

Present: Councillor Claire Rylott (Chairman), (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Anton Dani, Neil Drayton, Patricia Marson, Barrie Pierpoint, Ralph Pryke, David Scoot and Suzanne Welberry

In attendance:

Officers –  
Assistant Director - Regulation, Assistant Director - Culture and Leisure, Insights & Transformation Manager, Interim Cultural Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer

#### **48 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were tabled for Councillor Lina Savickiene with no substitute member and for Councillor Andy Iazard with Councillor Barrie Pierpoint substituting. Further apologies were tabled by Portfolio Holder Councillor Anne Dorrian.

#### **49 MINUTES**

With the agreement of the committee the Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting.

#### **50 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None declared

#### **51 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None tabled.

#### **52 STREET ART POLICY**

The Portfolio Holder Councillor Sarah Sharpe presented the report supported by the Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure and the Interim Cultural Services Manager. Members were advised that A Street Art Policy had been developed by South Holland District Council after they received a local petition requesting a street art wall from local residents and artists in 2021.

A Task Group was formed from the Policy Development Panel (PDP) to develop the governance framework to support the opportunity for street art in South Holland. A policy was drafted following detailed work by the Task Group and tested with a Pilot project in 2023. It was the intention to work towards adoption of the Policy across the South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership (S&ELCP) sub-region

The aim of the policy had been to deliver best practice in managing graffiti across the borough while providing space for street art. For the purposes of this policy street art is defined as: "Any work of art on building facades or infrastructure with permission that complements the public space in which it is situated. Such work will not detract, defame or depreciate the area. It could be a painting, land art, sculpture etc." Whilst graffiti was defined as "Defacement of building facades or infrastructure without permission by use of paint or another form of marker. This is always a form of criminal damage."

In South Holland the Street Art Policy had been in place for one year and had been well tested. During the Pilot phase one artist chose to go against the approved artwork for one of the two pieces of art and created a different piece about the cost-of-living crisis. That was a clear breach in the terms of the policy and because of the policy guidelines, that piece of artwork was defined as graffiti and removed.

The proposed policy would be piloted in Boston through a project working with partners, including schools and colleges to test the following steps in the policy:

Step 1 – Application for Street Art proposal to Boston Borough Council

Step 2 – Consultation with local community, ward members and the Parish Council or BTAC

Step 3 – Approval or rejection

Step 4 – Street Art work to be carried out with approval

A potential number of sites had been identified through the Public Realm Group, however for an initial project Central Park had been chosen as the pilot opportunity to test the policy in support of the ongoing work to achieve Green Flag status.

The pilot process for the policy would be planned to seek funding and establish partners (Transported Arts); create artist commission and share widely; pilot location and art ideas presented to relevant Portfolio Holders and Ward Councillors for approval; successful artist commissioned and artwork produced and the results of pilot to be presented to Cabinet.

The proposed policy had been developed and tested in South Holland resulting in examples of where it had enabled the successful delivery of street art in the community. It had also enabled the council to remove street art where it did not meet the guidelines laid out in the policy. The policy also enabled the potential for using street art to engage with young people and provide the opportunity to work with artists to develop their creativity in dedicated spaces rather than going down the route of illegal graffiti.

Committee deliberation and questioning followed which included:

On seeking reassurance that the specification in respect of the policy would be made very clear to residents from the outset, of what was acceptable and what was not acceptable, a member was advised that it would be made very clear publicly through communications and the Pilot would provide a full test of the policy to highlight any concerns ahead of it being publicised. Concern was noted at the likelihood of the installations attracting graffiti with issues of de-facing the works or encouraging unauthorised graffiti in the vicinity of display site.

Responding to further questions the Portfolio Holder confirmed that funding was being sourced to address maintenance requirements which was hoped to be delivered through the NPO project over 3 years and there would be public recognition that the street art productions were approved by the Council with supporting publicity for each instalment.

