Minutes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 15 July 2025 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

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

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|---|---|---|
| C J T H Brewis | M Geaney | I Sheard |
| N Chapman | S Hutchinson | A R Woolf |
| S Chauhan | J L King | |
| L J Eldridge | G P Scalese | |

In Attendance: The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), the Assistant Director - Regulatory, the Assistant Director - Housing and Communities, the Community Leadership Manager, the Head of Environmental Services, the Climate Change and Environment Officer *virtual*, the Climate Change and Environment Group Manager *virtual*, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and the Democratic Services Officer.

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

**Action By**

**20 MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel held on 20 May 2025.

**AGREED:**

That both the open minutes at agenda item 2, and the restricted minute at agenda item 16, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

There were none.

**22 ACTIONS**

Consideration was given to the update on actions that arose at the 20 May 2025 Performance Monitoring Panel meeting and the tracking of outstanding actions.

- Members referred to the response given at action 8b. *25/26* in respect of 'Council run stall occupancy levels' and, in the interest of helping market towns become more vibrant, requested that occupancy level data be made available to them at the earliest possible opportunity.
    - The Democratic Services Officer would relay the request to the relevant officer after the meeting.

- Members referred to the response given at action 8e. *25/26* in respect of 'average answer rate - Revenues and Benefits' and queried when a response would be coming forward.
    - The Democratic Services Officer would relay the request to the relevant officer after the meeting.

- Members referred to action 69. 24/25 and queried when a response would be coming forward.
    - The Democratic Services Officer responded that the Housing Stock Condition Survey update report was scheduled to come forward to members at the 15 October 2026 Performance Monitoring Panel meeting.

**AGREED:**

That the update on actions be noted.

## 23 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

## 24 TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

## 25 ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL.

There were none.

## 26 KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan dated 7 July 2025.

Members made the following comments:

- Members believed that the 'Land in Holbeach' decision had been made and therefore queried its presence on the plan.
    - The Democratic Services Officer would investigate and update members after the meeting.

- Members referred to the 'Destination Management Plan' decision which was due to be made by Cabinet on 16 September 2025. Members were keen that their input and comments (provided at the informal workshop on 15 July 2025) influenced the final document however concern was expressed regarding potential delays of the decision due to the summer recess. Members acknowledged the impending deadline for this decision but expressed a preference that the 16 September 2025 Cabinet date be adhered to.
    - The Democratic Services Officer would relay the comment to the relevant officer after the meeting

**AGREED:**

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

## 27 USE OF SECTION 113 AGREEMENTS

Consideration was given to the briefing note of the Assistant Director – Corporate which provided the Performance Monitoring Panel with information relating to Section 113 agreements across the partnership.

The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) presented the information to members which detailed the following:

- Background to the use of Section 113 agreements:
    - Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 allowed local authorities to place their officers at the disposal of another authority. This legal mechanism had underpinned the staffing arrangements across the partnership, enabling the sharing of officers between the three councils;
- The number of posts currently shared across the partnership was 144; a comprehensive breakdown of the sharing arrangement of each post was provided at Appendix A;
- Risk considerations: the use of the Section 113 agreements was deemed to be beneficial in that they:
    - Improved resilience across services;
    - Provided opportunities for professional development and career progression for officers; and

- Enabled access to specialist expertise, such as in relation to Carbon Reduction and Green Energy which had benefitted South Holland; and

- A new job evaluation scheme and pay structure was being developed to reflect the complexity of roles that spanned multiple authorities. A report on this would be brought to Full Council in due course.

Members considered the briefing note and appendix and made the following comments:

- Members welcomed the transparency of the report and the opportunity to scrutinise the arrangements.

- Members had supported local development management teams, particularly in respect of the Planning team, and concern was expressed regarding potential dilution of knowledge and availability where officers were required to work permanently across all three authorities.
  - The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) reassured members that while some posts were shared, the intention was to retain localised delivery where appropriate. The agreements allowed for flexibility to respond to peaks in demand or staffing shortages. Appendix A detailed the degree of each sharing arrangement and whether individual agreements had been applied on a temporary or permanent basis.

- Members queried whether the scale of shared staffing posed risks to service quality, communication or staff wellbeing and retention.
  - The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) responded that no significant risks had been identified and reiterated that the S113 agreements provided resilience among teams. The use of virtual meeting platforms and mobile technology had significantly reduced the need for travel and had improved communication.

