

# Meeting of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 11 February 2020, 5.30 pm

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## Committee Members present

Councillor Judy Stevens (Chairman)  
Councillor Hilary Westropp (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Paul Fellows

Councillor Virginia Moran  
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith  
Councillor Jill Thomas

## Cabinet Members

Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew, Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy

## Officers

Interim Strategic Director, Growth (Harry Rai)  
Corporate Operations Lead (Paul Stokes)  
Leisure and Events Supervisor (Sharon Haythorn)  
CEO, InvestSK (Steve Bowyer)  
Head of Arts, InvestSK (Michael Cross)  
Cultural Services Team Leader (Graham Burley)  
Scrutiny Officer (Zena West)  
Democratic Officer (Naomi Page)

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## 28. Comments from Members of the Public

A number of members of the public and local Councillors wished to make statements regarding the Bourne CiCLE festival.

Those making comments expressed their frustration that a formal decision had not yet been reached as to whether the Bourne CiCLE festival would be held again in 2020. Reference was made to a social media post which had stated that the festival would not be going ahead and the subsequent statement from the Council informing residents that a decision had not been finalised.

One member of the public highlighted the period of time that had lapsed since discussions had first begun regarding the potential to hold another CiCLE festival in 2020 and noted that there would not be sufficient time for the organisation of the festival within the current year. Others referred to the plans identified previously by InvestSK that the festival was being planned for three consecutive years to allow for publicity surrounding the event to grow. Comments made reference to assurances that the festival had potential to acquire international status and gain sponsorship support by its third year. The speakers expressed how successful they felt the event in 2019 had been and how pleased the local community had been to have a specific event organised for Bourne and the surrounding villages. A Councillor also referred to the relationship between the cycling event and the Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency; the environmental impact of encouraging interest in cycling within the district was also thought to be beneficial. Other comments referred to the effort that had been put in to support the festival. It was felt that direct answers were needed as to whether the festival would be going ahead in 2020, or if there were plans to hold the festival again in subsequent years.

The members of the public were thanked for sharing their comments. The Chair explained that an update regarding the Committee's consideration of the Bourne CiCLE festival would be given during the 'updates from the previous meeting' item.

**29. Apologies**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**30. Disclosure of Interests**

No interests were disclosed.

**31. Action Notes from the meeting held on 5 November 2019**

The action notes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019 were noted and agreed as a correct record.

**32. Updates from the previous meeting**

The Chair gave an update regarding the Committee's consideration of the future of the Bourne CiCLE festival. At its meeting on 5 November 2019, the festival had been considered during the 'overview of festivals' item, alongside the Stamford Georgian festival. As a full report had not been submitted for the Committee to consider, it was decided that a round table discussion would be held separately to discuss the feasibility of the Bourne CiCLE festival moving forward. This discussion was held as a workshop on 25 November 2019 and was open for all interested Members to attend.

The Committee delegated authority to allow members of the Committee in attendance at the workshop to make a recommendation directly to Cabinet regarding the future of the festival. A recommendation was put to Cabinet supporting the CiCLE Festival being held in 2020, subject to stronger budgetary controls and greater community and business involvement. The Committee had therefore discharged its involvement and the item had been removed from the Work Programme.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy was asked if she would like to respond to the earlier comments from members of the public regarding the festival. She informed the Committee that the governance process regarding the future of the festival had not yet been completed. It was explained that timescales may not allow for the festival to be held in 2020, but that there was a commitment to look after the district's residents and tax payers.

A member of the Committee asked why the potential 2020 date for the festival had changed, noting that this had created a challenge in allowing sufficient time for the organisation of the event. The Corporate Operations Lead confirmed that he had attended a meeting with British Cycling along with the Head of Visitor Economy from InvestSK. A date in August had been unavailable due to other events in the cycling calendar and the preferred date to hold the festival had been in May.

Members asked for further clarification as to whether a decision had formally been made that the festival would not go ahead in 2020, and where this decision had taken place. The Interim Strategic Director, Growth noted the previous comments that the festival had been a valued event. He confirmed that a recommendation had been brought to Cabinet for its consideration and highlighted the challenges of the current economic climate, which called for difficult decisions to be made for the Council to achieve a balanced budget. He assured the Committee that the Council remained committed to supporting festivals where possible in the district and acknowledged the comments from members of the public that the residents of Bourne valued having an event held in their area. Members were informed that although time constraints would likely not allow for the event to be held in 2020, the event still held potential for the future.

The Chair referred to her earlier statement regarding the Committee's recommendation to Cabinet with reference to the festival and requested a written statement in response to the recommendation.

