

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 12 JULY 2013

Statement from: Councillor P A Robinson, Executive Councillor for Fire & Rescue, Emergency Planning, Trading Standards, Equality and Diversity

Fire & Rescue

Joint working with East Midlands Ambulance Service (Emas)

Exploratory talks between our FRS, Public Health and EMAS are continuing to examine ways in which ambulance response times across the county can be improved by closer co-operation between 'blue light' services in accordance with the Government's Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP). Our current 'co-responder' service, with firefighters providing emergency first aid when they can reach a 999 caller more quickly than the ambulance, is aimed at stabilising the situation until EMAS reaches the scene.

Whilst Government funding may be available under the JESIP initiative, it will be important to avoid over-loading the availability of Retained Duty firefighters in the rural areas where a new scheme is likely to be needed most.

Continuing move to 'spine' of whole-time manned fire stations

In order to exploit the value of whole-time firefighters with their faster response times and higher level of training, Lincolnshire FRS plans to have a 'spine' of nine whole-time manned fire stations by 2015: in the last two years the number has increased to six. When completed, the spine will enable to first or second fire appliance arriving at an incident will be whole-time manned.

Progress of new fire control

Many Fire & Rescue Services have been left with fire control systems which would have been upgraded or replaced were it not for the expectation that the Regional Fire Control project would make them no longer necessary. When the regional scheme was abandoned, the Government encouraged fire services to form 'clusters' of fire controls to preserve some of the resilience it had promised. Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Humberside and Hertfordshire formed a cluster and received funding from DCLG to establish a joint control system. The new system is planned to become operational in 2015: it will retain a control room in each county with two data centres (Humberside and Hertfordshire) to provide resilience. Response times and cross border co-operation will be enhanced by 'dynamic' systems which will enable fire controllers to see on their screens the location of all appliances and communicate more effectively with them than at present.

Emergency Planning

Exercise Georgiana

Exercise Georgiana was held in Lincolnshire on 21 to 23 May to test planning and procedures to deal with a major rail crash. The exercise was run successfully in three locations – Claypole as the notional site of the crash itself, the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) facility at Waddington, and the grounds of the Epic Centre where an emergency mortuary was set up. Exercise Control was based at FRS HQ. More details of the exercise are available on the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum website at <http://www.lincolnshireprepared.co.uk/>. The Emergency Planning staff

were extremely grateful for the whole-hearted participation of so many volunteer 'victims', which contributed greatly to the success of the exercise.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards, working in partnership with the Police and HMRC, has continued to take steps to tackle the sale of illicit tobacco and alcohol across Lincolnshire. In the last 12 months over 30,000 illicit cigarettes 15 kilos of hand rolling tobacco and 190 litres of alcohol have been seized and destroyed. These actions have also resulted in 15 premises having their licence to sell alcohol removed, and currently 6 criminal prosecutions are underway. This area of work will remain a priority in the next 12 months for the Trading Standards Service

Following an intensive enforcement programme to tackle the sale of counterfeit products on sale at Eastgate Market in Ingoldmells, a number of the cases have now been heard. The sale of counterfeit products such as sportswear, make-up, clothing and electrical goods seriously undermines local businesses and put consumers at risk.

The poor weather in the run up to Christmas has again meant that Trading Standards have been supporting and advising the farming community, ensuring animal welfare standards are upheld. This work, along with the detailed audits of Lincolnshire's animal feed producers helps to ensure that Lincolnshire's farming economy retains its strong reputation for quality.