

Minutes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 12 November 2019 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

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

J R Astill
A C Beal
C J T H Brewis
A C Cronin

R Grocock
J D McLean
N H Pepper
P A Redgate

A C Tennant
S C Walsh
D J Wilkinson

In Attendance: The Place Manager, the Communities Manager, the Corporate Innovation, Change and Performance Manager, the Housing Landlord Services Manager, the Community Safety and Enforcement Manager, the Principal Planning Officer and the Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillor J L King

27 **MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel, held on 11 September 2019 and the minutes of the Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel held on 16 July 2019.

The following issues were raised:

- At the last meeting, it had again been requested that feedback be provided on how many prosecutions were achieved through the use of CCTV. Officers responded that work was being undertaken with the Police regarding this request, and that more qualitative information would be included within the next update report in March 2020.
- Swimming Pool and Leisure Facilities update – members asked that the information requested at the last update be provided.
- Members asked when the dilapidation schedule for the leisure facilities would be in a form suitable for scrutiny by the Panel. Officers responded that conversations were still ongoing with the previous contractor, and as a result, they could not confirm when the information would be available. The Chairman would be provided with an update outside of meeting.

Action By

DB

EH

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

AGREED:

- a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel held on 11 September 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record;
- b) That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel held on 16 July 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

28 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

29 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

30 TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel was advised that a report had been presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 29 October 2019, which provided an update on the progress of the recommendations of the Public Toilet Task Group, and proposed future options.

The recommendations within the report were agreed by the Cabinet, and would all be undertaken in full.

Officers confirmed that the recommendations had been considered alongside another report relating to Holbeach and Spalding Town Improvement Works.

31 ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL.

Long Term Empty Homes

The Policy Development Panel had been receiving regular updates on the position regarding Long Term Empty Homes, the latest update being to the meeting on 24 September 2019. As the position on the number of long term empty homes had been quite static, the report to the meeting in September had laid out proposals for moving forward with regard to how information on empty homes could be reported in the future. One of these proposals was that, going forward, consideration of performance be undertaken by the Performance Monitoring Panel.

The Performance Monitoring Panel considered this proposal, and

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

the following issues arose:

- Performance around empty homes appeared to have dropped – why had this position arisen?
 - Officers explained that the current target performance indicator was linked to work undertaken by the Private Sector Housing Team, and did not take account of work undertaken across the Authority as a whole (which included PSPS and Council Tax). The Performance Indicators needed to be re-addressed as they did not accommodate spikes at certain times, due to other factors. Officers commented that there was an additional lack of clarity due to the year end Key Performance Indicator (KPI) showing the net increase/decrease of Council Tax receipts together with a quarterly measure which showed the number of properties brought back into use as a result of the work of the officer group.
- Was the objective to bring in more Council Tax revenue, or to decrease the number of empty homes?
 - Officers responded that with regard to the year-end figures, the focus was around Council Tax receipts, and the New Homes Bonus, and with regard to officer intervention, the focus was on the impact that an empty property had on the area.
- How was the New Homes Bonus affected?
 - Officers advised that bringing a property back into use generated a New Homes Bonus, which was preferable to the income brought in from Council Tax payable on an empty property. The two distinct areas made the information around the KPI unclear – separate KPIs were required to make the data clearer.
- Members asked what the process was with regard to bringing a property back into use.
 - Officers advised that there was a dedicated inbox and information on the Council's website for individuals to report properties, which officers would then take forward. The Council Tax department also provided information on empty properties, and relevant officers would then try to determine the reasons for the property being a long term empty home. The Policy Development Panel would be considering the Empty Homes Strategy in due

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

course, but performance around KPIs was a different issue, and the correct reporting mechanisms had to be found.

- Officers stated that the number of empty homes was very small, that there were ad hoc procedures to deal with empty homes, and that a policy would be brought forward in due course to consolidate this.
- Members commented that careful consideration had to be given to the correct form KPIs should take, in order that performance and the work undertaken by officers could be clearly reflected. It was agreed that further information on KPIs be provided for consideration at the next meeting of the Panel, alongside some background information with regard to situations and difficulties faced.

AGREED:

That with regard to Empty Homes, further information be provided to the next meeting of the Panel around Key Performance Indicators, and background information with regard to situations and difficulties faced.

