

Present: Councillor Sue Ransome (Chairman), Councillor Ben Evans (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Alison Austin, Anton Dani, Viven Edge, Martin Griggs, Brian Rush, Nigel Welton and Stephen Woodliffe

Officers –

Head of Place and Space and Senior Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance: County Councillor Paula Cooper

## **50 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Committee's last meeting, held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the deletion of Councillor Stephen Raven's name from the list of attendees.

## **51 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Head of Place and Space updated Members with respect to actions agreed at the last meeting (Minute 49 refers).

1. Inspector Morrice would be reporting on the impact on the Police of leaving Central Park's gates open.
2. Inspector Morrice was in attendance.
3. The Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner had attended a Member Briefing in June and had taken questions from Members. The Acting Chief Constable had since confirmed that he would attend a future briefing and the Head of Regulatory Services was arranging this.

### **Action: PP**

Ask the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner to attend a future BTAC meeting, as agreed by the Committee at its last meeting.

## **52 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Paul Gleeson, Stephen Raven and Yvonne Stevens.

## **53 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Sue Ransome declared that she was Secretary of the Royal British Legion and Poppy Appeal Organiser.

## **54 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME**

Mr Darron Abbott addressed the Committee and reported various incidents of anti-social behaviour at Garfit's Lane open space, including drinking, substance abuse and an illegally parked trailer, and circulated photographs as evidence. Mr Abbott asserted that, despite there being CCTV in operation, neither the Police nor the Council took action to tackle these incidents and he had actually received threats.

Inspector Morrice then addressed the Committee and pointed out that Garfit's Lane was not within the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) area and drinking alcohol was not a criminal offence. Within the PSPO area, the Police could ask a person who was drinking alcohol to hand it over; a criminal offence would only be committed if the person failed to do so.

In response to a Member's concern about the powers of the Police being limited in this respect and in relation to parking, Inspector Morrice stressed that they did not have the legal power to do more and they should address any issues with respect to illegal parking to the authority with the power of enforcement, i.e. Lincolnshire County Council. The Police used their powers of enforcement where they could, but had to prioritise. Someone drinking a can of beer could not be treated as urgent. Substance abuse in a play area for small children was disturbing, but could not be treated as an emergency, which meant an immediate threat to life. Threats could be treated as an emergency and he would speak to Mr Abbott after the meeting on this matter.

A Member congratulated the Police on receiving a national award, which deserved publicity. Inspector Morrice explained that the award related to the work of the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP), which was predominantly aimed at tackling under-age drinking. All off-licenses had signed up to the Challenge 25 scheme, with free training and resources, and two series of test purchases had resulted in failure for just one premise, which had had its licence revoked by the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee. Further work on this was ongoing. In addition, they had carried out a lot of work educating young children in schools on the dangers of drinking involving AddAction, which one survey indicated had resulted in a reduction of weekly drinking among school children from 23% to 1.8%. It was hoped this would have a significant impact on the town as these children grew up.

A Member asked for an update on the Mini Police scheme. Inspector Morrice reported that the scheme, originally piloted in 2 schools, was now active in 119 in Lincolnshire, 9 of them in Boston, all primary schools. A 999 day had been held in August involving 70-80 children, raising approximately £2,000 for the Air Ambulance.

Various Mini Police projects were ongoing. Two hour sessions engaging schools were being held, with one hour of teaching and one hour in the community. One project involved people caught speeding who were given the option of paying a fine or being interviewed by one of the children; they found that the interview was not the easier option, being presented with challenging questions such as "how would you feel if you'd killed me?"

Scams were a significant issue currently and the children had carried out scams talks at Asda's and Greyfriars were wanting them to go there. They would also be at the War Memorial on Remembrance Day. They were increasing so much in number that a limit might have to be introduced.

Members commended the Mini Police scheme. One reiterated the value of the attendance of the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner at a future meeting in order to discuss issues raised by the Committee.

In response to other questions, Inspector Morrice explained that issues raised by members of the public predominantly concerned street drinking and long-term solutions.

Test purchases of cigarettes had not been carried out though the Police had searched a number of premises with Customs and Revenues.

With respect to the impact on the Police of leaving the Central Park gates open, Inspector Morrice reported that 100 incidents in the park had been reported in 2016; 69 had been reported in 2017; and 85 had been reported so far this year, around 10% of which had been after dark. These numbers did not give Inspector Morrice concerns; they were still below the number reported in 2016. The incidents had involved more minor offences, such as damage, nothing of major concern such as serious assault.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Morrice for his input.

## **55 BTAC SMALL GRANTS SCHEME**

The Head of Place and Space presented a report regarding an eligible application received in Round 2 of the Small Grants Scheme, which was deferred by the Committee at its last meeting in order for further information to be obtained.

In accordance with the Committee's Small Grant Scheme, the report presented the comments made by the Small Grants Working Group.

The additional information, relating to 'volunteer' and 'helper' expenses, was appended to the report. The Working Group was satisfied that the additional information provided by the applicant met the criteria of the BTAC grant for which they were applying.

In response to a question, the Head of Place and Space reiterated information given at the previous meeting that 63% of the children using the facility were from the BTAC area.

**RESOLVED That a Small Grant be awarded to the Boston Community Tennis Partnership to the value of £995.80 towards the cost of equipment and staffing expenses as follows:**

- **20 mini tennis rackets £279.80**
- **10 dozen Mini Tennis Red Balls £216.00**
- **Volunteer Expenses £150.00**
- **Helper Expenses £350.00**

## **56 BTAC 2018/19 FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE**

The Financial Update report was noted.

