

Minutes

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Wednesday, 11 October 2023, 2.00 pm

Council Chamber – South Kesteven
House, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham.
NG31 6PZ

Committee Members present

Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)
Councillor Steven Cunnington (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Vanessa Smith
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Richard Cleaver (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Phil Dilks (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning)
Councillor Rhea Rayside (Cabinet Member for People and Communities)

Other Members present

Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Murray Turner

Officers

Richard Wyles (Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer))
Nicola McCoy-Brown (Director of Growth and Culture)
Claire Moses (Head of Service - Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)
Ayeisha Kirkham (Head of Service – Public Protection)
Gyles Teasdale (Property Services Manager)
Claire Saunders (High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager)
Carol Drury (Community Engagement Manager)
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

13. Public Speaking

There were none.

14. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Habibur Rahman.

Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing substituted for Councillor Habibur Rahman.

15. Disclosure of Interest

There were none.

16. Minutes from the meeting held on 5 July 2023

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023 were a correct and accurate record.

17. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service

There were no announcements or updates.

18. Police and Crime Panel Feedback

Councillor Sarah Trotter provided the Committee with an update on the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel:

'Since I last spoke to you, I have attended 2 meetings of the Police and Crime Panel, one in June and the other last month now held at East Lindsey District Council building, Horncastle.

For those of you new to the Rural and Communities OSC Committee and recently newly elected Councilors, I thought it would helpful to just briefly explain the roles and responsibilities of both the

- *Commissioner,*
- *And the PCP & Chief Constable, currently Chris Howard.*

Our current Police Commissioner for Lincolnshire Marc Jones is scrutinized and supported by the PCP made up of 10 Councilor's from the County's eight local authorities and two independent (co-opted members).

- 1) We can review the Commisioner's decisions and have the opportunity to question him.*
- 2) We have the power of veto over any precept proposals, the choice of Chief Constable, and we are required to review the Police and Crime Plan before it is published.*

Marc Jones has the vital role in holding the Chief Constable to account for operational delivery on behalf of the people of Lincolnshire.

The Chief Constable must answer to the Commissioner in terms of delivering efficient and effective local policing to the people of Lincolnshire, and the way resources and spending are managed, as well as ensuring that the force is contributing to ensuring that policing capabilities are available to address national crime threats and cross-border criminality.

The PCC in the June meeting presented a report that provided an update on the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan (2021-2025). The report covering the period up to June 2023.

Commissioners Update

The report updates against each of the four 'Key Principles' within the Plan:

- 1) Community Safety and Prevention in Partnership*
- 2) Listening, responding and being accountable*
- 3) Protecting and supporting victims and the vulnerable*
- 4) Policing that Works*

This document is a lengthy read, but I have taken a snapshot of some of the information contained within: -

Community Safety and Prevention in Partnership

The PCC continues to support the local Environmental Crime Partnership. The Chair, Ayeisha Kirkham, a name you may recognise is the SKDC's Public Protection Manager.

To name a few successful operations co-ordinated to reduce and prevent

- fly-tipping and waste crime.*

Example of partnership work and successful operations:-

- Operation Clean Sweep – Intelligence led targeted action days of action coordinated with other key agencies such as DVLA and HMRC to disrupt and intervene against waste crime.*
- Operation Cyber Guardian – removal of illegal waste service advertising on social media & Operation Asgard, seizure of offender's vehicles for forfeiture or destruction.*
- The county-wide review of CCTV commissioned by the PCC. This will include a comprehensive review of the existing provision and consideration of opportunities around future models. I hopefully can report back to the committee in due course.*

Listening, responding and being accountable

- *The PCC has arrangements in place with District Council colleagues to ensure information is shared with the public about how the precept element of their Council tax is spent.*
- *During the period of January to April 2023 the Safer Together Team have attended over 100 meetings, engagement sessions and events across Lincolnshire. The team have also been attending meetings with Just Lincolnshire, Parish Councils, Lincoln BIG and South Kesteven Partnerships to hear the views of communities through partnerships.*

