



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## **TOURISM AND VISITOR ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL**

**11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 10.00 a.m.**

### **Present:**

Councillor Brookes (in the Chair)

Councillors Abel, Callison, Freeston, Hyldon-King, Mickleburgh, Rogers, Parkinson

### **Officers in attendance:**

- Sharon Wroot (Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources)
- Carolina Borgstrom (Assistant Director Environment)
- Levi Andersonjordan (Environmental Services Graduate)
- Neil Clark (Regulatory Services Strategic Lead)
- Laura Cowie (Scrutiny and Committee Advisor)
- Rachel Graham (Ecology Manager)
- Guy Lonsdale (Finance Group Manager)
- Helen Thompson (Investment Manager, Economy and Growth)
- James Trowsdale (Strategic Lead for Culture)

### **Also in attendance:**

- Councillor Harness (Economy Scrutiny Panel member invited for item SPTVE.48)
- Councillor Proctor (Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism)

### **SPTVE.39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received for this meeting.

### **SPTVE.40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received in respect of any item on the agenda for this meeting.

## **SPTVE.41 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

## **SPTVE.42 URGENT BUSINESS – CONTROL OF DOGS ON THE PROMENADE**

The Chair raised an item of urgent business following a request from a panel member relating to the control of dogs off their leads along the promenade during the seasonal months, and its effect on tourism. Although dogs were currently banned from being on the central beach from Good Friday to the end of September each year, they could still be on the promenade (prom) off their leads to roam free and could cause a nuisance to visitors. The panel member was concerned this could effect tourism as a result of visitors not feeling safe or wanting to be on the prom.

A member suggested that there be no change to rules during the summer months but during the winter season when dogs were allowed on the beach, that they be kept on a lead in the central section. Another member suggested that dogs should not be allowed off the lead during the seasonal months.

Mrs Borgstrom summarised the borough wide precautions which were in place. A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was brought into force in July 2019 for the control of dogs in public spaces, which specifically covered areas such as church yards, crematoriums, parks / play areas (when events were on) and Cleethorpes beach. Mr Clark explained further that the PSPO allowed officers to issue an order for owners to put dogs on leads if they were causing a nuisance. The PSPO was in place for a period of three years until July 2022 but, at that point, further consultation could be undertaken with this panel to inform changes going forward.

The Chair welcomed this and requested that officers come back in the new municipal year with an update on how many Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) had been issued on the prom to date this year.

A member questioned if there was sufficient signage up covering the PSPO. Mr Clark reassured the panel that signage was up at every entrance to the beach, which amounted to approximately 30 signs, and he therefore felt that there was adequate signage in place.

**RESOLVED** – That a report presenting detail of any Fixed Penalty Notices issued along the Cleethorpes Beach be submitted to this panel in the 2021/22 municipal year.

## SPTVE.43 QUESTION TIME

There was a question submitted to the panel in accordance with the constitution which was read out by Miss Cowie as follows:

*“For the benefit of encouraging tourism (including eco-tourism), please could I request that Cleethorpes Boating Lake is renamed Cleethorpes Boating Lake and Waterfowl Gardens?”*

*The boating lake only operates during spring and summer, but the waterfowl provide an all-year attraction for all age groups.*

*What is more, the lake is of great ornithological significance for the following reasons:*

*a) In winter, it occasionally attracts unusual species of duck such as goldeneye and goosander*

*b) Also in winter, it is one of the last waters in Lincolnshire to have an over-wintering population of a fast-declining UK species - the pochard*

*c) As well as the large flock of domestic grey lag geese, the lake hosts one of Britain's few non-migratory flocks of barnacle geese, and this Cleethorpes population is shortly to be the subject of an in-depth study by the RSPB.*

*The site will always be known locally as the boating lake, but a modest rebranding - for instance in tourism publicity material - would surely provide an added inducement for visits from birdwatchers.”*

Mrs Borgstrom informed the panel that there would be no objection from officers regarding the renaming of the boating lake and they were happy to support it if this was what members wanted. She suggested that officers conduct a cost appraisal and report back to this panel before a final decision was taken.

Note - this was later superseded at item SPTVE.48 (Cleethorpes Habitat Management Plan) when it was suggested by a member that the renaming and cost of new signage be incorporated into the planned signage review; to which the panel agreed.

RESOLVED –

1. That the question be noted.
2. That the renaming and cost of new signage be incorporated into the planned signage review later in the year.
3. That this remain on this panel's tracking until completed.

#### **SPTVE.44 FORWARD PLAN**

The panel received the current Forward Plan and members were asked to identify any items for examination by this Panel via the pre-decision call-in procedure.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be noted.

#### **SPTVE.45 TRACKING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF SCRUTINY**

The panel received a report from the Assistant Chief Executive tracking the recommendations of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel.

