

**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 21 SEPTEMBER 2021**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A N Stokes (Vice-Chairman), A Dani, W H Gray, K E Lee and E J Sneath.

Councillors: L A Cawrey, A P Maughan and D McNally (Executive Councillor Waste and Trading Standards) attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer) and Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

The following officers attended the meeting remotely, via Teams:

Sara Barry (Acting Assistant Director - Public Protection), Steven Batchelor (Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager), Mark Baxter (Chief Fire Officer), Will Mason (Head of Culture), Clare Newborn (Interim Head of Service - Community Safety), Lee Sirdifield (Assistant Director – Corporate), Ryan Stacey (Assistant Chief Fire Officer) and Spencer Creek (Area Manager Response).

73 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J Brockway, M R Clarke, N F Clarke, A M Key and J L King.

An apology for absence was also received from Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell, (Executive Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement).

74 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of members' interest were made at this stage of the proceedings.

75 MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY MEETING
 HELD ON 27 JULY 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes of Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27 July 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

76 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF

OFFICERS

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Councillors L Cawrey (Executive Councillor Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services), A P Maughan (Executive Support Councillor Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services) and D McNally (Executive Councillor Waste and Trading Standards).

The Executive Councillor Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services advised the Committee that since the last meeting, a provider had been approved to take over the management and responsibility of the Ermine Community Hub. The Committee was advised further that the provider was Bishop Grosseteste University and that discussions were underway with them regarding the lease agreements and the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the hub, which outlined the areas of support both the Council and Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) provided.

The Committee noted that introductions had taken place between Bishop Grosseteste University representatives and GLL. Assurance was also given that members of the Committee would be advised of the opening date for the hub once this had been agreed.

There were no announcements received from senior officers.

77 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE PERFORMANCE
FRAMEWORK 2021-2022 - QUARTER 1

Consideration was given to a report, which set out the performance of Tier Two Service Level Performance Measures for 2021/2022 for Quarter 1 that was within the remit of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman invited Sara Barry, Head of Safer Communities, Will Mason, Head of Culture, Lee Sirdifield, Assistant Director Corporate, Mark Baxter, Chief Fire Officer, Ryan Stacey, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Steven Batchelor, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager, to remotely present the report to the Committee, which covered performance measures for Community Safety, Fire Safety, Libraries and Heritage, Road Safety, Trading Standards and Volunteering.

During consideration of the report and during discussion some of the following comments were noted:-

- The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Plus. It was noted that the MARAC Plus trial was continuing on a monthly basis in addition to the weekly MARAC, and that up to the end of June 2021 there had been 14 cases referred to MARAC Plus. The Committee was advised that the purpose MARAC Plus was to provide additional time to the more complex domestic abuse cases;
- The number of domestic abuse cases in Lincolnshire. The Committee was advised that this information would be provided by police figures, as they were the main agency for reporting domestic abuse incidents;

