



**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 DECEMBER 2021**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs J Brockway, M R Clarke, Mrs N F Clarke, A Dani, W H Gray, T R Ashton and A M Hall.

Councillors: Mrs P A Bradwell OBE, (Executive Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement), L A Cawrey (Executive Councillor Fire and Rescue and Cultural Services), A P Maughan, (Executive Support Councillor Fire and Rescue and Cultural Services) and D McNally (Executive Councillor Waste and Trading Standards) attended the meeting as observers remotely, via Teams

Councillor S P Roe (Executive Support Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement) attended the meeting as an observer.

Officers in attendance:-

Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer) and Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

The following officers joined the meeting remotely, via Teams:

Steven Batchelor (Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager), Mark Baxter (Chief Fire Officer), James Chapple (Head of Registration, Celebratory and Coroners Services), Diane Coulson (Assistant Director - Public Protection), Will Mason (Head of Culture), Lee Sirdifield (Assistant Director – Corporate), Paul Smith (Acting Senior Coroner), Jade Thursby (Domestic Abuse Business Manager) and Ryan Stacey (Assistant Chief Fire Officer).

90 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A M Key, J L King, K E Lee, E J Sneath and A N Stokes.

It was noted that the Chief Executive, having received notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, had appointed Councillors A M Hall and T R Aston to replace Councillors E J Sneath and A N Stokes respectively, for this meeting only.

Note: Councillor K E Lee observed the meeting remotely, via Teams.

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91 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of members' interest were made at this stage of the proceedings.

92 MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 November 2021 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

93 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF
OFFICERS

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Councillors L Cawrey (Executive Councillor Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services), A P Maughan (Executive Support Councillor Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services), D McNally (Executive Councillor Waste and Trading Standards), and Mrs P A Bradwell OBE (Executive Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement).

The Executive Councillor for Waste and Trading Standards advised the Committee that Lincolnshire had three confirmed cases of Avian Flu, with a further two cases pending results and that a sixth location was due to be visited.

There were no announcements received from senior officers.

94 FIRE AND RESCUE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

Consideration was given to a report from Mark Baxter, Chief Fire Officer, which invited the Committee to consider and note the contents of the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Authority's Statement of Assurance for 2020-2021.

Appendix A to the report provided a copy of the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance 2020-2021 document for the Committee to consider.

The Committee was advised that the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Authority was satisfied that the systems and measures it had in place with respect to financial, governance and operational matters for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 were fit for purpose and were effective. It was further highlighted that its business had been conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money had been properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently, and effectively; and that the National Framework requirements had been met.

During consideration of this item, the Committee raised some of the following comments: -

- Thanks were extended to Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue (LFR) and East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) staff for their professionalism and support during the pandemic; particular reference was also made to the Horncastle Fire Station;
- When the IMT strategy review would begin and how frequently would reviews be carried out. The Committee was advised that the services continually received software updates to the bespoke packages used; and that the IMT strategy would be updated continually;
- Definition of the SHERMAN vulnerabilities. The Committee was advised that as a result of working closely with the Integrated Risk Team, the service had been able to profile risk and identify known vulnerabilities within communities. The Committee noted that the definition of SHERMAN was: smoker, hoarder, elderly, reduced mobility, mental health, alcohol misuse, and needs care and support;

(Councillor S P Roe (Executive Support Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement) joined the meeting at 10.18am).

