

Business Plan Steering Group Meeting Notes

Town Hall 3rd May 2024

Attendees:

Cllr S Bennett

Cllr M Deacon

Cllr M James

Cllr D Rowe

Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)

Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. Review of Business Plan 2024-28 Survey

The Business Plan Steering Group Members reviewed the responses to the Business Plan 2024-28 survey consultation which ran from 22nd March – 26th April 2024.

The Survey had been promoted via the Town Council's magazine, website and social media channels. In addition, direct invitations to complete the survey were emailed to over 100 community groups and stakeholders.

There had been 23 responses received during the consultation period.

The results were discussed as follows:

Q1 Do you support the Town Council's vision for Felixstowe as "a thriving and dynamic community that welcomes all people to live, work and visit in a clean and safe environment"?

22 of 23 respondents agreed.

Q2 Do you agree with the following four key priorities for the Town Council in the Business Plan? 1. Take Pride in Public Spaces & Services 2. Enable our Communities 3. Celebrate Felixstowe 4. Promote Environmental Sustainability

17 agreed and 6 disagreed. There were 6 comments which were all discussed, feedback on some of these are as follows:

Snowhill steps are not owned by Felixstowe Town Council, but can be mentioned under the public realm meetings. This can be put out as a response from this survey.

Regarding safety – Felixstowe Town Council does have representation on Nightsafe and the Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings, which focus on matters relating to local crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Members considered the merit in setting up a meeting with the Police, where the Police come to the Town Hall for a meeting regularly say every quarter to update the Town Council on local crime. We can then understand what is happening in the town

and also pass on issues. It would be useful in reporting back to Council or Civic & Community Committee. It would be good to re-introduce the attendance of new local Inspectors at Council meetings.

There was a comment about no 3 'Celebrate Felixstowe' being a bit weak, and it had been suggested to use "Celebrate the diversity of our people, our economy and our built and natural environment". Members considered this but agreed that the business plan doesn't preclude those things.

Q3 Business Plan Priority 1: Take Pride in Public Spaces. Do you agree that objectives set out under this priority appropriately outline the ways in which the Town Council can support our public spaces?

15 agreed and 8 did not, there were 9 comments.

One comment was that there is too much "consider" and not enough "Do!"

Members looked at page 6 of the Business Plan and there are 2 mentions of considers:

7. *Consider opportunities for community gardens, providing local produce* – this can be changed as we are now working with Edible Felixstowe. It was agreed to change this to 'Deliver opportunities ...'

8. *Consider areas for provision of benches* – this is about considering the appropriateness as well as assessing new areas for benches so should instead say 'Review the provision of benches.'

A comment saying 'Although some of the objectives would benefit from clearer KPIs or measurements so that it's easy for people to see if they have been achieved or not.' was considered. There is an Action Plan that follows the Business Plan. The Annual Report produced each year contains information on what we have delivered and achieved. Members discussed whether there was a better way of highlighting the annual achievements and whether the Annual Town Meeting was a good place to deliver this.

Members discussed the Annual report and whether it would be a good idea to have an executive summary – a snapshot is included in the Summer Magazine. A summary of the highlights can be created, and then if people want further information they can go into the document further.

A comment 'Weed free verges too are important. Loos open and working Campervans on prom issue as could become very messy area Bins emptied on time to avoid seagull rampage Not just housing anywhere but build with pride and sensitive to location' was also discussed. These are things that we are interfacing with.

‘Many remaining unsafe for our youngest who live here especially when they are the ones using them. More needs to be done with their upkeep and also the welcoming environment they create’ It is assumed that Parks is what this comment is referring to these are being addressed through improvement projects in the parks paid for by CIL funding and partnership working with East Suffolk Council who are responsible for most of the parks. Felixstowe Town Council will prioritise this in our parks.

Q4 Business Plan Priority 2: Enable Our Communities. Do you agree that the objectives set out under this priority appropriately outline the ways in which the Town Council can support the community of Felixstowe?

