



**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 NOVEMBER 2016**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C J T H BREWIS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors L Wootten (Vice-Chairman), K J Clarke, D C Morgan, A G Hagues, Mrs N J Smith, R Wootten, A M Austin and M A Whittington.

Officers in attendance:-

Sara Barry (Safer Communities Manager), Steven Batchelor (Senior Manager), Nick Borrill (Chief Fire Officer), Louise Egan (Programme Officer), Nicole Hilton (Community and Resilience Commissioning Manager), Mark Keal (Business and Public Protection Manager), Karen Shooter (County Domestic Abuse Manager), Kirsty Toyne (Senior Trading Standards Officer), Catherine Wilman (Democratic Services Officer) and Daryl Pearce (County Manager Public Protection).

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT COUNCILLORS

Apologies were received from Councillors C R Oxby, R J Phillips, Mrs A J Reynolds, S L W Palmer.

The Chief Executive reported that having received a notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillors A M Austin and M A Whittington as replacement members of the Committee in place of Councillors R J Phillips and S L W Palmer for this meeting only.

15 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor C J T H Brewis declared a personal interest in item 9 – Update on Greenwich Leisure Limited – Library Contract (minute 22) as he was a volunteer at Sutton Bridge Library.

16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to four minor amendments.

**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 NOVEMBER 2016****17 UPDATE FROM EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICERS**

Councillor C N Worth, Executive Councillor for Culture and Emergency Services reported that he and Councillor Pepper (Executive Support Councillor for Culture and Emergency Services) had attended a very informative multi-agency fire and rescue exercise on 1 November 2016 at Spalding Fire Station.

18 FIRE AND RESCUE - STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

The Committee considered a report which set out the requirement for fire and rescue authorities to provide an annual Statement of Assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. The Statement would be used as a source of information on which to base the Secretary of State's biennial report under section 25 of the fire and Rescue Service Act 2004.

Following questions from Councillors, the information below was confirmed:

- The Fire and Rescue Service was operating using one year budgets. To date, the Service had made some significant savings which would make implementing further cuts difficult and would put people's lives at risk. If another round of cuts to Council services was to be made, the likelihood of them being directed at fire and rescue was slim;
- A key objective of the Fire Service was to reduce the number of fires, however there had been an increase in domestic fires in 2015/16 which was against the trend of previous years. This would be monitored closely;
- It was noted that the Council had not yet received the final external audit opinion. Once this had been received the Statement of Assurance would be updated accordingly.

RESOLVED

That the contents of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Authority's Statement of Assurance 2015-16 be noted.

19 ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS IN LINCOLNSHIRE - UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with an update on fatal, killed and serious injury (KSI) casualty figures for Lincolnshire; data on trends, comparisons and areas of priority. The Manager of the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) presented the information and statistics in the report.

Due to its rurality, agriculture, tourists, road network and mix of vehicles, Lincolnshire had, in the past, a higher than average number of road traffic collisions. However since the creation of the Lincolnshire Safety Road Partnership, these numbers had been gradually reducing.

**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 NOVEMBER 2016**

The Committee discussed the theatre in education production Too Fast Too Soon which was reported to have been very emotive and effective at teaching secondary school age children about the risks of dangerous driving.

The Officer was asked if the LRSP was collating collision data in relation to the switch off of street lights in the county. It was confirmed there had not been a request to undertake a blanket assessment across the whole county however data on roads where there was concern was being retained.

When a suggestion from the Committee was made regarding educating road users on making better decisions when driving, the Officer replied that it would be hard to fund and its success rate would be hard to measure. The threat of enforcement was a more significant motivator to drive carefully.

New 'average speed' cameras had been installed on the A1 at Stoke Rochford and were detecting around 190 speeding offences a week. It was confirmed that the LRSP and the Police bore the costs of processing the fines however the fines themselves were received by HM Treasury. LRSP received a referral fee to cover the cost of processing the offence. If the offender was required to complete a speed awareness course, this would take place within the county where they resided.

The number of older people involved in collisions was mainly due to the high number of retirees in Lincolnshire, the distance needed to travel within the county and the rural nature of the roads.

Members thanked the LRSP Manager for his very comprehensive report.

RESOLVED

That the report and comments made be noted.

20 DOMESTIC ABUSE PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report which provided an update of the Domestic Abuse work undertaken by the Safer Communities Service – County Domestic Abuse Team.

The Team were hoping to secure the White Ribbon Town Award for the Council which was a campaign against violence against women and it was highlighted by Councillors that the campaign should not detract from reducing violence against men and other victims of domestic abuse. Following on from this point, Officers explained there had been a Councillor Development session on domestic abuse in the past, however it had been poorly attended.

The County Domestic Abuse Manager informed the Committee she would be collating information packs for Councillors to disseminate information within their areas. She was hoping to have these complete in time for Christmas when there was often a spike in reported domestic abuse cases.

**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 NOVEMBER 2016**

It was questioned whether data analysis could be done from domestic abuse related A&E admissions, Officers confirmed that a victim was more likely to present to their GP with depression or anxiety than visit A&E.

Members raised issues regarding domestic abuse within ethnic communities. Officers explained that the Police were doing a lot of work with the Eastern European community in raising awareness of domestic abuse and encouraging victims to report it. Abuse within the Muslim community mostly went unreported as help would often be sought from elders. An event to raise awareness of domestic abuse, aimed at ethnic communities was due to be held in Boston.

