

**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND
 COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
 COMMITTEE
 28 JULY 2020**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors W J Aron, K J Clarke, Mrs K Cook, Mrs C J Lawton, C R Oxby, L Wootten and R Wootten

Councillors: R D Butroid, Dr M E Thompson, C N Worth and B Young attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Les Britzman (Chief Fire Officer), Louise Egan (Library and Heritage Client Lead), Will Mason (Head of Culture), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer), Jade Sullivan (LSCB Audit and Policy Officer), Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer) and Tim Joyce (Area Manager)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A N Stokes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2020

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 March 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman extended his thanks to Timothy Brennand, Senior Coroner for Lincolnshire who was leaving the Council to take up a Senior Coroner post in Manchester West.

The Chairman also congratulated Paul Smith who was due to become the Acting Senior Coroner for Lincolnshire for a minimum period of twelve months.

The Chief Fire Office informed the Committee that Diane Coulson, the Assistant Director for Public Protection had been seconded to the Covid-19 recovery group. As a result, Sara Barry was currently acting as Assistant Director for Public Protection. The role of Head of Safer Communities was currently being shared by Clare Newborn and Mark Keal.

The Chief Fire Officer thanked the officers presenting at the meeting for their reports.

5 PERFORMANCE OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES CONTRACT - YEAR FOUR REVIEW REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Library and Heritage Client Lead, which provided an update of the year four performance of the Library Services Contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL).

Members were advised that during year four, library staff ran a total of 5,354 events in core and mobile libraries, which had included National Bookstart week – pajamarama and the annual summer reading challenge with a 2% increase in participation from 2018.

GLL had also continued to work with District Council to which had included hosting a Holocaust Memorial and memorial service, sign language and yoga events.

It was noted that the 24% decrease in the 'Number of visits to core libraries and mobile library services in 2019/20 was not as significant as may be perceived, as there had only actually been a 5% decrease in visits from the previous year, which was likely a result of the covid-19 pandemic.

Positive feedback had been received as a result of significant and immediate IT improvements had been made in many libraries.

The main focus of year five of the contract was to recover from Covid-19 pandemic and responding to changing needs to customers and partnerships, as well as completing the final element of IT which was due to be completed in the coming weeks.

Nicola Rogers (GLL) advised the Committee that they had moved a lot of events online as part of the Facebook and Twitter officer. The library service reiterated that they had ran many successful national events and overall it was perceived a successful year.

Members considered the report and as part of the discussions the following points were noted:

- Members thanked officers and partners from GLL for their work on the Library Service Contract, particularly for continuing to work through the pandemic and maintaining a target for 8 out of 10 KPI's, which was a great testament to innovations, improvements and hard work.

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- Members raised concerns over the signage at the Boutham Community Hub being unclear and not mentioning library use. It was confirmed that officers had looked into the signage previously and clarified that a sub-heading on the sign did mention library use. Officers wanted to ensure that community hubs could be more than just a library and were sustainable for other facilities and services to operate from. The Library and Heritage Client Lead agreed to revisit the signage at the Boutham Community Hub and liaise with Councillor K A Clarke as the local Member directly regarding this.
- Officers were looking to start reopening core sites including Grantham Library where the public would be able to receive a pre-reservation services to reserve items online or over the phone and bring items back to reception. Customers would also be able to begin to pre-book public computers on a 30 minute basis to avoid an influx of individuals queuing. The next stage of reopening would look to enable the public to come into sites to continue browsing on a limited number basis.
- Physical attendance to libraries would mean the introduction of one way systems, quarantine trollies, hand gels and sanitisation and screens at enquiry desks. Customers would also be able to begin to pre-book public computers on a 30 minute basis to avoid an influx of individuals queuing.
- At the time of the meeting, Officers did not believe that it was mandatory for the public to wear a mask when visiting a library but had requested clarification and clearer guidance on this issue. However, the council were considering putting up additional signage to request that customers wear a mask if they felt comfortable doing so.
- The Executive Councillor for Culture and Emergency services also thanked library staff for their outstanding work during the Covid-19 emergency, in particular for their work with the elderly and vulnerable and innovative ideas to get young people involved in reading.
- It was clarified that customers had a choice of whether to borrow an e-book for seven, fifteen or twenty-one days as well as the opportunity to extend when you renewed the book.
- Officers welcomed the suggestion that the local Councillor be invited to any special events in their area.
- Officers clarified that events were advertised in libraries and posters in local communities, as well as through press releases and on social media.
- There was a long standing arrangement within the library service that South Kesteven District Council would continue to manage Bourne Library within their building with their own employees. There were currently no plans to make amendments and transfer the management of Bourne Library to GLL.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note and support the progress of year four of the Library Services Contract.

6 BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Area Manager – Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue which provided a progress update on the Blue Light Collaboration Programme which was agreed in 2015.

Members were advised that the Blue Light Collaboration programme was a range of projects to enable collaborative working between Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue and the Ambulance service.

The Committee were informed that the shared headquarters between Lincolnshire Police and Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue had been completed in 2017 and the shared control room facility with Lincolnshire Police had been completed in March 2020.

The South Park complex was formally completed in February 2020 and the site was now fully operational. It was noted that South Park had been a complex project, however despite the challenges faced it had been badged as a great success and was a flagship of collaboration for Lincolnshire throughout the country.

Members also received an update on the Wider Estates and Wider Integration and Interoperability projects.

Members were referred to Appendix A for a financial breakdown of the programme.