At SPTVE.29 Historic Vessels; a member raised their concerns that this was at risk of being forgotten and a lot of hard work lost. Mrs Thompson repeated what had been discussed at previous meetings, that there was a conservation management plan in place which meant that the vessels were checked and maintained on a regular basis. Funding opportunities were consistently being explored and applied for, if applicable. There was currently an outline concept bid for funding being compiled for the Heritage Centre, which although would not be for the vessel specifically, hoped reassured members that this was high on officers' radars.

RESOLVED – That the tracking report be noted.

#### **SPTVE.46 QUARTER 3 FINANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The panel received a report from the Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources providing key information regarding the Council's provisional financial outturn at quarter 3.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

#### **SPTVE.47 MAKING THE MOST OF OUR CULTURE AND HERITAGE ASSETS**

The panel received a briefing note from the Strategic Lead for Culture detailing the progress of North East Lincolnshire Council and its partners in the delivery of the Culture and Heritage Framework in 2020.

Mr Trowsdale gave a brief presentation covering details of what had happened over the past 12 months including the response to COVID-19 and new ways of working, new funding opportunities which had been successful and a summary of success stories. Mr Trowsdale acknowledged that although it had been a tough and challenging year in many ways, it had proved especially challenging for culture with few events being allowed to happen. However, positive opportunities had been brought about by means of going digital and having remote trails and events. Local organisations had brought in additional funding to the

local area and new partnerships had been established with schools and education settings.

A member noted that the clock on Grimsby Minister was not working and questioned if there was any funding available to have this corrected. Mr Trowsdale confirmed that conversations had taken place about this very subject and he would provide a written response to the councillor.

A member welcomed the update and was pleased to hear of all the progress, good news stories and success which had happened over the past 12 months. They were pleased to see progress and projects moving forward, especially with the involvement of local businesses and organisations.

Mr Trowsdale responded to a question regarding the £94k of grant funding of which some was allocated to the Moon on the Water, and the member believed this company had closed down during last summer as a result of COVID-19 and rent increases. He acknowledged that it was in local media about the business closing down and confirmed that they were awarded funding from the Cultural Recovery Fund but he was unable to confirm details of the use of the funding. He agreed to find out and provide a written response to the councillor.

The panel referred to a new lifeboat station at Brighton slipway which had previously been agreed by Planning Committee but had since gone quiet and queried if there had been any progress with this. Councillor Harness, who was also the current Chair of Planning Committee, confirmed that it had recently been in the local media and believed it would be expected back at Planning Committee in the near future.

RESOLVED –

1. That the update be noted.
2. That written responses be provided to individual panel members on the clock at Grimsby Minister and the outcome of the grant funding application for Moon on the Water.

## **SPTVE.48 CLEETHORPES HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The panel received a briefing note from Assistant Director Environment providing an update on the Cleethorpes Habitat Management Plan prior to its renewal.

Members received a presentation from Mr Andersonjordan providing background information and context on why we needed a plan. The presentation also included information on the designations of Cleethorpes coastlines, habitats and species of the coastline, management of the salt marsh and management of bird distances. Future plans and changes were also explained to members and included the promotion and growth of eco-tourism, changes to the codes of

conduct for water users, working with local community groups to raise awareness in the local area and education on the importance of the plan. There was also a scheduled signage review which would include new interpretation boards. Presently there were no proposed changes to the dog walking PSPO, however, this may be deemed necessary in the future. Mr Andersonjordan closed his presentation with a summary of next steps that included an informal consultation with Natural England, RSPB and the Humber Nature Partnership. The plan would then be formally submitted with feedback expected by June 2021, it would then come back to scrutiny before its formal submission to Cabinet in the late summer / early autumn.

Members welcomed the presentation and briefing note, and it was suggested that the planned signage review incorporate the new signage required for the renaming on the boating lake as per the question submitted from a member of the public earlier on the agenda. Members raised no objections with this, and Mrs Borgstrom advised that this would mean a delay in the boating lake been renamed as the signage review was not planned until late summer. Members felt this was a sensible approach.

With regards to the consultation, a member asked what member involvement was planned. Mrs Borgstrom advised that the consultation was statutory and there was little room for member involvement, but this was why it had been brought to scrutiny today and would come back before going back to Cabinet to allow members the opportunity to comment. The panel appreciated that it was led by statutory consultation but highlighted the importance of member engagement.

RESOLVED –

1. That the update be noted.
2. That the planned signage review incorporate the suggested name change to the boating lake.

#### **SPTVE.49 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

There were no questions for the portfolio holder at this meeting.

#### **SPTVE.50 CALLING IN OF DECISIONS**

There were no formal requests from members of this panel to call-in decisions taken at recent meetings of Cabinet.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11.13 a.m.