

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 27 September 2022**

**Statement from: Councillor L A Cawrey, Executive Councillor for  
Fire & Rescue and Culture Services**

### **FIRE & RESCUE**

#### **Operational Response**

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue's operational response to emergency incidents has returned to the pre-Covid levels of 2019/20. However, trends have changed in line with the blended approach to work; for example, as more people are working from home, more dwelling fires are taking place in the daytime. The main reason for the increase in incidents is due to household equipment.

Through the months of July and August, LFR responded to a variety of incidents linked to environmental impacts; our crews worked in extreme 40c temperatures dealing with a multitude of fires. Our response to wildfires in the first four months of this financial year has exceeded the annual total for the last three years.

#### **Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Service**

The HMI re-visited Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue in May to discuss the progress we had made against the two causes for concern which related to our fire protection function and improvements in our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The conclusion of the visit was that LFR had made good progress against both elements. We continue to liaise with HMI representatives on these two areas. A further re-inspection focused on our continued improvements in protection will take place in October, whilst the work relating to the progress against our EDI agenda has been sufficient for HMI to not require further updates and will inspect the on-going progress within round 3 full inspection of the Service early 2023.

#### **Integrated Risk Management, Operational Support & Service Support**

The Integrated risk management team have gone from strength to strength and this was reflected in the 2021 HMICFRS report that highlighted a number of areas of good practice and improvement. Business Continuity, Health & Safety and National Learning were all cited within the report and the Service continues to perform well in these areas. This demonstrates some exceptional development within the department and the team should be rightly proud of this achievement.

#### **Fire Protection**

With a detailed action plan developed following the feedback from the HMICFRS inspection, the team have continued to focus their efforts on the three main areas of feedback: delivery of the risk-based inspection programme, the quality assurance of protection activities and the administrative elements of the function. A robust reporting mechanism has allowed regular updates to be given, with progress outlined against the specific areas. Work has continued into 2022/23 and good progress has been made.

Having successfully completed the national building risk review exercise, (inspecting all known high rise residential buildings), the national focus has now turned to medium rise premises,

(buildings with 4-7 floors). I am pleased to report that we have started preliminary work and are looking to confirm numbers and locations of this type of building across the county.

As a result of feedback from local audit activity and a national recognition of issues with staffing in the care sector, proactive targeting of fire protection requirements in care homes has been carried out by the team. We have been working closely with the county council's Public Health colleagues to confirm required standards and support compliance within homes. Our next planned focus will be hotels across the county, blending physical visits with the provision of information to support compliance.

### **Fire Prevention**

Our 'resource to risk' work, that sees areas identified as 'high risk' across the county proactively targeted, is now embedded as part of our delivery strategy. We have seen an increase in the number of safe and well checks being carried out.

The team have formed part of the working group that has come together to support the Homes for Ukraine work. We have provided fire safety information in a variety of formats and languages and developed the initial check proforma. Recognising our specialist resources and capabilities, we will be carrying out the second follow up visit to all premises hosting Ukrainian families. We will be carrying out a safe and well check but have worked in partnership to add additional elements to the visit, for example child safety, domestic abuse concerns and safeguarding concerns.

## **CULTURE**

### **Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice Awards**

Lincoln Castle, The Collection Museum, the Museum of Lincolnshire Life and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Visitor Centre have been awarded Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice Awards. These awards are based on visitor reviews left on the travel website, Trip Advisor, and only those venues with the very best reviews over the last 12 months are recognised with the award.

The Travellers' Choice Awards put our sites in the top 10 per cent of listings on Trip Advisor and are a glowing indictment of the passion and enthusiasm of our staff and volunteers, who truly bring the county's culture and heritage to life at these four amazing venues.

### **Easter weekend at Lincoln Castle**

With the arrival in April of Lucy the Dragon, a life-sized model of a dragon built into the castle wall, we attracted a wealth of publicity over social media, local radio and press – with her introductory #MeetLucy Facebook post having reached over 120,000 impressions and counting!

Easter weekend was the most popular weekend we have ever seen at Lincoln Castle with 60,000 people visiting over the four-day period and 1,000 children and families taking part in the Dragon Quest trail, hunting down different coloured wire dragons installed around the grounds.

