

Extract from BTAC Minutes – 24 March 2022

39 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Democratic Services Delivery Manager presented the report advising a brief history of the consideration of the report to date.

The Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) had requested that Council consider conducting a Community Governance Review (CGR) of the town area of the Borough under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, with a view to establishing a Town Council within the area of the town wards.

That request had then been subsequently considered by the Corporate and Community Committee on 17 August 2021, when a recommendation was put forward to extend a CGR to the whole of the Borough area.

At the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20 October it was agreed to refer the matter back to BTAC, proposing that an informal public consultation process be undertaken prior to the request for a CGR being reconsidered by Cabinet to allow Members to gauge the public appetite and interest in such a review, prior to the Council committing further resources.

Committee were advised there were four options available to them:

- To recommend that an informal consultation exercise be undertaken on the proposal for a Community Governance Review for the town centre area.
- To recommend that prior to an informal consultation exercise be undertaken on the proposal for a Community Governance Review for the town centre area, Parish Councils be contacted to inform them of the proposed consultation and asked to consider if there were any issues within their particular parishes which they felt would necessitate a CGR and any issues identified be incorporated into the informal consultation exercise.
- To recommend that a Community Governance Review is not undertaken at this time.
- To recommend that a Community Governance Review be re-considered when the direction of local government reorganisation for Lincolnshire is known.

Councillor Nigel Welton Portfolio Holder for the report provided Members with an overview of the Cabinet decision stating he wanted to make it clear that Cabinet were not being obstructive. Cabinet felt it was not appropriate for them to take Scrutiny's recommendation or permit Scrutiny, to overrule a decision of BTAC with Scrutiny's request for a borough wide review, without it coming back to BTAC.

Cabinet's recommendation to BTAC was that it carry out an initial informal review to gather supportive evidence for a full review, prior to moving into a full Corporate Governance Review for the whole of the Borough area.

Committee deliberation followed which included:

Members' recognised the potential forthcoming changes both in the form of a possible Unitary Council for Lincolnshire along with the potential two Council structure and their role within the current South and East Lincolnshire Council Partnership.

Other issues included concerns in respect of the indicated costs of holding such a review in light of the changing financial climate and also the need for the Council to prioritise and focus its' spending on existing services.

As the number of concerns weighed heavy in their determination committee's overriding agreement was that it would be foolhardy to commit to such funding at the current time.

RESOLVED: That BTAC recommend that a Community Governance review be reconsidered when the direction of Local Government reorganisation for Lincolnshire is known.