

**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES  
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
 8 MARCH 2022**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors Mrs J Brockway, M R Clarke, A Dani, W H Gray, K E Lee and E J Sneath.

Councillors: L A Cawrey (Executive Councillor Fire and Rescue) and A P Maughan (Executive Support Councillor Fire and Rescue) attended the meeting as observers.

Councillor C Matthews (Executive Support Councillor NHS Liaison, Community Engagement, Registration and Coroners) attended the meeting as an observer remotely, via Teams.

Officers in attendance:-

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

The following officers joined 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), Lee Sirdifield (Assistant Director – Corporate), Ryan Stacey (Assistant Chief Fire Officer) and Paul Drury (Prevent Officer).

108 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

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

109 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

110 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2022

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 January 2022 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

111 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF

OFFICERS

The Chairman advised the Committee, that leadership for the Public Protection function was being transferred from Andrew Crookham, Executive Director – Resources to Glen Garrod, Executive Director for Adult Care and Community Wellbeing with effect from 1 April 2022.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman extended thanks to Di Coulson, Assistant Director for Public Protection for all her hard work and support to the Committee during the last two years. The Committee was advised that Di would be returning to her substantive role with Lincolnshire Police.

The Committee was advised that Martyn Parker, Detective Chief Superintendent at Lincolnshire Police had been appointed as the new Assistant Director for Public Protection and would be joining the Council shortly, and it was hoped that Martyn would be able to attend the April meeting of the Committee.

The Executive Councillor for Fire and Rescue and Cultural Services also extended her thanks to Di Coulson for her support and the strengthening relationship with Lincolnshire Police.

In response to queries raised by a member in the previous meeting of the Committee, Will Mason, Head of Culture, advised the Committee that work was ongoing with Bishop Grosseteste University regarding the opening of the Ermine Library Hub. It was highlighted that works were due to begin on site week commencing 7 March 2022, to this week to upgrade the boiler and that this work was expected to be completed by the end of the month. The Committee was also advised that the Heads of Terms had been shared with the university, once these were accepted, matters would then proceed.

The local member extended thanks to everyone involved for all their hard work to get the hub open again.

112 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2021-2022 - QUARTER 3

The Committee considered a report from Sara Barry, Head of Safer Communities, Mark Baxter, Chief Fire Officer, William Mason, Head of Culture, Steven Batchelor, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager and Lee Sirdifield, Assistant Director – Corporate, which set out the performance of Tier Two Service Level Performance Measures for 2021/2022 for Quarter 3 that were within the remit of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman invited officers to remotely present the report to the Committee. The report detailed performance measures for: Community Safety, Fire Safety, Libraries, Road Safety, Trading Standards and Volunteering.

Ryan Stacey, Assistant Chief Fire Officer also participated in the presentation to the Committee.

During consideration of the report, some of the following comments were raised:

- Some clarification was sought regarding the classification of fires, particularly fires in skips/refuse containers. The Committee was advised that primary fires related to property and a secondary fire did not involve property. Therefore, fires in refuse containers would be classed as secondary fires. It was noted that fire and rescue worked with the arson task force and fire investigators to try and establish the cause of such fires; and that where possible individuals were charged;
- Page 29 – Deliberate Secondary Fires – It was highlighted that this target had not been met, as there had been a slight increase in the number of incidents compared to the previous year, which equated to six additional incidents over a nine-month period. The Committee noted that the reason for the increase in the number of incidents was the weather, as more people were engaging in normal activity later in the evenings, and that more incidents happened during the summer months;
- Reduction in the number of cooking related fires (chip pan fires). It was reported that there had been a 14% reduction in these types of fires. The Committee noted that this reduction had been partly due to home safety prevention activities; but the reduction was also attributed to healthier eating, as more people were now moving to healthier ways of cooking;
- The types of fire prevalent in farming environment. The Committee was advised that a considerable number of fires on farms were caused by an accumulation of combustible material in farm machinery, there was therefore a seasonal variation in the number of fires throughout the year. It was also noted that a small number of fires happened in agricultural outbuilding, barns etc. The Committee noted that some comparative investigations could be done to reveal how Lincolnshire compared with other similar rural communities in this regard;
- Learning from the five fire fatalities in Lincolnshire and whether there was sufficient resource available to deal with such incidents. The Committee was advised that fire and rescue worked very closely with police crime scene investigators to gather evidence from an investigatory perspective or a forensic level, depending on the level of investigation. It was noted that lessons were learnt locally, between partner agencies, to see if anything could be done differently from a community, fire and rescue and policing etc. perspective;
- Accidental dwelling fires caused by smoking. No specific figures could be given in this regard at the meeting, but it was highlighted that the number of smoking related incidents across the country were on the decline. This was largely due to the decline in the number of people now smoking. The Committee also noted that modern cigarettes were designed not to burn at a high temperature and that their design now was less likely to cause fires. There was, however, some concern with regard to illegal cigarettes, and it was highlighted that fire and rescue worked very closely with trading standards concerning this matter;
- Whether there had been any update on the Greenwich Leisure Limited baselines from 2016. It was reported that although the baseline was set in 2016, it was reviewed on an annual basis and the fact that the baseline had not changed in recent