- Collaborative working arrangements. The Committee noted that the service worked with other fire services who had a similar makeup to Lincolnshire; and that agreements were in place with fire and rescue services bordering Lincolnshire to augment the services operational resources when required. It was noted that the service maintained a collaborative partnership with Norfolk, Humberside and Hertfordshire fire and rescue services as part of a project to develop an integrated and resilient joint mobilising service;
- Support was extended to the collaborative work with the Local Flood Authority and LFR operation of the two-trailer mounted flood pumps, which provided extra pumping capacity to deal with high volumes of water in a flooding event;
- An explanation was provided relating to the difference between the number of calls received by the service 17,836 in 2020/21 and the number of calls attended in 2020/21 which was 8,039. The Committee noted that the shortfall would comprise of hoax call, false alarm calls; calls that did not need a 999 response, and malicious calls. The Committee was advised that breakdown data relating to the shortfall could be provided to members of the Committee after the meeting;
- An explanation was sought as to which service would respond for example, to an overturned lorry in a field. The Committee was advised that the main responders would be the police and highways; and that the fire service would only be called if there was risk to life i.e. a driver being trapped, or if any other risks were present i.e. the removal of contaminants; and
- A question was asked whether the service was ready to support the ambulance service, should the support be required in the coming months. Reassurance was given that the service working with the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum; and was engaging with partners on a daily basis, to help with the vaccine rollout and to provide support to EMAS when required.

The Chairman extended thanks on behalf of the Committee to the Chief Fire Officer for his presentation.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Authority's Statement of Assurance for 2020-2021 be received and noted.

95 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE PERFORMANCE
FRAMEWORK 2021-2022 – QUARTER 2

The Committee considered a report from Diane Coulson, Assistant Director - Public Protection, Mark Baxter, Chief Fire Officer, William Mason, Head of Culture, Steven Batchelor, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager and Lee Sirdifield, Assistant Director – Corporate, which set out the performance of Tier Two Service Level Performance Measures for 2021/22 Quarter 2 that were within the remit of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman invited officers to present the report to the Committee, the report detailed performance measures for: Community Safety, Fire Safety, Libraries and Heritage; Road Safety; Trading Standards and Volunteering.

Ryan Stacey, Assistant Chief Fire Officer also participated in the presentation to the Committee.

During consideration of the report, some of the following comments were noted: -

- Further information was requested relating to which schools had taken up the e-safety workshops in 2021. The Committee noted that the workshop had been running for a while and that further details as to which schools had participating with the workshops would be shared with members of the Committee. The Committee was advised that face to face meetings of the workshops had proven to be more beneficial, as this allowed for better engagement. Reassurance was given that there was adequate capacity to provide the workshops, even if every school was to request them;
- A request was made for quarter range dates to be included on the bottom of pages, to avoid confusion. Officers agreed to include in future reports;
- Deliberate primary fires (page 41) whether any trends were occurring. Confirmation was given that all types of property were looked at and that no trends had been identified. Confirmation was also given that the information was broken down by property type and occupancy type. Further clarity was given that fire safety activities were directed to be person focused, as it was the people and the way that they lived in properties that actually caused the fires;
- Deliberate secondary fires (page 43). The Committee was advised that there had been a reduction in almost all property types. It was noted that refuse/refuse containers continued to account for most deliberate secondary fires, although there had been a slight reduction from the previous year and that the service kept in close contact with district councils. The Committee noted that Lincoln City fly-tipping and

refuse initiative was working well and was being monitored. It was hoped that this initiative would be implemented in other district council areas, should similar issues arise. It was however noted that incidents in rural areas did not have the same arson link to them as there was not the same level of access for an opportunist;

