

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 15 DECEMBER 2017**

**Statement from: Councillor B Young, Executive Councillor for Community Safety and People Management**

### **SAFER COMMUNITIES**

#### **Trading Standards**

Trading Standards continues to focus its efforts on tackling unlawful trading, particularly the sale of illicit tobacco, rogue trading, product safety and counterfeiting. The Service has undertaken five operations targeting illicit tobacco sellers resulting in the seizure of over 3500 packets of cigarettes and over 850 pouches of hand rolling tobacco. Eleven individuals are currently under investigation or in the process of being prosecuted for a range of tobacco related offences.

Trading Standards recently completed a small safety sampling survey of toys and electrical chargers and the majority of the samples submitted failed to meet safety requirements. Follow up work has been completed that included revisiting stores and removing any remaining stock from the market place and advising retailers. In total Trading Standards Officers have seized or had surrendered nearly 9,200 unsafe items this year including toys, make up and light up rechargeable trainers. A further 2000 items were placed under suspension whilst Officers worked with the importer to ensure that they were brought into conformity before they were placed on the market.

The Service's work in tackling the sale of counterfeit goods was recognised by the National Markets Group who awarded the Lincolnshire Trading Standards Service the National Markets Group Team Award 2017 for Excellence in Intellectual Property (IP) Enforcement, particularly for the work at Ingoldmells/Eastgate Market. The awards are presented annually to teams and individuals recognised by members of the group to have made a significant contribution to tackling IP Crime. The award recognises work to tackle counterfeiting at the market during last year's Operation Angelico and the continuing work with the National Markets Group under Operation Big Ben. In excess of 20,000 counterfeit items have been removed from sale by trading standards officers.

April to September has seen the culmination of a number of Trading Standards investigations as they passed through the courts. In total 15 defendants have been convicted for a range of offences including the sale of out of date food, food with altered use by dates / labelling in a language other than English, counterfeit and unsafe alcohol, animal health and welfare, counterfeit and illicit tobacco and counterfeit goods. In total the courts handed down sentences totalling £7,795 in fines, 340 hours community payback, 42 months in suspended sentences, 40 months' imprisonment, and a contribution towards prosecution costs of £23,679.

Trading Standards Officers continue to promote awareness of scams. This year's 'Scams Awareness month' was widely publicised and they have worked closely with the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner to promote the crime prevention messages concerning postal and online scams. Officers continue our programme of engagement with the victims of scam mail working closely with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

The Service remains on target to complete its inspection programme for high risk premises.

### **Community Safety**

The County Council continues to contribute to the multi-agency response to addressing community safety alongside the police, district councils and health organisations, in addition to many other partners including probation trust, community rehabilitation company, prisons and 3rd sector organisations.

I was able to report last quarter on the reduction in adult reoffending rates within Lincolnshire. In this quarter that downward trend has continued. In addition, crime severity is also being reduced as a result of the work with offenders carried out by the ARC (Assisting Rehabilitation through Collaboration) team. The cohort managed by ARC continues to increase, meaning the team can support a greater number of individuals. Clients often present with multiple complex needs frequently around mental health, drugs and alcohol, accommodation and children and families

The County Council continues to play a key role in tackling sexual violence and abuse. A further #NoMore campaign has been driven by the Safer Communities Service with excellent engagement from partners and the press. The theme for the week, which ran between 25 September - 1 October, was the work of the specialist 'Emerald Team' within Lincolnshire Police. The team is made up of specially trained officers and experienced detectives committed and dedicated to rape investigation. National Ugly Mugs (NUM) has also been successfully promoted in the County. NUM is an organisation which provides protection to sex workers.

In respect of domestic abuse, the County Council is currently making the final amendments to specifications for the Domestic Abuse Support Service for standard and medium risk cases and the IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) Service for high risk cases of domestic abuse prior to inviting providers to bid for the contracts. New contracts will commence on the 1 July 2018.

On behalf of the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategic Management Board, the County Council is leading on the procurement of a new case management system. The solution needs to enable partners to share information with the aim of effectively managing cases of anti-social behaviour, particularly repeat and vulnerable cases. The Safer Communities Service has received good engagement from partners in drafting the specification and procurement documentation. The tender was due to be issued mid-November with evaluation scheduled to take place early January 2018. Members of the partnership will also sit on the evaluation panel. Implementation in the form of data transfer and training will occur prior to the new system going live on the 1 May 2018.

