

Present: Councillor Nigel Welton (Chairman), Councillor Sue Ransome (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Alison Austin, Anton Dani, Viven Edge, Paul Gleeson, Martin Griggs, Stephen Raven, Brian Rush, Yvonne Stevens and Stephen Woodliffe

In attendance:

Officers –

Chief Executive, Head of Housing, Health and Community Services, Head of Town Centre, Leisure, Events and Cultural Services and Senior Democratic Services Officer

Guests –

Inspector Andy Morrice, Boston Policing Inspector
Mr Dylan Taylor and Mr Nathan Bryant, Christmas in Boston
Rev Alyson Buxton and Mr Adam Kelp, Parish of Boston

Also in attendance: County Councillor Paula Cooper

50 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declaration of interests were made.

52 POLICING ISSUES - STANDING ITEM

Inspector Andy Morrice addressed the meeting and discussed issues raised as follows.

Incidents in Central Park

A query had been received prior to the meeting as to whether there had been a rise in disturbances in Central Park since the gates had been left open 24 hours a day. Inspector Morrice reported that, from January 2017 to date, 70 incidents had been reported relating to Central Park, compared to 101 incidents during the same period the previous year, including incidents of street drinking; therefore, opening the park 24 hours a day had not impacted on the number of incidents. Overall, street drinking had decreased 50% and had remained at that level.

101 Service

It was not known whether the number of reported incidents in Central Park had been affected by the number of calls to the 101 service. However, the number of calls received by the 101 service had continued to increase, so callers were getting through. Inspector Morrice added that he was confident as he could be that the number of incidents in the park had decreased. There was no indication that people had been put off using the 101 service because they felt it was not effective or because they could not

get through, though a Member asserted that members of the public in his ward had a different view.

It was noted that calls to the 101 service cost 15 pence regardless of length. If someone had no credit on their phone and could not obtain any, they could call in to the police station, report an incident online or use a phone box.

Inspector Morrice would bring data on the 101 service to the next meeting.

Perception of Crime

A Member reported that information available on the internet indicated that incidents of violence and burglary in Boston were a fifth of the national average and incidents of theft were a third of the national average and asked how this message could be communicated and promoted.

Inspector Morrice confirmed that this message was promoted, but people's perception was different. The borough was one of the safest in the country, but it was not helped when papers reported salacious headlines that were not backed up by figures; with respect to murders, for example, Boston did not even appear in the top 100 boroughs.

Community Alcohol Partnership

Boston's Community Alcohol Partnership was selected from all those in the county to give a presentation at Westminster, which was delivered by Boston's Youth Council; it went extremely well and received a lot of praise.

Exchange

A one-week exchange was being arranged through the Polish Embassy and Boston Grammar School to take place the following year, the first of its type in the UK.

Cycling

Inspector Morrice had met with the Highway Authority for further discussions about a drafting a plan and deciding where people should be allowed to cycle, as existing cycle paths had no start or finish so people cycled onto pavements. The Council's Partnerships and Sustainability Manager was also involved through the Strategic Health Group. The National Lottery and Sustrans might provide funding. There would be a meeting with all users and interested parties in due course. Inspector Morrice would update the Committee at the next meeting.

Members voiced concerns about people cycling on pavements at speed and ignoring clear signs that cycling was not permitted. Inspector Morrice confirmed that it was illegal to cycle on pavements, but it was not a straightforward matter. Signage needed attention, there were pot holes in the road, it was difficult to police, especially as mobility scooters, which were larger, were allowed to use the pavements. It was recognised that cyclist/pedestrian collisions were a danger, but so too were cyclist/vehicle collisions. "Wanton and furious" cycling was a separate issue.

Recruitment

In response to concern that cycling on pavement was difficult to police, but it did not seem that PCSOs prevent it either, Inspector Morrice explained that the PCSO team had reduced in number and it had taken time to recruit more, but four newly-recruited PCSOs were due to start imminently. Police officers had been recruited beyond the maximum capacity with 12 recruited for the Boston and South Holland areas. Recruited officers included 2 EU nationals.

An open evening had been held recently to encourage people to become special constables, but Inspector Morrice had not yet received feedback on this. The role of special constable was a voluntary one.

Electric 3-Wheelers

Members raised concerns about people racing through Strait Bargate and Wide Bargate on electric 3-wheelers, which was intimidating and dangerous. Inspector Morrice confirmed that people should not use these trikes where there were "No Vehicles" signs up and Members' evidence about this happening should be passed to him and should be quickly resolved. The trikes came under motorbike legislation and had to be used in line with road traffic regulations.