### **Recommendation**

- **Cabinet to provide the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a formal written response as to the status of the Bourne CiCLE Festival, and a response to its recommendation made to the December 2019 meeting of Cabinet:**

**“To support the CiCLE Festival being held in 2020, subject to stronger budgetary controls and greater community and business involvement”.**

### **33. Markets in South Kesteven**

The Corporate Operations Lead gave a presentation outlining the current provision for markets in South Kesteven and the potential options for extending them. He wished to acknowledge the contribution of the Head of Town Centres who had been responsible for markets over the last eighteen months. The presentation highlighted the benefits and challenges that markets presented, both to traders and the hosting authority. Reference was made to adverse weather conditions that had affected the success of the markets, as well as a change in customer expectations.

Stamford was reported as a particularly successful market which was meeting its own costs and had a waiting list of stall holders wanting to trade. Grantham and Bourne markets were less stable, with diminishing numbers in recent years. Markets tended to be most successful when they coincided with other community events. The international food market in Grantham had been successful and did not incur a cost to the Council as it was wholly managed by the organisers.

Background information was given regarding the Deepings market and the decision that had been made to close it for the winter period. A market with local organisers was run independently on a Wednesday. As a Council managed market had been requested, this had been facilitated by way of an 18 month Saturday road closure which was valid until the end of September 2020. Although the Deepings market had seen some successful moments initially, numbers had dwindled after the discounted fee period had ended; this had been exacerbated by ongoing bad weather conditions. The decision to suspend the market had been made to allow time to consider its feasibility moving forward.

The Committee was given information regarding the potential options for a Sunday market in Bourne. It was explained that a road closure to allow for the market to be held in the town centre would create challenges and incur significant costs. Stalls would also need to be transported from Stamford; this would incur additional staffing costs. A market in the Corn Exchange car park would be less of a financial risk, as no road closures would be needed and pop-up stalls could be used. However, either option for a Sunday market in Bourne would need to be supported by trader interest and customer demand for it to be a viable provision.

Members were asked if they had any comments or questions arising from the presentation in relation to a potential Sunday market in Bourne:

- One Member commented that when the idea for a Sunday market in Bourne was first put forward, it had been with a specialist type in mind to encourage new traders to join the market. He felt that it would be beneficial to trial the idea in the Corn Exchange car park once a month over the warmer months to establish its viability as a permanent option.
- Other members of the Committee welcomed the idea of a Sunday market in Bourne and felt that trialling the idea to coincide with other events over the summer months would help to publicise the launch. Potential ideas for the market theme included specialist foods, crafts or antiques.

### **Action Points**

- **Bourne Ward Councillors to meet with the Corporate Operations Lead with a view to putting ideas together for a trial run of a Bourne Sunday market, to coincide with other events in the town.**
- **The market to be held in a location that does not require road closures or traffic management.**
- **The outcome of the meeting between Bourne Ward Councillors and the Corporate Operations Lead to be reported to the next meeting of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

Members were asked if they had any comments or questions arising from the presentation in relation to the Deepings market:

- A member of the Committee wished to express how keen they were for the Deepings market to be reintroduced in the spring. It was felt that the removal of the cash machine from the vicinity had impacted the level of customer spending at the market, particularly as most of the traders accepted cash-only payments. Reference was made to an idea the Member had put forward previously to offer empty stalls to local crafters; it was thought that this initiative could help with attendance.
- The Chief Executive of InvestSK referred to some work that had begun previously with regard to establishing which factors drove the success of Stamford market and if lessons could be learned to improve the performance of markets in other areas of the district. It was suggested that continuing this work could support the Council in improving the performance of markets.
- Members discussed the potential regularity of the market, if reintroduced. Although there was a keenness from local Members to hold the market weekly to attract regular traders, the Committee also considered holding a monthly market as a starting point.

The Corporate Operations Lead responded to Members' comments by suggesting that the Deepings market be re-introduced in the spring on a trial basis as a monthly farmers market with craft stalls to supplement this. He

suggested that community leaders be approached to ask for support in leading the market alongside the Council.

#### **Action Point**

- **The Deepings Ward Councillors to meet with the Corporate Operations Lead to discuss the options for re-introducing the Deepings market, with a view to trialling the market as a monthly event during spring/summer 2020.**
- **The outcome of the meeting between Deepings Ward Councillors and the Corporate Operations Lead to be reported to the next meeting of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

#### **34. Charles Worth Festival**

The Head of Arts at InvestSK introduced the item outlining the potential for a Charles Worth festival to be held in Bourne. Referring to earlier comments that had been made with regard to the Bourne CiCLE festival, it was confirmed that this suggestion was not intended to replace the CiCLE festival, but that the idea had been put forward by a Bourne resident and developed by the Head of Arts to support the Council's aim to develop the arts and cultural provision in the Bourne and Deepings areas.

