had their own safeguarding policies as to what should be included within their procedures.
 - Officers confirmed that community and voluntary groups had their own safeguarding policies and procedures in place following feedback, the Safeguarding Children's Partnership held regular briefing sessions via Zoom that groups could participate in.
 - It was suggested that it may be pertinent for an All-Member Briefing session to be held to explain to Councillors their duties in relation to safeguarding and how they could raise any concerns they had.
- Members praised horticultural and agricultural businesses within the district who had taken a lead and promoted the issues surrounding modern slavery.
- It was agreed that the public wanted a one stop shop to raise their concerns.

DECISION:

- a. That the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures be approved;
- b. That the Deputy Chief Executive – Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Heritage, be delegated to approve any minor amendments to the Policy; and
- c. That an All-Member Briefing session be held to make Councillors aware of their duties in relation to safeguarding and how they can raise their concerns about safeguarding issues within their wards.

(Other options considered:

- *That the Council has 8 separate policies and procedures for Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults at Risk, Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Hate Crime & Mate Crime, Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking, County Lines & Cuckooing and Preventing Violent Extremism – this option was not recommended as the overarching principles for each of these topic areas are the same and can be approached with a consistent framework.*

Reasons for decision:

- *To ensure that the Council continues to fulfil statutory responsibilities to safeguarding children and adults.)*

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8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE LEADER DECIDES ARE URGENT.

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 10.40 am)

(End of minutes)

Any RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL detailed above will be submitted for consideration to the meeting of the full Council on 22 June 2022.