



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 16th March 2023

TOURISM AND VISITOR ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL

26th January 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:

Councillor Parkinson (in the Chair)
Councillors Cairns, Callison, Farren, Freeston, Hasthorpe (substitute for Brookes),
Lindley and Mickleburgh.

Officers in attendance:

- Helen Thompson (Strategic Lead for Tourism)
- James Trowsdale (Strategic Manager – Regeneration)
- Damien Jaines-White (Assistant Director – Regeneration)
- Sarah Smith (Programme Manager – Regeneration)
- Carol Heidschuster (Townscape Heritage Project Manager)
- Paul Windley (Democratic and Scrutiny Team Manager)
- Sophie Pickerden (Committee Support Officer)
- Nick Browning (Head of Culture, Heritage, Leisure and Tourism)
- Eve Richardson Smith (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Also in attendance:

- Councillor Furneaux (Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and the Visitor Economy)
- Councillor Holland (Freshney Ward Councillor)

There were no members of the public in attendance.

SPTVE.39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received for this meeting from Councillor Brookes.

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

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 24th November 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

SPTVE.42 QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public for this meeting.

SPTVE.43 FORWARD PLAN

The panel considered the current Forward Plan and were asked to identify any items for examination by this panel via the pre-decision call-in procedure. No such items were identified.

Mr Windley reminded members that the Resort Public Space Protection Order item would be considered at a joint meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Panel and the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel on 2nd March 2023.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be noted.

SPTVE.44 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.

Mr Windley stated that the Grant Street Car Park Project had been discussed at the recent Budget Scrutiny meetings. Mr Jaines White confirmed that there was a recommendation from officers not to progress with the Grant Street Car Park Project at this time. A member queried whether the panel would be able to assess the recommendation prior to a decision being made. Ms Richardson Smith stated that due to time constraints the panel might not get chance to assess the recommendation at a future panel meeting, but it would form part of decisions to be taken as part of the budget setting meeting of full Council. A member asked whether they would receive paperwork on the costing of the project prior to the full Council meeting. Ms Richardson Smith stated that she would speak to relevant officers and report back to the panel, suggesting a briefing note may be appropriate so that Members were as up to date as possible before any debate at Full Council.

Mrs Thompson confirmed that she would be providing a report to the panel at the next meeting which would include reference to the marketing of small businesses in the area.

RESOLVED –

1. That the tracking report be noted.
2. That further information regarding the Grant Street Car Park Project be provided to members of this panel prior to the budget setting meeting of Council.
3. That a report, including reference to the marketing of small businesses, be submitted to the next meeting of this panel.

SPTVE.45 GRIMSBY CREATES UPDATE

The panel received a report providing the latest information on the Grimsby Creates Cultural Development Fund.

The panel was pleased with the work being undertaken on the project.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPTVE.46 DISCOVER CLEETHORPES TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE PROGRAMME UPDATE

The panel received a report providing an update on the Cleethorpes Townscape Heritage programme.

Ms Heidschuster informed members that the scheme had been extended to 2024. A member asked whether the project was solely for the Cleethorpes area. Ms Heidschuster confirmed that the project was for Alexandra Road in Cleethorpes. Mr Jaines White said that whilst the project was for Cleethorpes, officers did look at other areas for similar projects to be undertaken.

There was a wider discussion regarding the different grants that people could apply for as part of the project.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPTVE.47 NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE PROVISIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

The panel received a report providing the latest information regarding forthcoming events in North East Lincolnshire.

A member asked Mrs Thompson what the council was doing to encourage visitors to stay overnight and to not just visit for the day. Mrs Thompson stated that increasing the time visitors spend at the resort

was one of the key tourism objectives, she reiterated that she would be providing the panel with a briefing paper at the next meeting regarding the marketing of small businesses in the area. She informed members that on the DiscoverNEL website, there were itineraries which visitors could follow which showed different things they could do whilst visiting the area, either as a day visitor or for a longer visit.

There was a wider discussion around upcoming events and the importance of celebrating anniversaries of local attractions. A member asked whether there would be a Visitor Guide for the year. Mrs Thompson said that the guide was created bi-annually, so there would not be a new guide for this year, but one is planned for 2024-2026. However, details of any upcoming events would be included in a monthly newsletter which people can subscribe to through the DiscoverNEL website. Mr Jaines-White said he would send details of this to Mr Windley for distribution to panel members.

Councillor Farren queried whether there would be a survey conducted asking visitors about the resort. Mrs Thompson informed members that survey data was constantly being collected about the resort by the resort team officers when speaking to visitors. Mrs Thompson stated that the STEAM Report had been provided to panel members back in September containing data about the resort. Councillor Farren asked to see a copy of the visitor survey to look at the questions being asked. Mrs Thompson said she would circulate to members an example of the survey.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That further details of the events newsletter be circulated to members of this panel.
3. That further details on the Visitor Survey be circulated to members of this panel.

SPTVE.48 QUESTIONS TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

With the permission of the Chair, Councillor Holland was invited to ask a question of the portfolio holder regarding the recent Christmas light switch on event in Grimsby Town Centre. He expressed his disappointment with the issues with the sound system and the lack of a Christmas atmosphere during the switch on. Councillor Holland said he was also disappointed to see Freshney Place Shopping Centre closed on the evening of the Christmas Light Switch On and thought that it was a missed opportunity. Councillor Holland asked the portfolio holder who had approved the scope and planning of the 'Festive Weekender' and to detail how performance of the events contractor was evaluated, including how the post event contract close-out was managed.

Councillor Furneaux stated that he shared Councillor Holland's disappointment that the sound system was not working during the Christmas Light Switch On event on the Friday. Councillor Furneaux said that the event was marketed as a community tree lighting event and whilst it was a shame about the sound system, he felt that the rest of the weekend was fantastic. He stated that there was a variety of street acts and that there was a 54% increase in footfall through St James Square. Councillor Furneaux said that the event organiser was approved through a tender process and the format of a three-day event was approved by himself. He said that the event was supported by council officers but ultimately the event organiser was responsible and that once the tender was awarded, officers did not have direct control and could only advise. He said that tourism officers had reviewed the event and had raised their concerns regarding the sound system with the event organiser. Councillor Furneaux commented that a report would be produced outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the event and that Councillor Holland's feedback would be taken on board for the next event.

SPTVE.49 CALLING IN OF DECISIONS

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

SPTVE.50 URGENT BUSINESS

Councillor Mickleburgh stated that he had asked Councillor Brookes if he could raise the issue of the Cleethorpes Library at the meeting. He said he had concerns over staffing and asked if the Chief Executive of Lincs Inspire could attend a future meeting to provide an update. Mr Jaines-White said that he would circulate an update on the Cleethorpes Library to panel members so that they could decide whether they wanted to include this on the agenda for a future meeting.

Councillor Callison asked whether a representative from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) could attend a future meeting to address concerns over parking, traffic and delays to the redevelopment. Mrs Thompson commented that she did meet regularly with representatives from the RNLI and agreed to circulate an update regarding the redevelopment.

Mr Windley reminded members that they should inform the Chair and Democratic Services in advance of the meeting if they wished to raise items of urgent business.

RESOLVED –

1. That an update regarding the Cleethorpes Library be circulated to members of this panel.
2. That an update on the RNLI redevelopment be circulated to members of this panel.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11.00 a.m.