Protecting and supporting victims and the vulnerable Activity in the last Quarter

- *As of 1st April 2023, the newly commissioned Domestic Abuse Specialist Service commenced in Lincolnshire has secured funding from the Ministry of Justice to recruit an additional one and half sexual violence advisor posts in 23/24, with a further 3 posts for 24/25 (subject to the fulfilment of posts in 23/24).*
- *The MoJ has confirmed that the funding bid submitted for Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Interventions was unsuccessful. The PCC is working with partners to identify alternative funding to deliver a perpetrator behaviour change programme.*

Policing that Works Activity in the last Quarter

The Strategic Policing requirement (SPR) sets out the Home Secretary's view of what the current national threats are. This includes:-

- *violence against women and girls*
- *terrorism*
- *serious and organised crime*
- *a national cyber incident*
- *child sexual abuse*
- *public disorder*
- *civil emergencies*

Precept Commitments

The PCC made a number of commitments in relation to the use of the extra council tax raised through the precept from April 2023. These are summarised below and progress against delivery of these commitments will be reported each quarter which I will report back to this committee.

- 1) *Maintaining police officer numbers; Retaining our police officer numbers at 1,186, bolstering local neighbourhood teams, preventing and tackling crime, and protecting our communities.*
- 2) *Extra officers and staff into specialist sexual assault/abuse units; Commitment to greater protection and justice for children and adults across Lincolnshire who experience some of the most harmful crimes.*

- 3) *Improving 101 call response times; Lincolnshire has one of the best 999 answering records in England. An additional 15 call handlers will boost the 101 service to give residents the service they deserve.*
- 4) *Making our roads safer; Investment in the Serious Collisions Investigation Unit will help deliver crucial answers and justice to victims and families of tragic incidents on our roads.*
- 5) *Increasing community confidence; We are determined to keep the confidence of the public and raise it even further with investment into the Professional Standards Department to maintain and raise standards of conduct and behaviour within the service.*
- 6) *More officers on shift when you need them; Investment in a revised deployment model to place more officers on duty in peak demand periods thereby improving incident response times.*

A presentation from Chief Superintendent Martyn Parker

- *seconded to Lincolnshire County Council as Assistant Director of Public Protection*
- *and Chair for Safer Lincolnshire Partnership Strategy Board.*

The safer Lincolnshire Partnership has the following statutory duties

- *To prepare and implement a partnership plan that sets out a strategy for the reduction of reoffending, crime and disorder, combating substance misuse, understand serious violence, community engagement and addressing the priorities identified in the strategic assessment.*
- *To set-up protocols and systems for information sharing*
- *To regularly engage and consult with the public about their community safety priorities and issues*
- *To hold one or more public meetings during each year*
- *To commission Domestic Homicide Reviews following notifications from Police of a domestic homicide*

The recommendation for the report was to enable the panel to effectively scrutinize the Commissioner's performance in delivering his community safety and crime responsibilities.

It was concluded, there is a good working relationship between the PCC and the SLP, his office provides a high level of representation at SLP Meetings at a strategic and operational level. Members of the Office of the PCC team engage in regular communication with the team, supporting the SLP to progress workstreams. Examples of good working practices can be found within the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership report Annual Report 2022-23 including Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordination working with Substance Misuse & reducing reoffending.'

Councillor Phil Dilks shared concerns around the latest cuts to the Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) from 91 to 50 across the County. There

were 150 PCSO's across the County when the current Police Crime Commissioners took over around 7 years ago.

Members thanked Councillor Trotter for her thorough presentation.

In response to concerns received, Councillor Sarah Trotter shared a response received from the Police Crime Commissioner:

'It is always the case that policing is changing and must respond to evermore risk and complex challenges placed upon them, as well as attending to the personal issue of meeting a growing demand of the service.'