years was not because it had not been reviewed, it was because the baseline reflected the national trend;

- The positive impact of the website for libraries both in terms of physical visits to the library, but also for people engaging with the digital service externally from their own homes. It was felt that Covid-19 had accelerated the move to a digital environment;
- The number of feedback forms received. The Committee was advised that due to Covid-19, visitors had been reluctant to complete forms. It was highlighted that a strong indicator of people's enjoyment was the feedback left on TripAdvisor. It was reported that all of the council's heritage sites had achieved the TripAdvisor excellent rating;
- The impact of mobile libraries in rural communities. The Committee noted that the mobile library service was incredibly important in Lincolnshire. The Committee noted further that a review had been conducted previously to ensure that the service was as efficient as possible, and that this information could be made available to the Committee. Confirmation was also given that mobile libraries still operated around the edge of Lincoln. The Committee was advised that timetable information for mobile libraries was available on the council's website. It was also noted that there had been a decline in the number visits to libraries nationally, mainly attributed to people using computers and mobile phones for reading, and the availability of lower priced books via the internet. It was highlighted that the library service would continue to explore different facets, as libraries were incredibly important part of the community hub network;
- Avian flu update. The Committee was advised there had been around 15 outbreaks in the county and that these were predominantly in the north and east of the county. It was reported that fantastic support had been received from colleagues in the animal plant and health agency, colleagues from fire and rescue and colleagues from highways who had helped with office accommodation when staff needed to be in the north of the county. Officers advised that a report would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee. Confirmation was given to the Committee that compensation was given when birds were culled;
- Some concern was raised about the presence of lithium batteries in children's toys; and the presence of T-bar clear plastic tags in children's clothing. Officers were unable to comment regarding plastic tags but agreed to investigate whether this was an issue nationally. There was acceptance that electronic toys were part of today's electronic world, and that the important factor was the protection of the concealment of the battery and its stability within the toy, to not be removed. It was highlighted that some work was being done with colleagues in the Office for Product Safety and Standards, and that a big campaign had been done around lithium batteries. There was recognition that more that could be done around enforcement, ensuring that toys were not available where batteries were accessible and highlighting to parents the risks associated with lithium batteries. Officers confirmed that a lot of work had been done promoting the risks associated with lithium batteries and very small magnets;
- The selling of illegal cigarettes within the Boston area and the role of the landlord in this regard. Officers agreed to investigate the matter further. The Committee was

advised that if a pattern of behaviour was emerging, the landlord of a shop would be warned that this type of selling was taking place and that they should have methods in place to ensure that no criminal activities were taking place. It was noted that landlords needed to be made aware as they had responsibility, under money laundering legislation, to verify their premises were not being used for criminal means. If activity continued, then quite rightly action would be taken against the landlord because the rent paid to them had been derived from criminal activity. It was reported that a future report could be provided for the Committee's consideration regarding the sources of intelligence used by trading standards;

