



**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
15 SEPTEMBER 2020**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A N Stokes (Vice-Chairman), W J Aron, K J Clarke, Ms K Cook, Mrs C J Lawton, C R Oxby, L Wootten and R Wootten

Councillors: R D Butroid, Dr M E Thompson and C N Worth attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Sara Barry (Safer Communities Manager), Mark Baxter (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Nick Harrison (Democratic Services Officer), Ben Illsley ((Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue)), Tim Joyce (Area Manager), Mark Keal (Acting Trading Standards Manager), Will Mason (Head of Culture), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Barbara Ward (Principal Trading Standards Officer)

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

There were no apologies for absence.

14 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

15 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 28 JULY 2020

A supplementary document had been published and issued to the Committee on 8 September which included an amended set of minutes for the meeting of 28 July 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 28 July 2020 (as amended and circulated in a supplementary agenda pack) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

16 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 17 AUGUST 2020

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 17 August 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS
AND CHIEF OFFICERS

There were no announcements.

18 HERITAGE SERVICE UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal report from the Head of Culture, on an update on the Heritage Service. Following a question from the Chairman it was reported that a verbal report instead of a written report was being given at the meeting due to the fluidity of the discussions taking place on some of the issues and the timing of sensitive conversations and he commented on the impact of Covid-19 on some of the work being undertaken.

Members were reminded that at a meeting of the Executive on 3 September 2019, consideration had been given to a report from the Executive Director – Place, on the results of a public consultation on the Council's Heritage Service and had sought approval for a series of recommendations relating to proposed changes to the Service. Approval had been given to the Heritage Service to move to a more commercial approach to attract greater income and make the Heritage Service as financially self-sustaining as possible. At that meeting it had been noted that the County Council would look for the receipt of a sustainable business case from a third party to run the Usher Gallery by no later than 31 October 2019. The Head of Culture reported that discussions were still on going and that whilst to date no sustainable business case, or alternative model had been provided by any third party, conversations were ongoing with the City of Lincoln Council with regards to the future of the gallery. The Usher Gallery is owned by the City of Lincoln Council, and was currently leased by Lincolnshire County Council.

At the Executive meeting approval had also been given to serving notice on English Heritage in October 2019 to terminate the lease of Gainsborough Old Hall in October 2020, with Lincolnshire County Council ceasing to manage and operate the Old Hall in October 2020. The Head of Culture reported that the majority of English Heritage staff had been furloughed due to Covid-19 and discussions on an operational plan had therefore been impacted by this. English Heritage had recently notified Lincolnshire County Council that the Old Hall would not be opening on 1 November 2020 and was unlikely to open before the summer of 2021 at the earliest.

The Committee acknowledged that staff had been working in challenging conditions due to the impact of Covid-19 and had come up with some innovative solutions for the provision of the service and a message of thanks was recorded.

(Councillor Clarke joined the meeting at this point)

RESOLVED:

1. That the update be noted;
2. That a written update report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

19 ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE ENFORCEMENT WITHIN TRADING STANDARDS

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Trading Standards Manager, Safer Communities, and the Principal Trading Standards Officer, Safer Communities, on a review of the delivery of Animal Health & Welfare (AH&W) enforcement within the Trading Standards Service in Lincolnshire. County Councils, in England had a statutory duty to work with local communities to help them comply with laws that were aimed at preventing the spread of animal disease and protecting the welfare of animals. Work had been focused on the following areas: disease control; animal by-products; high risk activities such as transportation and markets and rendering plants; animal welfare such as failure to provide treatment and prevention of unnecessary suffering.

The report and presentation included details of the number of complaints and referrals relating to animal health and welfare, the number of inspections of premises, developing and maintaining officer competency and on regional and national collaborations.

The Trading Standards Service had developed a programme of enforcement based on the principles of an AH&W Framework Agreement to ensure that it was: responsive and accountable to local communities; focused on high risk activities to make best use of limited resources; recognition of why national consistency was important for businesses, the public and to protect against animal disease; delivered controls in a way that supported European and international trade agreements; promoted collaborative working with other local authorities, delivery partners and industry.

Members considered the report and as part of the discussions the following points were made:

- The Committee thanked the officers for the comprehensive and interesting report.
- The Council had a statutory duty to investigate complaints regarding farm animals and the RSPCA would investigate complaints involving domestic animals. The Council had good relationships with partners and it was noted that the RSPCA would normally refer any complaints they received about farm animals to the appropriate Council.
- The County Council had 22 qualified generalist officers with varied experience. Other neighbouring Councils may employ specialist officers.

