

Minutes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 3 March 2015 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

B Alcock (Chairman)
D J Wilkinson (Vice-Chairman)

G R Aley
S M Booth
C J T H Brewis

R Clark
R Grocock
M Howard

R Perkins
E J Sneath
S Wilkinson

In Attendance: The Planning Manager, the Community Development Manager, the Corporate Improvement and Performance Manager, the Corporate Improvement and Performance Team Leader and the Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors J L King, R M Rudkin and M D Seymour

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were none.

52. JOINT TASK GROUP UPDATES

Both the Leisure Task Group and the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field Task Group had comprised members of both the Performance Monitoring Panel and the Policy Development Panel. Policy Development Panel members had therefore been invited to attend this meeting to receive updates on the current position of both Task Groups.

Leisure Task Group

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director Community which provided an update on the work undertaken regarding the future provision of Leisure Services.

The Task Group had presented an interim report to Cabinet on 7 October 2014, where it was resolved:

- That at present, the interim report of the Leisure Task Group be noted for the work undertaken to date, but the recommendations not be accepted; and
- That the Corporate Management Team (CMT) look at the

Action By

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interim report and the issues raised within the discussion of it, that this be fed into the work of the Task Group, and that a further report be presented to the Cabinet in due course.

CMT considered a report identifying strategic issues relating to future provision of leisure services, and its view was that the development of a full Business Case should form part of a wider transformation programme that was currently being developed for the Council, and that an analysis of new and existing data should be completed immediately.

Local media had expressed an interest in surveying the public to gauge their views on leisure provision, and this was undertaken in November 2014. The outcome of this work was summarised within the report,

- 127 responses were received, 111 of which were current members of the facilities;
- Questions asked related to:
 - Satisfaction – Levels of satisfaction relating to customer service; value for money; programming/activities on offer, facilities/equipment on offer; and cleanliness.
 - Usage – which of the facilities were used
 - Desired changes – respondents were given the opportunity to identify 'desired changes'
 - Additional comments – respondents were given the opportunity to make additional comments to the points covered in the survey.

Members had been keen to understand how previous research conducted in the district could be utilised. This information had been used as a comparison for the more recent data. However, comparing this data to previous data collected by the Authority in August 2007 was problematic for a number of reasons:

- The sample size in the recent survey was not great enough to produce statistically significant values and therefore may not represent an accurate picture;
- The data was collected from specific groups of people, i.e, those who received and read the local paper and users of the facilities who were also encouraged to respond;
- Data collected previously by the Authority was almost 8 years old and therefore may also be unreliable. However, the sample size used in 2007 was 728 and this research, whilst dated, did provide a wider opinion of the community as the methodology used ensured a mix of feedback from a broader cross section of the population, different age groups, users and non-users.

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The difference in data received from both surveys did however suggest changes in usage of the facilities, what the public expected, and that an increased number of respondents felt that it was important to provide a new leisure centre in South Holland.

Members considered the information provided, and the following issues were raised:

- How would leisure be reflected within the Transformation Programme?
 - The Community Development and Health Manager responded that with regard to leisure provision, there were a number of projects and initiatives, some included within the Corporate Plan and some that were larger in resource needs. High level objectives would be included within the Transformation Programme, which was currently in its infancy, and would ultimately be presented to Council to be ratified.
- What timescales were involved with the Transformation Programme? Was leisure provision no longer a priority?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society responded that a number of projects had come forward within the new Corporate Plan, including provision of leisure facilities. High level objectives were being considered, these could be built on and prioritised in June/July 2015. Leisure provision was still a priority – the Chief Executive had wanted to ensure that the Corporate Plan was in place first.
- What had the CMT involvement with the Task Group's recommendations contributed to the process? It did not appear to have moved the issue forward in any way.
 - The Community Development and Health Manager responded that CMT had advised that leisure provision would be looked at urgently once the Transformation Programme had been agreed. It had highlighted the risk of the impending expiration of the current contract at the leisure centre.
- What was the next step?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society responded that the information provided by the Task Group and from the survey had produced a small baseline. The issue would be taken forward after the District

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Council elections when it would be decided if this was a priority. Information would have to be gathered, the work of the Task Group had been valuable and had provided some of the base work already.

