

**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 19 MARCH 2024**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors P A Skinner (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A M Austin, Mrs J Brockway, M R Clarke, Mrs N F Clarke, A Dani, A M Key, E J Sneath and N Sear.

Councillors: L A Cawrey (Executive Councillor Fire and Rescue and Cultural Services), D McNally (Executive Councillor Waste and Trading Standards) and S P Roe (Executive Support Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration) attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Steven Batchelor (Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager), Mark Baxter (Chief Fire Officer), Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Louise Egan (Library and Heritage Client Lead), Nicole Hilton (Assistant Director - Communities), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Will Mason (Head of Culture), Martyn Parker (Assistant Director Public Protection), Lee Sirdifield (Assistant Director – Corporate), Ryan Stacey (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Jade Thursby (Domestic Abuse Business Manager), Zoe Walters (Community Strategy Co-Ordinator), Dan Charlesworth (Commercial and Procurement Manager) and Angela Nauth (Serious Violence Coordinator, Safer Lincolnshire Partnership) attended the meeting remotely via Teams.

64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W H Gray and K E Lee.

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 that Councillor N Sear had been appointed as the replacement member for Councillor W H Gray, for this meeting only.

Apologies for absence had also been received from Councillor Mrs Sue Woolley, (Executive Councillor for NHS Liaison, Integrated Care System, Registration and Coroners) and Martin Samuels, (Executive Director – Adult Care and Community Wellbeing).

65 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared at this point in the proceedings.

66 MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 January 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

67 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

No announcements were received from the Chairman, Executive Councillors or Chief Officers.

68 DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2021-2024 PROGRESS UPDATE

SITTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to a report from the Domestic Abuse Business Manager, which provided the Committee with an update on progress made in the last two years of the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024, the duties introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and the key areas of focus for the Domestic Abuse Partnership in the next 12 to 18 months.

The Committee noted that it was the intention to develop and publish a new strategy in January 2025 to reflect the priorities for the Domestic Abuse agenda in Lincolnshire for 2025-2028. It was noted further that this strategy would be a collaborative approach with all partners being engaged in the process and that an engagement plan would be developed to ensure that key stakeholders were driving this agenda forward.

During discussion of this item, some of the following comments were noted:

- Confirmation was provided that information was shared in a sensitive way through the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership. It was noted the information normally would be shared with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Group and then information would be shared at an operational level where it was needed. The Committee noted that the partnership also looked at police and health data. There was however recognition that access to data could be improved;
- That the strategy needed to refer to male genital mutilation. Officers agreed to add this to the policy and for it to be included in the strategy when it was republished in 2025;
- The Committee was advised that the recommission of safe accommodation would be looked at with partners, as part of the needs assessment. It was noted that six new 'Move on' units had been introduced in the last two years;
- It was reported that on occasions for safety reasons, families were moved out of county. It was however noted that such a move would be dependent on the wants of the person/family;

- Some concern was expressed that domestic violence appeared to be increasing. It was however highlighted that through the work being carried out by the partnership, there had been an increased awareness of the different types of domestic abuse. It was noted that the increase in the number of incidents did not present a positive picture, but it was felt that the increase was due to better reporting and that by knowing this more was able to be done to support individuals;
- That female genital mutilation (FGM) was included within the report as it was part of the national definition of domestic abuse. It was noted that in Lincolnshire FGM and the processes were monitored through the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. Reassurance was provided that processes were in place regarding the reporting of FGM. Officers agreed to work with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership regarding the reporting of this matter to the Committee going forward;
- The Committee was advised that there was appropriate safe accommodation in Lincoln, which was undergoing some refurbishments at present. It was noted that the introduction of two 'Move on' units for Lincoln were in the process of being finalised. It was noted further that other developments for Lincoln were being sought not just for domestic abuse victims, but also for victims with multiple and more complex needs;
- It was reported that in Lincolnshire there was 'Operation Encompass' for when police attended a domestic abuse incident, and they were aware of children being in the household. They would report the incident to the schools to let them know about the incident, so that the school was then informed of what the child/or children may have experienced, seen or heard. This then ensured that the child/children were then supported and received the care they required, which might include the involvement of the safeguarding officer in school. The Committee was advised that there was also Stay Safe Officers who visited schools to do the healthy relationships education, who received a number of disclosures; and there was also the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Specialist Service (LDASS) who also worked with children and young people when their non-abusive parent was engaged in the service;
- The Committee was advised that there was a process within the law when the police could take prosecution without the support of the victim, when there was supporting evidence to do so;
- The Committee was advised that a significant community engagement element had been introduced within the LDASS contract, whose purpose was to engage with communities in Lincolnshire;
- There was recognition that there was more to be done as to how success was measured, and that this would be a key focus of the partnership for the next 12 to 18 months. It was hoped that success information would include some true-life stories, along with the number of people supported;
- The success of safe words and safe number initiatives for those in danger or experiencing domestic abuse;
- Reassurance was provided that any of the priorities that were not completed would roll over in to the next strategy;