- The complaints received were from a mixture of sources including the public and other agencies. Information was on the County Council website on how to raise concerns.
- It was unclear what the effect of Brexit would be on the service if there was no deal, however the service was continuing business as usual for now. It was possible that there may be changes regarding import/export regulations as well as to pet passports. Possible transportation delays following Brexit were another possibility. Once the situation was clearer then planning would commence and advice would be issued.
- The service had adopted a mixture of announced and unannounced site visits largely depending on the previous history of the business. If issues were found then there would be regular follow up visits.
- A Task Group was looking at the transportation to slaughter of pregnant animals and concerns would be raised with the industry to ensure checks on farms and on transport.
- It was confirmed that there were regulations governing the transportation of animals in terms of feed, water and travelling conditions.
- The majority of Lincolnshire was at present a low risk area for Bovine TB and there had been no planned badger culls to date although this situation was subject to change. Trading Standards were not involved in the licencing or enforcement of badger culls. Bovine TB was the greatest animal health threat that England faced today, and work was being prioritised in Lincolnshire to ensure that farmers and other livestock keepers were aware of, and compliant with, the ever changing rules and regulations.
- In some areas of Lincolnshire badger carcasses were being tested for Bovine TB. In high risk areas, cattle were tested for Bovine TB before being transported and again 60-120 days after arriving at their destination. This gave assurance to members who had concerns about the transportation of livestock from high to low risk areas of the country.
- It was confirmed that any vehicles used for the transportation of rendered materials should be leak proof and that any spillages should be reported to the Council and a possible breach of regulations would be investigated.
- Wildlife parks were licensed by District Councils, however the County Council may undertake some inspections of premises, particularly as Animal By-Products were often used as feed.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and that the Animal Health and Welfare work being undertaken by Trading Standards be endorsed.

20 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2024

The Committee received a report from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, on the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to cover the period 2020 to 2024 which was being presented by the Executive on the 6 October 2020. The views of the Scrutiny Committee would be reported to the Executive as part of the consideration of this item.

The report provided a full update on the work to develop a newly constructed Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) covering the period up to April 2024 and sought approval of the IRMP and associated documents, including the Community Risk Profile and five supporting Framework Documents for: people, response, prevention and protection, resourcing and evaluation. The adoption and publication of an IRMP was a requirement of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 and allowed the Service to focus its plans and resources on the basis of a thorough assessment of the risks facing its communities.

Members discussed the report, and during discussion the following points were made:

- The Committee welcomed the comprehensive report and presentation on the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024 and its proposed publication. The Committee welcomed the proposal for a yearly review of the progress and outcomes of the Integrated Risk Management Plan and supported this being reviewed through the scrutiny process.
- It was confirmed that this would be a 'live' plan and be updated when necessary.
- It was noted that risk slightly increased at certain points in the year and specific reference was made to university term times.
- Members were disappointed at the response rate to the consultation on the fire service and it was noted that the service was looking at new ways of engagement with the public and partners to enable better response rates in the future. This included those members of the public for whom English was not their first language. It was suggested a low response rate could indicate that the public were generally satisfied with the service.
- It was noted that response times in very rural areas were lower and it was also noted that these areas were often classified as lower risk areas. The Committee supported the approach of these areas being targeted with a greater level of prevention and protection approach to aid in reducing risk.
- The County risk profile information was particularly welcomed for giving information on what the main risks were and that resources were matched to these in the most appropriate parts of the County.
- Reference was made to the processes for raising concerns and support available for any staff members who felt that they were subjected to bullying and harassment.
- Work was on going with agencies and other partners to identify trends in the statistics, particularly in relation to incidents relating to drink, drugs and the use and manufacture of illegal cigarettes.
- The report should use the term 'fire stations' where appropriate and not 'stations'.
- The Committee enquired why the population figures for Lincoln didn't include the student population as a possible oversight. Officers confirmed that including the student population could result in a disproportionate focus of resource. It was confirmed that the student population were the focus of a more targeted prevention and protection approach to mitigate this.

(Councillors Mrs C Lawton and Ms K Cook gave their apologies for the remainder of the meeting)

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Executive, as set out in the report on the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024;
2. That a summary of the above comments be passed on to the Executive as part of its consideration of this item.

21 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by the Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on its work programme for the coming year. The full work programme was detailed within the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and an update report on domestic abuse be scheduled in for a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.08 pm