53 CHRISTMAS IN BOSTON - STANDING ITEM

Mr Dylan Taylor gave a brief final update on the progress made by the *Christmas in Boston* community group prior to the Switch-On event and added that all but one of the memory lanterns had been sold [*which was then purchased by a BTAC Member*].

In response to questions, Mr Taylor confirmed that the cost of electricity for lights would be £20 plus the cost of lighting West Street. Businesses had been given a choice of colour, but they were all bright. The Chairman understood that all businesses had been consulted.

The Chairman reported that 509 entries to the Christmas poetry competition had been received so far across the three age categories. Volunteer judges were still needed if any one else could offer their help. The Council and Boston Mayflower were carrying preliminary judging the following week. Entries that did not meet the criteria, but were commendable, would get special mention. A selection would be brought to the next Committee meeting. It was hoped to publish a book of entries to raise funds next year.

The community group was thanked for all their hard work.

54 PASSION FOR PEOPLE

The Reverend Alyson Buxton of the Parish of Boston and Adam Kelk, Activity and Events Manager and member of the Heritage Lottery Fund team, were present as invited guests.

The Reverend gave a PowerPoint presentation describing the Parish of Boston project *Passion for People*, which involved carrying out repairs to The Stump and installing a

new educational interpretation and activity scheme to continue and expand as a visitor centre and hub of the community.

The Stump was not only an iconic, historical building, but a centre for a range of community activities, music and art projects and was used free of charge by community groups. The church was looked after by 230 volunteers who opened it, cleaned it, served in the shop and cafe and provided administrative support.

The day-to-day costs of running the church were met by donations from the congregation and through fund-raising activities. However, this did not cover the cost of repairs or the improvements to enhance its use for the benefit of the whole community.

The total cost of the project was £2,175,319 of which £365,478 was still to be found. The team were raising the profile of the project; it was recognised that everyone was affected by budget cuts, but any ideas or contributions would be greatly appreciated.

In response to questions, the Reverend explained that historical negotiations were continuing with the Council regarding maintenance of the chancel and repairs were ongoing. The tower remained on Heritage England's list of heritage at risk.

Discussions were in the initial stages with respect to a contribution towards *Passion for People*. The project had raised the profile of the church as a hospitable and welcoming place; this was working and they tried to accommodate the needs of all community groups.

The Boston Municipal Non-Educational Charities already contributed £10,000 per year towards the cost of the musical director, who held adult and children's choirs etc, and half of whose work was for local schools.

Passion for People was a 3-year project. People had pledged money and it was accumulating, but it was thought donations would increase as the project progressed and it could be seen that it would successfully achieve its target. Donations large and small had been received; all were equally appreciated.

There was an extensive fund-raising plan in place that included raffles and an auction of promises. The coffee shop was performing steadily and did very well on days when coach-loads of visitors came to Boston. It would be difficult to set up a lottery, but a suggestion for a 100 club could be considered. Any other suggestions would be welcomed and Members were invited to simply drop in.

The Committee fully supported the project. The Stump was an iconic building that contributed significantly towards tourism for the area, attracting significant numbers of visitors, and the Committee was committed to improving the offer of the town. The project was making the church a warm and welcoming community hub for local people and promoting integration.

Members discussed how best to contribute towards the project. It was suggested that the Committee could contribute for the two years of Members' current term of office. However, the Large Grant Scheme was to be considered later on the agenda and it was suggested that the Parish Team could make an application, which would be considered alongside other applications in accordance with the agreed process.

55 BTAC 2017/18 FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE

The Committee received an update on BTAC's financial position, showing the budget for the 2017/18 year, and the projected reserve at the year end, which were set out in detail in the appendix to the report.

Assumptions required to assess the year end position included that outturn spending for already agreed spending and income was in line with the budget, and that the remaining unallocated 2017/18 sum was approved and spent this year.

Mid-year assessment of the budgets resulted in a projected underspend of £2,103 due to small underspends.

The closing balance on BTAC reserves was currently projected to be £57,016 at 31 March 2018, assuming that spend was in line with the approved budget.

A potential one-off spend from the unallocated sum was Transported Illuminate funding of £5,000, which had been previously committed to secure match-funding. Transported Illuminate had now identified another possible source for match-funding and it was confirmed that funding of up to £5,000 from BTAC would be released should the new match-funding be confirmed, in accordance with the Committee's decision made on 28th June 2017.

