

Present: Councillor Judith Skinner (Chairman), Councillor Tracey Abbott (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Peter Bedford, Anton Dani, Deborah Evans, Paul Goodale, Neill Hastie, Peter Watson and Judith Welbourn

In attendance:

Officers –
Chief Executive, Head of Environmental Operations, Head of Place and Space,
Transformation & Governance Manager and Democratic Services Officer

15 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were tabled for Councillors Sean Blackman and George Cornah.
No substitute members.

16 MINUTES

With the agreement of the committee, the Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 30 July 2019

17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were tabled.

18 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Mr Darron Abbott tabled the following question:

It appears from the agenda from this evenings meeting a vote was taken by the members of this Committee to approve the setting up of a Task and Finish Group into the night time economy of Boston is this correct?

The Chairman thanked Mr Abbott for the question and responded as follows:

As you will see from the minutes of the last meeting, published with the agenda papers for tonight's meeting, specifically minute 13 on page 6, the committee did resolve to establish a Task and Finish Group to examine the night time economy of the Public Space Protection Order area and the Borough as a whole.

The Chairman then asked Mr Abbott if he had a supplemental question which he tabled as follows:

At that same meeting on the 24th July did a discussion take place as to which Councillor would Chair the task and finish Group? If yes was that Councillor present? If they were did they accept the proposed appointment? At the BTAC meeting on Wednesday 21st August Councillor Hastie requested that the report from the Task and Finish group on the night time economy " be presented at the next meeting, as he was supposed to be the chair and had heard nothing" Will this report be presented at the BTAC meeting on the 2nd October 2019 and if not why not?

The Chairman thanked Mr Abbott for the supplemental question and stated:

In response to your supplementary question Mr Abbott, no the Chairmanship of a Task and Finish Group was not agreed at the meeting, any Chairmanship of a Task and Finish Review is agreed at the first meeting of the group in line with Scrutiny Best Practice. It is not for the parent scrutiny committee to agree any Chairmanship. I am further advised that when the subject matter arose at the BTAC meeting the Chairman of that committee clearly stated any such review was a Scrutiny matter and not for BTAC.

19 BOSTON ALTERNATIVE ENERGY FACILITY

The Chairman introduced Mr Gary Bower and Miss Bethan Griffiths from Boston Alternative Energy Facility and welcomed them.

Mr Bower presented a very comprehensive update supported by a detailed powerpoint presentation. The following minute highlights key points of information:

Three rounds of public consultation had taken place in September 2018, February 2019 and in June/July 2019. The proposed development would be a 102MWe Energy from Waste (EfW) advanced gasification facility. It would operate via an import/export wharf, providing waste reception and storage export of lightweight aggregates. The proposed development site is 25 ha of land, allocated in the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, as suitable for works on the banks of The Haven. Both delivery of the refuse derived fuel and the export of the lightweight aggregate is by ship.

The refuse derived fuel (residual household waste) would be plastic wrapped in 1.8cbm bales weighing 1.5 tonnes with 620 shipments per year. It would all be UK collected waste with nothing from overseas with off-loading at the site by mobile crane at one of the three berthing points.

Waste would be stored for no longer than 5 days before being shredded to allow non suitable items for the gasification process to be removed. Recyclable products such as glass and metal are captured and sent for recycling locally. The shredded feedstock is then transferred via a sealed conveyor to store in silos before gasification and conversion into approximately 80 MW of power being exported to the National Grid. Ash from the process is recycled into aggregates for the construction industry which would be exported via ship.

Members were advised that the build would be in line with the best technology available to operate efficiently and safely with strict European emission standards. Liaison with the Port of Boston was ongoing in respect of the turning of the ships which would be either at the knuckle point or within the dock itself.

Addressing the overall benefits Mr Bower confirmed that, the recovered energy from 1 million tonnes of RDF would generate power to more than 206,000 homes. It would also reduce the 3.5 million tonnes of waste currently exported and processed abroad.

With the UK benefitting from generating its own renewable energy, it would allow the UK to meet UK renewable energy targets. The initial construction phase would create approximately 300 jobs, and 80 permanent jobs once operational. It would bring new skills to the town with the developer engaging with the college in respect of apprenticeships. The facility would also allow local investment opportunities with potential exporting of Co2 which was a desirable commodity. It also had capacity within its tolerance level of 1.3 million tonnes, to take the 50,000 tonnes of residual waste for South Lincolnshire which was currently transported via road to the EFW at North Hykeham.

