

ACTION NOTES

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2013



COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Paul Cosham
Councillor Alan Davidson
Councillor Reginald Howard (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown
Councillor Michael King

Councillor David Nalson
Councillor Helen Powell
Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Bob Sampson
Councillor Frank Turner

OFFICERS

Strategic Director (Tracey Blackwell)
Head of Community Assets (Paul Stokes)
Head of Environmental Services (Mark Taylor)
Head of People, Projects and Performance (Sue Griffiths)
Development Management Service Manager (Pat Reid)
Community Safety and Licensing (Mark Jones)
Community Engagement and Policy Development Officer (Carol Drury)
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)
Administrative Assistant for Legal and Democratic Services (Alexandra Jarvis)

2 members of the public

56. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Two members of the public were present who both put forward questions.

Sue Verel asked for the Council's view on the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) consultation and whether the Council had requested a hub be based in Grantham to increase health-related employment opportunities. She also asked whether EMAS had been asked to use medical centres as Community Ambulance Points and reinvest savings in new ambulances. The Chairman stated that the question would be circulated to all Committee members who would be invited submit a response, which would be fed back at the Committee's next meeting (9 April 2013).

Michael Worth asked for the date of the meeting at which the Cabinet was due to consider the Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document; this had been

deferred on a number of occasions. The Schedule of Decisions indicated that the decision was due to be taken on 8 April 2013. Later in the meeting the chairman permitted Mr Worth to ask a second question. He asked whether all pre-application advice given to applicants for planning permission would be recorded and placed on public record and whether there would be a charge to the applicant for pre-application advice. Councillor King agreed to speak to the Development Management Service Manager on behalf of Mr Worth and that a written response would be sent to him.

Action Point:

- ***Committee members to submit their comments regarding the question on EMAS by Monday 25 March 2013 to report back to the Committee at its meeting on 9 April 2013.***
- ***Councillor King to speak to the Development Management Service Manager about questions in relation to pre-planning application advice.***

57. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Smith.

58. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No interests were disclosed.

59. ACTION NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2013

The action notes from the meeting held on 22 January 2013 were noted.

60. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

A stakeholder newsletter produced by Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on Stamford Hospital Redevelopment was circulated for the information of Committee members.

A brief statement was made in respect of previous discussion on automatic external defibrillators, including their ease of use and the risk of litigation. These issues were agreed at the previous meeting as key lines of enquiry for the working group to investigate.

61. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT: 'KEEP SK CLEAN, GREEN AND HEALTHY' AND 'LEISURE, ARTS AND CULTURE'

The Head of People, Projects and Performance presented the quarter 3 performance report, which had a focus on the Council priorities of 'Keep SK Clean, Green and Healthy' and 'Leisure, Culture and the Arts'. Included with the report was a summary of the council's performance against priority projects

and performance indicators and a summary document which was targeted at members of staff and the public. The Committee agreed that the leaflet was a good tool for staff and the public but felt that the performance information that sat behind it was most useful to the committee in fulfilling its role scrutinising the Council's performance.

Councillors were shown a short film, which highlighted key achievements against corporate priorities in 2012, including: Gravity Fields; improvements in Westgate/Market Place, Grantham; the green waste scheme; Olympic torch relay; well-being week for staff; the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme; Bourne Community Access Point; Bourne Core Area and Grantham Growth Point projects. Several members of the Committee congratulated the staff who had supported the successful delivery of the projects.

The video also included a brief feature on the British Racing Motors (BRM) Day in Bourne. SKDC officers had provided advice on running the event and shared lessons learned from the torch relay. Details of volunteer stewards from the torch relay were shared with organisers and barriers were loaned to them.

Councillors supported the work that was being undertaken to promote the district nationally. It was suggested that the video shown to councillors could be used to help attract people to the district. Officers advised that this external promotion would form part of the Destination SK project.

Some members asked how the success of the Gravity Fields Festival would be measured. They highlighted the importance of assessing the longer term impacts of projects. Officers advised that a full project evaluation for Gravity Fields was being produced; the committee requested that it be presented to them.

Action Point:

That the Gravity Fields project evaluation be included on the agenda for a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Development Management Service Manager responded to questions about planning performance indicators on the length of time taken to determine applications. A number of measures to improve performance were discussed, including the scheduling of additional meetings to deal with the backlog.

Mr Reid explained that the previous customer-focused approach had been revised. Applicants were now given deadlines to submit additional information whereas previously they could reply when they wanted. The Development Control Committee received regular reports on applications awaiting determination. Mr Reid reported that the format of this report had been updated to include a precise date on which the application was scheduled to be determined and the reason it was outstanding.