- Primary Fires (page 37). It was noted that the increase in primary fires in the last year had primarily been seen in fires involving farm related property. As a result of the increase, links were being made with the National Farmers' Union (NFU) to further develop partnership working to enhance preventive messages and actions to try and reverse the trend;
- The need to make the recording of data simpler and more meaningful. It was noted that an updated suite of figures would be available from the start of April 2022. It was noted that the rate per 10,000 population was a really useful metric when comparing to other fire and rescue services, but it was not useful when comparing year on year;
- The need to ensure that plans to promote visitor attractions in the county were in place for 2022. Reassurance was given that work was already well underway and that several initiatives were already planned for 2022 for the whole of greater Lincolnshire. The Committee also noted that season passes were already in place for Lincoln Castle, which offered good value for money for the visitor and that further discussions were continuing with partners across the sector to see what else could be done for the forthcoming year;
- How the number of visits to libraries were recorded. It was reported that most of the libraries had electronic people counters which recorded the number of visitors to libraries and that the number of issues were recorded on the digital system;
- Thanks were extended to the Head of Culture and his team;
- Whether further data could be ascertained relating to individual libraries, to see how each were performing. Officers agreed to look into the request to see if more in-depth data could be made available in future reports;
- The need to promote the wearing of cycle safety gear to young people more. The Committee noted that there was a programme for both primary and secondary schools that promoted visibility and the type of safety equipment recommended children should use when they were either a pedestrian or a cyclist. It was highlighted that secondary school aged children were one of the biggest challenges, as their freedom of movement increased. It was also highlighted that this particular age group had less spatial awareness and were less likely to see the risks associated with their actions. Some concern was highlighted to the disregard of safety rules and the lack of awareness to other road users. There was recognition that all types of road users needed further education and that more was being done to change behaviours;
- A request was made for the number of bicycle accidents recorded. It was reported that Lincolnshire Police colleagues would have to be contacted to obtain the said figure;
- Praise was extended to the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership for not having set a target for the number of child casualties;

- The need for the provision of zig-zag lines outside of schools. The Committee noted that this was a matter for highways. The Committee was advised that contact would be made with highways colleagues regarding the issue, the results of which would then be reported back to a future meeting;
- People killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions graph on page 58. The Committee was advised that the rise in numbers from 2016 was because of the police changing from paper-based recording to an electronic recording system, which classified every injury type;
- How Lincolnshire's Killed or seriously injured (KSI) figures compared to other counties. It was noted that it was difficult to compare with other counties, with Lincolnshire having one of the longest road networks in the country, the vast majority of which were single carriageways, with lots of national speed limits as well as a particularly difficult mix of vehicle users. Bringing all the factors together did present a higher degree of risk than some other areas, so it was very difficult to make a comparison. The Committee noted that comparison with other similar counties had been tried. Officers agreed to look into whether any comparison could be done per class of road;
- Whether helicopters attending emergencies had reduced the number of fatalities. It was felt that would be difficult to comment on as to whether that attendance alone had made the difference, but there would be examples when emergency services attending incidents quickly had made a significant difference and saved lives. Officers agreed to look into this matter;
- The poor labelling of some food items in some shops in Boston. Some concern was expressed as this could cause problems for members of the public with food allergies, as they were unable to ascertain what ingredients foods contained, as labels were written in different languages. Also highlighted was the need for consistent pricing, rather than the price being at the discretion of the assistant selling the goods. Officers agreed to look into the matter further;
- Congratulations were extended to officers for changing the way reports were written, so that they were not target based all the time, as targets could provide an unhealthy approach to the work in question;
- Illicit alcohol and tobacco product seized – page 61, one member enquired as to how many people were prosecuted for selling illicit products. The Committee was advised that all the seizures would be fully investigated, and that prosecution happened when it was possible. Officers agreed to provide details to members of the Committee;
- The valuable services of volunteers throughout the county was commended;
- Whether health and wellbeing support, particularly for mental health was provided to volunteers if they needed it. It was noted that a range of services were available to volunteers, some of which included mental health support. It was highlighted that a survey of volunteers was due to take place in January 2022 to understand their challenges, so that better support could be provided; and
- That a report on volunteering would be ready for the Committee to consider at its March 2021 meeting.

The Chairman extended thanks on behalf of the Committee to officers for their presentation.

RESOLVED

That the Service Level Performance reporting against the Performance Framework 2021/22 Quarter 2 be received and that the comments raised by the Committee be noted.

96 LINCOLNSHIRE CORONERS SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

(Councillor A Dani left the meeting at 11:48am).

Consideration was given to a report from Paul Smith, Acting Senior Coroner and James Chapple, Head of Registration and Coroners Services, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the Lincolnshire Coroners Service Annual Report.