Highway impacts would be experienced due to the large volume of cement needed. Local batching was being considered which would significantly reduce the number of deliveries. The developer was committed to the mitigation measures stipulated within the Construction Traffic Management Plan. There would be off-site traffic noise impact assessments.

Addressing operational noise members were told that the air-cooled condenser located at the south-west of the site was the dominant noise source and the developer would work with the technology provider to alter the design to include attenuation measures to reduce the noise.

Any impact on air quality during construction was predicted to be negligible. The contributions of benzo(a)pyrene produced by the facility would be below the required environmental assessment levels but with background contributions, there was a predicted exceedance.

There was a predicted exceedance of the 24-hour Oxides of Nitrogen and Hydrogen Fluoride levels at Havenside Local Nature Reserve at the closest point to the facility and action would be taken to mitigate them.

Concluding Mr Bower explained that a Development Consent Order would be drafted, the Environmental Statement completed and then the application submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Thereafter if it was accepted, the examining phase would take place, ahead of the application being submitted to the Secretary of State.

Mr Bower responded to members questions as follows:

- The site would be the joint largest in the UK once constructed and the tallest stack would stand 73 metres tall. Boston Stump is 83m.
- Once the power was sold on from the site it was for the distributor to determine where it went for usage. The provider had no authority in the distribution of the power.
- The number of ships per annum visiting the site would be 620: 11 ships per week delivering the RDF and 2 exporting the aggregates.
- The facility would be sealed. Levels of all emissions would be continually monitored and the facility would be built with the technology to allow it to shut itself down, should it need to.
- The initial construction of the silos which were 4000 tonnes each would be a 24 hour a day operation.
- The need to use plastic to bind the bales was to ensure secure and strong wrapping and also restrain odour. Once the bales were opened, all the wrapping is then put back into the recycling process at the facility ensuring no residual plastic waste.
- There were 2 forms of piling available but the specifics were not known: one was via hammer driving and the second via a vibration method. Agreement on which form would be used had not been finalised.
- No discussions had been held with Lincolnshire County Council in respect of the possibility of the facility receiving the residual waste from the Slippery Gowt facility in Boston. The Development Consent Order was a legal document which when agreed would then allow any negotiations to take place in respect of the transfer site.

- Where possible local companies would be contracted to provide training for specialist skills for both the manufacturing phase and the operational activity of the facility.

The chairman invited questions from the floor which Mr Bower answered.

20 CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Chief Executive addressed the meeting and tabled apologies on behalf of the Chairman of the group Councillor Anne Dorrian.

Committee were advised that two meetings of the group had already taken place with the third being scheduled for 25th September 2019. There were 7 meetings scheduled to ensure final reporting back to Full Council in December 2019.

The working group comprised of five Council Members including the Portfolio Holder and eight members of staff, plus one co-opted member of the public. External representatives would be invited as required.

At its first meeting the group had scoped its terms of reference which it agreed needed to result in tangible and deliverable recommendations. It recognised the success of the Council's own Carbon Management Plan to date, in that it had reduced its own carbon footprint by 49% since 2008 and agreed its commitment to reducing carbon emissions further.

The group recognised the importance of being pragmatic in what it could achieve and hopes to suggest 2 areas of climate emissions declaration which currently frame the work:

1. What the Council could achieve itself in a practical and achievable way.
2. Championing with others including partners to look at carbon reduction opportunities and action across the Borough geography.

No Member questions were tabled and the Chairman thanked the Chief Executive for the update.

21 THE PILGRIMS 2020 AND ALLIED OPPORTUNITIES (UPDATE)

Presenting the report the Head of Space and Place confirmed the report was an update to the initial report tabled in January 2018 and then tabled at Cabinet in February 2018 requesting support for specific elements for funding to progress projects. Plymouth had secured £500k from Visit England in May 2016 with a similar amount being secured in 2018 from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Boston had benefitted directly from the funds resulting in it being included in travel itineraries for 2020; promoted at trade fairs and was also featured prominently on national and internationally available apps telling the Pilgrim story. Furthermore interest had increased in the Guildhall and the Boston Heritage Trail.

