

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 09 December 2022**

**Statement from: Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell OBE - Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement.**

### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

#### **Social work workforce**

The first social work apprentices have successfully completed their degrees following three years of hard work, with all 10 securing permanent positions across our frontline teams. 14 new social work apprentices started on 19 September, and recruitment for 2023 will begin early in the new year. The Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that another round of Step Up to Social Work, for people who already have a degree at 2:2 or above, will open for applications in January, and we have committed to taking 15 people. In September, 15 social workers successfully completed their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment, and we have 20 new social workers joining this year's programme.

#### **Children's homes expansion**

The relocation of Strut House's short-breaks provision to the St Francis Special School site is now complete, and we have received fantastic feedback from parents and children about the new facilities. Work on Robin House, the new children's home in Lincoln, is ongoing, and we are progressing with plans for a second new children's home in Louth. This has been made possible thanks DfE match-funding. We look forward to the opening of Robin House in early 2023, with the Louth home expected to open in autumn 2023.

#### **Family Hubs and Start for Life programme**

Our involvement in this programme will bring additional investment, helping us, and our partners, to build on the strong provision of children's centres and early help for families, especially in (but not limited to) the crucial first 1,001 days of a child's life.

Governed by a new board, a core transformation team will deliver the programme, set the vision around our existing priorities, and ensure integration with other programmes and initiatives.

Our next steps are:

- Wide communication and engagement.
- Local community needs assessments across 48 children's centre areas.
- Development of data strategy and success measures.
- Establishment of parent/carer panels to inform the programme.

#### **Children's centres**

Families continue to visit our children's centres for a variety of learning activities, as well as antenatal and health visiting appointments. This includes a universal baby massage offer for new parents, which is extremely popular with families. The centres are somewhere warm where families can drop in, and they have a range of beautiful, pre-loved donated baby and

children's clothing that families can access for free. There are lots of exciting activities planned for the Christmas period, including Christmas parties and theatre productions.

### **Children's health**

The children's health 0-19 team continue to focus on the restoration and recovery of the Healthy Child Programme. Additional family health workers have been recruited to support the health visiting team, who are now offering all routine (mandated) contacts to families. The service has also recruited seven student health visitors, who will join the service as qualified health visitors in September 2023.

### **Review of mental health services for children and young people**

Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust are reviewing local emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people. Families and professionals can take a survey at [www.letstalk.lincolnshire.gov.uk](http://www.letstalk.lincolnshire.gov.uk) before Sunday 18 December. Their views will be used to transform and improve services, helping children and young people to live more independent, safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

### **Schools**

The majority of maintained schools continue to work collaboratively to support each other, and the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership remains a key part of the sector-led approach to improving education in the county. Through a willingness to work in close partnership with the Teaching School Hub and the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) education team, all schools have access to the best professional support and development possible.

Schools are accessing a range of nationally funded programmes for tutoring and intervention, as well as targeted support from DfE school improvement packages. Early examination results show that Lincolnshire's primary pupils are performing well, compared to the national landscape. The performance of secondary schools appears variable, but, overall, it is broadly in line with the national picture. Our maintained schools are performing well in Ofsted inspections, but there is some turbulence in inspection outcomes in the academy sector.

### **Improving school attendance strategy**

Following the DfE's new guidance on Working Together to Improve Attendance, we are engaging with all schools termly to discuss attendance from September 2023. This work will be completed by the new school attendance team. There are also plans to inform and engage with all children's services teams on the importance of school attendance and addressing barriers through early intervention.

### **School admissions**

Despite an increase in demand, on national offer day 88% of secondary-age children received a place at their first-choice school, with a further 1% allocated their first preference following revised applications and appeals. For primary admissions, 96% received a place at their first-choice school.

### **Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)**

There are now 96 HAF clubs across Lincolnshire (up from 53 in the year before) with 3,752 children and young people accessing the programme. The Lincolnshire programme has been

recognised by the DfE for its partnership work and presented to other local authorities on 'value for money' showcasing how donations have enhanced our clubs. A Lincolnshire provider has also been recognised for engaging with secondary-aged girls to improve fitness, make new friendship groups and access a variety of fun activities.

### **Lincolnshire Music Service (LMS)**

LMS performed at the Royal Albert Hall on 16 November, as part of the Music for Youth Prom 2022, which represents the very best music making from across the UK. 475 young people from across Lincolnshire, aged 8-21, performed a medley of Beyonce hits, singing and playing from memory. Many of the young performers have English as their second or even third language, but all are united in their music. During the last academic year, LMS has engaged with 91% of schools, resulting in over 15,500 pupils learning a musical instrument.

### **ADULT SKILLS & FAMILY LEARNING**

The Adult Skills & Family Learning Service continues to deliver very good outcomes for its learners.