Officers commented further that issues and barriers related to domestic abuse within ethnic communities had been incorporated into the new domestic abuse policy, agreed at Corporate Management Board earlier in 2016.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the report and comments made be noted.
- (2) That a Member of the Committee be nominated to sit on the Council's Internal Domestic Abuse Group.

21 TRADING STANDARDS UPDATE - RESPONDING TO VULNERABLE VICTIMS AND TACKLING THE BLACK ECONOMY

The Committee received two presentations from Trading Standards Officers which provided updates on how Trading Standards was:

- Working in partnership with Lincolnshire Police, the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board and others to tackle the problem of Mass Marketing Fraud which was targeted at residents through scam mail and cyber-crime;
- Working in partnership with Lincolnshire Police, HMRC and the Anti-Counterfeiting Group to tackle illicit sales harming the collective interests of consumer and legitimate businesses in Lincolnshire.

The first presentation, Scam Mail Mass Marketing & Cybercrime covered the following points:

- The national perspective on fraud was that it had cost the UK £52 billion in total;
- Victims often responded to scams via mail which encouraged more through the post. The most common scams were fictitious prize draws, fake lotteries, clairvoyance or dating scams, false investment opportunities and bogus pension or equity schemes. Responding to these scams could often become an addiction;
- Most scam victims were either elderly, lived alone, were isolated, had no family support or had either physical or mental health issues. The impact of the scams often exacerbated these issues;

**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 NOVEMBER 2016**

- Visits to victims by Trading Standards was the most effective way of bringing their attention to the issue of their plight. PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) were best placed in the community to do this work and training for PCSOs was being rolled out across the county;
- Once identified, Trading Standards kept the names (only) of scam victims which they entitled a "Suckers List". It was queried whether this was an insensitive name, however Officers confirmed that it was felt to be the most appropriate term.

Following questions from the Committee, it was confirmed that:

- Families could become fractured with the effect from scams, and Trading Standards tried to work with a victim's network to find a resolution. Where a victim had no family/friend network, the Police had a group of befriending volunteers called Revive which worked with crime victims;
- People with mental health issues were often offered help through local safeguarding agencies;
- Any issues regarding fraud and scams could be reported to Action Fraud which was the UK's national fraud and cyber crime reporting centre, or the Citizen's Advice Bureau. Reporting fraud to the Police was an option, but this route would not provide as swift a resolution.

The second presentation, Tackling the Black Economy covered the following points:

- The black economy was based on deliberate non-compliance that extended beyond the limits of Trading Standards law. Offending could range from organised crime associated with criminals to businesses who repeatedly ignored advice and knowingly persisted in trading unfairly;
- The main illicit products sold on the black market were unsafe goods, counterfeit goods and illicit tobacco and alcohol;
- Tackling the issue required a partnership approach involving the Police, immigration, HMRC and the Anti-Counterfeiting Group who represented the global brands being exploited;
- The sale of unsafe goods had identified imported upholstered furniture and toys being high risk. At this point in the meeting, Officers circulated some examples of unsafe goods and highlighted that there was often a lack of safety instructions or manufacturer's information provided;
- Shop owners had been found with illicit goods hidden both on their premises and off, behind panels, under shower trays and other secret places. Tobacco dogs could be used in these circumstances, but they were expensive.

RESOLVED

That the reports and comments made be noted.

22 UPDATE ON GREENWICH LEISURE LIMITED - LIBRARY CONTRACT

A report was considered which provided an update on the first six months of the Greenwich Leisure Limited Library contract which commenced on 1 April 2016. Two representatives from Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) were present and welcomed by the Committee.

It was reported that the transfer to GLL had caused little disruption to the public. No performance monitoring had been undertaken in the first quarter and the performance measuring tools were different to those used by the Council.

The relationship between the Council and GLL was developing into a collaborative one with GLL playing a vital part in managing the hubs effectively and going over and above duty in order to support them.

Committee members expressed a vote of thanks to Councillor N Worth (Executive Councillor for Culture and Emergency Services) for his work in bringing the contract to fruition.

Following questions from Members, the information below was confirmed:

- Grantham Library was the only library still under LCC management. This was due to the owner of the building, which currently housed the library, not permitting a sub-lease to GLL. The Council's existing agreement with the landlord was on the basis of a peppercorn rent and finding an alternative was not financially viable, although the sourcing of an alternative was an ongoing task. Despite this GLL were still supporting the staff at Grantham and the library would receive a review in line with other sites;
- The Boultham Library in Lincoln was managed by Community Lincs and an increase in opening hours had been achieved through its use of volunteers;
- Savings had been made through the new library contract when compared to the previous year's spending, mainly due to GLL's charitable status which enabled a reduction in overheads, coupled with efficiencies created through the development of the community hub model;
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) were providing computer time in libraries which reduced the available time for the public to use the computers, Members questioned whether this was fair;
- As the Lincolnshire area was the biggest on GLL's books, the LCC/GLL model was being observed by other authorities.

The Committee thanked the representatives from GLL.

RESOLVED

That the report and comments made be noted.

**COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2 NOVEMBER 2016**

23 COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its programme of work for the coming months and it was reported that there would be a budget workshop for the Committee following the next meeting on 14 December 2016.

RESOLVED

That the work programme and changes made therein be noted.

The meeting closed at 1.15 pm.

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