A bid submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund to build on the Explore and Discover project, which would introduce monoliths firstly at Pilgrim specific sites and then sites within the town, had been unsuccessful.

As such in line with the tight timescales a reduced scheme was proposed focussing on the interpretation of the Pilgrim story. Boston Borough Council had match funded the bid and also secured a further £10k from Lincolnshire County Council but that money had been dependant on securing the original bid. Lincolnshire County Council had then agreed a reduced fund of £5k and that money along with the £10k match fund from Boston Borough Council had been used to deliver the works.

Referencing the Structures on the Edge project at Havenside members were advised that it was hoped that the structure would be in place by July 2020 at Scotia Creek. Running alongside this project was that of the bouys. Five applications for siting them had been agreed at the Planning Committee in July 2019, The installations would be sited at Haven Bridge, on the High Street, at the Bus Station, alongside the footbridge and in Central Park.

The Council had been asked to join forces with the Poacher Line in April 2020, to provide specific information in respect of Boston and its American connections to be advertised at Kings Cross Station for a day. The facility was part of the Community in the City initiative which encouraged travel by train supporting rural routes to the City.

In conclusion the Head of Place noted that the list of activities was not exhaustive and that as 2020 approached it was likely that additional activity could be incorporated in the programme of events.

Member comment and questions followed including:

Noting the app. which provided the half-day tour, a member stated that the period of time given would only permit viewing within the actual town itself: any progression out towards the Pilgrims memorial site and further, once the Structure on the Edge was in situ at the wash, would be impossible on foot due to time restrictions. Further concern noted it would be very difficult to get coaches up onto the bank. The Head of Place and Space agreed but stressed that the majority of the trail was town centric and that tours and visits to the outer town sites could be arranged: members were advised that Fishtoft Parish Council were very active in both the promotion of and possible tourist visits to Scotia Creek.

Noting confusion on the cost of the illuminate festivals within appendix 1 for £110k and the monies made available by the Controlling Migration fund on page 16 of the report, a member asked what the funds on page 14 from ACE were for and if the funds noted were all the same. The Head of Space and Place confirmed that the funds on page 14 were from a separate funding stream.

Members voiced approval of the events scheduled and suggested / requested that a proper tourism offer be established which would be permanent in the town to build a reputation and make it a destination. Concern noted that after 20/20 nothing new would arise and the Head of Space and Place assured committee that projects for 2030 were already being scoped and there would be significant promotion of the town and all its history and future events going forward. Key to establishing the towns permanent heritage would be development of its strong maritime history. Alongside that would be elaboration of the American connection and the importance of Boston, its Grammar School *[and further information to yet be revealed]* in respect of the Pilgrims story and early settlers in America from Boston.

22 NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

The Head of Environmental Operations advised the committee he was presenting the report on behalf of the Head of Regulatory Services.

Members were reminded that at the committee's previous meeting held on the 30 July 2019, having considered a very detailed report in respect of crime and disorder, alongside the annual review of anti-social behaviour and the Public space Protection Order, they determined that they would like to carry out more in-depth scrutiny of such matters and agreed to convene a Task and Finish group.

Members were advised that given the size of the scrutiny task and the wide range of areas to consider, officer felt that an Inquiry Day would be the most efficient way to progress the task in first instance. At this session the committee members could receive information from Council officers and Lincolnshire Police who had already agreed to support the scrutiny process.

In receiving the information at the Inquiry Session, it would allow the committee to agree or not, if a Task and Finish Group was still necessary and to agree the scope and reporting arrangements.

If so, then a report on the Inquiry Session would be taken back to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on the 5th November 2019, at which point members could agree or not, to convene a Task and Finish Group. If agreed then the Chairman of the group would be elected at the first meeting.

Member comment included:

Overall members noted the reasoning for having the Inquiry Session recognising that it would allow them to determine if a Task and Finish Group should be convened.

One member was keen to speak with CCTV Operatives and Anti-Social Behaviour Teams from a number of other authorities along with our own, and to also call on Enforcement Officers.

At this point in the proceedings the Portfolio Holder addressed the meeting and urged strong caution that the member be aware of being too operational. As a point of clarification and to ensure all members were aware of the process, the Head of Environmental Operations confirmed that the Inquiry Day would be the first step. Should members wish to continue scrutiny via a Task and Finish Group, they had the right to do so.

