

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 13 DECEMBER 2013

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

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (FRS)

FBU Dispute

A series of short strikes has been called by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) in the recent past, arising from their national dispute with DCLG over proposed changes to conditions of service in terms of fitness and capability and their implications on pensions. Although local fire authorities such as our Council are the employers of the firefighters, the issues at stake in the dispute are capable only of settlement at a national level.

Although some Lincolnshire firefighters have taken strike action, thanks to those who have continued to work, our FRS has been able to provide a good level of service across the county.

Extension of Co-Responding

In partnership with the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) the County Council has made a successful bid for funding a pilot to extend the co-responder scheme run by the FRS. The pilot will see the provision of a small number of FRS ambulances which, in certain circumstances, will be able to transport patients to hospital.

Reduction in Fires

Following on from last year's significant reduction in fires and fire deaths, the downward trend has continued in the current reporting period, in particular with regard to deliberately started fires.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

Exercise Cynus

Following the successful mutual Peer Reviews of Local Resilience Fora (LRF) between Lincolnshire and Devon and Cornwall, our county LRF has been selected as one of a small number of areas to take part in Exercise CYNUS, a government funded exercise testing the national response to a flu epidemic, which remains at the top of the national risk register.

Exercise Lazarus

On 26 November our county Emergency Planning Team ran a very successful day long table-top exercise to study the recovery phase following major flooding on Lincolnshire's east coast. The exercise was attended by over 60 representatives across the range of agencies involved, both within our Council and outside bodies.

The exercise was especially useful in bringing out the sheer scale of the lasting impact of a major flood and the decisions which would be needed in terms of recovery and re-construction.

Lincolnshire Red Cross

A new Red Cross centre has been opened this month in Langtoft, near Market Deeping. About 50 volunteers and staff from across South Lincolnshire are involved in delivering first aid at events, support at home, helping communities prepare for and recover from emergencies, and first aid training in the community. The new centre houses a fully equipped events ambulance and has a large training room to support volunteers and help the team cope with the increase in demand for their services.

TRADING STANDARDS

Work continues to bring to court those businesses and traders who flout the law by selling unsafe and dangerous products to consumer and illegal goods that impact on legitimate businesses in Lincolnshire. Fake and illicit tobacco continues to be found across the county, with sellers being prosecuted and action taken to remove their licences. In October the parent company of TK Maxx was prosecuted for selling potentially lethal phone chargers and two sellers of large quantities of counterfeit clothing were imprisoned.

Our Trading Standards Service has teamed up with the national Citizens Advice Consumer Service to provide help and support to consumers who run into problems with goods and services. This service is available on a 24 hour basis via www.citizensadvce.org.uk, or on weekdays from 0900 to 1700hrs by telephone 08454 040506. In Lincolnshire the major problem areas for consumers using the new helpline are second-hand cars, home improvements, furniture and telephone services. Consumers can learn of current “scams” by following @LincsTS on twitter or accessing the Lincolnshire Trading Standards Facebook page. The Trading Standards section of our Council Website is extremely informative.