- Thanks were extended to the Fire and Rescue Service for all their hard work;
- Whether the increase in the number of dwellings being built had impacted on the number of primary fires. The Committee noted that the small increase in the number of dwelling fires from 80 in Quarter 1 2019/20 to 96 in Quarter 1 2020/21 was directly attributed to deliberate dwelling fires;
- The increase in the number of deliberate primary fires from 1 in the previous year to 16 in Quarter 1 2020/21. Reassurance was given that following any deliberate fires, robust fires investigations processes were in place which allowed for trends to be identified, some being hate crimes; and some being the work of gangs. It was highlighted that the numbers in Lincolnshire were low and that no trends had been identified. The Committee noted that this target had not been achieved, but were advised that there was a drive for continuous improvement, but that seasonal variances were to be expected due to weather conditions, school holidays and seasonal events. It was noted further that although behind target, it was highlighted that the upper tolerance range equated to only two incidents at this point in the year and that the target was only three incidents outside of the upper tolerance range;
- Graph at the top of Page 32 which depicted Deliberate Secondary Fires (Actual Numbers). One member enquired why the figures for Quarter 1 and 2 were higher compared to Quarter 3 and 4. The Committee was advised that seasonal variances were to be expected over the year, but the trend was when there was warm dry weather and the days were longer more incidents occurred;
- The Committee was advised that the number of visits to core libraries and mobile library services had seen lower visitor numbers during April as a result of the pandemic. However, during May and June, when 14 core libraries transitioned to the 'Browse & Borrow' phase, this had seen the return of some customers into sites in line with health and safety guidance. Overall, there was still some hesitancy by some customers to return to face to face visits. It was highlighted that there had been a higher number of visits to library websites, which indicated better performance;
- Whether all heritage sites across Lincolnshire, not just those operated by the Council, were promoted as each area had their own unique history. The Committee was advised that the aspiration was to showcase all of the history of Lincolnshire; but there was recognition that there was more work that needed to be done with regard to this matter;
- Whether the pandemic had impacted on the number of road traffic collisions. The Committee noted that as traffic volumes were not consistent with previous years, it was hard to make any comparisons at this time;
- The regulations governing the importing of food from abroad and whether regular visits were made to European supermarkets. Officers confirmed that visits were made to a range of stores and European supermarkets as part of the routine inspection plan, which was based on intelligence received, and where concerns had been raised. The Committee was reminded that Trading Standards Officers worked very closely with District Councils Environmental Health Officers who were responsible for the environmental safety of food and that the Trading Standards Officers would be looking at the standard of food, for example that the food was as is should be and that it contained the right

ingredients, and did not contain any contaminants. Reassurance was given that officers would visit sites, where concerns had been raised;

- When Trading Standards Officers visited car boot sales, whether they just looked at new goods or, if whether they included vintage goods for instance, those that were now banned, and would they remove them from sale? The Committee was advised that the consumer's products safety legislation only applied to businesses selling goods. Therefore, where a member of the public was selling at a car boot sale the legislation would not apply to the person selling second hand goods;
- One member asked whether counterfeit perfumes were unsafe. It was noted that perfume was classed as cosmetic and that counterfeit perfumes often contained high alcohol content. It was noted further that counterfeit make-up had also been found which contained lead, and that this was an area of concern for the service;
- It was agreed that for a future meeting, when the Committee considered the trading standards update report, officers would bring in some counterfeit items for members of the Committee to view;
- One member extended congratulations to the Voluntary Centre Services (VCS) and the Lincolnshire Community & Voluntary Services (LVCS) for all their hard work and to the valuable service they provided. The Committee agreed that a letter of thanks would be sent to both organisations on behalf of the Committee.

RESOLVED

1. That the Service Level Performance reporting against the Performance Framework for 2021/2022 for Quarter One be received and that the comments raised by the Committee be noted.
2. That a letter of thanks be sent to the Voluntary Centre Services and the Lincolnshire Community & Voluntary Services from the Committee, recognising their effectiveness within the community and expressing gratitude for services provided by them.

78 FUTURE OF THE HERITAGE SERVICE IN LINCOLNSHIRE

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the actions being undertaken relating to the future of Heritage Services in Lincolnshire.

The Chairman invited Will Mason, Head of Culture, to remotely present the item to the Committee.

The Committee was advised that the changes relating to the future of cultural services provided by the Council had been approved by the Executive at their meeting held on 3 September 2019. The recommendations had included, changes in service delivery to the Cultural Enterprise and Supersite Model, which delivered culture based-products and services to generate a surplus which would then be used to ensure the service's long-term

sustainability and development; changes to the operation of Gainsborough Old Hall, The Collection Museum and Usher Gallery, Discover Stamford and Burgh le Marsh, Alford and Ellis windmills.