The Chief Constable must decide how these challenges will be met, this includes the operation choice to realign £2 million from the PCSO budget to other important policing roles that will keep our communities safe. He was spending plans included prioritising warranted Police Officer numbers to ensure crime can be prevented and tackled:

- *9 Police Staff in the Safeguarding Hub to ensure effective safeguarding management of domestic violence, disclosure scheme, information sharing with relevant partners with swift referrals to the protecting vulnerable people unit.*
- *12 additional detectives in the PVP unit to protect the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities.*
- *15 call takers into the force control room to improve the 101-call handling service. Investing in a serious collisions investigation unit to improve the safety of Lincolnshire roads and delivery of justice to victims.*
- *3 additional Officers and 2 Police Staff in the professional standards department to increase community confidence.*
- *13 additional community managers who are warranted Officers going into the Neighbourhood Policing Teams to invest in learning and development to ensure our Officers and Staff are equipped with skills needed in developing high quality services to our communities.*

Following a review of the Officer deployment model, investment in a revised model to place more Officers on duty in peak demand periods, therefore, improving incident response times. The Chief Constable needs to make strategic choices based on his expert knowledge and experience, to ensure he has the right resources in the right place to keep communities safe and is right to allow the flexibility to adapt his workforce to meet the challenge of tackling crime in the modern world. The only way these investments and improvement in service for our community can be achieved is by delivering a balanced budget.

It is rightly a matter for the Chief Constable to use the operational judgement to keep our communities safe as possible and to decide the balance between unwarranted staff roles and warranted Officers.'

It was queried as to whether the number of Police Officers at 1186, was a new figure, an increase or decrease in the number of Officers.

The number of Police Officers at 1186 was an aspirational figure. It was common for Police Officers to move forces and gain promotions.

A query was raised in relation to the request of more Police Officer presence in Stamford.

It was further queried as to whether there were more or less Police Officer's on the streets in comparison to 2022.

Councillor Sarah Trotter agreed to take any operational queries back to the Police and Crime Commissioner for an accurate answer.

19. Disabled Facility Grants

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning presented the report which provided an overview of the current end to end time for the delivery of disabled facility grants (DFG) to residents of the District, in comparison to the previous year. The Council were given £975,000 per year of Government funding from the 'Better Care Fund.' This fund was utilised to make agreed adaptations in homes in the private sector to assist people in having the best quality of life whilst remaining in their own homes.

Main points of the report included:

- For 2023/24 year, the Council received £1,060,000 allocation for DFG's.
- The reserve based on previous years underspend was £2,000,000 at the start of 2023/24.
- In 2022/23 the Council spent £666,799 from £975,000 allocation.

A query was raised on what happened to the funding provided if was not spent and how the budget was maintained.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning confirmed that the funding not spent would be carried over to the following financial year.

Clarification was sought on whether the Council shared Occupational Therapist services with Lincolnshire County Council, and whether this was the reason for delays in assessments taking place.

Occupational health assessments were undertaken by Lincolnshire County Council. The delays in assessments had been overcome on their side as their waiting lists had reduced. The assessments were crucial to ensure the right adaptations are put into place.

One Member noted that the report provided figures on enquiries sent out and received back to applications not returned back. It was queried whether the applications not returned back were chased up by the team.

In some cases, the applicant may have passed, moved property or may no longer require adaptations.

The Head of Service – Public Protection confirmed that there were designated Officer's in place that would chase up applications that were not returned.

It was noted that table 2 included a large number of days between enquiry received and the application being set out to the client. Clarification over the process of stage one of the process that increased the amount of days between the enquiry being received and the application being set out in regard to the Occupational Therapist and the Surveyor.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning highlighted a section of the report that stated 117 days from enquiry received and the application being sent out. This process had now reduced to 44 days.

The Head of Service – Public Protection clarified that the days had fallen due to an apprentice working for the Council and assisting with the applications received and the administration behind them. There was also an additional interim surveyor in post that assisted with the process. A full-time Team Leader was in position and further mechanisms to support the team were being explored. The Occupational Therapist referrals timeframe was out of the Council's control.