- The selling of alcohol coming from Russia; and ensuring that foods are labelled correctly. The Committee was advised that the trading standards team were aware;
- Inspections of high-risk premises. The Committee noted that high-risk premises were mainly food premises. Confirmation was given that abattoirs would not be included, as they received veterinary inspections. However, trading standards had links with abattoirs because of the welfare of animals attending abattoirs, and the service would occasionally perform checks of the weight and measures equipment being used;
- Whether there was sufficient capacity to help with the influx of Ukrainian refugees. The Committee was advised that the Lincolnshire Local Resilience Forum had been assisting in supporting a coordination group that was linking the main objectives to support this area; and that officers were working with voluntary organisations to put plans in place on how the response would deal with this matter;
- Confirmation was given that letters of thanks had been sent from the Committee to voluntary organisations;
- The Committee was advised that a report concerning future support to volunteers would be considered by the Committee at their 19 April 2022 meeting, at which Ben Rollett, Chief Executive, Voluntary Centre Services would be attending;
- A request was made for more voluntary support to be offered face-to-face and for some of that support to be offered in the evening either face-to-face or online. Officers agreed to take back the comments raised; and
- Page 54 of the report pack highlighted the number of voluntary and community groups actively supported in Lincolnshire and that the quarter one figures for every year were far higher than for any other quarter. It was reported that the figures were cumulative, and that there tended to be that peak at the start of the year. It was noted that organisations were counted at the first point of contact.

The Chairman extended thanks on behalf of the Committee to officers for their presentation.

#### RESOLVED

That the Service Level Performance reporting against the Performance Framework 2021/22 Quarter 3 be received and that the comments raised by the Committee be noted.

Consideration was given to a report from Steven Batchelor, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager, which provided the Committee with an update on fatal, and killed and serious injury casualty figure for Lincolnshire. The report also provided data on trends, comparisons, and areas of priority.

The Chairman invited Steven Batchelor, to remotely, present the report to the Committee.

In guiding the Committee through the report, particular reference was made to: the substantial and sustained reduction in killed or seriously injured casualties in Lincolnshire; the formation and role of the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP); the current LRSP activity services; the delivery of education, training and publicity to schools and colleges; and the impact of Coronavirus.

Appendix A to the report provided details of road traffic collisions in Lincolnshire for the Committee to consider.

During consideration of the report, the Committee raised some of the following comments:

- Clarity was sought as to why more speed cameras were not used. The Committee was advised that the partnership operated in accordance with the Department for Transport, in that cameras were placed, and enforcement action taken in locations where there was a history of collisions and speed related offending; and that this had been expanded with some mobile operations, when there was an element of community concern. There was recognition that there was an issue of motorists exceeding speed limits and that the introduction of the Safer Road Team within Lincolnshire Police would help alleviate some of this, and that it was expected there would be more activity in communities to identify speeding problems. Officer also agreed that more needed to be done to explore how mobile cameras could be used in some areas where collisions had not occurred;
- Thanks were extended to the LRSP for a comprehensive report;
- The effect of road traffic accidents on local services and whether communication campaigns could be linked into local news stations. The Committee was advised that most of the collision incidents occurring in the county happened on rural roads that had national speed limits, and that collisions were not always attributed to speed. It was highlighted that the partnerships' focus was for people to drive at an appropriate speed for the conditions and the nature of the road they were driving on. It was reported that a package of information was always put together whenever a campaign was run, which provided all the different media outlets the opportunity to create their own story. The Committee noted that there had been good collaboration with all BBC and other TV networks over the years. One member suggested promotion through the County Council magazine. The Committee was advised that this had been used in the past, but there was recognition that more could be done to ensure that the messages were getting out across all different media outlets;
- Some concern was expressed that more regulation and education was required for EU drivers in the county. There was recognition that in some incident's, drivers

lacked awareness and knowledge; and that some motorists wanted to drive safely but needed some assistance to enable them to do so. It was highlighted that the LRSP had provided information in the past, for example a leaflet had been created around drink driving laws and these had been printed in different languages. The partnership had also conducted road shows in areas where it was thought some of the issues were more prevalent. Officers agreed to take away the comments raised to see what action could be taken;

