



**PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
21 MARCH 2023**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N H PEPPER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A N Stokes (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Brockway, M R Clarke, Mrs N F Clarke, A Dani, W H Gray, A M Key, K E Lee, E J Sneath and M Hasan

Councillors: D McNally (Executive Councillor - Waste and Trading Standards) and S P Roe (Executive Support Councillor – Children’s Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration) attended the meeting as observers

Councillors: L A Cawrey (Executive Councillor – Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services) and A P Maughan (Executive Support Councillor – Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services) observed the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Baxter (Chief Fire Officer), Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Lucy Gavens (Consultant - Public Health), Nicole Hilton (Assistant Director - Communities), Will Mason (Head of Culture), Ryan Stacey (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer), Steven Batchelor (Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager) and Lee Sirdifield (Assistant Director - Corporate)

Officers in attendance via Microsoft Teams:

Jemma Clarke (Community Safety Strategy Co-ordinator)

61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J L King.

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Councillor M Hasan had been appointed as a replacement Member for Councillor J L King, for this meeting only.

62 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None were declared.

63 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2023

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

64 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

There were no announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillors and Chief Officers.

65 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE SUCCESS FRAMEWORK 2022-23 QUARTER 3

Consideration was given to a report which summarised the Service Level Performance against the Success Framework 2022-23 for Quarter 3, in relation to Community Safety, Volunteering, Fire Safety, Libraries and Heritage, Road Safety and Trading Standards, as detailed in the report.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

Volunteering

- A volunteer drive was planned for the King's Coronation event at Lincoln Castle as part of the Big Help Out, which would encourage people to try volunteering.
- The Voluntary Centre Services provided advice on the set up and configuration of volunteer organisations, which included courses on governance, safeguarding activities, expectations, and DBS processes. A full list of support offered by the VCS in relation to governance would be circulated to the Committee.

Fire Safety

- Officers were not aware of any recent issues with appliances being unable to attend incidents due to irresponsible parking, however Members were assured that reasons for missed attendance were analysed in detail and where possible, systems were introduced to address issues.
- The new allocation and recording process had now been rolled out that would hopefully result in a decrease in the administrative burden and an increase in outputs for Home Fire Safety Visits. However, despite an increase to around 69% of planned visits, it was unlikely that the annual target would be met.
- The County experienced around 300 more wildfires than usual in 2022/23, which were mostly smaller scale agricultural fires, rather than heath land fires. Assurance was provided that the Council were linked in with the National Fire Chiefs Council on Wildfire protection and were better prepared to respond to wildfires. Important

work had also been undertaken with the farmers union in preventative issues and to equip farmers in responding quickly to such issues, particularly in high-risk areas.

- High risk premises included student accommodation, hospitals, and care homes.
- The Committee were reassured that action would be taken where examples of high risk or failings had been found. For instance, in an instance where cladding was found on a property, a risk-based approach to remediate the cladding would be undertaken based on the level of risk posed.
- The Committee acknowledged the impact that not meeting targets could have on morale and were assured that staff were congratulated for continual improvement and the importance of celebrating improvements was highlighted.
- Care homes were generally considered high risk for fire safety however, they were assessed on an individual basis. Assurance was provided, that Officers would respond to any cause of concern to ensure each care home had adequate fire safety provision as a priority for the residents.
- In some instances, fire crews were unable to identify whether the cause of a fire was deliberate or accidental, such as when almost all evidence had been consumed by the fire. The recording of such data helped carry out further trend analysis.

Libraries and Heritage

- The Committee welcomed the increase in library usage and were pleased to see community hubs being utilised for a number of valuable services as well as libraries, such as banking tools and youth markets. The Committee congratulated the service on the success of community hubs and libraries.
- It was acknowledged that an increase in the opening hours would be beneficial in some areas.
- Online engagement in libraries included the use of eBooks, music streaming service, dictionaries, ancestry, and a range of other online services, free of charge.

Road Safety

- Officers were looking to establish who had introduced the comparators for Lincolnshire's 'Statistical Neighbours' and whether they were still the most appropriate authorities to benchmark information against.

Trading Standards

- Further to the data in the report, a total of 9000 unsafe items had now been removed from the market.
- The 22 food inspections of high-risk premises referenced in the report were part of around 150 food inspections overall.
- Members were assured that the Trading Standards Team worked closely with Environmental Health teams in regular meetings and regularly shared any concerns over the standard of premises, particularly regarding allergies. It was acknowledged that formal information sharing when concerns were raised could be recorded.