Lucy the Dragon has remained extremely popular with children and adult as the centre piece of 2022's theme of 'magic and illusion' which has included lots of immersive added-value story generating family events and trails - such as the Victorian Dragon Hunters and Once Upon a Castle. The activities are also accompanied by a first edition of "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe", on loan from the British Library and on display in the Magna Carta vault.

### **The Great British Jubilee Picnic**

Adorned in red, white and blue, Lincoln Castle provided the perfect setting for celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June. Throughout the extended Bank Holiday weekend there was a variety of live entertainment on the platinum band stand; from a 1940s singer to historic brass by Queen Victoria's Consort, live screening of BBC coverage and plenty of space for families to bring their own picnics and soak up the atmosphere of this historic and joyous occasion.

Lincoln Castle joined the rest of the nation in celebrating the Jubilee with beacons on the walls lit by The Lord Lieutenant and The Mayor. Two thousand free tickets were made available in advance, allocated within 48 hours, as people congregated on the South Lawn to join in with the nationally-choreographed celebration of bugle call, piper and choir.

The whole weekend was a great success as the castle welcomed 29,500 guests over the four days, averaging over 8,500 per day Thursday to Saturday, and the café enjoyed its most successful days so far. Unfortunately, the typical British weather significantly dampened visitor numbers (but not the spirit!) on the Sunday, but there was one stalwart family who endured the whole day in their pop-up tent.

### **Food and Drink and Craft Beer Festival**

Lincoln Castle hosted a 16-day long celebration of Lincolnshire's best food, drink and entertainment. From Dirty R00ts street food to Goods Plant Base Bakery, Barbell Burger or Gyros there was something for everyone to enjoy during those glorious summer evenings. Over 50,000 visitors sampled the very finest of the county's hospitality in its favourite green space, with a packed programme of day-time and evening music entertainment, featuring the Lincoln Ukulele Band and Backstage Brass. In addition to the free entertainment, there were ticketed activities such as morning yoga, wine-tasting and a set by Norman Jay MBE.

One of the most talked about activities was the call of "all aboard!" for the miniature steam railway which chugged along the driveway. Another unforgettable highlight was the screening of the Woman's UEFA Championship final on 31 July with 600 spectators celebrating the Lionesses' victory!

### **Exhibition: Gaia by Luke Jerram**

Visitors were able to explore our planet like never before through the awe-inspiring art installation, Gaia, by the same artist who brought Museum of the Moon to The Collection in 2019. This exhibition attracted 32,000 visitors between March and May making it the second most popular exhibition we have ever hosted. This brought in new audiences and generated £11,500 in donations through a 'pay what you decide' approach which aimed to ensure the exhibition was accessible to all. A number of events alongside the exhibition added value to the experience, which included a Planetarium, yoga, late night events and chilled sessions.

## **Libraries**

We welcomed StoryTrails, the UK's largest immersive storytelling experience, to Lincoln Central Library on Saturday 30 and Sunday 31 July, celebrating the city's well-known heritage alongside the lesser-known stories of local people. Working hand-in-hand with local creatives and the community, StoryTrails and the Central Library team helped collect previously untold stories from local people that were incorporated into the weekend's major event.

At the event, visitors explored stories across virtual and augmented reality. As well as through a series of installations, bringing the physical and digital together, they experienced Lincoln like never before. Over 1,600 people attended the weekends event, with many stopping for the best part of the day so that they could experience all that was on offer. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with many emerging from the immersive cinema experience with a tear in their eye, having been touched by the stories told.

Linked to the project's legacy work, the Augmented Reality Imp trail created for the project will be available for city visitors to use on their own devices until the end of the year.

## **Supporting Ukrainian Refugees**

The team at Louth Library, working with a local organisation, the East Lindsey Area of Sanctuary (ELAS), have been welcoming a group of Ukrainian refugees and their host families to weekly coffee mornings. Working with ELAS to support the group further, the library is also hosting the Grimsby Institute during these weekly sessions who are providing free English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to the group. Ukrainian language stock is being provided at Louth and a number of other larger core libraries where we are aware of demand. A number of these libraries, such as Boston and Stamford, are working to engage with local groups and encourage use of our facilities.

Skegness Library have also started working with a group of refugees that include people from Iran, Iraq and Africa and are holding a weekly social session with the support of a local volunteer that includes things like survival English. This group are housed in various local guesthouses rather than with host families, and so their social opportunities/support is quite limited and while has only been going a few weeks they have feedback that it is making a real difference for them.