A member spoke about the validation of applications and referred to a previous suggestion that only complete applications should be validated. However it was noted that the Government had begun consultation on an approach that would see the validation of applications at the earliest point possible following submission. Mr Reid responded that while awaiting the outcome of the consultation, the team would keep requesting as much information as possible before validation. He also added that applicants were encouraged to seek pre-application advice from planning officers regardless of the size of the development.

Some discussion ensued on the 'Clean, Green and Healthy' priority. Members were advised that income raised from the green bin scheme had been used to pay for additional street cleaning services. One councillor raised concerns about street-cleaning needs which were a consequence of the night-time economy. The Head of Environmental Services invited feedback on trouble spots to help target resources. Members were encouraged to report any issues to the local area office. The Committee also talked about the number of requests the council had had to remove fly-tipping. They commented that self-reporting via the website was not straightforward and that the facility should be made more easily accessible for members of the public.

Action point:

Supply a breakdown of income from the green waste scheme and how it has been spent to improve the cleanliness of the street scene.

Mr Taylor also talked about the new dry recyclables contract into which the council would enter from August 2013. The new contract included a fixed contamination rate (this was an agreed percentage). The Council would be charged for any contaminated loads above this level. Educational campaigns were planned to reduce the impact of this.

11:13-11:19 – the meeting adjourned

62. CCTV PROVISION

The Community Safety and Licensing Service Manager gave a presentation on the Council's CCTV provision:

- The CCTV control room opened on 18 June 1997 and has since provided a service 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- The service was run by 10 members of staff and one supervisor. Arrangements were in place to provide cover for unexpected absence.
- All CCTV staff were trained and registered with the Security Industry Authority (SIA).
- Since September 2012 and the closure of the care centre, the service has also delivered the Council's out of hours service.
- The team monitored a range of cameras including town centres, car

parks, highways (on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council) and automatic number plate recognition (on behalf of Lincolnshire Police).

- There were 15 cameras in Stamford, 8 in Bourne, 4 in the Deepings and 32 in Grantham. 8 cameras were also monitored on behalf of North Kesteven District Council.
- All cameras record digital colour images, which meant footage was of a good quality. All images were retained for 28 days.
- Shopwatch and pubwatch radios enabled the team to contact businesses across the district about incidents in their area.
- When operators witnessed an offence in progress, they would inform the police and continue to monitor the situation.
- CCTV had direct contact with local police officers so were able to provide live intelligence. Major incidents were called into the Force control room.
- A feed from CCTV cameras could also be sent to Lincolnshire Police so they could monitor live incidents.
- The Community Safety Partnership had purchased a mobile CCTV unit; this had been gifted to the police and was operated by police officers and police community support officers.
- In 2012 the team reported monitoring approximately 3,500 live incidents which had led to 850 arrests.

Some members asked about the role of CCTV operators in respect of public order offences during the night time economy. Operators would report any offence they witnessed to the police, who would attend if available. The police had powers to issue fixed penalty notices for public order offences.

The service had made a number of savings included absorbing additional work, the re-tendering of the maintenance contract and reviewing and refining the shift patterns. In response to questions from Councillors, Mr Jones stated that Lincolnshire Police made no financial contribution to the provision of CCTV, although a small amount of capital investment had been made. Members suggested as the primary beneficiaries of the service, Lincolnshire Police should be asked to contribute to the running costs. It was suggested that the issue should be raised with the Police and Crime Commissioner through the Police and Crime Panel (chaired by Councillor Wootten) to establish support from other district councils.

Recommendation:

To request Councillor Wootten places an item on the Police and Crime Panel agenda to discuss opportunities for a police contribution to the funding of CCTV.

Mr Jones added that officers from South Kesteven were playing a leading role in assessing the feasibility of having one or two control rooms to provide CCTV cover for the whole county. This was a priority of the Police and Crime Commissioner which was highlighted in the Police and Crime Plan.

The Committee agreed, following the presentation, to disband the working group set up to consider CCTV. Members agreed that the group would be reinstated should any issues arise in the future.

63. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

Action point

In preparation for the meeting on 9 April 2013 at which representatives from Procurement Lincolnshire would be present, officers should provide those representatives with a copy of the recommendations made by the Committee.

64. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Cosham gave a report on a meeting of the Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board held on 7 February 2013. He highlighted the additional work undertaken as a result of adverse weather over the Christmas and new year period. The dedication of the staff had been commended. A copy of the agenda and minutes had been placed in the Members' Lounge.

Councillor Mrs Kaberry-Brown gave an overview of recent meetings of the Lincolnshire health scrutiny committee. Key topics included the EMAS 'Being the Best' consultation, the suicide rate in rural areas, alcohol abuse in young people and obesity. Reports from the meeting would be placed in the Members' Lounge.

65. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 12:20pm.