

Minutes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 13 September 2023 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

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

C J T H Brewis
N Chapman
S Chauhan
L J Eldridge

M Geaney
A Harrison
S Hutchinson
J L Reynolds

S-A Slade
J Whitbourn
A R Woolf

In Attendance: Councillor T Carter (Portfolio Holder), the Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development, the Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture, the Cultural Services Manager, the South Holland Centre Manager, the Leisure Operations Manager, the Business Intelligence and Change Manager, the Head of Customer Contact and the Democratic Services Assistant.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors P Barnes and D J Wilkinson.

17 MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the Performance Monitoring Panel held on 4 July 2023 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

18 ACTIONS

Consideration was given to the actions which arose at the 4 July 2023 Performance Monitoring Panel meeting, and the tracking of previous outstanding actions.

Members considered the update and made the following comments:

- Regarding action 2b, Members requested an update on the timescale for which this data would be available to them.
- Regarding action 2c, Members noted that the subject of the potential task group was not perceived as a problem and therefore the task group may not be required. However, Members had an interest in understanding on the service provided by management companies to residents.
- Regarding action 11c, the Business Intelligence and Change Manager confirmed that this information had been

Action By

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circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

AGREED:

That the actions and responses be noted.

19 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

20 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

21 TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

22 ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL.

There were none.

23 KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan dated 5 September 2023.

AGREED:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

24 Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director - Corporate which provided an update on how the Council was performing for the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023.

The report was introduced by the Business Intelligence and Change Manager which provided an overview of how the Council was performing against its key performance indicators. Full details were provided at Appendix A to the report.

The key points of the report were outlined:

- There had been a revision to some indicators and targets to ensure they remained relevant to service delivery and monitored the key aspects of service performance.
- 33% of metrics presented a positive position, while 14%

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were below target.

- Homelessness performance had particularly improved from the last quarter.

The Head of Customer Contact was also in attendance and highlighted:

- Customer Contact performance varied in quarter 1 as some metrics were red and others were green but noted that all metrics were green for quarter 2 which would allay Members fears.
- March and April were an extremely busy time for Customer Contact with benefits and council tax calls.
- Pre-emptive measures had been put in place for this period such as the call back service introduced on 9th May, a ban on annual leave and extended hours.
- There were a number of improvements in the pipeline with new data in the Customer Relations Management system that could track the digital capabilities of customers and the number of enquiries received where there were no digital options in place. This information would be fed back to services to inform them of digital changes that could be made to their service.
- A Customer Experience Board had been set up, attended by the Head of Customer Contact, the Business Intelligence and Change Manager and the Assistant Manager – Wellbeing and Community Leadership, that looked at recorded data and used this to influence future service operation decisions.

Members considered the report and made the following comments:

- Members asked whether there were any trends identified that had caused the increases seen.
 - The Head of Customer Contact stated that there was a natural uplift in the number of calls received in March and April which could be planned for to a certain extent, but demand this year was much higher than expected with a 38% uplift in April this year, compared to last April
 - It was also noted that financial pressures for residents had increased which had led to an increase in calls relating to benefit applications, council tax and homelessness. Many of these calls took longer to answer as they were sensitive cases and often needed to be signposted to additional support.
 - The Head of Customer Contact confirmed that a quality first approach was being taken to ensure all

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- customers were given the best support possible. This approach did however have a knock-on effect as other customers would then have to wait in the queue for longer.
- It was confirmed that digital self-serve avenues were being investigated with individual departments to help reduce the number of phone calls coming through to customer contact, although it was recognised that this was not an overnight solution that can be put in place and will take time. A call-back system had also been introduced that had received overwhelmingly positive feedback.
 - Members asked whether there were any concerns about the sustainability of progress made within customer contact?
 - The Head of Customer Contact responded to say that peaks within the year were planned for and there had been continued positive performance within the department.
 - It needed to be recognised that due to the inflexible nature of the targets set that during March and April these may not be met due to the overwhelming demand on the service.
 - It was explained that the service now had a stabilised workforce and were working on re-evaluating what the new norms were for the demand on the service in comparison to the same period last year.
 - Members commented that there had been a concerning drop in the number of metrics that were showing positive performance, from 40% to 33%.
 - Members noted that the new contract for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) and fly-tipping had been working well and praised the uplift in charges for these. However, there was concern that the 66% payment rate for FPNs seemed low. Members asked how long the time period was for payment to be made and what steps were taken to gain payment once this time period had ended.
 - Members also queried why there had not yet been any prosecutions for fly-tipping under the new contract and felt that there had been an increase in fly-tipping in the countryside since the beginning of the contract as compared to the urban areas in the District. Members asked for more information on this difference to be provided.
 - Members noted that it was good to see an increase in the number of visitors to the Peele Leisure Centre.
 - Members questioned whether there had been an

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improvement to the staff turnover percentage, which appeared high for Quarter 1 at 5%.

- The Business Intelligence and Change Manager confirmed that the figure represented 11 leavers in total, 86% of which were voluntary resignations.
 - Members felt that this needed to be monitored in case any trends appeared as if the same figure was returned long-term, there could be a serious problem.
- In relation to fly-tipping, Members asked several questions in relation to portable CCTV cameras:
 - How many of these cameras did the authority own?
 - Was there a way to increase the stock of cameras?
 - What sort of damage had occurred to previous cameras used across the District?
 - Where had cameras previously been utilised?
 - How much activity did the cameras pick up?
 - If cameras were not being utilised, could an explanation be provided as to why?
- Members asked whether staff who had left recently were all from the same department or spread across many different departments?
 - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager confirmed that the leavers were from various different departments across the Council.
- Members queried whether the target for number of businesses with a food hygiene rating of 3 stars should be increased to at least 4 stars.
 - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager explained that the number of 3 star premises was the annual return figure that was reported to the Food Standards Agency but suggested that a line for 4 or 5 stars could be added in addition to the 3 star metric.

