



**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
13 MARCH 2018**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A N Stokes (Vice-Chairman), B Adams, C J T H Brewis, W J Aron, K J Clarke, L Wootten, R Wootten and M A Whittington

Councillors: Mrs S Woolley and B Young attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Nick Borrill (Chief Fire Officer), Nicole Hilton (Chief Community Engagement Officer), Pete Moore (Executive Director, Finance and Public Protection), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

There were no apologies for absence.

50 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

51 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 be signed as a correct record subject to it being noted that Mark Baxter from Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue was also in attendance.

52 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS
AND LEAD OFFICERS

There were no announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillors or lead officers.

53 DRAFT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2023

Consideration was given to a report which presented the draft Engagement Strategy 2018 - 2023 which outlined plans for how Lincolnshire County Council would engage over the next five years. It was created following a workshop with 16 councillors and included feedback from them. It had also been informed by the Community

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Engagement Team's experience of providing engagement advice and working with communities for many years.

It was reported that the workshop had been held with members to ensure that there would be the ownership of the Strategy would be both officer and member led. The Chief Engagement Officer thanked members for taking part in the workshop, as it had been a very progressive and effective way of delivering this piece of work.

The Committee was advised that the Strategy was deliberately more informal than the previous one, but it did capture all the relevant legislation.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was commented that the way that LCC engaged with other organisations was admired by other areas, but this relied on a lot of people to make this work.
- It was considered important to let volunteers know how much they were appreciated.
- Officers were thanked for the way that the Strategy had been set out.
- It was commented that the transfer of resources back to the community was supported. The recent work undertaken by the Council in relation to Bourne Town Hall was highlighted as a positive example of this as it was felt that members and officer had gone to great lengths to ensure that the building was transferred back to the community and there had been absolute co-operation between the voluntary sector and the local authority. Congratulations were given to those members and officers who had been involved with the Bourne Town Hall
- It was noted that a report would be presented later in the year to this Committee on the type of support that could be provided and the methods of engagement which were available.
- It was confirmed that the Engagement Strategy would be reviewed periodically.

RESOLVED

That the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee support the recommendations to the Executive as set out in the report.

54 CITIZENS ADVICE LINCOLNSHIRE

The Executive Councillor for NHS Liaison and Community Engagement introduced a report which outlined proposed changes to the funding provided to the Citizens Advice Service in Lincolnshire. The Committee was informed that the Council believed that Citizens Advice was a very important volunteer organisation and had considered it could continue to support it.

It was proposed to allocate a single year amount of £278,000 to continue to fund Citizen Advice Lincolnshire for 'core services' for 2018/19 with a further one off £53,000 to enable the provision of advice and support in areas around welfare reform and Universal Credit.

Members were advised that Citizens Advice activity had historically been funded through a grant aid agreement. A review of the service had been carried out and it was proposed to continue to provide funding for the core service and income maximisation support. Other advice which was available in the community was also looked at, and it was discovered that there was a wide range of advice available within communities, with some of that being specialised.

The Committee was provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- One member commented that they had been a representative for South Kesteven District Council on the Citizens Advice and the organisation did an amazing amount of work. He congratulated the officers and executive member for their honesty in the report, and suggested that some background information
- It was noted that Citizens Advice did receive funding from a wide range of other sources such as district councils, the National Lottery and Age UK.
- It was confirmed that the proposed reduction in funding would be approximately £300,000, however, an additional £53,000 would be provided to meet the reform agenda.
- It was commented that for every £1 invested, the local community would benefit by £18. Therefore it was believed that local communities would lose out. However, it was noted that this investment would not be stopped by the proposed reductions in funding from the County Council, as the funding would continue, but it would be coming from other organisations.
- It was noted that there were also other organisations which could provide the same advice that the County Council was funding. There were other organisations also carrying out the same piece of work.
- Councillor R B Parker, who was not a member of the Committee was permitted to speak by the Chairman, reported that a provider impact assessment completed by the CAB had revealed some interesting points. Officers acknowledged that the Equality Impact Assessment had recognised that there would be impacts on particular vulnerable groups.
- Councillor Parker reported that there were two aspects in which people could be impacted negatively by this reduction, directly for people who would no longer receive the services provided and also those seeking help to stay in their own homes. It was noted that it was easy to recruit the trained volunteers, but when the cases became more complex they would be passed to the trained legal officers, and it was thought that the proposed funding reduction could lead to a loss of expert knowledge, as there was the potential for up to nine people to lose their jobs. It was also commented that in relation to people who were seeking help from CAB to stay in their own homes instead of going into residential care, there could be significant savings for the County Council if these people were able to retain their independence. It was

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suggested that if only 11 people were diverted away from residential care, this would save the council money.