18 responded yes and 5 responded no. There were 6 comments.

The comments were reviewed and were not in conflict with what had been written.

Q5 Business Plan Priority 3: Celebrate Felixstowe. Do you agree that the objectives set out under this priority appropriately outline how the Town Council can promote a thriving Felixstowe, town centre, seafront, heritage and culture?

16 responded yes, 7 responded no. There were 9 comments.

All comments were considered. The car parking comments come under the current parking review which Felixstowe Town Council are involved in the consultations with East Suffolk Council.

One comment here was that ‘there is not much in there about the heritage’. This is under Celebrate Felixstowe. 8. on page 8 of the Business Plan. Promote and protect Felixstowe’s heritage and participate in Heritage Open Days to enable the community to see inside the Town Hall.

Members agreed that this should be changed to say ‘Do more to promote and protect Felixstowe’s heritage and participate in Heritage etc’

Q6 Business Plan Priority 4: Promote Environmental Sustainability. Do you agree that the objectives set out under this priority appropriately address the Town Council's commitment to climate change action and environmental improvement?

18 responded yes, none responded no. There were 5 comments.

A comment said ‘Point 9 should be high on the agenda. Do not allow any new homes planning permission UNLESS they have all possible energy efficiency incorporated’

The numbers are not in any priority order. So worth mentioning that in feedback. If bullet points were used instead it would be hard to refer to particular items on the list.

‘Once again the prom lights merrily twinkle away all through the night until dawn. For the last 6 years I have reported these and absolutely nothing has been done. It’s an

utter waste of electricity and most certainly goes against the ethos of your climate change policy.'

The lights are LED, and there are users of the Prom who use it very early in the morning, when it is dark. Having some form of lighting there is a safety benefit.

Q7 Clarity Overall, do you think that the draft Business Plan clearly communicates the Town Council's objectives in a well-laid out and easy to understand way?

13 responded yes, there were no 'no' answers. There were 10 comments.

Members discussed the ways that we communicate, we have several Facebook pages. They discussed engagement with social media as a council and as individual councillors. The advice on social media is to point to the Council website.

'Although some easy read options would help with accessibility issues for some people, along with some visual representations' is a fair comment. Previously an easy read version has been done. This is a challenge– how can we do more to make it more engaging and accessible? We can think about this and how we can present this to Council.

The following comment was considered 'There is a lot of buzz words with very little content and it is entirely missing the "how". How are these things going to be done.' This is a valid comment. Some of the responses are around delivery and there is an Action Plan which will show how these objectives are going to be acted upon.

2. Actions Agreed

Page 6

7. Change the word Consider to 'Deliver opportunities for community gardens, providing local produce'

8. Correct the word Consider to 'Review the provision of benches.'

Annual report

Create a summary of highlights, possibly in an Executive Summary, although a snapshot is included in the Summer Magazine, it would be good to have the highlights simplified and then if people want further information they can go into the document further.

Page 8

8. Add 'Do more to promote and protect Felixstowe's heritage and participate in Heritage etc'

It is worth mentioning in the feedback, that the numbers on each page of the business plan are not in any priority order. If bullet points were used instead, it would be harder to reference items on the list.

How can the Business Plan be made to be more engaging and accessible? When presenting to Council, an easy read option should be considered and the way it is promoted and made available.

Success and achievement of the objectives will be measured by the Action Plan which will be regularly reviewed by Council's Finance and Governance Committee.

Investigate setting up a regular meeting (quarterly) with the Police and increase their presence at meetings, especially when a new inspector is appointed.

Next Steps:

A report to Council to say that the Steering group have met and considered the responses, from these responses we have updated the Business Plan. A news post would be published on the Town Council website thanking those who responded and giving them some idea as to what was changed following the survey comments.

3. Close

Cllr Bennett thanked the Steering Group for its work in developing and progressing the Council's Business Plan and it was agreed that, subject to the Business Plan being approved at Annual Council it would be publicised on the website, via social media and in the Magazine.