The report provided an update on the actions taken and the Committee was invited to comment on the actions as shown on pages 60 and 61 of the report pack. The Committee raised some of the following points:

- The re-opening of Ellis Mill as a visitor attraction;
- The successful joint working arrangements between the County Council and the City of Lincoln Council, which had led to the Usher Art Gallery remaining open, and Lincoln's museum and art collections remaining in Lincolnshire. Appreciation was extended to the Executive Councillor for Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services for all her hard work behind the scenes to make the arrangement happen;
- Whether local councils were able make a request for some of the treasures relating to their area to be returned to them, for them to be able to display and promote the history of their area. Officers advised that it was important to showcase the County's rich heritage, and that some of the collections held were not on display. The Committee was advised that any interest from organisations across the County would be considered to help share the story of Lincolnshire;
- The impact restricted opening times was having on heritage sites. It was noted that there was still a variance across the County with regard to opening times and to the number of people being able to visit at one time. The reduction in the number of visitors had significantly impacted the amount of income generated and that at the moment it was difficult to estimate when opening times would be back to pre-Covid times. It was highlighted it was important for heritage sites to be able to pay for themselves and where there was demand making sure the sites were open appropriate hours; and
- One member enquired as to what progress had been made in repairing the Burgh le Marsh windmill, following it losing its sails in 2020. The Committee was advised that the insurance claim had received a positive response from the Resource Board. The Committee noted that it was proposed to start work on the ancillary building first so that the site could open then open its café, shop and display area to continue to tell the story of the site, even though the mill was unable to grind flour. The Committee noted that currently a similar proposal had been undertaken at Ellis Mill. It was highlighted that all the mills owned by the County Council all required some work, and that currently, there was no Mill Rights in the County. It was highlighted further that it could take years before all the works were completed.

RESOLVED

That the continued work towards delivering the recommendations approved by the Executive in September 2019 be received.

Consideration was given to a report from Mark Baxter, Chief Fire, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Technical Response Unit Refresh, prior to a decision being considered by the Executive on 5 October 2021.

The Chairman invited Mark Baxter, Chief Fire Officer to present the item to the Committee, remotely via Teams.

The Committee was advised that Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue (LFR) provided a number of technical response capabilities to assist in delivering its operational response. It was highlighted that when responding to emergency situations LFR sometimes had to attend environments and incidents where the capabilities carried on a fire appliance were not suitable or adequate to resolve the situations and therefore there was a requirement for additional capabilities to ensure successful outcomes were delivered.

It was highlighted that the Community Risk Profile 2020/2024 had identified that additional capabilities were required to support the rescue of large animals, support other agencies in repositioning or removing large patients to access better medical care, allow operations to be conducted in water, support the response to incidents involving large transport and provide alternative rescue methods for incidents in commercial or industrial settings.

The report highlighted that to ensure that the service was prepared for its known and future risks an assessment of the services known risks had been conducted within the County and a review had been done on the operational response to incidents involving those capabilities over a five-year period. It was highlighted further that the findings had highlighted that in order for LFR to provide a sustainable response in the future; the response model needed updating to meet the demand. It was highlighted that capital investment was needed to upgrade vehicles and equipment.

Full details relating to the reasons for change were detailed within the Executive report.

The Committee was advised that a total budget of £1,208,000.00 had been allocated to purchase replacement vehicles, replacement boats and supplementary equipment for the new heavy rescue and large transport requirements and the new command support function. Details on the revenue savings were summarised on page 77 of the report.