Clarification was further provided, in that there would be varying sizes of art installations depending on the commission. The ones identified for Central Park would all be one size on boards to be placed in-front of the existing fence. Other commissions direct onto the side of buildings would have a timeline to be painted over and would be larger and, dependant on the commission, could possibly be permanent features.

When referencing the specification in respect of the materials to be used by the artists, a member questioned if any manufacturer approved supplier list would be provided and the Portfolio Holder confirmed that advice would be sought from professional artists to ensure resilient and eco-friendly products were sourced.

Responding to several concerns raised by a member in respect of the removal of graffiti and the cost of the removal to the Council, clarifying the position the Lead Officer for the committee the Assistant Director for Regulatory, confirmed that graffiti was an environmental crime and whilst it could be a challenge to identify the culprit, when it was possible the environmental crime officers would issue a fixed penalty notice.

The Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure further advised committee that the BTAC Operatives who worked within the town centre, were very active in both spotting and removing incidents of graffiti and were supported in spotting incidents by the new ASB Officers who patrolled the area and the prevalent CCTV coverage now in place. Members were also advised that overall art works which had been installed around the town had been appreciated by residents and whilst a small amount of vandalism would arise, it was dealt with efficiently.

### **53 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Group Manager for Transformation and Insights presented the Quarter 3 data. Members were advised that it was tabled for information and, to enable members to identify any potential future work items for its work programme. The indicators for performance providing a point of direction of interest on some areas not hitting targets.

Member commenting and questioning followed which is summarised:

Concern was tabled by some members at the trend information provided, which they felt was not informative as there was no benchmarking to compare the trend information to. Further comments questioned why targets were not in place as the Council had data from previous years to compare against and there was no information within the document explaining what a trend measure meant.

Following several questions relating to the trend measures the Group Manager for Transformation and Insights clarified the position. Trend measures did not have a target to aim to, sometimes due to there being no historic data to compare against and other times, the information was used to look at a specific area. Trend data also fed into policy documents and was used to track a particular situation overtime and in certain areas like the number of properties improved it was impossible to set a target as it was unknown how many applications would come forward.

On questioning why the calls received data had been recorded in seconds, the Group Manager for Transformation and Insights advised that it had been to ensure calls were answered quickly. However, that form of recording had been reviewed and the measure would be changing to identify customer queries being dealt with.

Referencing the success in achieving and surpassing the target for the 'homeless not becoming homeless', a member queried if any follow up a year later was made on the outcomes to see if those homed were still residents or had moved on again or re-presented with the same issues. Further comments were tabled in respect of homelessness and rough sleepers and the Chairman advised that should members wish to take the subject further, then it would be a matter for the sister committee, Corporate and Community committee. In response to comments identifying improved properties The Lead Officer for the committee advised it related to housing standards and not the sustainable warmth programme. Officers confirmed that further details would be sought on the matter.

Responding to concerns in respect of the market stalls and no target being in place, members were advised that the portfolio holder would need to look at the data to set a target. A further point of clarity was made in respect of the cumulative savings for the partnership in that the number indicated in orange text referenced the savings banked to date, with the number referenced in blue being the target. Confirmation was also provided that the criteria for the visitor numbers was based on the GMLP and not across the town or borough.

## **54 WORK PROGRAMME**

Ahead of the work programme the Chairman asked Cllr Dani to update on the Member working Group on its activity.

Cllr Dani advised the group had not progressed any further since the previous update to the committee as they were still awaiting information, and confirmed a further meeting was scheduled within the next few weeks. Councillor Pryke confirmed the next meeting was scheduled for the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 and advised the group would look to draw some conclusions. Councillor Dani further stated that a lot had been discussed which he wanted to see implemented and he felt another two meetings maybe needed or one every three months to give the group the scope to push the town to be improved.

Members noted the work programme for the new municipal year and the Lead Officer for the committee the Assistant Director for Regulatory advised that a further report had been added to the agenda tabled, which was the Environmental Policy.

The Meeting Closed at 8.00 pm