

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 18 SEPTEMBER 2020

Statement from: Councillor B Young, Executive Councillor for Community Safety and People Management

COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Community Safety Team have continued to support the partnership response to the pandemic through data gathering, scanning and analysis, to ensure there is a shared understanding of the impact of CoVID-19 on Domestic Abuse, Fraud and Anti-Social Behaviour incidents for example. The team will continue to monitor trends to enable partners to be focused in their response to these issues.

The team have been working with Domestic Abuse service providers to understand and manage demand for their services during the lock-down period; to ensure there is sufficient capacity to support every adult and child experiencing domestic abuse who reaches out for help. This has included the successful submission of bids for additional Government funding.

The team have been working with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board to progress the Serious Adult Review "Learning from the experience of large-scale Modern Slavery in Lincolnshire" recommendations. A virtual meeting was held with the Victims and Partnerships Lead, Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, to ensure our learning influences future policy and practice around Modern Slavery. Partners have also been working on the development of a Modern Slavery Charter for Lincolnshire, as well as resources to raise awareness of Modern Slavery. Partners are looking to launch both the Charter and resources on Anti-Slavery Day on the 18 October 2020, with the support of Lincoln Cathedral, who have agreed (for 1 night only) to light up the Cathedral yellow as part of the awareness raising campaign.

Trading Standards

The Trading Standards Service has focussed on responding to issues arising from the COVID19 pandemic. The service has undertaken a project to ensure the safety of PPE being sold online and through local retailers. Samples of hand sanitiser and face masks have been submitted for testing. Whilst a number have been found to be non-compliant due to their labelling, serious failures have been identified with some hand sanitisers. Samples tested have been found to include insufficient alcohol content to make them effective and others contained highly toxic methanol, rather than ethanol which is commonly used. Trading Standards are currently following up on all adverse results.

Due to COVID-19, Lincolnshire Police had to suspend their volunteers work, which affected their ability to allocate victims a REVIVE volunteer. Op Revive (Repeat,

Elderly, Vulnerable, Intimidated, Victim Engagement) volunteers provide support and reassurance to those who have been victims of crime. A lot of the cases could be put on hold as the local PCSOs retained 'responsibility' and were looking in on residents until they could start REVIVE again. However there were a number of cases where it wasn't appropriate to stand back and the Trading Standards Scams Prevention Officer has stepped in and done visits with PCSOs. Without their assistance, the Police wouldn't have been able to provide 1:1 support.

Last year Trading Standards set up a Lincolnshire "Better Business for All" (BBfA) Partnership bringing together Lincolnshire Trading Standards, the seven District Councils (H&S, Environmental Health & Licensing), and Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue to identify the issues facing local businesses and shape the provision of effective support services. All of the Lincolnshire BBfA partners have continued to receive enquiries from businesses about their regulatory and legal responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently those enquiries have predominately been in relation to the reopening of their business. Trading Standards co-ordinated the production of a Better Business for All Toolkit of resources to help Lincolnshire businesses become COVID-secure, resume trading safely and protect their staff and customers as lockdown is eased. The toolkit provides all the information and website links in one place making it quicker and easier for businesses to locate the key information they need to restart their business safely.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Apprenticeships

The total number of apprentices on roll, as at 18 August 2020, was 196, with a levy allocation of £1,649,621.00. Local providers are delivering 62% of training provision. At the time of reporting, 27 of the 196 apprentices are on a break in learning, including 20 who have been redeployed due to Covid-19. Of those 27, twelve are due to recommence their learning in September 2020.

The HR Service is working closely with providers to agree the optimum time of return to learning for redeployed apprentices; additionally we continue to work with all providers to ensure our apprentices are supported through to completion of their apprenticeship.

Lincolnshire County Council has amended the target to 250 staff undertaking apprenticeships for 2020-21. The emphasis will be on up-skilling existing staff and recruiting new talent, so we can maximise the levy and benefit from staff development.

The corporate approach is currently:

- Continuing to support take up of apprenticeships across all services and schools. For the Council, areas that are hard to recruit to and retain are a high priority.

- Business Support continuing to drive forward with apprenticeships as part of their workforce development approach. They have also introduced the new Business Administrator Level 3 qualification into their centre and have apprentices working to the new Customer Service Practitioner Level 2 standard.
- The ILM Leadership and Management Apprenticeship for Level 3 are scheduled to commence in the autumn.
- We continue to work with the Local Government Association (LGA), Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), local networks such as Compact and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP), and as part of the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network for the region. This enables Lincolnshire County Council to share and receive resources, refine good practice within the Council and participate in benchmarking exercises with other authorities.
- As part of the Covid-19 recovery plans we are working to ensure, wherever possible, that the Council is in a good position to support apprenticeships in Lincolnshire. One example of this is the transfer of levy funds into the Adult Care Sector. As of the end of July 2020, Lincolnshire County Council was supporting 24 apprentices through this route.

LEGAL

Legal Services Lincolnshire (LSL) has continued to support the County Council, District Council partners and the wider Lincolnshire Resilience Forum with advice during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has included regular updates on rapidly changing Regulations and Guidance.

Advice and support continues to be given to the local outbreak management process and, in particular, preparations for the exercise of the new legal powers granted to County Councils in relation to premises, events and outdoor public places.

The scheduled annual assessment of LSL against the LEXCEL Practice Management Standard took place remotely in July. This was the four-yearly full assessment and led to the assessor finding only four minor areas of non-conformity with the Standard. This was a particularly pleasing result given the difficulties experienced with using the case management system when working from home.

Fortunately that case management system will itself be replaced imminently with the new Civica I-casework cloud-based system due to go live in September 2020. The introduction of the new system has provided the opportunity to rationalise data and processes and introduce a greater number of workflows which should increase the efficiency and therefore the capacity of the service. Progress on the creation of an alternative business structure for LSL has been impacted by Covid-19 but the company, Legal Services Lincolnshire (Trading) Limited has been established and the application by the company for a licence from the Solicitor's Regulation Authority is well advanced.

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