## **57 UPDATE ON WORK OF BTAC OPERATIVES**

The Head of Place and Space reported the work undertaken by the BTAC Operatives in August, illustrated by a 'before and after' presentation.

The work included:

- Painting in West End Car Park
- Graffiti Removal
- Cleaning Buoy Yard Car Park

- Painting Barriers
- Supporting Events
- Installing 32 New Litter Bins
- Cleaning Irby Street Car Park
- Installing New Bollards
- Street Vac Operations

The Head of Place and Space reported that the roll out of replacement bins involved a fairly significant amount of work. There had also been a request for the removal of whips on the trees on Haven Bank, which had been programmed, and the removal of self-planters. The street cleaning team would use the Scarab on the footpath there; this was also in the job programme. There was to be a report back to Members on additional bins and a request for a bin at the entrance to Station Path would be included in this.

In response to concern that the Operatives' work was mainly in the town centre, it was confirmed that a significant amount of work had been carried out in other areas. From the outset, two of the three Operatives were to work outside of the town centre; however, Members of those wards needed to submit work requests and they were urged to do so and report any 'grot spots' using the e-mail address provided to them, which would then be added to the Operatives' work programme.

A Member, concerned about the BTAC Operatives having to use basic machinery, suggested that money from BTAC's unallocated spend be allocated to the Operatives to use for equipment and consumables needed as a priority. The Head of Place and Space agreed that a budget for this going forward could be discussed with the Chief Finance Officer at BTAC's budget workshop for 2019/20 and for inclusion into the finance report to Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> November to cover this financial year. The Environment & Sustainability Officer and the Operatives were currently looking at what was needed and having a budget would enable them to buy items when they were needed. The Member proposed instead that £5,000 be allocated immediately as a working fund from unallocated expenditure in the current year for equipment with a report back on what it was spent on and this was seconded.

**RESOLVED: That £5,000 be allocated to cover equipment for the BTAC Operatives, including machinery, tools etc, from the Committee's unallocated spend with items of spend to be reported back to the Committee.**

## **58 BTAC SUB GROUP UPDATE REPORT ON EVENTS**

The Head of Place and Space presented a summary of the events held throughout the spring and summer seasons and upcoming events in the calendar for the remainder of the 2018/19 financial year.

The 2018/19 financial year had seen an increasing calendar of events against the previous year, with events now running regularly from March to December. Appendix A incorporated the full listing of events.

A total of 30 events had been delivered by the Events Team during 2018/19. The Events Team consisted of 1.5 Full Time Equivalents, including the additional Events Assistant post agreed by BTAC at its 30<sup>th</sup> August meeting.

The additional funding to support the development of existing and new events had resulted in the Events Team delivering 11 new events and the expansion of 3 events in this year's calendar for 2018, and, with the support of the Events Sub Group, the Team was working towards further new events in the future.

The BTAC Events Sub Group had successfully delivered events over the summer with an additional event being planned for December. The Lost and Found Vikings, Sausage and Beer Festival, and Teddy Bears Picnic had all been well received and a Sub Group Volunteer was currently working hard to see a return of a Santa Fun Run in Boston.

The Events programme had led to wider benefits to the wider Town Centre with businesses seeing an increase in their footfall whilst events were being held, and businesses were starting to support the development of the events programme through sponsorship and advertising.

The Events Team and the Sub Group were getting increasing levels of very positive feedback. With people now starting to come to visit Boston from further afield to see what we have on offer, it is anticipated that the demand for hotel accommodation and other retail/catering opportunities will start to rise as well.

The Events Team and Sub Group were continuing to develop and deliver events and make improvements for the 2019/20 programme. Some great constructive feedback has been received from the general public on improvements, changes they would make and things they would like to see.

The Events Team and Sub Group will continue to develop relationships with businesses to create further sponsorship opportunities to support the costs of running events where possible.

In response to questions, it was explained that officers themselves had not received any negative comments about the event, but all feedback, covering compliments and complaints to the Council, was reported to Cabinet in the Quarterly Monitoring Report.

*[Councillors Anton Dani and Brian Rush left the meeting at 7.30 pm]*

Members commended the partnership working between Members and members of the public and the range of events they had developed, and also the way that businesses had become engaged and had contributed.

Members discussed the merits of monitoring the cost and attendance figures for each event, purely in order to decide whether there should be increased advertising etc. It was acknowledged that the success of some events could not be attributed to their cost effectiveness or numbers, e.g. the Fairy Doors event for small children, and larger events could subsidise smaller ones. It was hoped that events would become cost neutral or that the money from events could be put towards more events. However, some events took time to develop, e.g. the outdoor cinema events, which were sold out this year, and the weather also made a difference.

Members felt that a significant outcome of the events was the way they raised morale and allowed people to take part in interesting things in the town without having to travel elsewhere. The Sub Group was congratulated, particularly the volunteers for the time and effort they had put in and the fantastic ideas they had put together.

## **59 WORK PROGRAMME - STANDING ITEM**

Members noted the work programme.

In response to a question, it was explained that Policing Issues was no longer a standing agenda item in order to comply with BTAC's constitution. Members of the public were only invited to address the Committee during Public Speaking Time and questions had to be submitted two clear days in advance of the meeting. Inspector Morrice had volunteered to attend meetings to update Members on policing matters and answer questions, and was happy to continue to attend when he could reasonably do so.

The Chairman reminded Members that the Committee's Budget Workshop would take place immediately prior to the next meeting at 5.30 pm on 28<sup>th</sup> November and also reported that the Draft BTAC Revenue Budget Report had been brought forward to the agenda for 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

The Meeting ended at 7.50 pm