

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 17 MAY 2019

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

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Trading Standards

The Trading Standards Service became the first Service in the Country to bring a prosecution against a landlord who continued to let premises to those involved in the sale of illicit tobacco products despite several warnings not to accept rental payments that were derived from the proceeds of crime. Adopting this novel approach with other landlords has resulted in a number of problem businesses being evicted from premises by those who have received similar warnings. The Service has received enquiries about this model from other Local Authorities across the Country who also want to tackle persistent offending in their communities.

Trading Standards successfully prosecuted a local car dealer for supplying a dangerous second hand vehicle. Having been advised that officers had seized the vehicle, the defendant posed as a Trading Standards Officer from Norfolk in an attempt to recover the vehicle. In another first for the Service he was also charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice and was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment.

These prosecutions have contributed to an annual total of successful prosecutions resulting in convictions for 18 defendants who were collectively sentenced to one year and six months imprisonment, 24 months in suspended sentences, 1670 hours unpaid work, £1410 in fines and curfew orders with electronic tags for 13 months. They were ordered to pay prosecution costs totalling £45,396.36.

The Service has extended its partnership working with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue and we now share information relating to house fires involving consumer products and work together to inform and protect Lincolnshire residents. Trading Standards has successfully bid for funding from the Office for Product Safety and Standard to produce a best practice toolkit based on our approach for other services to adopt nationally.

Community Safety

The County Council's Community Safety Team offers coordination support to the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership. This partnership and all its collective members are committed to working collaboratively with the objective of keeping people in Lincolnshire safe. The Community Safety Team carries out a range of other functions to support the work of the Partnership, including the procurement of the county's Domestic Abuse Support Services as well as the procurement, implementation and contract management of an I.T. solution that will enable partners more effectively to manage anti-social behaviour in the County.

The Community Safety Team gathers intelligence on a range of community safety issues to inform the work of the partnership, and evaluates and reports on the

performance of a number of partnership initiatives such as ARC (Assisting Rehabilitation through Collaboration) (prolific offending) and The BlueLight Project (treatment resistant drinkers). The County Council is host to the latter two multi-disciplinary teams as well as ACTion Lincs, whose focus is to address entrenched rough sleeping in the county.

As part of the re-tendering of the County's Domestic Abuse Support Service contract, the Council invested in some new elements of service including a hospital-based Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) provision. An IDVA service was established at Lincoln County Hospital in January of this year, with the service being mirrored at Boston Pilgrim Hospital from April 2019 onwards. The aims of this service are to reduce the immediate risk of harm and homicide, and improve the physical and mental health outcomes of those affected by domestic abuse and receiving treatment. The hospital-based IDVA provides immediate support and advice to victims to improve their safety and advocacy, as well as link them and their families to longer-term specialist community-based support services.

Although still early days, the IDVA at Lincoln County Hospital has engaged with more than 20 people experiencing domestic abuse. The IDVA has also undertaken a number of other activities, from consultations and briefings/training sessions, to enhance the ability of front line staff to recognise and respond to domestic abuse and raise awareness of support services.

The Community Safety Team have also been working in collaboration with a local Domestic Abuse Provider to support large local employers in developing their Human Resources policies and procedures in relation to domestic abuse, as well as raising awareness of how employers can support both victims and perpetrators. To date the project has engaged with Lincolnshire Co-op, Bakkavor, Boston College, Moy Park and HMP North Sea Camp.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Apprenticeship Reforms

As at the end of March 2019, the total number of apprentices is 145, of which 59% are being delivered by local training providers.

The first Children's Services Social Work Apprentices have commenced their training with the University of Sheffield; this is a 3 year programme that involves 10 candidates.

As of 1 April 2019 levy paying organisations are able to transfer up to 25% of their levy to eligible employers directly. The Council has set up and is ready to transfer levy funds to support 69 apprentices in the Lincolnshire Adult Care Sector.

There have been some positive local and national recognition for our apprenticeships. The Council's HR apprentice Kelly Moffat, was shortlisted for the national PPMA (Public Service People Management Association) awards. At the recent Boston College Apprentice of the Year awards Rebekah Bowen of Alford Primary School, was awarded the Apprentice of the Year in Early Years and Schools Category.

The Corporate Management Board are formally reviewing the Council's current Apprenticeship Strategy to determine any changes to our approach which would enable the Council to further maximise the apprenticeship levy spend and to develop the required skills for the future.

LEGAL SERVICES

Legal Services Lincolnshire (LSL) continues to support the work of the County Council and its District Council partners.

The service also seeks to attract external income from other sources where it has the capacity and expertise to do so.

The County Council and a number of the District Council partners are pursuing more innovative ways of exercising their functions and promoting the development of their areas. This includes the creation of new entities such as companies. This can mean that activities such as buying land or entering into contracts which traditionally would have been carried out by the Council itself may increasingly be carried out by a specially created company.

As a service staffed predominantly by solicitors LSL is regulated in relation to its professional obligations by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA).

The SRA has issued guidance on the degree to which an in-house team can carry out work for other clients without being authorised by the SRA. That Guidance impacts on the ability of LSL to act for entities such as companies created by the District Council partners and to attract additional income by offering its services more widely to the public sector.

As a result the Executive will be considering at its meeting on 8 May 2019 the creation of a company with a view to that company being licenced by the SRA to provide legal services to a wider range of bodies.

That would enable the Council both to continue to act for existing partners as they establish new entities such as companies and to offer services more widely where appropriate to attract additional income to support the costs of the service and to sustain it as a resource for the County Council and the District Council partners.

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