The Chairman referred to the as yet unallocated funds. At the meeting on 30th August the Committee had considered a report on BTAC's financial position and future resource allocations including possible further support to help protect valued local services. BTAC had agreed to support the provision of events and the town centre maintenance operatives, being £86,000 existing spend and £40,000 additional monies for events (including a new post of events assistant) and £12,000 existing support and £41,000 additional monies for two new posts for town centre maintenance. This decision related to the 2018/19 financial year.

The Chairman put it to the Committee that they should avoid any delay and recommend to Cabinet that this matter take effect in the current financial year to allow the commencement of necessary preparations for these matters to be brought into effect as soon as possible. The budget clearly showed that BTAC had the resources to make such a recommendation. Any unspent allocation would, of course, remain within the BTAC budget for the Committee to address as part of any year end arrangements and budget recommendations for 2018/19.

One Member felt the funding should commence from 2018/19, but the majority were supportive of the proposal to make such a recommendation, particularly in order to benefit from the recruitment of the town centre operatives as soon as possible.

The Chief Executive reported that a process was already underway to recruit to the one existing operative post and this could be expanded accordingly.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the projected financial position for the year and the reserve amount held at the year end be noted.**
- 2. That it be noted that match funding of up to £5,000 towards the Transported Illuminate project would come from the current year's unallocated sum provision should the project's alternative match-funding bid be successful.**
- 3. That it be recommended to Cabinet that BTAC's support for the provision of events and the town centre maintenance operatives, being £86,000 existing spend and £40,000 additional monies for events (including a new post of events assistant) and £12,000 existing support and £41,000 additional monies for the two new posts for town centre maintenance, be provided in the current financial year effective immediately.**

56 DRAFT BOSTON TOWN AREA COMMITTEE LARGE GRANT POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Head of Housing, Health and Community Services presented a draft policy framework for large grant applications for the Committee to consider, for amending and adopting as appropriate.

The report set out a proposed application process and draft guidance notes for applicants were attached as an appendix. If adopted, a Large Grant Policy Framework would provide a structure within which the Committee could consider making grants of more than £1,000, the current upper limit under the Committee's Small Grant Scheme, to formally constituted community groups and other organisations towards projects that would have a significant benefit to the BTAC area and to BTAC residents. Applicants could apply by using the Small Grants application form if they wished.

The report suggested that applicants could apply for a maximum of 50% of the total cost of a project and must clearly set out what 'legacy' would be left as a consequence of any funding. In particular, they were asked to be clear about the total project costs, other forms of funding already secured and what other sources of funding were being sought to make up the 50% match funding required.

It was suggested that the assessment process for applications be:

1. Where an application did not have a clear, demonstrable benefit to the BTAC area and to BTAC residents, the Head of Service responsible for Community Development would advise the Chairman of BTAC and the applicant about its ineligibility.
2. Where applications did present a demonstrable benefit to the BTAC area and to BTAC residents, the Head of Service responsible for Community Development would inform the BTAC Chairman and refer the application to the BTAC Grants Working Group for further assessment.
3. The Working Group would provide the Chairman of BTAC with a summary of the application at a relevant Chairman's briefing from where it would be for the Chairman of BTAC, acting reasonably, justifiably and proportionately, to determine whether it was placed onto a BTAC agenda for consideration.

Members commended the policy framework. It was clear and easy to understand, and guidance was preferable to a prescribed application form. It would be useful for applications to be considered in this way prior to any submission to the Committee.

It was noted that the applications over £10,000 would be subject to recommendation to Cabinet. The Head of Housing, Health and Community Services advised Members that this was implicit in the Council's governance framework and applicants would be advised.

The policy framework did not advise applicants that officers could provide support completing an application; however, it was recognised that applications would be from organisations, not individuals, and that this should not be necessary, though a contact telephone number could be added.

RESOLVED: That the Large Grant Policy Framework, as set out in the report, be adopted.

57 USAGE OF GREEN SPACES

The Committee received a report by the Head of Town Centre, Leisure, Events & Culture, which provided information on the use of green spaces through the issuing of licences, as requested by Members.

The use of a licence enabled a hirer to access facilities over a period of time, such as a football season, enabling the hirer to become self sufficient in setting up and using the facilities for the duration of the hire, removing the need for the Council to engage a member of staff that had previously meant that costs had exceeded hire fee income.

Unlike a lease, which transferred a legal interest in land through a contractual agreement between a landlord and tenant (and included exclusive possession), a licence did not transfer any legal interest in land but gave access to occupy/use the property for specified periods of time and use.