Members considered the report and during the discussion the following points were noted:

- Officers clarified that they did not have a blueprint to work towards when building the South Park centre and the facility remained a flagship across the county as it was designed from scratch and the first tri-service facility to also include a home office standard custody suite on-site. However, the project had been successful and the building had been well designed.
- The East Coast and Hertfordshire Consortium were a consortium of control rooms that had been brought together and was a separately funded initiative.
- The link between the Lincolnshire, Humberside, Norfolk and Hertfordshire control rooms provided a significant level of resilience for the service, enabling handlers to better manage call spikes and absorb calls.
- Members also commended the use of the County's Emergency centre and the excellent partnership working that operated from within the building.
- The Chief Fire Officer commended the work of the Emergency Planning team who had worked extremely hard since the Wainfleet Flooding emergency in June 2019. He also commended the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum's county wide response to the covid-19 pandemic with the involvement of many partners and external organisations.
- It was noted that the movement of the control room function to Nettleham had allowed the Emergency Planning Team to move into a refurbished area of the old county emergency centre. It was initially planned that the Emergency Planning team be based within the new building at South Park, but it was felt

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that it was more beneficial to refurbish the old building for use by the Emergency Planning Team.

- The shared control room between the police and fire and rescue service provided benefits in the case that there was a large scale emergency such as a terrorist incident and would enable both teams to collaborate and work effectively together.
- The council tax charges for the new South Park Building was split between each service within the lease for the building.
- There were still some opportunities for the Blue Light Collaboration Project that were yet to be progressed, which included a possible Joint Cadet Service and improving the synergies between some operational teams that existed.
- Officers felt that it may have been beneficial to have a tri-service training building on site at South Park however this was restricted with the finances available.
- The Committee commended the new Tri-Service Operational station at South Park, particularly with it being a flagship building that would lead the way for others.

RESOLVED:

That the progress of the Blue Light Collaboration programme be noted.

7 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by the Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on its work programme for the coming year.

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 15 September 2020 the following reports were scheduled:

- Lincolnshire Registration and Celebratory Service Annual Report
- Animal Health and Welfare Review
- Heritage Service Update
- Adults Reoffending Performance

The full work programme was detailed within the report.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

8 RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC ABUSE IN LINCOLNSHIRE

Consideration was given to the Community Strategy Safety Co-ordinator – Domestic Abuse lead, which provided the Committee with an overview and update of the work

that was being undertaken in relation to Domestic Abuse within Lincolnshire, especially in light of COVID-19.

Members were advised that on average over the last four years there had been over 10,000 domestic abuse incidents reported to Lincolnshire Police each year, of which £6500 were standard risk incidents; around 25% were graded as medium risk and 8% were high risk. Since the introduction of the Statutory Domestic Homicide Reviews in April 2011 there had been 17 cases involving 25 deaths that have met the criteria for a domestic homicide review in Lincolnshire.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, referrals to MARAC and the Domestic Abuse Outreach Service (EDAN Lincs) had remained stable. General enquires to EDAN Lincs by way of telephone calls, emails and the website have increased, however these had not translated into referrals. Refuges in Lincolnshire had remained at usual capacity with no increase in demand and incidents reported to the police had remained stable with some uplift seen on bank holiday weekends.

The Domestic Abuse Priority Group, MARAC EDAN Lincs had continued to operate effectively throughout the pandemic. All refuges had also continued to operate and support victims and children of domestic abuse in Lincolnshire.

The Committee were informed that the key elements of focus for the partnership over the next sixth months alongside maintaining all services in relation to Domestic Abuse were to focus on recovery planning and preparing for changes in government guidance and proceeding with the planned consultation in relation to the domestic abuse bill and governance arrangements in Lincolnshire.

It was noted that Lincolnshire County Council had been successful in receiving funding from a bid to MHCLG for £187,000 to support the development of consistent Countywide sanctuary scheme to help people suffering from domestic abuse to stay in their own homes where appropriate.

Members discussed the report and during the discussion the following points were noted:

- Members questioned why referrals to refuge in Lincolnshire during the covid-19 pandemic were much lower than in some areas of the country. This was due to the fact that Lincolnshire County Council were generally successful at moving people to alternative accommodation and were well supported by the district councils on this.
- It was agreed that a breakdown of male and female data be provided to the Committee where possible. However, due to a lack of reporting from male victims, reported cases were predominantly female.
- The Sanctuary scheme supported victims to stay in their home if it was appropriate to do so. If the decision was made to keep somebody in their own home, a risk assessment of the property would be carried out, as well as a safety assessment with the victim to look at routines regular contacts. Officers would also work with the police to ensure that the perpetrator wasn't part of the safety planning and all elements were put in place to ensure that the victim

was protected from that person. Often cases were managed through Multi-agency risk assessment conference where all officers were present and would discuss the best way forward to work with the victim and provide support where possible.

- Members acknowledged the difficulty in obtaining data for financial, emotional and coercive control abuse as these types of abuse were often harder to identify and record. However, MARAC recorded data locally which was used to recognise issues and look at patterns and put in place solutions.
- All statutory agencies received training around coercive control behaviour. The Council worked with Hairdressers, barbers, estate agents and similar agencies to help them to identify coercive control behaviours.
- Members welcomed the programme to try to support perpetrators in breaking habits and behaviours.
- There was currently no update on the code word that could be used by victims to highlight that they were in immediate danger as a result of domestic abuse.
- The relationship between district councils and the County Council was commended and it had a positive impact on the domestic support available.
- Services had been innovative in the way that they had managed staffing during the covid-19 pandemic and had utilised staff and re-deployed staff into areas that needed the most support.
- Members were advised to call 999 if they believed somebody was in immediate danger as a result of domestic abuse. However, if no immediate danger identified and but Members were concerned they were encouraged to contact EDAN Lincs to be directed to the right channels of support.
- The EDAN Lincs contact details were available on their website.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.00 pm