It was queried as to whether the £308,000 underspend in reserves from last years budget would be ringfenced for Disabled Facility Grants only, and could not be utilised for other spends.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing confirmed that at the beginning of 2023, the Council had approximately £2.1 million carried over from previous years. The funding was tied to be utilised on Disabled Facility Grants only.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) informed the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to store previous funding away in various reserves of the Council. There was still some legacy underspend from previous years, however, it was getting to a level that was unsustainable.

ACTION: For the Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) to provide the Committee with a full visibility of what had been previously agreed in terms of Disability Facility Grant funding.

It was queried as to whether Officer's had managed to identify the main problem in regard to the delivery time of 10 months. Further concern was raised on the amount of surveys being completed a month, it was queried as to whether every property had to be surveyed.

The Head of Service – Public Protection clarified that the majority of properties were surveyed depending on the adaptations required.

Occupational Health provided a recommendation as to the need of the client which was processed by Officer's, then a surveyor would visit the property to collate a report. The problem previously was due to staffing in terms of administration staff on dealing with applications received. Previously there was only one surveyor, the new additional interim surveyor position was hoped to be made a full time post.

One Member requested that an update on the Disabled Facility Grants be brought back to the Committee in 3-4 months' time.

The underspend was noted, it was queried as to whether promotion had taken place of the funding for residents.

Most of the works were allocated, working through and completing the caseload, would mean an underspend would be lost. The promotion of the funding was on the Council's website and a Lincolnshire Working Group were working on further promotion of the funding via communications to residents.

It was queried as to how many cases had been solved within the 2023/24 financial year out of the 262 applications received.

It was confirmed that current information was not yet available, however, would be available for a later meeting where a full update would be provided.

One Member queried as to whether any data was available on which parts of the District required adaptations or were receiving adaptations.

The Head of Service – Public Protection informed the Committee that the geographical information was unknown at present.

ACTION: For the Head of Service – Public Protection to provide the Committee with geographical data on parts of the District requiring adaptations or receiving adaptations.

A query was raised on whether the grant could be utilised for hard standing or vehicle adaptations.

Officers process recommendations received from the Occupational Therapist which may include dropped kerbs. The type of adaptation requests were mostly stairlifts, ramps, extensions. The policy on discretionary grants was being revisited in the future, as the amount of money was currently capped. The query around hardstanding adaptations would be provided back to the Committee once known.

It was clarified that the Occupational Therapists recommendations could not be overseen by the Council. The importance of the surveys was emphasised due to

the recommendation not always being appropriate in regard to the suitability of the property.

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the current end to end times for delivery of the disabled facility grants.**
- 2. Notes the current and proposed improvements to continue to enable the quicker delivery of disabled facility grants.**

20. Changing Places Update

The Leader of the Council presented the report that provided an update regarding the Changing Places Toilets Facilities Project across the District.

In July 2021 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced the opening for Expressions of Interest bids for a share of a £30M pot to provide Changing Places toilets in existing, publicly accessible buildings.

In March 2022 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) informed the Council that its bid had been successful and that it had been awarded the maximum £160,000. This was reported at Cabinet on 29 March 2022.

The funding was awarded to cover a two-year period for completion of the project. DLUHC had confirmed that the funding would need to be incurred by 31 March 2024 to avoid any of the funding being returned.

Following a number of location changes amendments due to construction and financing challenges, the following was the final location listing for the four facilities:

- South Street public toilets, Bourne (In partnership with Bourne Town Council)
- Meres Leisure Centre, Grantham (project delivered)
- Wyndham Park, Grantham
- Cattlemarket Stamford

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) clarified the funding position. There was a mismatch between the funding made available by Government and the actual amount that was required to deliver the four schemes. The Government had capped each facility at £40,000 irrespective of the actual costs of delivering each of the sites. As set out in the report, the Council was around £100,00 short of what was required to deliver each of the facilities. The Council had been working with outside bodies to engage with necessary funding to deliver each of the sites.

The Meres Leisure Centre funding shortfall had been met by the District Council's legacy budgets that were agreed by Council to fund changing places in respect of

Wyndham Park, that shortfall would be met by the Grantham ESFCA reserve due to being within the ECA area special expense area. Wyndham Park was one of the primary assets of the special expense area.