It was moved by Councillor Paul Goodale and seconded by Councillor Anton Dani that committee agree the officer recommendation and resolve to undertake preliminary scrutiny by way of an Inquiry Session.

The motion was clearly carried.

RESOLVED: That an Inquiry Session be scheduled ahead of the next meeting of the committee on the 5th November 2019 and that a report on the Inquiry Session be tabled at that meeting.

23 REPLACEMENT DOMESTIC WHEELED BIN CHARGES

The Head of Environmental Operations addressed the committee confirming the reason for the report which was to respond to the resolution agreed by the committee at its last meeting on the 24th July 2019 that charges for replacement wheeled bins be added to this agenda.

For clarity members were advised that the Brown Bin charges were not in the scope of the report as the service is in opt-in discretionary service. The report covered Blue and Green bin replacement charges only.

Referencing the 2013/14 annual budget report, the Head of Environmental Operations drew members' attention to the new charge for replacement 240L bins as being £25.00 per bin. The budget report had been taken through the Corporate and Community Committee on the 17th January 2013; Audit and Governance Committee on the 28 January 2013, Cabinet on the 20th February and Full Council on the 4 March 2013 for formal approval. The same charge had been included in subsequent budgets for each year thereafter up to and including the current financial year.

Since the formal approval of replacement bin charges in 2013/14 budget, it became apparent that the charge had not been consistently applied. On the 14th January 2019 at an Inquiry Evening held in respect of the draft Waste and Recycling Operational Procedures document, at no time during the deliberations were concerns noted by any member in respect of the charges for the replacement wheeled bins.

Income from the sale of the replacement bins from 2013/14 to date had been £5,000, £4,150 of that amount had been collected since April 2019.

Member comment and questioning included:

A member stated there appeared to be a few discrepancies within the Waste and Recycling Operations procedures document with the one tabled within the report. The Head of Environmental Operations agreed that there had been a number of draft versions of the procedures but the one on the Council's website, which had been agreed following the Inquiry evening, was the correct one. Clearly set out under Procedure 14 it stated that when a bin was damaged in the back of the collection vehicle, a note would be made by the crew and the Council would arrange a replacement bin to be delivered free of charge.

A number of suggestions by members followed including:

- Developers on new builds taking responsibility for the cost of the initial bins. Members were advised this was already in place
- Charging all residents for their existing bins and making them the owner. They would then be automatically responsible for any bin replacement subject to it being damaged by the Council.
- Charging HMO's commercial rates and not residential rates for their refuse collections. Members noted that many HMO's had multiple bins to empty.

- Waiving all replacement charges and looking at the possibility of off-setting the replacement costs through the overall waste removal system.
- Holding a 'Bin Amnesty' to allow any unused / unwanted secondary bins to be collected freeing up reusable bins.

It was moved by Councillor Deborah Evans and seconded by Councillor Neil Hastie that all charges for replacements Green and Blue bins be withdrawn.
The motion was clearly carried.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Environment and Performance Committee recommend to Cabinet that it withdraw all replacement charges for the Green and Blue domestic wheeled bins.

24 WORK PROGRAMME

The Transformation and Governance Manager presented the Quarter 1 Performance report to committee to support their consideration of the future work programme. Addressing the planning applications determined the Transformation and Governance Manager noted the improvement in performance with previous red flags having become blue. Red flags on Environmental Services were being addressed through the current trial providing separate kerbside collections for paper and card. Incidents of commercial fly tipping had reduced. Members questioned fly tipping by HMO's whereby mattresses and furniture were just dumped outside the HMO and asked if HMO owners were charged for the removal of large scale furniture item and abandoned white goods.

Noting the decline in the markets a member questioned the previous Task and Finish Group review and questioned if the outcomes and recommendations had been monitored and reported back. **Committee agreed that a report on the outcomes of the markets review simply updating on each recommendation be tabled for a future meeting.**

At this point in the meeting a member questioned the Chairman as to why only one portfolio holder had taken the time to turn up at the meeting bearing in mind the number of reports on the agenda. The Chairman confirmed that all portfolio holders were invited to attend the meeting.

The Head of Environmental Operations duly noted apologies for Councillor Yvonne Stevens for having been unable to attend the meeting due to annual leave.

The Meeting Closed at 10.00 pm