- Who would set future priorities?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society advised that the new administration, following the District Council elections, would set future priorities. The issue was not currently a priority as base information was needed before funding could be applied for. Priorities within the new Corporate Plan were wide ranging and needed to be channelled into more detail.
 - With regard to Leisure, intelligence was continually being gathered. Information gathered to date would be held in a 'Knowledge Hub' ready for the new administration. As Leisure was within the Corporate Plan, it would ultimately be prioritised.

- If the Cabinet had felt that the cost of a fuller survey, as recommended by the Task Group, was too high, could LEP money not have been used to fund this?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society felt that it may not be possible to link the leisure facilities issue to LEP funding as this funding was linked to economic growth. It could be possible to apply funding from other sources such as Lottery or European funding.

AGREED:

- a) That the report of the Assistant Director Community be noted; and

- b) That leisure provision must be a priority for the Council, and must be considered as a priority by the next administration following the District Council Election.

A G, JK,
MO, RR,
RW CM

Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field Task Group

The Community Development and Health Manager provided members with an update on how progress would be made with the recommendations of the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field Task Group.

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A Work Programme had been drawn up with 26 actions to address the 15 recommendations made by the Task Group. These were all to be completed by the end of April 2015. Each action had been allocated to an appropriate officer with a deadline date. Some actions had already been completed, others were underway. The Work Programme would be circulated to all members of the Performance Monitoring and Policy Development Panels.

With regard to the gates to the Field, members were advised that an amount had been included within the budget figures, and that a tender process would have to be undertaken for the works. The best value for the work required had to be secured.

AGREED:

- a) That the update report be noted;
- b) That the Work Programme to action recommendations of the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field Task Group be circulated to all members of the Performance Monitoring and Policy Development Panels; and
- c) That a further update on progress be provided to the Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel in six months time.

RW CM

RW CM

53. PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

At the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel on 8 April 2014, it had been agreed 'that Portfolio Holders, including the Leader of the Council, be invited to attend Panel meetings, to provide updates on the work that their departments were undertaking, and that financial issues should also be included in the updates'.

At the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel held on 25 November 2014, it was agreed that the Panel wished to speak to the Portfolio Holder responsible for Communication. Alongside this, they also requested an update on his portfolio in general, and the current position. To this end, the Portfolio Holder for Internal Services, Performance and Business Development attended to provide the update requested. The following information was provided:

Communications

- Usage of the website was very good. There had been 17,000

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users last month.

- The Portfolio Holder felt that shared management arrangements with respect to Communications were not sufficient. Since the Joint Communications Team Leader had left, a consultant and junior officer were currently in place. However, he was not happy with this shared arrangement and wished instead for a senior officer to be in position at each of the authorities (Breckland Council and South Holland District Council).
- Use was being made of social media e.g. Twitter and Facebook.
- A number of press releases had been made however, there could have been more and he felt that this could be improved once dedicated communications staff were in place.
- Members' Designated Budgets was an area that could receive more high profile communication.

Other areas of Portfolio

- There was some concern with regard to Human Resources data
- Zero-hour contracts – some staff at the Authority were on zero-hours, which he advised they were happy with.
- A lot of work had recently been undertaken in respect of the Corporate Plan.

Members raised the following issues:

- If the website was being used so well, would this have not been an ideal platform to undertake the Leisure survey?
 - The Portfolio Holder agreed that it would have been.
- Recently, there had been some articles in the local newspaper featuring Council Officers, explaining areas of work being undertaken. This was felt to be a good idea. Would this be happening more?
 - The Portfolio Holder agreed that this was a good initiative as it provided more information to the public on Council services.
- Were any statistics held regarding user-satisfaction with the website. The Authority needed to know this information, and if there was any reason why some members of the public were not using it, e.g. difficulty in finding particular information.
 - The Portfolio Holder agreed that the website was not user-friendly. He commented that there needed to be more consistency and Plain English should be used.

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- Communications included communicating with members of the Council, other Councils and Parish Councils. Was there any information on how satisfied others were with this. District Council members felt that this was not always as good as it should be e.g. members were not always advised beforehand of Press releases.
 - The Portfolio Holder responded that lack of resource could sometimes be a reason for poor communication. With regard to Press releases, it could be possible to send this information out to Councillors.

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Panel for inviting him to the meeting and advised that if members had any further questions, that they could contact him with them.