The report provided the Committee with information pertaining to: Lincolnshire's Coronal jurisdiction; the Coroners Statistics for 2020; the challenges and achievements for 2020 and the impact of the pandemic on the service; the positive developments resulting from the Coroners Service Transformation Project, which included the provision of a permanent office and court facility for the service, improved method of working across the County with the introduction of a new electronic referral system and improved communication with other stakeholders; and the potential formation of a Greater Lincolnshire Coroners Service.

In conclusion, the Committee noted, despite the unprecedented challenges presented by the pandemic, the service had received positive feedback from families they had supported in finding closure of the sudden death of a loved one; and that it was hoped that the service would continue to move forward with renewed optimism.

During consideration of this item, the Committee highlighted the following comments to be noted: -

(Councillor A P Maughan, (Executive Support Councillor Fire and Rescue and Cultural Services), left the meeting at 12 noon).

- Some concern was expressed to the increase in the number of deaths caused by industrial diseases, and the number of deaths classed as 'all other conclusions'. It was reported that the increase in industrial diseases was a modest increase year on year, this was mainly due to the large retirement population on the east coast, many of whom had retired from coalfields in the east Midlands or from other industry. The 'all other conclusions', were incidents when the coroner was able to express the circumstances of a death, which did not fit a particular label, for example someone who died as a result of an excess of prescribed medication, the coroner may be satisfied that the person had taken too many tablets but was that because they were in chronic pain, or whether it was an error of judgement, under those circumstances the coroner would not ordinarily return a narrative conclusion.

- Reasons for the delay in the merger. The Committee noted that it was not known why the process was taking so long, the County Council had done everything it needed to do, and that it was now down to the Chief Coroner making an application to the Lord Chancellors Department. It was highlighted that the Acting Senior Coroner for Lincolnshire was also Acting Senior Coroner for North Lincolnshire and Grimsby;
- Confirmation was given that going forward the use of IT would form part of the service, but it was highlighted that some delicate cases were better suited to face-to-face hearings;
- Clarification was sought as to the number Lincolnshire residents who died each year. The Committee was advised that that figure was not within statistics provided, as the Acting Senior Coroner was notified of body lying within the area of Lincolnshire. It was suggested that the information would be held by the Office of National Statistics. Officers agreed to check and report back to the Committee if that information was held by them; and
- Definition of a lawful killing and an unlawful killing. It was reported that both were very rare. Unlawful killing was a killing which arose out of the criminal offences of murder or manslaughter; and lawful killing would be if somebody had been killed through legitimate and proportionate use of force, for example i.e. a police shooting.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended thanks to the presenters.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Coroners Service Annual report be received and that a further update be received in July 2022.

97 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman invited Kiara Chatziioannou, Scrutiny Officer, to present the report, which invited the Committee to review the work programme as detailed on pages 78 to 80 of the report pack and to highlight any additional scrutiny activity to be included for consideration in the work programme.

Appendix A to the Report provided the Committee with an extract from the Executive Forward Plan relating to the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee was advised that the following items had been added to the work programme:

- 25 January 2022 meeting – Registration Service Fee Setting 2022/23 - 2024/25, (pre-decision scrutiny – Executive Councillor decision), report from James Chapple, Head of Registration & Coroners Services;

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- 19 April 2022 meeting – Animal Health and Welfare Enforcement within Trading Standards – Update report from Sara Barry, Head of Safer Communities and Mark Keal, Trading Standards Manager; and
- 31 May 2022 – Cyber Fraud – Impact on Vulnerable Individuals during the Pandemic, report from Diane Coulson, Assistant Director – Public Protection.

RESOLVED

That the work programme as set out on pages 78 to 80 of the report pack be received subject to the addition of the items listed above and the item listed at minute number 96.

The meeting of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee ended at 12:18pm.

(Councillor D McNally, (Executive Councillor for Waste and Trading Standards), left the meeting at 12:18pm).

98 **ADOPTION AND PUBLICATION OF THE DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2021-2024**

SITTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The meeting resumed at 12 :28pm.