In respect of South Street, the Council would meet the shortfall based on the model of the Town Council taking over full responsibility for the facility going forward. Cabinet had agreed back in February 2023, to transfer the freehold of South Street to the Town Council who would take full responsibility of the asset and the operation costs that go with it.

Cattlemarket was an ongoing challenge, the Council had been engaging with Stamford Town Council for several weeks to secure a level of funding contribution from the Town Council to meet the funding gap of £30,000 which was between the grant available to the Council and the cost of the facility. The Council had requested the Town Council contribute from their special expense area reserve. This decision had been agreed, however, the decision was being revisited. Concern was raised around the timescale of which the facility would be delivered at Cattlemarket.

All facilities had to be delivered and spent by the end of March 2024, otherwise the Government would pull the funding from the Council.

A query was raised on whether the full £160,000 would need to be repaid to Government if not all facilities were completed.

It was confirmed that the funding for the one project would need to be repaid if it was not completed by March 2024.

The Property Services Manager provided an update on the work maintenance of the four sites. The Meres Leisure Centre had been completed in the previous financial year, as per the original anticipated programme. This was now registered as a changing place toilet.

South Street changing places was thought to be brought forward in the previous financial year, however, due to complications with the agreement with the Town Council taking over management which had caused a delay. The Council had now reached exchange for transfer of the site on completion of the works within the previous week and Officers were looking to engage with contractors to bring the site forward, which roughly would take four weeks to complete.

In regard to Wyndham Park, a feasibility had been undertaken in relation to the location of the changing place facility, space had been identified within the memorial arch which was a former toilet facility. The Changing Place Support Team had signed off the designs for the proposal and Officers were engaging with contractors to bring the timeline forward on the facility.

The Cattlemarket scheme was currently being identified for a modular scheme rather than the existing building conversion. The Council were working with the contractor to bring the scheme forward and identify any difficulties.

One Member raised a query regarding the running costs of the facilities and whether budget had been set aside for the ongoing maintenance of the equipment of the facilities.

The Council had made an agreement with Bourne Town Council which meant that the Town Council's would take over control and budget for monitoring the South Street facility in relation to repairs and management.

The separate agreement with Stamford Town Council requirement a contribution of a one-off sum and then the District Council would be liable for the ongoing maintenance of the facility. Cattlemarket and Wyndham Park were within the Council's ownership and therefore, the Council was responsible for the maintenance of the facilities.

The running costs of each facility was estimated to be within a region of £1,000 per annum. The Council were seeking to enter an extended warranty for the equipment of 3 years.

An explanation was sought around the likelihood of all the facilities being completed by March 2024.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) informed the Committee that they were determined to deliver all facilities by March 2024. The Cattlemarket was at the highest risk of not being completed in time due to uncertainty of funding from Stamford Town Council, the District Council had been liaising with the Town Council for six months. If the Town Council were unable to fulfil the request of the funding, Cabinet would then be asked to seek approval to find an alternative source of funding from elsewhere. The works also involved contractors and infrastructure works taking place on the sites, which may would increase the timeframe to completion.

One Member provided an update on Stamford Town Council's position in regard to the Changing Places at the Cattlemarket.

A question had been raised by the Town Clerk of Stamford Town Council regarding conflict of interest for Councillors who were a District Councillor as well as a Town Councillor. The District Council's Monitoring Officer had since confirmed that there was no conflict of interest and there was not an issue on dual-hatted Councillors could participate in votes on the topic at both Council's.

Stamford Town Council were due to revisit the issue imminently.

It was further confirmed that the grant conditions stated that all expenditure needed to be incurred and paid for by the end of March 2024. Government would not allow the transferring of funds for the current financial year to the next financial year.

One Member discussed the previous allocation of the Changing Places sights and informed the Committee of a suitable site in the Deepings.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) clarified that a site within the Deepings was explored, however, a response was not received back from the Community

Centre. There was not an opportunity to renegotiate other locations for Changing Places, due to the process taking up to three months for Government to confirm the location of a facility.