- That due to the unsuccessful funding bid, the project group had revisited the proposal for Lincolnshire's perpetrator response and were refining some of the details with a view to resolving the matter in 2024/25. It was noted that baseline budgets were being looked at with a view of making permanent funding available with regard to perpetrator response; and
- Confirmation was given that the Committee would be consulted regarding the proposed new strategy.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended thanks to the presenter.

RESOLVED

That the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 and the Council's role in driving the Domestic Abuse Strategy forward be reviewed, and that assurance be given to the progress made in the last two years through the delivery of the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

69 INTRODUCTION OF THE SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY IN LINCOLNSHIRE

The Committee considered a report which provided an introduction to the application of the Serious Violence Duty (2022) in Lincolnshire.

The Chairman invited the Business Manager, Safer Lincolnshire Partnership to present the item to the Committee. The Serious Violence Coordinator, Safer Lincolnshire Partnership was also in attendance for this item via Teams.

The Committee was advised of a broad range of activities that were taking place across the county to address the issues of serious violence. It was noted that learning from the comprehensive needs assessment had enabled the partnership to target interventions for maximum impact, and that regular monitoring of these interventions would enable the partnership to report on the outcomes achieved.

During consideration of this item, the Committee made some of the following comments:

- Reassurance was provided that work had been ongoing delivering the projects highlighted in the report for the last two years, despite the strategy only being published in January 2024;
- It was noted that CCTV would always be a deterrent in tackling crime. The Committee noted a project was being looked at involving the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and District Councils to combine CCTV equipment to utilise technology better as a preventative measure;
- The challenge of removing/changing a perception of a particular town/area in Lincolnshire, when evidence suggested otherwise. The Committee noted that the challenge was raising confidence levels through media engagement campaigns with input from statutory organisations;

- The Committee noted that having a uniform presence in hotspot areas appeared to drive down activity. It was noted further that this did not need to be a police presence. It was reported that Summertime policing of St John Ambulance Safe Haven pilot project situated in Skegness provided several services, including preventative engagement, medical intervention, or a safe place for those who are vulnerable. It was noted that further information would be available regarding this pilot in due course; and
- The Committee was provided with a brief introduction to the Happening Project, an initiative hosted at the Sleaford Police Station. It was noted that the aim of this project was to prevent and divert young people (aged 10-19) away from carrying a knife, using a multi-agency approach.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended his thanks to the presenters.

RESOLVED

That the Introduction of the Serious Violence Duty in Lincolnshire report presented be endorsed and that support be committed by the Committee by raising awareness of the work of the SLP Serious Violence Core Priority Group as it establishes its priorities in Lincolnshire to positively impact on our communities, and that a follow-up report be requested in 12 months' time.

70 LINCOLNSHIRE ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

SITTING AS THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a report from the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) Senior Manager, which provided an update on fatal, and killed and serious injury casualties figures in Lincolnshire, and data on trends, comparisons, and areas of priority.

The Committee noted that there continued to be a steady decrease in the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads (426) in 2023, which was the lowest figures seen since 2015. It was however highlighted that there were 48 people who had lost their lives in 2023, which demonstrated that there was still more work to do.

Reference was made to the work being done by the LRSP which included current activity and services, the delivery of education, training and publicity to schools and colleges; and the planning for the 2025 Road Safety Strategy.

