

Minutes of a meeting of the **SPALDING TOWN FORUM** held in line with the Local Authorities & Police & Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority & Police & Crime Panel Meetings) (England & Wales) Regulations 2020. on Wednesday, 24 March 2021 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

R Gambba-Jones (Chairman)

A C Cronin
R A Gibson (Vice-
Chairman)
C J Lawton

J D McLean
A M Newton
G P Scalese

G J Taylor

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillor G A Porter.

In Attendance: Councillor E J Sneath, G Scott (Spalding Transport Forum), R Perkins (Castle Sports Complex Bowls Club), J Bland (Civic Society), Assistant Director - Communities and Operations, Environmental Services Manager and the Democratic Services Officer.

55. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2021.

AGREED:

That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

56. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

57. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES.

There were none.

58. COMMUNITY LITTER PICKING GROUPS

The Forum received a verbal presentation from the Environmental Services Manager regarding ongoing communications between the Council and litter picking groups. The Forum was advised of the following:

- Tribute was paid to the good work that the Wombles

Action By

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Group, and community litter pickers across the District were undertaking.

- Since 12 March 2021, 1,000 bags of litter had been picked up by the Spalding Wombles, and these had been collected by the Environmental Services Team from over 128 different locations.
- In order to lessen the impact to the Environmental Services Team of collecting the additional rubbish, which was in addition to their existing collections, it was recognised that communication with the Wombles Group around the reporting of litter collections had to be improved. The Forum was advised that this would be happening, and that a meeting had been arranged between the Environmental Services Team and one of the founders of the Spalding Wombles Group, to take place on Friday 26 March 2021.

Following this update, the following questions were raised:

- Members asked whether a new option could be added to the 'Report It' function on the website for litter picking groups to report littering, rather than it being categorised under fly-tipping.
 - Officers confirmed that there was a currently an option under Street Cleansing, within the 'Report It' function, and that this should be used to report littering.
- Members commented that the same areas were having to be repeatedly cleared, and questioned what the Council could do to educate the public about littering.
 - Officers responded that information that had been collected by the Wombles would help in identifying hotspots. Differing methods of addressing littering would be employed, dependent on the issues that caused it in the respective areas.
- Members suggested that residents who were part of litter picking groups could try to take the litter they had collected home with them if possible.
 - Officers responded that where possible, it would be useful for litter pickers to take rubbish home with them. It was also requested that if leaving litter by bins, that the 'Report It' function on the website be used to identify it for collection.
- Much work was being undertaken on many fronts to address the problem of littering, and tribute was again paid to volunteers who were assisting with this. It was suggested that private businesses could be encouraged to also assist in

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efforts to keep the area clear of litter.

- Members were concerned about the risks some members of the groups were taking when litter picking, particularly on the riverbank.
 - Officer responded that the Council had previously provided risk assessment templates to the litter picking groups and would use the meeting with the Wombles group later that week to provide safety advice and guidance to ensure that residents were not putting themselves at risk.
- Members asked what guidance was being given out to litter picking groups outside of the Wombles group in relation to where to leave their collections and how to report them.
 - Officers confirmed that they had been in touch with other groups prior to the meeting to offer advice on safety, and how to report their collections in a way that would limit the impact on the Environmental Services Team, and which would work in conjunction with the system in place for the Wombles group.
- Members enquired as to how much litter picking could be undertaken in or around the rivers.
 - Officers commented that this was a difficult area to advise on, due to where responsibilities lay (Local Authority or Environment Agency) but encouraged anyone who was looking to host a litter pick in these areas to contact the Environmental Services Team so that they could offer advice on risks and safety.

Officers also confirmed that previously the Council had worked with the Environment Agency to lower the water levels to allow more litter to be safely collected from the riverbanks. Undertaking this work with partners in a pre-arranged way would be the safest and most effective way of addressing the issue.

59. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN HAS BEEN MADE AWARE OF BUT WERE NOT ABLE TO BE ADDED TO THE AGENDA IN TIME

The Chairman announced that he had received notification of six issues for consideration at this point:

1) Additional questions to Item 5 of the agenda

- Members asked whether there were any bins waiting to be installed in specific areas. Had any areas requiring special attention been identified?

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- Officers responded that there had been requests for two bins, and the team were in the process of installing these.
 - Officers confirmed that a project was underway to review the placement of bins around the district, to ensure that they were in the right locations.
- Members questioned how much green waste was being fly-tipped.
 - Officers responded that there had been 176 fly-tip incidences reported across the district in February 2021, and that of these, only seven were for green waste.
- Members asked for an update on the roll-out of brown garden waste bins.
 - Officers confirmed that over the last few weeks, around 140 brown bins were being offered on routes each week, and around 100 of these were being sold on a weekly basis. The current register of interest for the bins was being used, with the aim of working through the list to ensure everyone that wanted a bin was offered one.
 - Officers encouraged any resident who felt they had been on the list for a long period of time to email the Waste Services team.
- Members enquired if there was anything the Council could do to educate residents about not putting their refuse and recycling bags out too early.
 - Officers responded that 885 warning and advice letters had been issued so far this year in relation to early presentation of waste. Where there were repeat issues, and a particular household could be identified, a Community Protection Warning could be issued.
- Members responded that it would be helpful if the 'Report It' function on the website could be developed to allow pictures to be attached, rather than having to send these via supplementary emails.
 - Officers agreed that the process had to be better and responded that this issue was currently being looked at and would be improved in due course.