AGREED:

- a) That the update provided by the Portfolio Holder for Internal Services, Performance and Business Development be noted;
- b) That the SHDC website was not user-friendly, and should be modernised and made easier to use and navigate; and
- c) That the comments of the Panel be taken back by the Portfolio Holder for consideration in any future changes and improvements to Communications.

SL, MM,
MO, GT

54. CRIME AND DISORDER UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society was in attendance to provide an update report on community safety and how it was being delivered through the various tiers of Groups and Panels (including the East Lincolnshire CSP and Lincolnshire CSP). He advised on the following additional issues:

Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership

The Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership had met in January for a priority-setting event. The County-wide priorities had been set to address: 1) Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime; 2) Domestic Abuse; 3) Reduction in re-offending; 4) Serious organised crime; 5) Sexual violence; and 6) Substance abuse.

Work was also to be undertaken on information sharing and analysis.

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A previous priority, Road Safety, had dropped off the list of priorities for the current year. The Road Safety Partnership had been very successful in reducing injuries and deaths and as a result, this was no longer an area of priority. However, it would still be monitored.

A Community Safety Agreement and delivery plans were being developed, and the Portfolio Holder would receive more feedback on this at the next meeting on 5 March 2015.

The 14/15 Annual Report was currently being drawn up, and the Portfolio Holder advised that this would be shared with the Panel once it had been finalised.

East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership

Priorities had been set to address: 1) Anti-Social Behaviour; 2) violent crime and domestic abuse; 3) alcohol abuse; and 4) theft.

- Members questioned how the Police managed the priorities of each of the bodies, as they were not the same.
 - The Portfolio Holder responded that all priorities were important and that the bodies were given a lead member who reported into the Police.

County-wide designation of powers

At the Panel meeting on 25 November 2015, Inspector Tyner had advised that the Chief Constable was considering a final decision on the County-wide designation of powers, and that members would be advised of the outcome of the decision. A response had been received and the Chairman advised the Panel of this. The following issues were raised:

The Community Development and Health Manager commented that the delegation had arisen following the introduction of new legislation. Discussions were taking place between local authorities and the Police as to how this would work. It had originally been thought that PCSOs would have all delegations passed down to them however, it would appear that currently only some had been passed down.

Members felt that PCSOs should not lose their community role by having too much delegated down to them.

The Community Development and Health Manager responded that the Authority was working with the Police to consider how this should be dealt with locally.

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Other issues

- Concern was raised regarding the continued operation of unlicensed scrap dealers. Since the Police had taken over enforcement in the area of scrap dealers' licenses, had any been challenged?
 - The Portfolio Holder responded that he was not aware of the Police having to undertake any enforcement in this area however, it would be useful of find out this information.
 - The Community Development and Health Manager advised that information could be sought from the Licensing Department as to whether there had been any feedback from the Police linked to those dealers that had been issued with licences.

AGREED:

- a) That the update provided by the Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society be noted;
- b) That the Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership's 14/15 Annual Report be shared with the Panel when it became available;
- c) That information be sought from the Licensing department as to whether there had been any information from the Police with regard to irregular behaviour by licensed scrap dealers; and
- d) That the Portfolio Holder for Localism, Economic Development and Big Society be requested to provide a further update to the Panel in six months time.

EH, CW
CM

CM, ES

CW CM

55. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

At the meeting, members had requested that an update be received on the current situation with regard to the bandstand and aviary at Ayscoughfee Gardens, and issues around the access road at the Spalding Gypsy and Traveller Site. These updates were provided as follows:

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Bandstand and aviary at Ayscoughfee Gardens

The Community Development and Health Manager provided members with an update on the current situation:

- With regard to timescale, the project was not as advanced as it could be however, progress was now being made.
- A planning application had been submitted on 10 February 2015. Documents were available on the SHDC website.
- The amount of £57,000 for the project had come from Section 106 monies.
- The specification had exceeded the original provisional budget.
- A competitive tender process would be entered into, with the aim of arriving at a cost as close to the original budget as possible.
- Work would start on the project, subject to planning approval.