**AGREED:**

That the briefing note relating to S113 arrangements across the partnership be noted.

**28 <u>SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S CROWDFUNDING SCHEME - TWO-YEAR PROGRESS</u>**

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Housing and Communities which provided an overview of the first two years of the South and East Lincolnshire Crowd Funding Scheme.

The Community Leadership Manager and the Assistant Director – Housing and Communities attended for this item.

The Community Leadership Manager introduced the report to members and the following points were highlighted:

- The scheme had supported ten projects within its first two years, which had totalled £105,497 across the sub-region, of which £59,000 had been contributed by the Crowd and represented a strong return on investment;
- The report did not include projects from the Spring 2025 funding round, which was still active;
- Successful projects in South Holland had included the refurbishment of the museum of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, Taste It Lincolnshire and a dog play area at Tydd St Mary's;
- The Impact Report – Crowdfund was at Appendix A;
- The Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment Tool was at Appendix B; and
- Of the six current projects, two had reached their funding targets, a further two were in sight of their target with two still actively crowdfunding.

Members considered the report and made the following update:

- Members stated that the figures quoted at point 2.6 of the covering report, in respect of leverage on Council investment, needed to be amended to 1 to 5.8.
    - The Community Leadership Manager would check the figures after the meeting.

- Members referred to the contract with Spacehive and asked for clarification of how this was funded and the value for South Holland.
    - The Assistant Director – Housing and Communities responded that:
        - The scheme operated under an annual contract with Spacehive, valued at £34,000 per year, which was shared equally between the three sovereign councils. The platform cost was not dependent on the number of projects supported, but rather on the population size of the participating councils;

- The 'pot' for each council was dependent upon contributions made by each sovereign council. South Holland had contributed £30,000 which had been further increased by UK Shared Prosperity Funding. Around £20,000 was currently still available for projects; and
- The scheme had demonstrated a strong return on investment and community engagement, and officers were looking at ways the scheme could be sustained for 2026/27.

**AGREED:**

That the progress and continuation of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Crowdfunding scheme be noted.

## 29 SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS POLICY

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Regulatory, which provided an update on delivery of the Sustainable Products Policy.

The Climate Change and Environment Officer and the Climate Change and Environment Group Manager attended virtually for this item, and the Assistant Director – Regulatory attended in person.

The Climate Change and Environment Officer introduced the report to members and highlighted that:

- The policy had been developed to support the Council's commitment to reduce its environmental impact and achieve its Net Zero targets;
- Since adoption of the policy, a significant amount of work had been undertaken to audit procurement practices across the Partnership, with a particular focus on identifying the use of single-use products;
- Audits had been conducted across the Partnership which had identified purchasing behaviours and the top ten suppliers of single-use items such as PPE, cleaning products and stationery; and
- The audit process had been time-consuming and largely manual, due to limitations in the current finance system, particularly where purchasing cards were used.

Members considered the report and made the following

comments:

- Members welcomed the report and supported the work being undertaken.

- Members raised concerns about Amazon being listed as the second highest supplier and queried whether more sustainable and local alternatives could be sourced.
    - The Climate Change and Environment Officer responded that efforts were underway to reduce reliance on Amazon by encouraging officers to raise purchase orders through approved suppliers, which would also improve data tracking and accountability.

- Members queried the total purchasing value of the products covered under the policy.
    - The Climate Change and Environment Officer stated that while costs were attached to the top ten suppliers, the data was currently organised by cost centre rather than supplier, making it difficult to provide a comprehensive figure. Work was ongoing to improve the breakdown of costs and to define the data more effectively. Nonetheless, the data currently held would be shared with members;
    - The Assistant Director – Regulatory added that:
        - The sharing of the current data was supported however a full purchasing cycle was required to establish a robust benchmark. As a result, a further report would be brought back to members in 18 months to allow for meaningful financial and carbon analysis; and
        - The policy was already driving behavioural change across the three councils, although such change would take time to fully embed.

- Members queried whether the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was included in the audit.
    - The Climate Change and Environment Officer confirmed that the audit covered all cost codes relating to single-use or disposable items, including those within the housing department.

**AGREED:**

1) That the progress to date be noted; and

2) That a further update report be received in 18 months'

time, once sufficient time has elapsed to enable the outcomes to be quantified in financial and carbon terms.