Since the beginning of August we have delivered 219 courses to 1,447 learners; of these 62.5% are unemployed and looking for work, 33% live in areas of deprivation and 24% have low or no qualifications. There has been, and continues to be, a great deal of interest in our qualification programmes which support Lincolnshire's priority employment sectors and provide the skills and learning to equip our learners for work. These include English, maths, bookkeeping, customer service, hospitality and leadership, working in mental health, payroll, food production and food preparation.

Extensive partnership working by our 21 Learning Providers ensures we reach those adults who experienced little success at school and lack confidence and self-esteem in their own ability and potential. Our curriculum and the support from our experienced tutors mean that we have a substantial impact on our learners' lives.

### **Multiply**

The Multiply programme is now underway. 18 Providers have been procured who will deliver innovative and fun engagement maths provision to increase skills in Lincolnshire to over 2,000 adults, who do not already have a GCSE at grade 4 or above, by the end of March 2023. Early programmes are centred around money management and budgeting which are providing support for those residents struggling with issues relating to the cost of living challenges they are facing.

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

#### **Stay Safe Partnership**

The Stay Safe Partnership comprises of staff within Lincolnshire County Council's Community Safety 'Stay Safe' team, Lincolnshire Police Crime Prevention Team, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership, We Are with You (provider of the county's Substance Misuse services) and South of Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Service. Collectively, these partners offer schools 'Stay Safe' Days; multi

agency workshops delivered on the same day in five key safety areas. Each Secondary School is offered two free Stay Safe Days in the academic year.

During these Stay Safe Days, the Partnership had 117 disclosures, 101% more than the 3 previous years combined. These disclosures related to domestic abuse, abusive peer relationships and stalking, alcohol and drug misuse, knife crime, county lines, online exploitation, and road and fire safety concerns. It is possible that without this intervention having taken place, these children and young people may have remained hidden victims and never accessed any form of support.

To impact on future generations, the Stay Safe Partnership is aware of the need to offer preventative messaging at an earlier age. Alongside Secondary prevention work, LCC's Community Safety 'Stay Safe' team deliver Online Safety Sessions to Year 6 students and from January 2022 began offering a Friendship and Emotions workshop to Year 2. Expanding the curriculum to primary schools ensures there is a programme of prevention intervention that follows students from Year 2 through to college.

By the end of the 2021/22 academic year, the Stay Safe Partnership had delivered sessions (either face-to-face or virtual) to 19,141 secondary and 10,265 primary school pupils across the breadth of the county.

The Stay Safe Partnership has established itself as a primary deliverer of safety messages to children and young people, and a trusted source of preventative education for schools and academies in the county. The Partnership's work was recently heard at Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee and its paper circulated for information to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee. Following this, the team received press and media attention from the Lincolnite, BBC Radio Lincolnshire and Lincs FM.

### **Domestic Abuse (DA)**

The DA partnership is now in its second year of operation and is working effectively to push the agenda forward. In that time a great deal of work has been undertaken to develop the response to DA in Lincolnshire in line with the DA Act statutory duties. These include implementation of the partnership strategy and delivery plan as well as the commissioning plans for the outreach and community-based service and safe accommodation provision.

Since December 2021 one of the main focuses has been the recommissioning of the DA outreach and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) service and commissioning new arrangements in relation to safe accommodation, extending and improving the provision we have in Lincolnshire.

The new outreach and IDVA service will be commissioned from April 2023 and the additional safe accommodation support started being introduced in May 2022.

The DA partnership team is now fully operational with only one more position to recruit to by the end of the year, which is in relation to the development of a countywide sanctuary scheme. The partnership team has been doing some innovative work with local and regional Businesses and are holding a Business Conference on the 29 November 2022, bringing

businesses together to improve the response to DA victims and perpetrators within the private sector. This is a huge piece of work and forms part of the wider community engagement and communications strategy.

As we approach the national 16 days of action campaign the partnership has been working closely with all partners to produce an inclusive campaign that will start on the 25 November and includes a number of key messages about Domestic Abuse and how people can seek support. In addition, the team has been working with Lincoln City Football club to produce videos that support international men's days and promote positive images of males.

## **HOMES FOR UKRAINE**

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, launched on 14 March 2022 allows individuals resident in the UK to sponsor named Ukrainian guests. So far Lincolnshire has welcomed over 1100 Ukrainian guests to join their hosts across the County, with another 200+ expected to arrive. Some guests, having been in the Country for several months now are starting to move on into independent accommodation but the majority (just over 900 individuals) are continuing to reside in their hosting arrangements. Lincolnshire has received the 17th highest number of visa applications nationally and 2nd highest in the region.

We are pleased to have published a wealth of information and advice for Ukrainian arrivals on the Connect to Support directory of services. New resources include information on moving to and living in Lincolnshire for Ukrainian guests and their hosts. We have enabled on-site translation in an effort to make the relevant webpages as accessible as possible.

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