



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 16th September 2021

TOURISM AND VISITOR ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL

29th July 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:

Councillor Brookes (in the Chair)
Councillors Callison, Hasthorpe (substitute for Robinson), Mickleburgh, Parkinson, Reynolds and Silvester (substitute for Freeston)

Officers in attendance:

- Damien Jaines-White (Assistant Director of Regeneration)
- Neil Clark (Regulatory Services Strategic Lead)
- Laura Cowie (Scrutiny and Committee Advisor)
- Carol Heidschuster (Townscape Heritage Project Manager)
- Stella Jackson (Heritage Action Zone Project Manager)
- Michelle Lalor (Head of Communications and Customer Service)
- Guy Lonsdale (Finance Group Manager)

Also in attendance:

- Councillor Callum Procter (Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism)
- Councillor Stan Shreeve (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets)

SPTVE.1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

It was noted that at the Annual General Meeting of the Council held on 27th May, 2021, Councillor Brookes had been appointed the Chair and Councillor Parkinson the Deputy Chair of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel for the ensuing Municipal Year.

SPTVE.2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillors Freeston and Robinson.

SPTVE.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

SPTVE.4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 8th April 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

SPTVE.5 QUESTION TIME

There were two questions received from Mr Wright for this meeting as follows:

1. At the last tourism scrutiny panel meeting, a member said he would make inquiries of Lincolnshire Housing Partnership about the continuing neglect of the four raised flower beds at the junctions of Trinity Road, Highgate and Sandringham Road in Cleethorpes. Can he or any member of the panel provide an update on when works will start? At present, I believe an opportunity to enhance this busy part of the resort is being missed.

2. Are there any plans to introduce flowers, shrubs or trees in the four large planters at the north end of North Promenade (opposite the rock armour) now that the holiday season is in full swing? It is an important destination point for many walkers / promenaders / estuary-watchers, and it seems a shame that (so far) it has been excluded from the programme of seafront floral enhancement.

Miss Cowie advised the panel that as the questions had been submitted outside of the five working days required, a written response would be provided to Mr Wright outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the questions be noted, and that a written response to the questions be provided to Mr Wright.

SPTVE.6 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.7 TRACKING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF SCRUTINY

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

At SPTVE.37 Motorhome Aire, concerns were again raised over the use of the word 'Aire' rather than 'Site', and whether a site was required as there were arrangements in situ already. Having had a response to this point previously, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resource and Assets agreed to take this back to his next briefing with officers to discuss.

RESOLVED – That the tracking report be noted, and those actions marked as complete be removed.

SPTVE.8 TOURISM AND VISITOR ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL - WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

The panel considered a report from the Statutory Scrutiny Officer (Assistant Chief Executive) outlining the forward work programme of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel.

RESOLVED – That the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel Work Programme for 2021/22 be approved.

SPTVE.9 2020/21 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN REPORT

The panel received a report from the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets providing key information and analysis of the Council's position and performance against its Finance and Commissioning Plan at the end of the 2020/21 financial year. It was noted this report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting held 16 June 2021 and was referred to all scrutiny panels.

Councillor Shreeve, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets presented the report and captured the key highlights for the panel.

The panel wished for it to be noted that the layout and presentation of the Outturn Report was one of the best they had seen, and it was appreciated how it assisted the interpretation of the data. Thanks to the Section 151 Officer, Deputy Section 151 Officer and their teams were noted.

RESOLVED – That the 2020/21 Provisional Outturn Report be noted.

SPTVE.10 BEACH ENFORCEMENT

The panel received a briefing note from the Regulation and Enforcement Strategic Lead providing an update on enforcement activity around the control of dogs along the promenade and around the resort.

The panel welcomed the update and were reassured by action taken so far. They felt although signage was important more might be required due to the number of fines issued, it highlighted there was still an issue with dogs being on the prom during the summer seasons. In response to members comments and questions, Mr Clark advised the panel that from the fines issued roughly one third of these were for local residents and two thirds for visitors. Mr Clark reiterated that the signage was regularly monitored for vandalism or damage and also underwent a full annual review and, in 2021, a full signage refresh was agreed. There was signage up at all entrances on to the beach (over 30), but it was believed that visitors to the beach were still not reading them. Other methods had also been used to communicate the message including notices on our website and social media accounts. Every effort had been made to get the message out there, including adding a map to signage for a clear understanding.

The panel asked if the Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) were effective and were they being paid. Mr Clark informed members that roughly 50-60% were paid, a proportion went through the appeals process and the remaining FPNs went through the court process. It was noted that this was in line with regional colleagues' statistics too.

A member asked if there were rules about dogs on long leads, being allowed to run around. Mr Clark explained that there were no requirements in the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), just that the dog needed to be under control.

Panel members asked if other signage could be explored, such as the use of electronic signage or audio systems for those who were blind or sight impaired. Mr Clark reassured members that this had been considered previously and benchmarked; it was difficult to measure but he was happy to note this.

It was also asked by members if there had been any consideration into reintroducing the use of a dog licence, to manage the increasing number of dog owners. Mr Clark advised the panel that there had been no progression on this, either regionally or nationally, and there was uncertainty over whether the implementation of a dog licence would achieve what was required.

The last point raised by members was regarding the geographic area of the restrictions, along the promenade but not on the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) where there were migrating birds etc; members felt this could contribute to the confusion. Mr Clark explain that there were several reasons for creating the PSPO, one being a requirement of the blue flag, a source of pride for the resort; others obviously including to encourage families to enjoy the resort safely. The PSPO replaced a bye-law which was in place for many years previously and, as a result, a reduction in the number of complaints of dog fouling along the beach had been seen. In response to members questions, Mr Clark confirmed that

the restrictions were only in place part of the year, from Good Friday to 30th September each year. Mr Clark reminder members that there would be an opportunity to review the PSPO during the consultation period next year. This was due to start in the new year and the panel would be involved in this process.

RESOLVED – That the briefing note be noted.

SPTVE.11 WELCOME BACK FUND

The panel received a briefing note from the Investment Manager providing the panel with an update on the grant funding awarded from the Welcome Back Fund to all local authorities.

The Chair was pleased to see that more funding had been brought into the Borough and looked forward to the further update on the funding later in the year.

A brief discussion was held over the use of the funding and whether it could have been utilised for the White Palm. Councillor Procter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism advised members that the funding was awarded to help build back better from the pandemic and would allow local authorities to put in place additional measures to create and promote a safe environment for local trade and tourism, and therefore could not be used on such projects.

RESOLVED – That the briefing note be noted, and a further update be brought to this panel later in the Municipal Year.

SPTVE.12 HERITAGE OPEN DAYS (GRIMSBY AND CLEETHORPES)

The panel received a briefing paper providing an update on the upcoming Heritage Open days to be held in both Grimsby and Cleethorpes.

With regard to the exhibition case to be displayed at Cleethorpes Town Hall, containing artefacts currently held in storage, members asked what artefacts would be on display. Mrs Heidschuster explained that she was working with colleagues on the collection and would be looking for items that related to the theme set (Fun, Food and Fishy Tales). At this point it couldn't be confirmed what would be on display, but they were hoping to have a display cabinet which would allow them to rotate the contents on a regular basis.

RESOLVED – That the briefing note be noted.

SPTVE.13 SUMMER HOLIDAY ACTIVITY BROCHURE

The panel received a copy of the Summer Holiday Activity Brochure being distributed to households across North East Lincolnshire this summer.

RESOLVED – That the summer activity brochure be noted.

SPTVE.14 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

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

SPTVE.15 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 10.58 a.m.