The theme of the festival had been developed as 'Bourne by Design'. The idea took inspiration from Charles Worth and could be piloted over two or three days as a community-led event supported by Council funding. Potential events and venues were discussed, with the suggestion to concentrate the theme on fashion and design but also incorporate links with theatre and tv/cinema.

The Committee was asked if it had any questions or comments regarding the presentation. Members commented that they felt the concept was worth exploring further and trialling. It was felt that the best way to develop the idea further would involve directly contacting Bourne stakeholders and community groups to include their input at an early stage. It was suggested that the Bourne Arts Trust could help with the event.

The Chair referred to the Deepings Literary Festival as an example of how a local community could work together to organise and support sustainable events with a small budget; she emphasised the importance of this type of initiative as local authorities continued to face the financial challenges of reduced funding moving forward.

#### **Action Point**

- **Bourne Ward Councillors to meet with the Head of Arts to discuss options for holding a community-led 'Bourne by Design' festival in Autumn 2020.**
- **The outcome of the meeting between Bourne Ward Councillors and the Head of Arts to be reported to the next meeting of the Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

*The Chair decided to change the order of proceedings to allow for consideration of agenda item 10 (Member Working Group for Leisure) before item 9 (Cultural Strategy).*

### **35. Member Working Group for Leisure**

The Interim Strategic Director, Growth provided an update for the Committee regarding the Member Working Group for Leisure. Following the interest shown by Councillors, the Leader of the Council had decided to work with the Ward Members for each of the leisure centres in turn, to seek local input before any decisions were made regarding the future of the leisure provision. It was intended that after these meetings had been undertaken the options for the district would be brought back to the Committee.

#### **Action Point**

- **The Committee to be updated on any outcomes from the meetings with local Members and the progress of the leisure centre review work.**

### **36. Cultural Strategy**

The Head of Arts at InvestSK gave an update on the progress of the Cultural Strategy. He explained that there had been a delay in the timing of the development of the document. Amendments following feedback from officers and Members were currently being incorporated within the draft strategy. When the amendments to the draft text had been completed, work would begin on the design of the document. The completed draft would then be shared with the residents and stakeholders who had engaged in the consultation process in 2019. Members requested that it also be circulated to the Committee electronically for feedback at this point, before its consideration at Cabinet. The Chair highlighted the importance of members of the Committee responding with any comments or suggested amendments when the document was circulated.

#### **Action Point**

- **The Head of Arts to circulate the completed draft Cultural Strategy to the Committee electronically for feedback prior to its consideration by Cabinet.**

### **37. Community Assets Toolkit - Stamford Arts Centre**

The Cultural Services Team Leader gave an outline of the services provided by Stamford Arts Centre. The Arts Centre was spread over three buildings and hosted events ranging from small community group gatherings to cinema screenings and touring theatre productions. The art gallery, where the meeting was held, was highly sought after, with a four year waiting list of artists wishing to secure a space.

The current focus of the Arts Centre was working with families and children using Arts Council funding. An 'Arts Around Town' family day had been planned for the half term week, as well as events with nurseries throughout the year.

The Committee enquired as to the demand for use of the building. It was confirmed that as there were limitations to capacity, it was often not available for all community groups. The building did not currently have a lift in place; this presented challenges for those wishing to make use of the upstairs space and meant that the building was not currently fully accessible. There were talks being undertaken with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy regarding the feasibility of having a lift installed in the building.

The Chair of the Committee noted the age of the building and asked how it was faring structurally. A condition survey of the building had been undertaken. There were some areas that needed attention, including a roof leak. Following works to rectify this, a plan would be put into place to ensure that the rest of the building was being adequately maintained. Emergency works were also being undertaken currently to repair a collapsed floor.

#### **Action Point**

- **Members of the Committee to spread the word about the half term 'Arts Around Town' family day.**

#### **Recommendation**

- **The Committee support the feasibility study into the proposed works for the building, including the installation of a lift and further maintenance works.**

### **38. Work Programme**

The Chair confirmed that the April meeting of the Committee would now be held at Grantham Museum rather than Easton Walled Gardens. The meeting would begin at 6.30pm. It was requested that the Markets item be re-visited at the April meeting to consider feedback from the discussions held with the Bourne and Deepings Ward Members and the Corporate Operations Lead, as well as the Bourne by Design festival item following discussion between

Bourne Ward Councillors and the Head of Arts at InvestSK. There would also be consideration of the response from the Cabinet regarding the Bourne CiCLE festival.

**39. Close of the meeting**

The meeting closed at 19:32.