Members raised the following issues:

- By how much and why had the amount of £57,000 been exceeded?
 - The officer was not aware of the exact figure. It was understood that the specification had caused a higher figure.
- Why was the specification not constrained to the amount of budget available for the project?
 - It had been the ambition of the design to see if a higher specification could be achieved.
- The officer commented that the original estimate for the work had been exceeded however, it was likely that the actual final quote for the work would be on budget.
- It had to be made clear that a certain amount was available to spend on the project, and that all bids should be within this budget.
 - The amount budgeted would be the amount that would be spent on the project.

Access road at Spalding Gypsy and Traveller Site

The Planning Manager outlined the current situation. He clarified that, with regard to the planning application, LCC Highways comments had been taken on board at both the pre-application and application stages. Highways had raised no issues with regard to safety.

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Members commented that they were aware of the planning issues however, their concern was that the matter of conditions being applied to the site should have been resolved prior to the planning application being submitted.

The Planning Manager replied that issues relating to both the structural integrity of the highway and the need for passing places had been addressed throughout the process. Both were the subject of conditions. Upgrade work on the road needed to be directly proportional to the proposed use. Ultimately, SHDC (as the local planning authority) would discharge the conditions. With regard to timescales, members were advised that a meeting would be held with the County Council on 18 March 2015. Members would be advised of the outcome of this meeting when known, and the information would also be made available to the general public.

AGREED:

- a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record; and
- b) That the update provided on the current position with regard to the bandstand and aviary at Ayscoughfee be noted, and that members monitor its progress.
- c) That members be advised of the outcome of the meeting being held on 18 March 2015 between SHDC and Lincolnshire County Council, regarding issues around the access road at the Spalding Gypsy and Traveller Site.

RW

PJ CM

56. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3.

There were none.

57. ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL.

There were none.

58. KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan issued on 9 February 2015.

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AGREED:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

59. RESOURCING WITHIN THE PLANNING SERVICE

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director (Place), which updated the Performance Monitoring Panel on resourcing within the Planning Service.

Following the update provided to the Performance Monitoring Panel on 25 November 2014, to address concerns raised with regard to completion of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, and delivery of the Planning service, a report had been presented to the Strategy Board on 16 December 2014, detailing the current situation with regard to insufficient staffing levels within the Planning Service, and the risks that this posed to the Department and the Authority in relation to service delivery. The provision of a £235,000 resource within the departmental budget had been sought to recruit to the following three temporary posts: Senior Planning Officer (2 years), Conservation Officer (part-time, 3 years) within the Development Management Team, and a Local Plan Project Management Officer (18 months). The Strategy Board had been entirely supportive of these proposals and had agreed to immediately provide funds for all three posts for the temporary periods outlined above.

The Planning Services immediately and successfully recruited to all three of the posts as follows:

- The additional Senior Planning Officer commenced work on 5 January 2015;
- The Conservation Officer role was also filled on 5 January 2015; and
- Local Plan Project Management resource was sourced and began working with the Joint Policy Unit Manager on 5 January 2015 (this was a supportive role that, whilst on-going, had been added to provide focus and project management skills to complement the existing resource).

In addition, two vacant Policy Officer posts were both filled in December 2014, leaving only one full-time vacancy within the Planning Service, which would be re-advertised shortly.

A marked improvement in performance had been seen in January and February within the Development Management Team. The longer-term benefits were harder to predict as income and application numbers remained high, and there still remained a

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single full-time vacancy. However, this post would be re-advertised shortly and when filled, should deliver greater resilience to meet with future demand.

With regard to the Local Plan team, the introduction of dedicated project management had enabled a thorough review of workload, work streams and project timescales to be undertaken. This had highlighted that the 6 month gap in staff resource had had an adverse effect upon work associated with the production of the Local Plan. Whilst existing work streams were maintained with the assistance of Boston colleagues, the consequence had been further down the line. Tandem work on other policy areas could not be begun and, as a consequence, there had been some slippage in the anticipated timescales. In addition, the Council's viability consultants had expressed the clear view that the next iteration of the Local Plan should be subject to the process of 'whole plan viability assessment'. This was a matter that, nationally, had caused delays in Local Plan production and impacted upon the evidence base, and the likelihood of site delivery. These issues would be considered when the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee next met on 6 March 2015. The report would set out the issues and seek agreement to a revised Local Development Scheme.