The Council was initially approached by St Georges School in 2015 to use Garfits Lane recreation area and the changing rooms on a more regular formal basis for activities. Legal Services Lincolnshire drafted a licence with standard terms and the Council arranged agreement with the school. The licence permitted the licensee to use the land for specific purposes and provided a set of rules for both parties setting out obligations, responsibilities and liabilities.

The Garfits Lane site had another licence, which allowed shared use with other licensees and along with the general public; it was important to note that licences did not prohibit hire or use by others. The Railway Athletic Football Club had a licence in place enabling them to use the pitches; this licence had expired and the Council was working with the club, which was now looking to renew for this season.

This approach had also been used elsewhere with Central Park setting up a 3-year licence for the Croquet Club's use of the bowling facilities following the demise of the bowling club. The Council also had used licences for Boston Town FC to fit and operate a gate to the shared car park at the country park (since 2015) and a licence was

prepared for Endeavour FM Events Limited to use Rosebery Avenue for the Big Boston Gig also in 2015.

More recently, Boston United in the Community wished to use this site to develop girls' football from July 2017 for a 3-year period, and also a section of the open space to the right of Rosebery Avenue, which was subject to a separate licence. This approach saved costs for the Council (and BTAC as appropriate) and administration associated with managing individual bookings. Under a licence, Boston United in the Community would be key holding, have use of changing rooms and football pitches for a period of 3 years from July 2017 to develop its girls' football programme. The licence was prepared through the Council's Property Services Team and the permitted use was for pre-booked football matches.

The terms of the licence and a number of functions that the licensee had to undertake were set out in the report. A copy of a typical licence for the use of green space for the purpose of football was attached as Appendix 1 for reference.

Members commended the use of licences as cost effective and time saving.

In response to questions, it was reported that there was a large number of girls involved in the football programme and both Garfits Lane and Rosebery Avenue pitches were used. No problems had been reported with respect to parked cars at Garfits Lane, where the car park was on an un-adopted road maintained by residents. The Council had to maintain an element of the boundary of the un-adopted road. Income from the Garfits Lane licences went into a budget set aside in the Council funds.

One of the terms of the licence was for the hirer to clean changing rooms after use. If complaints were received the hirer would be contacted and monitored. Hirers were trusted to honour the terms of the licence and steps would be taken if there was a breach and the hirer could lose the licence.

Action: PP

Feed back to the operations team regarding Members' observations attending the Committee's tour of assets that changing rooms had not been cleaned after use.

When a hirer was using a pitch, they had exclusive use of it, but hirers booked matches and so had a predetermined number of uses of the pitches to ensure other hirers were able to use them too.

Elements of equipment used by the hirers were supplied by the Council, but much of it was provided by the hirers. Council staff made routine visits to maintain the sites and report damage. Hirers were aware that they should report any damage they found on entering the site. Organised football matches were affiliated to the Football Association and it would come under its jurisdiction if an accident happened on the pitch, but the Council would be liable if it was a result of negligence on its part. The licensee's obligations with respect to indemnity and public liability insurance were set out in paragraphs 3.24 and 3.25 of the licence appended to the report.

A Member raised the point that, in order to access Garfits Lane playing field, people were crossing land maintained by the owners of three properties there and, in the event

of an accident on that part of the road it would not be the Council's responsibility, which began once the entrance was passed. The Chairman pointed out that this would be a matter for the individual property owners within the conditions of their properties.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the use of green spaces through the issuing of licences be noted.**
- 2. That the details of any new licences be reported to BTAC for information.**

58 WORK PROGRAMME - STANDING ITEM

With respect to the Committee's previous suggestion that the Environment and Performance Committee be requested to scrutinise the operation of parking charges, particularly in the Market Place, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Scrutiny Members had agreed to review all fees and charges when considering their work programmes at a workshop on 16th October.

The Chairman confirmed that he had presented BTAC's recommendation to Cabinet that a meeting of all relevant parties be held to consider a proposal to re-route the Into Town Bus Service. Cabinet considered and agreed to the recommendation, adding that it should be done in conjunction with discussions on associated improvements within the Transport Strategy.

A Member referred to the County Council's weed kill of public footpaths, which had been reduced from twice to once a year, and the impact of this in terms of appearance and litter, and suggested the Committee consider a report on the possibility of BTAC carrying out an annual weed kill.

Action: JC

Add the following reports to future agendas:

- 29th November – written reports from the Events and Open Spaces Working Groups.
- 3rd January – a feedback report from the Christmas in Boston community group along with participants in the Switch-On event.
- 28th February – a report on weed kill of open spaces.

The Meeting ended at 8.40 pm