## 30 REFUSE AND RECYCLING SACK DELIVERY SERVICE

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Communities which updated the Performance Monitoring Panel on the options to improve the reliability of the sack delivery service and consider options for the future.

The Head of Environmental Services attended to present the item to members and the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services attended in support.

The Head of Environmental Services presented the report, and the following main points were highlighted relating to the current sack delivery service and the challenges associated with its operation;

- The service was governed by a published policy available on the Council's website, which detailed the provision of sacks to households: 52 black sacks and 80 clear sacks per year, delivered twice annually;
- The service was operated by a single full-time driver and cost approximately £355,000 per year, covering the employee, vehicle, and sack costs;
- The service was managed manually using a paper-based system, and that staff absence was not covered, which could lead to delays in sack deliveries;
- Customers were encouraged to report issues via the Council's website under the 'Rubbish and Recycling' section;
- The Council had made a strategic decision to transition to wheeled bins in line with the requirements of the Environment Act and as a result the sack delivery service would be phased out for most households. Terraced properties unable to accommodate bins would continue to receive sack deliveries under a revised model;
- Due to the transition, interim investment in changes to the existing system was not considered cost-effective. Nonetheless, officers welcomed feedback from members and acknowledged the need for improved communication with residents during the transition period.

Members considered the report and made the following comments:

- Members queried why sacks were delivered twice per year

rather than once.
    - The Head of Environmental Services explained that this was a historical decision and could be reviewed.

- Members raised concerns about new residents missing sack deliveries.
    - The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that new developments were tracked through the Planning team and that all new residents, whether linked to a new development or not, could contact the Council to trigger a delivery.

- Members noted that the website did not clearly state that the allowance was a limit and queried the system in place for officers to track whether a resident had received their annual allowance.
    - The Head of Environmental Services responded that:
        - Deliveries were recorded manually, and data uploaded to a computerised spreadsheet for tracking;
        - Only 8 formal complaints had been received in the past year on the matter, despite 90,000 deliveries; and
        - If required, additional clear and black sacks can be purchased from retail outlets.
    - Members noted the 8 formal complaints but wished to be advised of the number of notifications submitted by residents regarding missing sack deliveries.
        - The Head of Environmental Services responded that enquiries would be made with the PSPS Customer Contact regarding the availability of the requested data.

- Members queried the course of action where sacks had been taken by a third party prior to the resident being aware of the delivery.
    - The Head of Environmental Services responded that a pragmatic approach to individual cases would be taken.

- Members stated that a previous analysis of the current system had rendered it to be effective and efficient and emphasised the need to maintain an efficient delivery model for those properties that would continue to require sacks.
    - The Head of Environmental Services acknowledged

the feedback and confirmed that a suite of policies would be developed to support the transition to wheeled bins. The importance of engagement, communication and managing expectations was reiterated.

- Members noted a deterioration in the quality of sacks currently provided.
    - The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that sack specifications would be reviewed during the next procurement exercise.

- Members concluded that improvements to communications and publicity to clarify expectations and reporting methods was key in providing a solution to the issues faced by residents. It was also suggested that Parish Council Clerks and District Councillors be fully briefed in order to assist with direct enquiries from residents.

**AGREED:**

1) That the panel notes the report; and

2) That feedback from the Panel relating to the requirement for improved communications and publicity be noted.

## 31 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 Democratic Services Officer introduced the regular report to members and highlighted the following main points:

- Appendix 1 at page 89 of the pack listed the meetings for the current municipal year and current expected items.
- The next Performance Monitoring Panel was due to take place on 15 October for the following items:
    - The annual Crime and Disorder Partnership Update;
    - The Housing Stock Condition Survey update;
    - The Q1 Performance Report 2025/26
    - An update on the Community Lottery; and
    - A new item regarding the use of ‘General Exception’ for the Key Decision regarding the contract award for insurance.

Appendix 2 listed the task groups – there were no current task groups for this committee.

- The Review of Implemented Planning Decisions was due to take place in October 2025. Members of both the Performance Monitoring Panel and the Planning Committee would be invited to attend. Potential dates would be circulated to members after the 23 July 2025 Full Council meeting.
    - The Chairman added that the exercise was interesting and informative and gave members the opportunity to review the implementation of both residential and commercial properties/developments. Members were requested to submit ideas of sites to visit whether that be for positive or negative reasons.

**AGREED:**

That the Performance Monitoring Panel Work Programme be noted.

**32 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.21 pm)

(End of minutes)