RB,
JK

Joint Task Groups

Consideration was given to the future of two Task Groups that had been set up jointly by both the Performance Monitoring Panel and the Policy Development Panel:

- Public Open Spaces Task Group – This had been a joint Task Group which had not concluded its work. The Policy Development Panel had suggested that this no longer be a joint Task Group, and that the Performance Monitoring Panel conclude the work. The Policy Development Panel would instead establish a new Planning Design Task Group. The Performance Monitoring Panel was in agreement with this approach, and it was agreed that the following Panel members be part of the new Public Open Spaces Task Group – Councillors B Alcock, J R Astill, A C Beal, C J T H Brewis and P A Redgate. It was also agreed that the scope be re-considered at the first meeting of the Task Group, to be arranged in the new year.
- Leisure Facilities Task Group – This had been a joint Task Group, and it was agreed by both Panels that it be removed from the respective Work Programmes.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

AGREED:

- a) That the Performance Monitoring Panel continue the work of the Public Open Spaces Task Group, and:
- i. That the membership consist of Councillors B Alcock, J R Astill, A C Beal, C J T H Brewis and P A Redgate;
 - ii. That the scope be reconsidered as the first meeting of the Task Group in the new year; and
- b) That the Leisure Facilities Task Group be removed from the Panel's Work Programme.

CM

CM

32 KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan issued on 29 October 2019.

AGREED:

That the Key Decision Plan issued on 29 October 2019 be noted.

33 Q2 2019-20 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Customer, which provided an update on how the Council was performing for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019.

The Quarter 2 2019-20 Performance Report detailed in Appendix A aimed to provide members, businesses and residents with an overview of how the Council was performing against a number of key strategic indicators. These indicators included the delivery of frontline services, financial performance and progress made towards achieving the overarching aims and objectives of the Council, as set out in the Corporate Plan. In addition, the covering report highlighted areas of improved and high performance, and also where performance was challenged.

Areas of success included:

- Significant improvement in the average re-let time for Quarter 2;
- Performance relating to the time taken to respond to customer feedback continued to perform strongly – this included responses to Freedom of Information requests and complaints;

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

- Performance within the Council's customer contact centre was very positive; There had been a decrease in the number of reported fly tips within the District, and a decrease in the amount of time to remove them

It was noted under areas for improvement that there had been a total of 465 missed waste collections in Quarter 2, which equated to 0.05% of scheduled collections.

The Panel considered the report, and the following issues were raised:

- Members commented that sickness performance was very good and that staff should be congratulated.
- Although missed waste collections was an area for improvement, the percentage was small when measured against the number of successful collections. Officers commented that further investigations were needed to identify whether these were missed collections or missed presentations.
- There were a number of points raised regarding fly tipping:
 - Fly tips reported in the performance report were fly tips that the Authority was responsible for clearing;
 - Some members felt that the situation around fly tipping was not improving. Other members suggested that part of the problem was fly tippers adding rubbish to existing waste collections, and officers commented that although work was being done, there was still some way to go.
 - Members asked which fly tips were the responsibility of the Authority. Officers responded that the Authority had no duty to clear fly tipping from private land, but would still look into these incidences and investigate.
 - Dykes and drains were major areas for fly tipping, and officers advised that the Authority often worked with the Internal Drainage Boards to resolve this problem.
 - Members commented that highway drains were another area prone to fly tipping. Officers responded that if the drains were in public ownership, they would be cleared by the Authority. However, safety of staff in undertaking this work was also a consideration - there had to be a balance between doing the work and ensuring the safety of staff.

DB, CP

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

- Improvements were required to the way in which reporting was dealt with on-line. Although reporting could be undertaken, there was currently no feedback or responses provided.
 - It was important that the Authority prosecuted fly tippers wherever they could, and that this was reported in the local press, to deter others.
 - Anti-littering/fly tipping education of children from a young age was important – could the Authority do anything in this regard? Officers advised that the Community Wardens were very effective in promoting their message, and could be used in schools. The schools themselves could be contacted to ascertain if there was any education of this kind already in place.
- Information included within the report around customer engagement was useful however, members requested that 12 months of data was needed on 'contact channels by type', for comparison purposes.
 - Members commented that the digital access to performance data was very good. Officers responded that they were piloting real-time performance management reporting for the future. This would mean that issues could be acted upon immediately, rather than looking at historic information. From the next quarter 1, trend and business analysis would be reported to the Performance Monitoring Panel.

RB

AGREED:

That the content of the report be noted.

(The Corporate Innovation, Change and Performance Manager left the meeting following discussion of the above item).

34 REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTED PLANNING DECISIONS

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Place which reported on the Review of Implemented Planning Decisions, and requested consideration of the findings.

The tour had taken place on 5 September 2019, with morning and afternoon sessions taking in different areas of the district. Eight members took part and were present for the whole day. A selection of eight residential developments were visited after prior discussion with the Chairman of the Panel. The sites chosen comprised both small and large-scale schemes, with some under

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

construction, and some that had been completed.

Members were provided with an information pack outlining the background and key issues relating to each site, as well as a block plan of the site. Verbal assistance was given on site where necessary, and officers noted members' feedback for each site.

A debriefing session was held after the tour to review the day, and these conclusions were detailed within the report and Appendix A.