During consideration of item, the Committee raised some of the following points:

- Clarity was sought around FRS legal requirement to respond to incidents that involved large animal rescue, bariatric response, technical road response, heavy rescue as well as to flooding incidents (water response) for which FRS was not funded. It was clarified that the FRS had a statutory duty to respond to fires and Road Traffic Collisions and, under the Civil Contingencies Act, to respond to significant emergencies within the County of Lincolnshire and beyond. It was noted that when an incident was attended, the requirements

would not be known until the point of these being assessed, therefore, it was necessary that appropriate resources and training were available at all times for the staff to enable them to provide a good quality service to the public. It was emphasised that water rescue was the most significant type of incident where, despite not having a statutory duty to respond to flooding incidents, FRS had the duty to respond to large scale events that went beyond the scope of single agency response to the incident. The Committee noted that information and risk data accumulated historically indicated that what was required was low level water, static and floodwater technical rescue equipment that allowed for Fire Crews to reach incidents swiftly. In relation to bariatric equipment, it was reinforced that these were pertinent to fire incidents (among others) where the people involved were classed as bariatric;

- Reference was made to risk data (page 121 of the report) that indicated that the County had 98 farms at which an unknown number of animals resided. It was clarified that there were farms across the County of Lincolnshire classed as high-risk areas. High-risk areas were identified through historical data including demographics of the County; where known facilities, such as storage located on farm premises and other concurrent factors that increased the risk of a fire hazard. This was not however, an indication that these farms were routinely operating in a high-risk environment;
- In relation to technical rope rescue required for operating below ground level, Members enquired if there were many incidents in the County where these were employed. It was clarified that there had not been any such rescues however, the service had improved other capabilities in this response which could be used in this type of incident;
- In reference to Command Support Provision comments (page 133) Members sought assurance that appropriate station support was in place. Assurance was given that FRS had all assets required allocated at the appropriate stations, in appropriate locations, based on levels of risk. In relation to the comment raised that Sleaford station was losing some of its technical skills, the Committee noted that the level was seen as being technically higher than that delivered at every Fire Station. It was reported that the proposal aimed to deliver command support from low level to complex incidents and the proposed structures and equipment allowed for this to be completed. It was clarified that capability would not change, however, what differed was the ability for command support to be implemented from the very first attendance which also enabled greater geographical coverage across the County;
- Members reiterated that shifting resources, specialisms, and equipment to where these were needed more imminently was reducing activity at already quiet stations. Assurance was given that the initial assessment accounted for all operational activity over a five-year period. Preventative and protective work carried out in line with a number of incidents across the County had improved the way in which local businesses were managing their own risks; this had reduced operational activity. Confidence was placed in the allocation of assets across the County, which could then manage future demand. It was noted that a flexible model operated already, which allowed for resources to be moved within the County as required;

- It was emphasised that Lincolnshire FRS had some of the most excellent fire appliances and equipment in the Country. It was noted that Lincolnshire FRS was conscious that it needed to ensure it had sufficient people resources to enable the appliances and equipment to be available. Assurance was also given that skilled human resources were allocated to operate vehicles and advanced technological equipment acquired at this moment in time;
- Members requested further information around the Capital Plan of circa £1.2m allocated to the project. The breakdown of proposed expenditure combined, covered the replacement of seven (7) vehicles, four (4) boats and funding of the Command Support Unit - among other - as per the needs described throughout the report. Rather than requesting like-for-like replacements of vehicles, it was proposed that FRS would pull the Capital replacement programme and subsequently would proceed with tenders recognising that there was £1.2m ceiling to look at procuring the proposed assets after the existing Capital programme was utilised; and
- Members asked that the final comment on page 135 of the report [*“What is vitally important (...) within the job function.”*] be noted as one representing a substantial percentage of the survey respondents. It was recognised by officers that a comprehensive spending review would be put forward to the Home Office and the government in request of additional funding to support FRS to deliver its statutory duties including its public protection and prevention statutory duties, which would satisfy these comments. Assurance was given that current and future resourcing would be utilised in the most effective, advantageous and efficient manner.

RESOLVED

1. That the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee unanimously supported the recommendations to the Executive as detailed on page 66 of the report pack.
2. That the comments listed above be forwarded on to the Executive in relation to this item.

80 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman invited Kiara Chatziioannou, Scrutiny Officer, to present the report, which invited the Committee to review the work programme as detailed on pages 144 – 146 of the report pack and to highlight any additional scrutiny activity to be included for consideration in the work programme.

