

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 22 FEBRUARY 2013

Statement from: Councillor M J Hill OBE– Leader and Executive Councillor for Policy, Strategy and Communications.

Police and Crime Commissioner

Together with officers of the Council, I have held constructive discussions with the new Police and Crime Commissioner, Alan Hardwick. The PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan is strongly aligned with the Council's priorities for community safety and for other key areas. We are jointly committed to explore ways in which the partnership can be even more effective and deliver even more positive results.

Lincoln Prison

Discussions are being held with HMP Lincoln to give assistance with their improvement plan following the recent inspection report. We are also seeking to improve better joint working to reduce re-offending and to support our partnership work in relation to Troubled Families.

Corporate Property Rationalisation Programme

Area reviews and rationalisation are continuing around the county.

Planned closures over the coming months are set to release over 5,000 square metres of office space and achieve revenue savings of over £300k. The intention to close Sleaford County Offices has been announced, which makes up a large proportion of this saving. Of the 250 desks on this site, less than half are used on a daily basis. Staff will be moved into existing LCC accommodation.

In Louth the Eastfield House Annexe has closed, avoiding around £20,000 of essential repairs. Over 500 square metres of office space has been released and staff have been moved into existing space in Eastfield House.

In the Lincoln area, further leases have been surrendered since December 2012, achieving annual revenue savings of £120k and reducing office space by over 500 square metres.

This rationalisation programme will deliver the Core Offer property saving of £1million required by the Council.

Registration, Celebratory and Coroners Services

The Registration Service continues to look at more cost effective ways of delivering services, linking in with improved customer access points. In Boston, the service moved from County Hall to the Municipal Buildings/Boston Borough Council and in March the service will join with other council services at the Corn Exchange in Bourne. This is part of a long term commitment to the improved utilisation of council property.

The General Register Office/Identity and Passport Service conducted two service delivery inspections and were extremely satisfied with the service provided.

In December a Coroners Body Removal Contract was put out to tender and the new arrangements are anticipated to be in place with effect from 1 April 2013. The tender specification highlighted the requirement for the highest possible standards and consideration of the needs of local families.