- Use of protective cycling/walking equipment. The Committee was advised that the partnership worked within schools providing both physical and educational training and that a quarterly newsletter was circulated highlighting the importance of reflective clothing and safety equipment for cyclists and pedestrians. Also highlighted was the lack of spatial awareness of school children, and that school children were less likely to see the risks associated with their actions. Reassurance was given that the educational training provided to schools was tailored to meet the needs of the young people. Reference was also made to the changes to the Highway Code and the hierarchy of road users;
- The high proportion of collisions on rural roads in the county, with mention being made to the East Lindsey area. One member sought advice as to what more could be done to make drivers aware of a particular hotspot in the East Lindsey area (East Keal). Officers agreed to look into the matter outside of the meeting; and
- Whether any conclusions were derived from the statistical information provided in Appendix A. The Committee was advised that the main type of information derived was relating to the types of collisions, different types of road users; and it also highlighted the key areas that needed more focus on in Lincolnshire, which were motorcycle safety and young drivers.

*(Councillor A Dani left the meeting at 12 noon)*

The Chairman extended his thanks on behalf of the Committee to the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager for his presentation.

#### RESOLVED

1. That the Road Safety Partnership Annual report be received and that the comments raised by the Committee be noted.
2. That the work being undertaken by the Road Safety Partnership to reduce the number of people killed and injured on county road be endorsed.

#### 114 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 100 and 101 of the report pack and to highlight any additional scrutiny activity to be included for consideration in the work programme.

Appendix A to the report provided the Committee with an extract from the Executive Forward Plan relating to the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee was advised that the item Adult Education and Community Development, was now being considered by the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee, as it was felt that it fitted in better within the remit of the Committee. Any members wishing to hear the debate on this item were invited to attend to observe the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee meeting, details of which would be circulated to members of the Committee

During consideration of the report, a request was made for a report to be included on a future agenda regarding the support being provided for Ukrainian refugees.

#### RESOLVED

That the work programme as set out on pages 100 and 101 of the report pack be received, subject to the inclusion of a future agenda item being added regarding the support being provided to Ukrainian refugees.

The meeting of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee ended at 12:16pm.

#### 115 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PREVENT

##### **SITTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman invited Sara Barry, Head of Safer Communities, to remotely present the item, which provided a summary of Prevent activity in Lincolnshire during 2021/22. Paul Drury, Prevent Officer was also present remotely, to provide support for this item.

The Head of Safer Communities took the opportunity to extend her thanks to Paul for all his work in his role as Prevent Officer with the council and wished him well in his future retirement.

In guiding the Committee through the report mention was made to:

- the continuing threats from terrorism in the UK;
- the Council's role in delivering Prevent;
- the three objectives of Prevent;
- the Lincolnshire Prevent;
- the Channel Panel, a key element of Prevent delivery, a multi-agency approach to provide support at an early stage to those identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism or supporting terrorist organisations; and



- Community engagement, the Committee noted that work carried out across the county included working with third sector organisations to support a wide range of projects, working with schools, families in local communities to build up an awareness of the risks of radicalization; and national development.

The Committee was advised that the Local Authority was required to ensure that all staff were appropriately trained to be able to recognize radicalization, extremism and vulnerability. Details of the training provided, and attendance figures were shown within the report presented.

During consideration of the report, the Committee raised some of the following comments:

- Some concern was raised about extreme right-wing influences on school age children (reference Page 109 of the report). The Committee was reassured that when work was done with young people across the communities and that all forms of extremism were covered. It was highlighted that when training was provided to schools it was aimed for teachers, as they were the prime source of observation amongst the children;
- Women's engagement events – It was noted that three events had been held prior to Covid-19; and now that restrictions were lifting events were re-starting again and events were planned at Grantham, Skegness and Stamford and a families' event at RAF Scampton, a first for the council working with the armed forces. It was also highlighted that officers worked with parish councils and village hall committees to raise awareness of the work being undertaken regarding Prevent. It was agreed that dates of the forthcoming events would be shared with the Committee; and
- Thanks were extended to the excellent Prevent training session provided by Paul for councillors. Mention was also made to the role of councillors in their communities in delivering the Prevent message. It was also highlighted that all councillors should have the opportunity to attend Prevent training.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended his thanks to officers for the presentation; and best wishes were also extended to Paul in his retirement.

#### RESOLVED

That the Annual Review of Prevent be received and that the comment raised by the Committee be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.39 pm