It was noted that there had been a change to the title of an item to be considered at the 14 December 2021 meeting, the title of the item for the Crime and Disorder Committee had change to: 'Serious Organised Crime, Fraud and Modern Day Slavery.

RESOLVED

That subject to the above amendment, the work programme as set out on pages 144 to 146 of the report pack be received.

The meeting of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee ended at 11:55am.

81 STAY SAFE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL UPDATE

SITTING AS THE CRIME & DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report, which provided an update on the Stay Safe project, it's achievements to date and future plans.

The Chairman invited Clare Newborn, Community Safety Manager, to remotely present the item.

The Committee were provided with background information relating to the formation of the Stay Safe Partnership in 2015; the key objectives of the project, which were to:

- To make the most effective and efficient use of public resources currently utilised in delivering preventative education to children and young people in a school setting;
- Tackle existing and developing priorities effecting young people; and
- Consider the engagement and education of children, teachers, other professionals and parents.

Detail's relating to the Stay Safe offer to schools was shown on page 150 of the report pack. It was noted that every secondary school in Lincolnshire was offered two 'Stay Safe' days in every academic year, at no cost, and that any additional days were able to be requested, but these would be chargeable.

In addition to the 'Stay Safe' days, primary and secondary schools were also able to book from a range of individual sessions offered by agencies through the County Council Stay Safe Directory, the majority of which were free to schools. It was noted that currently there were currently 64 packages available to primary schools and 82 packages available to secondary schools and colleges ranging from e-safety to Prevent awareness, modern slavery, mental health, knife crime and hate crime. It was highlighted that since the Stay Safe Partnership had been set up in September 2015, staff training and student workshops had been delivered to 100% of secondary schools and 99% of primary schools across Lincolnshire, which equated to over 186,000 students and staff. Page 151 of the report provided the Committee with information relating to training provided to schools since 2015.

It was reported that the delivery of 'Stay Safe' days had been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions and school closures, but the partnership had managed to deliver on 'Stay Safe'

days virtually to 64% of mainstream secondary schools in 2019/20. Details of the on-line provision were provided in the report.

In conclusion, the Committee noted that the partnership continually strived to better its offer to schools. The Committee was able to view feedback from students and teachers which were include in the report. It was noted that due to the demand from primary and secondary schools for preventative and safety messaging; and in order to expand the work of the partnership beyond secondary age pupils, there was to be further investment in the core Stay Safe team to ensure that the team had the capacity and resilience to meet future demand.

The Committee was invited to comment on the update relating to on the 'Stay Safe' project. The Committee raised some the following points:

- The provision of mental health sessions and whether these sessions were available to private schools. Confirmation was given that the 'Stay Safe' offer was available to all schools;
- One member commended the work done by the partnership and enquired whether any work was done with parents to help them keep their children safe. The Committee noted that the partnership did engage with parents, and that during lockdown, webinars sessions had been held for parents;
- The prevalence of knife crime in Lincolnshire. The Committee was advised that the issue of knife crime in Lincolnshire was not an issue as it was in some other areas. One member enquired whether the use of scanners had been considered. Clarification was given that the introduction of a scanner would be the responsibility of a school;
- Whether any of the sessions took into consideration anti-social behaviour. It was noted that this area was touched on in the sessions but, it was an area that would be covered by the Community Safety team; and
- Whether there were any disclosure trends. It was noted that there had been a greater number of domestic abuse disclosures, and that these were delivered and managed by expert providers. The Committee also noted that there had been an increase in on-line bullying.

The Chairman extended his thanks on behalf the Committee to the Community Safety Manager for her presentation.

RESOLVED

That the report on the 'Stay Safe' project be received and that support be extended to the continued delivery of the 'Stay Safe' project and that the comments raised by the Committee be received and taken in to account.

The meeting closed at 12.21 pm