Members considered the information provided, and the following issues were raised:

- Members were happy to hear that that the situation within the Planning Department was improving.
- With regard to the situation around the one full-time vacancy, detailed within section 4.3 of the report, it appeared that the gap in capacity had been covered well. Was there any flexibility in capacity to deal with the backlog?
 - The Planning Manager responded that this was the ambition. The main drive would be to improve applications, that turnaround may not be quick, but that it was preferable to arrive at a positive first application.
- Members requested that a further update be provided to the Panel in six months time. The Planning Manager commented that the forthcoming elections could have an impact on performance and requested that the update be provided in eight months time. Members agreed with this request.

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AGREED:

- a) That the report of the Executive Director (Place) be noted; and
- b) That a further update report on the position regarding resourcing within the Planning Department be provided to the Panel in 8 months' time.

PJ CM

60. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORT - Q3 2014/15

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director, Commissioning and Governance, which provided an update on delivery against the 2011-2015 Corporate Plan for the period 1 October 2014 to 31 December 2014.

The covering report represented a summary of the status of the Council's key projects and indicators, as well as the direction of travel since the previous quarter.

Areas of success, where performance had improved since the last report, were also brought to members' attention, as were areas of concern where performance was below anticipated outcomes or was worsening. These items were discussed at Performance Board on 29 January 2015 and were highlighted to the Corporate Management Team on 16 February 2015. Actions agreed were included in the summary within the covering report, and in the commentary of Appendix A to the report.

The Corporate Improvement and Performance Team Leader reported that the Quarter 4 report would be scaled back in order that preparations for the period 2015/16 onwards could be made. The Quarter 3 Performance Report would be reported to the Cabinet in March.

Members raised the following issues:

Paragraph 1.10 within the covering report – Average time to re-let SHDC property. Members' frequently had concerns regarding the re-letting of properties. How were figures arrived at? Some properties were left empty for a long period. It would be useful to see a sample of re-lets over a period of 6-12 months in order to see the range of re-lets. Averages were helpful however, there needed to be a focus on the reasons behind exceptions.

- Averages were generally reported however, this did obscure the full picture, and ranges would be better. The Corporate Improvement and Performance Team Leader advised that she would liaise with the Housing Department to provide the data that

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members required.

Pie charts were an easier way of representing changes in performance. Could more use be made of these within future performance reports, specifically to show both the previous and current period?

- Improvements in the presentation of performance information were often considered, in order to provide more meaningful information.

Was the Authority responsible for the inspection of licensed premises located in lay-bys? Were there issues around the business being on County Council property, being licensed by the Authority and payment of Business Rates?

- The Corporate Improvement and Performance Team Leader advised that she would request a response on the issues from the Licensing Team.

Members agreed that the presentation of performance within the quarterly reports was improving.

Was any action taken on poor performance?

- Performance was assessed internally, and Service Managers were called in to explain poor performance and how it would be addressed.

With regard to missed collections per 100,000, did this figure reflect the number of collections simply missed, or did it include ones that could not be collected?

- Sometimes non-collection could be as a result of contamination or access issues. Staff in the Customer Contact Centre were to be trained to ensure that they asked the right questions of customers, in order that issues could be filtered and thus, clearer performance information be gathered.

AGREED:

- a) That the report of the Executive Director, Commissioning and Governance, be noted;
- b) That the Corporate Improvement and Performance Team Leader liaise with the Housing Department in order to provide members with data regarding a range of re-lets over a 6-12 month period, showing the reasons behind exceptions, in order to provide a fuller picture than averages could give;
- c) That the use of pie charts and graphics within Performance

JW CM

JW

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Monitoring reports be considered and further developed, in order to provide more meaningful information in the presentation of performance information;

- d) That the Corporate Improvement and Performance Team Leader liaise with the Licensing Team regarding a response to members on their queries regarding licensed premises in lay-bys, specifically the fact that businesses were located on County Council property, were licensed by the Authority and any issues regarding the payment of Business Rates.

JW CM

61. PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Democratic Services and Legal Manager which set out the Work Programme of the Performance Monitoring Panel. The Work Programme consisted of two separate sections, the first setting out the dates 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 Chairman commented that any items on the Work Programme would roll forward to the next municipal year, to be considered by the Panel following the District Council election.

LE CM

AGREED:

That both sections of the Panel's Work Programme, as set out in the report of the Democratic Services and Legal Manager, be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.55 pm)

(End of minutes)