Members considered the information and the following issues arose:

- Those members that had attended agreed that the day had been useful and well organised, and that it was helpful to actually visit and see the sites, and to see the challenges that were faced.
- It was agreed that the comments detailed within Appendix A were too much of a precis of comments made by members. More comments on each of the sites was required – they could be important to the findings of the tour, and more expansion would be helpful for Planning Committee. Also, the précising of some of the comments did not make it clear whether they were beneficial or detrimental – they required more explanation.
- Earlier in the meeting, the Panel had been advised that the Policy Development Panel had agreed to set up a Planning Design Task Group - could the comments from the tour be incorporated into its work?
- Future tours should ensure that photographs were taken of the sites viewed, so that they could be seen by those members who could not attend. Additionally, better quality photographs should be taken of sites when an application was submitted to the Planning Committee.
- A 3-D Computer Aided Design of what a building should look like would be helpful in future consideration of applications.
- Consideration should be given to including commercial developments as part of future tours.
- Infill plots – there was an issue with some plots where larger properties were being build on plots that were too small for them.

LB, PN

CM, CP

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

- The Panel raised a number of additional issues on each of the sites, that it did not feel had been reflected within the appendix, and officers noted these comments.

AGREED:

- a) That the report on the Review of Implemented Planning Decisions be presented to the Planning Committee, and that the report include fuller comments on the sites visited; and
- b) That future Reviews of Implemented Planning Decisions be undertaken on an annual basis.

(The Principal Planning Officer left the meeting following discussion of the above item).

35 CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Place which provided members with an update on enforcement activity.

The Council was responsible for enforcing a wide range of legislation, with powers of enforcement usually delegated to individual officers in the various service areas concerned. Enforcement activity in the Council was extensive and included planning enforcement, contraventions of building regulations, littering, fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour, abandoned vehicles, evictions, possessions, prohibition orders, food safety, health and safety, licensing, noise nuisance and pollution. The activity covered individuals, public areas, homes and businesses.

With regard to enforcement data, performance indicators created for the current financial year commenced on 1 April 2019, requiring all teams across the authority with enforcement responsibilities to report on their enforcement on a quarterly basis, and information on the first two quarters was detailed within the report. Also detailed within the report were some enforcement case examples, covering Fly-Tipping; Planning; a Without Notice Injunction; and a Failure to license a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Members considered the information detailed within the report, and the following issues were raised:

- Members commented that under the Communities service area, it would be useful for anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping information to be broken down. Officers agreed that this

DB

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

would be useful – an appendix could be added, to include information for all departments to make it clearer to pick out detail.

- Members commented that with regard to informal notices, the warning letters, prosecutions and financial penalties for quarters 1 and 2 seemed disproportionate. Officers advised that PSPO warning letters were now included in the numbers within the report, which were not included within the Q1 figures.
- Press publicity for enforcement work undertaken was good. It was important that the public knew of anti-social issues, and that they noted times, dates and incidences when reporting them. Officers agreed, and stated that it was also important to work with people to find the best way forward.
- Members commented that feedback was frequently requested regarding progress on a number of untidy sites– communication regarding what was being done was insufficient, and it thus appeared that no progress was being made. Members were advised that work was being undertaken on these properties however, it was felt that communication had to improve and there needed to be a consistent message provided. Members responded that it may be useful to set up a Task Group to look into untidy sites, how the Authority dealt with them, and how communication was undertaken. A report detailing this information was requested to the next meeting, when a decision would be made as to whether to pursue a Task Group.

DB

DB, SB, KB

AGREED:

- a) That the content of the report be noted;
- b) That a further update be provided to the Performance Monitoring Panel in six months' time; and
- c) That a report be presented to the next meeting of the Panel providing details of untidy sites, how the Authority dealt with them and how communication on progress was undertaken.

36 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager Governance, 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

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

12 November 2019

future Panel meetings along with proposed items for consideration, and the second setting out the Task Groups that had been identified by the Panel.

- Members raised the issue of the development and availability of industrial units within the area. Holbeach, Spalding and Crowland had good availability however, Sutton Bridge did not. The provision that was there was in a poor state, and many of the units were not being used for the purposes they were set up for.
 - Officers advised that the original policy relating to industrial units had been produced in the early 2000s, there had been some movement from its original intentions, but that a new policy was being drafted and would be presented in due course to the Policy Development Panel for consideration.
- Members requested that a report be provided to the next meeting of the Panel, laying out the current situation regarding the use of industrial units within the area, including what they were being used for.

AG, RH

AGREED:

- a) That the Work Programme provided by the Executive Manager Governance be noted; and
- b) That a report be provided to the next meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel providing information on the current situation regarding the use of industrial units within the area, including what they were being used for.

37 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.40 pm)

(End of minutes)