Also on behalf of the partnership, the Safer Communities Service is facilitating the current Hate Crime Survey. The aim of the survey is to help improve understanding of hate crime in Lincolnshire and how it is tackled to inform future activity. The survey closes on the 15 December 2017 after which time the results will be analysed by the service.

As reported in my last update, 'County Lines' has been identified as an emerging issue impacting on areas managed by both the Serious & Organised Crime (SOC) and Substance Misuse (SM) Strategic Management Boards (SMB). 'County Lines' has now been identified as one of three priorities for the SOC SMB along with Modern Slavery and Fraud & Cyber Crime/Scams; the latter have a particular focus on vulnerable victims. Sub-groups are being established for each of these priorities with the County Council taking an active role in each.

I am very pleased that for this current academic year, we are able to offer every Secondary School two multi-agency days which address the public protection priorities of LCC, the Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership priorities and those of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board. The offer for years 7 or 8 is workshops on anti-social behaviour, internet safety, alcohol awareness, healthy relationships and fire. The offer for years 9 or 10 is workshops on anti-social behaviour, internet safety, drugs awareness, healthy relationships and road safety. The aim is that all young people in Lincolnshire receive the correct information to be able to make informed decisions should they be faced with various situations. All of the workshops will be delivered by local experts and offer follow-on material for staff to develop in future lessons.

## **PEOPLE MANAGEMENT**

### **Apprenticeship Reforms – Update**

#### Background Information

As outlined previously, the new Apprenticeship Levy was implemented from 6 April 2017 and the County Council has carried out two procurement exercises to meet requirements identified in early 2017 and have both recruited and offered existing staff apprenticeship opportunities. We have successfully recruited a number of training providers as part of the procurement exercise and they are starting to deliver apprenticeship training to staff in schools and across the Council. It is important to highlight that this is a new initiative so we expect to come across a number of unanticipated problems which we are addressing moving forward. Challenges include a small drop out of apprentices from their scheme, not all providers being ready to deliver the new Apprenticeship Standards yet and some of the Government Standards the Council and schools require not yet being ready (social worker and teacher for example) but we are hopeful that these will start to be available from September 2018.

Moving forward, a significant amount of engagement has recently taken place with Director Areas and Schools to plan for additional apprenticeships as the new Apprenticeship Standards start to be approved for delivery. This includes: the Chartered Management Degree; Civil Engineering degree; Commercial Procurement and Supply; Teaching; Facilities Management (for caretakers in schools); and various Business Administration roles. Once the training needs have been confirmed and commitment received from the budget holder, the project team will assess the needs and make recommendations for approval by the Corporate Management Board and will go to market through Procurement Lincolnshire.

A cross-section of care leavers will be contacted over the next 2 months to ascertain their career aspirations in order to ensure apprenticeships are in place, where possible, to support their future aspirations.

In summary, due to national and local challenges whilst providers become familiar with apprenticeships, we are experiencing some delays in recruiting to the apprenticeship programme, but we remain positive that once the standards are available for our priority areas, we will meet our project ambitions

## **LEGAL SERVICES**

As well as providing legal services to the County Council and partner authorities Legal Services Lincolnshire forms a part of the wider justice system within the County which is highlighted in two recent developments.

In the first, the County Council has formally signed up locally to the Protocol and Good Practice Model for disclosure of information in cases of alleged child abuse and linked criminal and care directions hearings. The Protocol governs the disclosure of County Council information about children to the police in the course of their criminal investigations, a process that is administered within Legal Services Lincolnshire. The Council's commitment to the Protocol has been refreshed at the request of His Honour Judge John Pini QC, the Honorary Recorder of Lincoln as part of the implementation of new practices in relation to the treatment of child witnesses in criminal proceedings.

In the second development, Rebecca Andrews, Principal Lawyer and Team Leader of the Child Care legal team within Legal Services Lincolnshire has become the Chairman of the Local Family Justice Board. The Board consists of representatives of all agencies and professions involved in family justice including the County Council, private practice solicitors, barristers and the courts. The role of the Board is to improve the performance of the family justice system in Lincolnshire and to ensure the best possible outcomes for children who come into contact with it.

This page is intentionally left blank