- It was noted that the County Council had a contract with an organisation called P3 which provided three housing related services, and one of the main tasks within the contract was to provide a countywide floating support service to all those who were vulnerable or at risk of losing their tenancies. It was also noted that all staff would be trained with knowledge of maximising benefits.
- It was noted that the work of Age UK, National Money Advice Service, Home Improvement Agency etc. had been reviewed which all work at keeping people as independent as possible. It was also noted that these organisations looked at the financial aspect as well as the appropriate level of welfare and benefits for a person.
- It was commented that the level of trust people had for the CAB was not comparable to any other organisation.
- It was suggested that if the fairer funding campaign was successful and the funding cuts were stopped, this should be the first service where funding should be restored to.
- It was queried whether the other organisations mentioned had the spare capacity to take on the additional work which the CAB would not be able to deal with due to the proposed funding cuts.
- It was commented that the CAB was a vital service of many people, not just the vulnerable, and it was understood that the core services would be maintained. It was confirmed that people approaching Citizen's Advice would be signposted to other organisations where necessary, but a resident had a choice of which organisation they wanted to go to.
- One member commented that they understood the reasons why this decision had to be made reluctantly, and they looked forward to the day when the service could be restored.

(NOTE: Councillor M A Whittington wished it to be noted that he would not take part in the vote on this item due to his involvement in the budget setting process as the Executive Support Councillor for Finance)

RESOLVED

That the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee support the recommendations to the Executive Councillor as set out in the report.

55 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT (1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2017)

Consideration was given to a report which provided with key performance information relevant to the work of the Committee.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- In relation to the 'Reported incidents of domestic abuse' it was noted that it was encouraging to see that more people were able to report, but it was queried whether there were enough police to deal with the increase in these incidents.
- It was noted that reporting arrangements were a multi-agency issue, but it was reported that the County Council was looking to recommission domestic abuse support services. It was planned that there would be a joint approach, with not only providing victim support, but also perpetrator support, trying to target the behaviours further up stream with potential perpetrators to prevent some of these incidents by working with at risk families.
- It was noted that there was not a single system for recording domestic abuse incidents, as they could be recorded by a number of different organisations, but the authority was working with district councils.
- It was reported that one of the main areas of focus for the Community Safety Partnership would be domestic abuse and the aim was to have the fullest participation possible at meetings from all agencies involved.
- Members were advised that more and more individuals were being trained to recognise domestic abuse situations or risk factors and then feed this into the safeguarding processes. It was also confirmed that there was additional capacity in the system to deal with this.
- In relation to 'Alcohol related violent crime incidents' it was queried why this figure was still increasing. It was noted that there was a need to work smarter with this issues, and it was important to recognise that people did not just fall into one box at one time, and there was often a range of complex issues which led to these incidents. There was a need to divert people through to the right avenue for dealing with their issue, but these could not be treated in isolation.
- In relation to 'Deliberate Primary Fires' it was noted that there had been a spike in quarter 2 for 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 and it was queried if the reasons behind this were known. Members were advised that this time of year generally tied in with the school holidays, and it was known that this type of activity was seasonal. However, there was no definitive answer for the spike, but this could be looked into further.

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the performance information presented.

56 BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

It was reported that in December 2015, the three blue light services agreed a programme of collaboration and formally started the 'Lincolnshire Blue Light Collaboration Programme'. the full programme management structures which initiated the programme were formally agreed by a steering group in May 2016. The following key elements were defined:

- A shared Fire and Police Service Headquarters (SHQ) project
- A shared Fire and Police Service Control Room (SCR) project
- A combined Lincoln Police/Ambulance/Fire Station (South Park Project)

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- A Wider Estates (WE) review project
- A Wider Interoperability and Integration (WII) Project

It was noted that the programme had a number of specific milestones, although given the rolling nature of the last two elements which were being considered on a case by case basis, there was no specified end date. The Committee received a presentation which gave an update on progress made to date as well as an indication of work which had been or was planned to be undertaken.

Members were provided with an opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and presentation, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- In relation to the South Park site, it was noted that the project was running to schedule on costs. Members were also advised that this was a brand new type of building, and during the design phase there had been stakeholder meetings involving all three services. Some of the operational police and security measures were new to Fire and Rescue and EMAS.
- It was queried whether it was thought that the traffic congestion in Lincoln would have an impact on the ability of the services to respond to situations. Members were advised that there would be no difference in staff levels on site in terms of Fire and Rescue and EMAS, and it was also reported that a lot of in depth work had been carried out on the times when people would be occupying the site, including staffing models, and it was expected that there would be a steady flow of vehicles to and from the site due to shift patterns etc.
- In relation to the joint use of existing building by the other services, it was noted that in relation to fire stations, retained fire fighters were required to live within 5 minutes journey time of the station. Therefore, it was likely that other services would look to co-locate in fire stations. It was noted that EMAS was engaged in this process.
- It was part of the process by EMAS to dispose of sites no longer required. If EMAS was directed to dispose of a site then they would look at options for moving.
- Members commented that they were very pleased to see the progress that had taken place and that this project could offer opportunities that had never been seen before.
- It was clarified that the control room software currently being used by Fire and Rescue was Vision 3, but under the East Coast collaboration project would be updated to Vision 4.

RESOLVED

That the progress made in relation to the programme be noted by the Committee.

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WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which enabled the Committee to comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit.

During consideration of the work programme document, the following was noted:

- The Scrutiny Officer would be contacting officers to determine whether there were any further items which could be considered at the meeting scheduled for 24 April 2018.
- It was queried whether the Committee could receive a report in relation to juvenile offenders, however, members were advised that youth offending was now under the remit of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
- It was suggested whether there should be a more substantive paper on domestic abuse, following comments in relation to the performance information. Officers agreed to look into this.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme as set out at Appendix A of the report be noted subject to the points raised above.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am

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