The Chairman advised that this item invited the Committee to consider and comment on the adoption and publication of the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021/2024, prior to a decision being taken by the Executive Councillor for Children’s Services, Community Safety and Procurement between the 16 and 23 December 2021.

The report had been circulated separately to members of the Committee on 8 December 2021 for their consideration.

The Chairman invited Jade Thursby, Domestic Abuse Business Manager, to remotely. present the item to the Committee.

Attached at Appendix A to the Executive Councillor report was a copy of the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021/2024 for consideration by the Committee.

The report referred to the background behind the obligations of the authority to publish the final strategy by 5 January 2022; the direction that Lincolnshire would be taking in the next three years in relation to the Domestic Abuse agenda, and the pivotal role Lincolnshire County Council had in delivering the work and new statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, particular reference was made to Part 4 of the Act which provided a four-part statutory framework for the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation and provided clarity over governance and accountability; and ensuring Lincolnshire had a robust response to the wider Domestic Abuse agenda with

the production of an operational delivery plan and subsequent commissioning plans for both outreach and accommodation-based services.

During consideration of this item, the Committee highlighted some of the following comments:

- Clarity was sought around the number of safe accommodations that could be accessed throughout the county and if there were any plans to provide any additional accommodation. Assurance was provided that within the strategy, under the commissioning section, advised of the services currently commissioned in Lincolnshire which were an Outreach and Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Service (IDVA) as well as a Refuge Service to support individuals experiencing domestic abuse and their children. In addition to the commissioned services there were other non-sustainably funded provision provided in the south of the county by a local charity South Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Service (SoLDAS). The Committee was advised that the intention was for further accommodation to be commissioned in line with the Domestic Abuse Act and funding availability, to ensure future consistency and standard across the county. It was also highlighted that a new refuge unit and dispersed accommodation was also coming into place in March 2022;
- Reference was made to disabled persons being at risk of abuse as highlighted in the report. Assurance was given that reporting of domestic abuse and data collection were featured in the strategy and there was acknowledgement that people that have disabilities, both physical and otherwise, did suffer from domestic abuse. It was also reported that the figures for Lincolnshire were not above the average in comparison to national figures. The strategy was inclusive of all individuals and victim groups, including people with disabilities;
- Lincolnshire was below the national average in terms of the number of individuals who spoke a foreign language as their main language and it was highlighted that 69.3% of those who spoke English well, was below the national average. It was felt that this could be associated with the rurality of the county. Further information was sought as to, what mitigations were in place to ameliorate the risk of abuse suffered amongst those individuals. Assurance was provided, that translation services were available in areas of the county where it was needed and that this was a key priority to the partnership. Moreover, the partnership was working with some particular workers from certain cultural backgrounds to mitigate risks and provide support;
- Members requested further information around staffing numbers within the department, whether there were vacancies, and if younger people were encouraged to enter the sector. Assurance was offered in terms of the central partnership team that worked with in Lincolnshire County Council who supported this agenda and pushed elements forward, in light of the £1.4m and the responsibilities under these statutory duties, that team was being expanded and recruitment was imminent in the coming months. In terms of the commissioned service and other services within Lincolnshire (charity-based organisations), there was staff turnover due to the nature of the work. Assurance was also provided that as part of the recommissioning

process, staffing level capacity, future training opportunities for individuals looking at joining this area as well as wages were all being reviewed; and

- Members requested more information on the support available to staff working in this particular area, including mental health support. Assurance was provided, that this was being investigated for staff who may not be working directly with victims but were however exposed to information that could be traumatising. The commissioned service offered one-to-one provision and regular supervision not only in relation to workload but also in regard to emotional and well-being needs. This was being monitored through official commissioning arrangements.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee extended thanks to the Domestic Abuse Business Manager for her presentation.

RESOLVED

1. That the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee unanimously supported the recommendation to the Executive Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement as set out on page three of supplementary report pack.
2. The Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed that the comments listed above be forwarded on to the Executive Councillor. Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement in relation to this item.

The meeting closed at 12.47 pm.

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