

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 18 SEPTEMBER 2015

**Statement from: Councillor B Young, Executive Councillor for
Crime Reduction, People Management, Legal**

CRIME REDUCTION

The Safer Communities Service commissions a number of projects whose aim is to prevent crime and support the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. One such project is the Vulnerable Victims Service which targets support to repeat and vulnerable victims experiencing and complaining of anti-social behaviour. As well as safeguarding these individuals, the project's aim is to reduce demands on council and police services. For many victims referred into the service the issues of anti-social behaviour are magnified by social isolation, or it may be that there is an underlying medical condition. Advocates working with these victims are able to support the individual to access additional services such as befriending, dementia, or mental health support. The service receives around 100 referrals per year.

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

The Youth Offending Service has now completed the restructure which was necessary following the Fundamental Budget Review. The new operating model is in place, based on a revised two team structure and core bases at Lincoln and Grantham. The service is progressing the opportunity to locate duty staff within the Police station in Lincoln city centre. This will provide support to children on their reception into Police custody and assist in transferring information, addressing safeguarding concerns, and informing decision making

As part of on-going efficiency measures, Her Majesty's Court Services are consulting around the proposal to close existing Courts located at Skegness and Grantham. Given the geography and scale of Lincolnshire, this proposal will have implications and interests for criminal justice agencies working with both and adults and youths, with the potential of leaving Lincoln as the remaining Youth Court in Lincolnshire.

Finally, at the request of the Ministry of Justice, the Youth Justice Board are due to consult with all Youth Offending Services regarding the need to generate further in year (2015-16) national savings of approximately £12M. The early indications are that this may represent a further individual 14% budget reduction in service funding (approximately £125,000 for Lincolnshire) on top of the 7.5% savings announced in April 2015.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

In order to understand fully the current picture and longer term trends of domestic abuse in Lincolnshire, a very in-depth analytical report has been produced by the Safer Communities analytical team. This strategic overview involved input by many partners, including the police and health organisations. The report contains 69 key findings and 24 recommendations which will inform the County Council's and other partners' approach to supporting victims, targeting the perpetrators, and preventing

domestic abuse. The national crime survey suggests that 1 in 15 adults (aged between 16 and 59) suffered at least one incident of domestic abuse in 2013/14 – this means that there were around 25,500 victims of domestic abuse in Lincolnshire during that year. Although many incidents are not reported, those that are account for a high proportion of the workload of many public agencies, including 1 in 7 police urgent callouts, 1 in 3 violent crimes, 1 in 4 adult safeguarding referrals, and 2 in 5 children's social care assessments.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Impact of Agresso Implementation on HR and Payroll

The difficulties experienced since the launch of the Agresso system in April 2015, and the delays in resolving the system issues, have impacted negatively on some aspects of the service which People Management delivers. This relates specifically to:

- the Payroll Service, where many Council employees have been affected as a result of incorrect pay;
- delays for Managers inputting key data into the system, such as appraisals, due to system issues;
- delays in developing the Agresso reporting functionality which has impacted on the production of key performance reports, including sickness absence

Serco have indicated that the major system issues will be fixed by the end of September, and a programme is in place to monitor this work to ensure an effective working system by then. Further improvements will follow between October 2015 and March 2016.

Despite these system issues, the HR Advisory service has continued to deliver 'business as usual' activity, including supporting Managers with complex disciplinary, sickness absence and grievance matters. The Service has continued to provide HR support to service area restructures (see below).

Managing Workforce Change

Restructures in 2015/16 (which began in June) are being managed within the planned programme for:

- Environment & Economy, including Legal Services & Democratic Services
- Audit & Finance
- Targeted areas in children's services
- Libraries and Heritage management

Recruitment and Retention of Key Skills

Despite the reduction in the overall size of the Council workforce, recruitment and retention of key skills remain a key focus for the Corporate Management Board.

Within this, a key priority is to maintain our reputation as a good employer and ensure that we remain attractive in the market place. The People Management Service have been requested to provide specific support and offer innovative solutions to address recruitment and retention issues, with particular focus on hard-to-fill posts including qualified Social Workers, Engineers, Public Procurement Officers and Planners.

Additionally, since April 2015, the People Management Service has led on a project to engage with and promote employment opportunities for young people within the Council. This includes work experience, supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships. A key focus is to 'grow our own' through increasing apprenticeships in hard-to-fill areas, ensuring effective succession planning.

LEGAL SERVICES

Legal Services Lincolnshire has continued to support the County Council's major initiatives including the Public Inquiry into plans for the Lincoln Eastern Bypass, progression of the Grantham Southern Relief Road, and implementation of the library changes including the procurement process required by the Localism Act.

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