2) Adopt a Red Telephone Box Scheme

Councillor Sneath suggested that an old red telephone box in Church Gate, Spalding be adopted, and turned into a history box with old photos of the area in the windows. She offered to lead on

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the potential adoption of the telephone box as part of her role as Heritage Champion.

Members raised concerns about the upkeep and maintenance that the telephone box may require in the centre of Spalding, due to the potential for vandalism.

It was agreed that advice be sought on the way forward, and that members views would be taken into consideration. Councillor Sneath would liaise with officers.

3) Welcome to Spalding Sign – Barrier Bank

Members raised concern about the 'Welcome to Spalding' sign that had been missing from Barrier Bank for a few months and suggested that this was an opportunity to look at designing some new 'Welcome' signs for the town.

Councillor Taylor agreed to take the lead on the development of the new signs and to look into funding opportunities for the purchase of the signs. It was suggested that a 'Welcome' sign could also be installed at the Bus Station and the Railway Station in Spalding.

The Chairman confirmed that he had been liaising with the Council's Assets Team to confirm the cost of replacement signs.

Mr Bland from the Spalding Civic Society confirmed that this issue had been raised at the Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group and confirmed that a good, consistent brand was required. He confirmed that the Civic Society would be happy to work with Councillor Taylor on this project.

4) Spalding & Peterborough Transport Forum

Mr Scott from the Spalding & Peterborough Transport Forum attended the meeting to give an update on the work of the forum:

- With the exception of the gardens, the work on the Spalding Station was now complete.
- The group had now split in two – the Friends of Spalding Station was being set up to help maintain the gardens and the Spalding & Peterborough Transport Forum would be looking at transport issues.
- The group was in contact with East Midlands Trains to find out if the empty rooms at Spalding Station could start being used.
- He advised that if anybody wished to join the group, they were welcome to.

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5) Steppingstone Bridge – improved lighting & change to design

The Chairman commented that Steppingstone Bridge had been raised a number of times at Spalding Town Forum meetings – 1) Because of the fact that Network Rail had replaced the original with a second-hand bridge; 2) Because of the inadequate access it gave to disabled people; and 3) Because it was felt to be unsafe in respect of lighting, and the original open sides being replaced by sheets of steel.

The Chairman proposed that contact be made with Network Rail to outline concerns about public safety on and around the bridge - to consider removing the sheets of steel and replace them with open sides, to encourage them to consider putting lights on the bridge itself, and to widen the pathways leading up to the bridge.

Members were supportive of the Chairman's proposal.

6) Lincolnshire County Council – Active Travel Fund consultation

The Chairman asked Forum members how they wished to approach the consultation, and whether a joint submission to the consultation could be made by the Forum, alongside individual submissions.

Forum members discussed the proposals, and the following issues were raised:

- A balanced, flexible approach was needed to cater for car users as well as pedestrians and cyclists. Cars were a necessity in rural areas;
- Members expressed concern over the loss of on-street parking that would occur under the proposal. This would cause difficulties for people who could not walk far or who wished to make only a quick visit into the town;
- Money was clearly available to make changes, and these should be well-considered to provide an effective long-term solution;
- Members suggested that existing cycle routes needed to be improved before new routes were developed.
- Members were concerned that the public did not have enough information about the consultation.
- Enforcement in town centres was vital with regard to cycle theft and to ensure that cyclists adhered to the rules.
- Cycling was supported however, existing cycle lanes that currently accessed the town centre were ineffective and had been allowed to run into a poor state of repair over the years.
- Members were supportive of the 20mph limit around the town centre included within the proposal but commented that

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cyclists should also adhere to speed limits.

- The Civic Society stated that there had been a lack of prior consultation before the suggested proposals had come forward. The Chairman of the Forum suggested that the Civic Society send a submission to the County Council with ideas to put forward, and that this be followed up with individual submissions.

Members felt it was too early for the Forum to make a collective informed response to the consultation at that point in time, and that wider information and more detail on implications was required. The Chairman advised that he would write to Lincolnshire County Council to advise that the Forum was concerned over the lack of detail and that members required more information.

60. TO AGREE ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

The Chairman informed members that any future items they would like to put on the agenda needed to put forward in good time to allow officers to bring timely information to the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 8.20 pm)

(End of minutes)