It was noted that the Cattlemarket had previously facilitated Changing Places in the past which meant the location was suitable for the facility. It was merely the funding position agreement from Stamford Town Council that was holding up the process of completion.

Another Member informed the Committee of an additional location in Grantham that would be suitable as a site for a changing place facility.

Stamford Town Council had stated they would prefer for the District Council to fund the construction of the facility, as well as the maintenance and operation.

Members shared their disappointment and concern of the Cattlemarket and problems with Stamford Town Council.

That the Committee:

- 1. Review the progress being made to deliver the Changing Places Toilets facilities Project.**

21. Update report on Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Project

The Leader of the Council presented the report which provided an update on the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone

The delivery of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme formally falls within the Economic Development function of the Council, and therefore under the remit of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC).

Regular reports are submitted to FEOSC for consideration. The last report to be presented to the committee was in September 2023. This was the first report to be submitted to the committee since the Local Government Elections in May 2023.

Subsequent changes to the Committee resulted in shopfronts and funding being included within the remit of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was therefore a recommendation of the FEOSC, the report be shared with the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The project was in its fourth and final year of delivery, regular reports would be taken to the Council's Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

It was reported that 9 shopfront regeneration schemes were scheduled for completion by the end of the programme. 3 projects were completed and 4 were

currently under delivery and project Officer's were awaiting confirmation on the commencement date for the remaining two shopfronts.

The Leader of the Council provided program updates on each scheme, asset out in the appendix A.

One Member raised concern in relation to 71 High Street, AddAction being at risk, however, it was 80% completed. A further update was requested on this specific scheme.

The High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager clarified that due to the scale of the project and economic factors that the construction industry was facing, this resulted in unfortunate delays, for example, contractor being over stretched with the number of projects taken on. Through the scheme, the Council were required to use specialist contractors who understood heritage buildings.

The original contractor for the scheme at 71 High Street was no longer working on the project and the property owners were appointing a new contractor to complete the works and would recruit the contractor appropriately within Historic England's requirements for the grant funding.

It was queried that if the scheme was not completed by March 2024, whether the property owner would take on full cost of the regeneration project.

It was confirmed that the property owner would incur the full cost of the project, if it was not completed by the deadline.

Members raised a query on whether the Council were encouraging more shop fronts to be done. It was noted that there were two pending shopfront opportunities.

The two pending shop front schemes were pending due to the Council awaiting a start date from the contractor for the works to take place. The grant had been agreed.

At this stage of the process, the Council were not looking to take anymore applications for grants through this scheme due to timings and budget available to deliver any other regeneration projects.

Clarification was sought around the recommendation to receive a report on the closure of the programme in six months time.

The Director of Growth and Culture informed the Committee that the Finance and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a three month update on the Future High Street Fund and not the Grantham High Street Heritage Action Zone Project.

ACTION: For the High Street Heritage Action Zone closure report to be added to the Work Programme for six months time.

That the Committee:

- 1. Reviews and endorses the report first presented to the Finance and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 19 September 2023.**
- 2. Agrees to receive a report on the closure of the programme in six months.**
- 3. Is invited to share any comments they may have on the report with the programme board.**

22. Equality Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement

The Community Engagement Manager presented the report Draft Equality Diversity Annual Position Statement for 2022/23 to the Committee.

The document was produced in accordance with the Council's legal duties under the Public Sector Equality duty which required the authority to publish information to show how they comply with the Equality Act 2010. South Kesteven District Council was required to publish information relating to the workforce and the communities they serve.

The document provided:

- Background on the Council's responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and our Equality Objectives.
- A profile of the District and Demographics – made up of Census 2021 information.
- The document also provided a small insight into how the Council continues to support its staff and customers.
- The Position Statement provided workforce statistics.

The document would undergo graphic design prior to its publication to the Council's website.

Members thanked the Officer for their report and the ongoing work taking place around the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement.