During consideration of this item, the Committee made the following comments:

- That more action needed to be taken relating to drug testing in local businesses to help prevent accidents. The Committee was advised that Lincolnshire Police was a significant partner within the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership and that sharing information, outlining key issues, trends, problems, or particular issues that had occurred in recent fatalities was something that happened on a day-to-day basis,

which ensured that tasking was effective going forward, particularly within the policing environment. It was highlighted that the issue of ditches and water was clearly a significant problem in Lincolnshire. It was highlighted that the team worked with big corporations and businesses to deliver education and training within their facilities to try and address any specific issues and problems;

- It was reported that drug driving was an increasing problem and was now referred to in education, training and publicity material;
- The experience of parish councils gaining assistance concerning speed reduction. Clarification was provided that for action to be taken regarding speed reduction there needed to be some collisions within the area concerned alongside evidence of speeding before the installation/use of speed cameras would be considered. It was highlighted that there did not need to be a fatality for speed reduction to be installed/used. It was noted that there were plenty of locations where there were speeding problems and collisions and that these were prioritised. The Committee noted that speed cameras were not the only tool for reducing speed, reference was made to where there was evidence of speeding, police enforcement could be applied; as well the implementation of the community speedwatch scheme;
- The Committee noted that the mobile camera units currently operated a shift pattern between 7.00am to 9.00pm, and that operation would be a range of times within that shift. It was highlighted that there was not a limit on the number of sites based on the current criteria. It was noted that over time steps would be taken to look into increasing the amount of people doing the role, so that more sites could be covered;
- Confirmation was provided that the mobile units would not pick up for example a cyclist misbehaving, as the speed camera operators only recorded the vehicles going through, using the registration plate to get the driver's details to take subsequent action;
- Some members extended their support for the improved report and the display of data contained within;
- One member advised of her personal experience of speed checks with the local highways officer;
- A request was made for more promotion of road safety, to include hotspot areas, causes of accidents, and the number of accidents that had occurred. It was noted that East Lindsey was seen as a high priority area, and that the higher number of collisions was caused by a combination of issues, the nature of the roads, the type of roads, the types of vehicles using the roads, and vehicle users;
- A further request was made for the next report to contain information relating to the financial costs that were attached for example to a fatality. The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager agreed to include financial costs to demonstrate the scale of the financial impact of serious and fatal collisions;
- The challenges facing the older driver in the county. The Committee noted that a fitness to drive course had been introduced as a diversionary factor. The example given was if somebody was involved in a collision or road traffic offence was identified through Operation Snap, Lincolnshire Police could now offer a fitness to drive course, where the individual's driving, and fitness and health would be assessed to ensure that they were safe enough to drive. It was noted that further training

could also be given to help them improve their driving. It was highlighted that the partnership worked with the NHS, particularly GP surgeries to make sure information was made available in those venues not only to people within the age category, but so that family members were aware of the types of dangers facing people in the older age range and the type of help that was available if they needed it;

- The Committee noted that cyclist restrictions in Boston were not being enforced, and as a result this was causing danger to pedestrians. A suggestion was made for an awareness day regarding the issues of cyclists using pathways. The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager was disappointed to hear that the danger of pedal cycles in pedestrian areas was still an issue, and agreed to have further conversations in this regard; and explore the idea of an awareness day getting the police and the road safety partnership involved in that area;
- The number of accidents caused by drivers in Lincolnshire not holding a British driving license. The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager agreed to look into the request and share the information with members of the Committee;
- It was reported that the Partnership worked closely with schools and if there was not the time in the curriculum to be able to get into the school, the partnership was happy to provide resources or recorded lessons from them to use. It was noted that the range of services detailed in paragraph 7.1 of the report were provided by road safety officers; and
- Despite the overall decrease in KSI casualties, 2023 had seen a rise in pedestrian, pedal cycle, and child KSI casualties between the times of 3.00pm and 5.00pm. The Committee was advised that the figures varied from year to year, but there was no obvious reason why there was more at this time of the day. It was however highlighted that the peaks were always in the day, and it was thought that it could be related to the volume of traffic in the day compared to the night, and it could be that it was the end of the day for a lot of people who were then in a bit more of a hurry.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended his thanks to the presenter.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Road Safety Annual report be reviewed, and that the Committee has been assured on the work being undertaken by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership to reduce the number of people killed and injured on county roads.