AGREED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

25 SWIMMING POOL AND LEISURE FACILITIES TASK GROUP UPDATE Q4 2022/2023

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture which sought to provide the Panel with an update on leisure provision and future provisions

The report was introduced by the Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture who highlighted the following key points:

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- Usage at the Castle Pool had increased during the quarter but visits to the Castle Sports Centre and Peele Leisure Centre had decreased.
- Overall membership numbers had started to decrease and there had also been a decrease in the number of sales at each site.
- The operator had highlighted a number of maintenance issues within the quarter and also noted that the Omicron Variant of Covid had impacted customer usage within the quarter.
- There were also concerns about the volatility of utility prices.

Members considered the report and made the following comments:

- Members asked whether the Authority were eligible for the grant being provided by the Government to assist with energy costs for swimming pools.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture stated that officers were attending webinars to gain an answer to this but it was likely that the Castle Sports Pool would not be eligible as Levelling Up funding had been received to build a new pool.
 - It was noted that a revenue bid for energy costs had been discovered and officers were awaiting the result of that bid.
- Members asked if quarterly performance reports could be brought forward in a timelier manner to the Panel.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture stated that the Panel had previously requested updates every six months. He confirmed that he would liaise with the Democratic Services Officer and the Chairman of PMP to look to amend the work programme to potentially bring these reports forwards quarterly.
- Members suggested that the Peele Leisure Centre also needed investment as a matter of urgency.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture clarified that the Peele Leisure Centre was owned by the University Academy Long Sutton not the Council. He confirmed that conversations were ongoing with the school about repairs/maintenance to the facility in the future.
- Members asked who was driving the marketing for these leisure facilities and whether there was anything the Council could do to encourage further marketing.
- Members queried whether the figures provided for 'academy use' were correct as the appendix quoted the

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- same number of hours for three consecutive months.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture explained that these figures were provided by University Academy Long Sutton.
- Members expressed concern about the lack of marketing they had seen for the Peele Leisure Centre and suggested that this needed to be improved immediately.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture confirmed that promotion and marketing were part of Parkwood’s responsibilities as operators and that they had recently produced some leaflets to promote the Peele, along with advertisement on social media.
 - He stated that he would find out where leaflets had been distributed to.
- Members requested sight of Parkwood’s marketing plan for the Peele Leisure Centre.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture confirmed that he would also engage with the Council’s Communications team to help further Parkwood’s promotions.
- Members requested that the quarterly data be presented in a more meaningful way for future reports.
- Members noted that no promotion could be seen on the Peele Leisure Centre’s Facebook since June 2023.
- Members noted that the figures for bowls and gym usage seemed lower than previous years and asked how this could be improved.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture confirmed that usage numbers did fluctuate throughout the year and some drops in figures were due to the Omicron Covid variant.
- Members were particularly concerned by the drop off in usage of facilities by the bowls club as previously the numbers had been very encouraging and requested that the operator explained why this was the case.
 - The Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture confirmed that a conversation would take place with the operator about the position of the bowls club.
- Members queried what the timetable was for information being provided to the Panel about the new Health & Wellbeing Hub.
 - The Assistant Director – Strategic Growth and Development stated that progress was being made with the project on site and confirmed that Spring 2024 was a crucial point for decision to be made on the project by the Council.
 - It was also noted that the Chairman and Vice-

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Chairman of the Panel would be kept regularly briefed on the progression of this project.

AGREED:

That the 2022/23 Quarter 4 performance outcomes be noted along with the approach for future options and opportunities for leisure provision in South Holland.

26 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Governance which set out the Work Programme of the Performance Monitoring Panel.

The Performance Monitoring Panel Work Programme consisted of two separate sections, the first setting out the date of the future Panel meetings along with proposed items for consideration, and the second setting out the Task Groups that had been identified by the Panel.

The Democratic Services Assistant outlined the following update to the Panel:

- Regarding Appendix A, it was noted that the Crime and Disorder Update due to come to the 13 September 2023 meeting had been moved to the 15 November 2023 meeting. Officers were currently organising a date for the Review of Implemented Planning Decisions due to be held end of October/early November.
- Regarding Appendix B, this set out a list of task groups identified by the Panel.

The Panel agreed to defer a discussion on a potential task group to examine the delivery of services provided by all General Practice (GP) surgeries in South Holland to the next meeting of Performance Monitoring Panel due to the Member who had suggested this discussion not being present at the meeting.

The Chairman encouraged Members to feed in suitable sites to visit as part of the Review of Implemented Planning Decisions and to also suggest any areas of concern to add to the Panel's Work Programme.

AGREED:

That the Work Programme of the Performance Monitoring Panel be noted.

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27 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

28 TO CONSIDER RESOLVING THAT, UNDER SECTION 100A (4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT INVOLVES THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE ACT.

AGREED:

That under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

29 RESTRICTED MINUTE

AGREED:

That the restricted minutes of the Performance Monitoring Panel held on 4 July 2023 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

30 SOUTH HOLLAND CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture which presented an Emerging Business Plan for the South Holland Centre.

AGREED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.57 pm)

(End of minutes)