One Member noted the wording around the profile of the District Demographics and highlighted that residents living in a rural area may not live in a village.

The Community Engagement Manager confirmed that the wording within the document could be adapted to include 'hamlets' to include residents living in rural areas.

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the 2023 draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Position Statement and offers comment on the content.**

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** to recommend the Cabinet Member for People and Communities that the information be published at the earliest opportunity.

23. Prevent Update

The Cabinet Member for People and Communities presented the report to the Committee in relation to Prevent.

Historically, Prevent, which sat within the Safeguarding arena, had formed part of the wider Annual Report on Safeguarding which was reported to Governance and Audit Committee.

It was considered to be an important topic in its own right and therefore important that an update be provided to Members on the Council's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, our involvement in the county Prevent Steering Group and to provide an overview to this committee of some of the work Officers had been involved in through the Steering Group on engaging with communities.

This report provided information on:

- The legislation under which the Council has the duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- The Prevent Duty and our responsibilities.
- The County Prevent Steering Group.
- The Counter Terrorism Local Profile and the three key priorities for Lincolnshire.
- The County Prevent Delivery Plan and the status of actions.
- Channel – the multi-agency approach to provide support at the earliest stage to people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.
- Forthcoming changes to the Prevent Duty and to the Protect Duty

Members noted the importance of the report.

One Member suggested that an annual update be brought to this Committee, due to the high importance of the topic within communities.

ACTION: That a Prevent Update be brought to the Committee annually.

A query was raised on the number of Elected Members and Council Officer's that had completed compulsory Prevent training.

The Community Engagement Manager informed the Committee that 50 Elected Members out of 56 had completed Prevent training. In terms of Council Officer's, 263 had received face-to-face. Other staff would complete the training where necessary, dependent on their job role. Every Council colleague also had access to Prevent e-learning.

That the Committee:

- 1. Is invited to consider the content of the report and comment if it wishes.**
- 2. Is invited to consider if an update relating to Prevent should be added annually to their Work Programme.**

24. SK Community Fund Update

The Cabinet Member for People and Communities presented the report which provided an update on the SK Community Fund.

Previous reports to this Committee had focused on changes to the Fund's criteria. The report provided an overview of the Fund and outlined the requirements applicants must follow to be, and remain, eligible for funding through the SK Community Fund.

It further provided information on grants and eligibility and an update on the number and financial value of grants awarded since the Fund opened in 2015.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Officer for the work undertaken on the SK Community Fund.

One Member noted that the report raised profile of what was expected of Parish and Town Councils. It was suggested that the terms of the Community Fund be further promoted in order for Parish and Town Council's to utilise their precept before the funding.

The Leader of the Council suggested the encouragement to Parish Council's to think ahead when they were setting their precepts for the following financial year, in order to establish how the precept could coincide with the Community Fund allocation.

It was noted that the Council were moving towards a new Corporate Plan, it was hoped that this funding would continue in the future.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that the funding would continue in the future. He thanked Officers for the workshops on funding that had taken place.

One Member raised a personal query around Parish Meetings in relation to funding opportunities.

It was a possibility that Parish Meetings could apply for Community Funding for speed gates, on the basis that evidence was provided of the need for it. Parish meetings would need to consult with the Road Safety Partnership in order to provide a need for the deterrent in the location.

ACTION: For an update on the SK Community Fund to be brought back to Committee annually.

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the contents of the report and is invited to request a further update on an annual basis.**

25. Work Programme 2023-2024

The Committee noted the Work Programme 2023-24.

The following items were added to the Work Programme for the meeting being held on 14 December 2023:

- Public Spaces Protection Orders

The following items were added to the Work Programme for the meeting being held on 28 March 2024:

- Annual Crime Update

26. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

The Chairman informed the Committee that Grantham A&E would be changing to a UTC 24 -hour provision. It had been stated that it would be similar to the A&E provision, with daylight hours only, facilities for sterilisation and transfer out patients. It would be a 24 hour walk-in facility with extra facilities for CT, MRI and X-ray scans.

27. Close of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 15:48.