71 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE SUCCESS FRAMEWORK 2023-2024 - QUARTER 3

Consideration was given to a report from the Assistant Director - Public Protection, the Chief Fire Officer, the Assistant Director – Communities, the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, Senior Manager and the Assistant Director – Corporate, which provided the Committee with a summary of the service level performance against the success framework 2023-2024 for Quarter 3.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer and the Head of Culture were also in attendance for this item.

During discussion, the Committee raised the following comments:

Community Safety

- The Committee was advised that in relation to PI 176 'Time to inquest taking place' a lot of mapping work had taken place and that as of February 2024, the figure was at 26 weeks to inquest and that for the next report this figure would be reduced further;
- It was reported that the target of registering a death was still not being met. It was highlighted that the difficulty for measuring the target was whether it was measured from the point of death, or at the point the coroner's service received notification of the death. The Committee was advised that this would be changing with the introduction of the medical examiner; and that this would be reflected in next year's report to scrutiny;
- That under the background section of the report for the measures not meeting their target, a request was made for an explanation as to whether these had improved, or had moved towards achieving their target; and
- That the number of call blockers (74) in the county seemed a disappointingly small number, compared to the number of people in the county. There was recognition that there was more to be done in raising awareness regarding call blockers as they were very effective in terms of preventing crime.

Trading Standards

- Whether repeat offenders received higher fines. The Committee was advised that the amount of the fines was determined by the court. It was however highlighted that the three-month closure of shops was having a significant impact on organised crime.

Fire Safety

- The Committee was advised that the service had experienced recruitment difficulties in both the protection and prevention areas of fire safety. However, following a recruitment campaign all the vacancies within the prevention and protection teams had now been filled which would help support an increase in the number of Home Fire Safety Visits being carried out. Confirmation was provided that all new staff received an extended training period that was in excess of two years;
- It was reported that in relation to the building control applications only 23 occasions in the last 12 months had missed the 15 working days response, and that these were predominantly in Quarter 1 of the year when there had been a capacity issue. It was highlighted that protection staff would get involved in this area of regulatory work in due course; and
- The Committee was advised that the inspector's roles had been filled and that it was hoped that by the first quarter of the following year the petroleum licensing inspections would be caught up.

Libraries and Heritage

- That the decommissioning of our Lincs to the Past website was continuing to impact the level of interactions, and that whilst the new Lincolnshire Archives Online Catalogue replaced this service, work was continuing to increase engagement.

Volunteering

- The Committee was advised that Quarter 3 had shown a significant increase in micro volunteering activity, for example knitting/crocheting poppies for the Remembrance Day Services and volunteering at the local events. The Committee also noted that the new volunteering platform launched on 2 January 2024 had seen over 100 volunteer host organisations registered within the first two weeks;
- That the Funding Ready Training had supported 33 organisations. And that for Quarter 3, groups had been supported to secure £249,155 external funding.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended his thanks to the presenters.

RESOLVED

That the report be received and that the Committee is satisfied with the Public Protection and Communities Service Level Performance for Quarter 3 2023-24.

72 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to report from the Senior Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Committee to review its work programme and to highlight any additional scrutiny activity which could be included for consideration.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer briefed the Committee on the items for consideration at the 14 May 2024 meeting.

During discussion, the Committee was advised that due to the re-visit not happening until week commencing 29 July 2024, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Inspection of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue report would need to be moved to the 24 September 2024 meeting.

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be approved subject to the amendment mentioned above.

73 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that if they were present there could be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

74 THE RE-COMMISSIONING OF THE LIBRARIES SERVICE

Consideration was given to an exempt report concerning the re-commissioning of the Libraries Service, prior to a decision being made by the Executive at its meeting on 3 April 2024.

The Chairman invited Louise Egan, Library and Heritage Client Lead to present the exempt report. Dan Charlesworth, Commercial and Procurement Manager and Will Mason, Head of Culture were also in attendance for this item.

RESOLVED

That unanimous support be given by the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee to the recommendations as detailed within the exempt report, and that the comments raised by the Committee be forwarded on to members of the Executive, prior to a decision being taken on 3 April 2024.

The meeting closed at 12.45 pm