- The time taken to inspect premises for bird flu was dependent on the size of the premises and whether any further guidance or visits were required.
- There had been a significant increase in the use of disposable vapes in adults and children across the County. The Committee were reassured that advice on vape compliance was provided to businesses and formal action and prosecution would be implemented should businesses fail to comply.
- The Tobacco Control Officer based within the trading standards team delivered workshops within schools to educate on the impacts on of tobacco and alcohol.
- Following an increase in mad cow disease in Brazil, assurance was provided that meat products were subject to border checks and were checked by an environmental health officer.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and that the comments from the discussion made be taken under consideration by the relevant Lead Officers and Executive Portfolio holders as recorded.

66 ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager, which invited the Committee to consider the Road Safety Partnership Annual Report, as set out at appendix A to the report.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- The Committee expressed their thanks to the Road Safety Partnership and local police officers in supporting with Parish Councils to successfully operate Community Speed watch within their communities. The reluctance from individuals to operate speed watch within their own communities due to potential for tension was acknowledged, however the importance of communities to feel empowered to make protect the community was emphasised.
- The enforcement of double yellow lines and other parking issues around schools were not the responsibility of the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership.
- Members were assured that the Council were reviewing policies around 20mph speed limits and whether they needed to be supported by Traffic Regulation Orders, particularly in high-risk areas.
- Training for 60+ drivers was made up of theory work which was classroom based and usually offered centrally within communities and practical, car-based training provided a supportive environment with a trained driving instructor and would point advise on further support if needed. It was emphasised that all training offered was supportive and there was no risk associated with the driver. Although mature drivers were less likely to be involved in road traffic collisions, they were more likely to be fatally or seriously injured as a result.

- The biker down initiative was commended. Similar initiatives involving cyclists and horse-riding groups would be considered.
- A formal mechanism for in depth studies and a better understanding of the nature of collisions would be introduced in 2023 through investigative work and a need to ensure appropriate enforcement, particularly around motorcycles and tourism.
- The importance of enforcement and people taking responsibility for the treatment of others was needed to reduce the impact of dangerous cyclists and drivers affecting the safety of town centres and beyond.
- The Road Safety Partnership worked with Lincolnshire Police at regular motorcycle events where they provided support and guidance and sought to educate other road users. The introduction of a communications officer within the Road Safety Partnership was welcomed and would offer further opportunity to raise awareness of the support offer and activities both internally and externally through social media and the local press.
- The dangers of electric scooters were emphasised. Assurance was provided that the police were addressing how to manage issues going forward.
- The Committee were assured that the RSP worked closely with the NHS on providing information to mature drivers and family members to make a decision on whether they would continue to drive.
- The importance of the work of the RSP in saving lives and pain of families was emphasised. The RSP were transitioning were adopting a different way of thinking which would not accept that fatalities should be a consequence of road travel, work would be fed into the new road safety strategy.
- The new pattern of collisions in the afternoon would be analysed to see if there was any commonality in the events happening at the time of day.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be endorsed;
2. That satisfaction with the activity and service provision be recorded;
3. That the comments and suggestions made in relation to the updates received be taken under consideration by the relevant Officers and the Executive Portfolio Holder.

67 PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given a report by the Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Committee to review the work programme and highlight any additional scrutiny activity which could be included for consideration in the work programme.

Concerns were raised over the timing of the Refugee Resettlement and Asylum Dispersal Arrangements - 6 Monthly Update scheduled for 25 July 2023 given the recently announced proposals to house asylum seekers at RAF Scampton. In particular, Councillor K Lee sought assurance that asylum seekers would be properly supported and that the proposals could meet the necessary conditions for asylum seekers. Concerns were also raised over RAF

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Scampton as a heritage centre. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that a report be received at the next meeting of the Committee.

It was also requested that a report be scheduled on the location of defibrillators within Lincolnshire.

The Scrutiny Officer agreed to liaise with Officers on the proposed timelines for reporting to the length of agendas.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted;
2. That the existing work programme be agreed, subject to the above amendments;
3. That the proposals to house asylum seekers at RAF Scampton be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

SITTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

68 DRUG AND ALCOHOL CORE PRIORITY GROUP REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Consultant – Public Health, which invited the Committee to consider a report summary of work related to drug and alcohol misuse carried out by the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership in Lincolnshire during 2022/23, as referenced in the report.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- The Committee recognised the challenges faced by individuals suffering from drug and alcohol addiction and their families.
- It was acknowledged that many people were secretive in their misuse of drug and alcohol and therefore may not be recorded in the overall figures. It was noted that figures were based on a well-established national programme of research which used a number of methods to estimate the number of people with drug and alcohol misuse issues and seemed to estimate local need.
- It was agreed that distinction between alcohol specific and alcohol related deaths with reference to failed breath tests be circulated.
- The availability to purchase alcohol at some premises during unsociable hours was concerning. There was good knowledge on what worked to prevent alcohol related harm which was supported by a strong evidence base. The importance of introducing a range of measures in supporting alcohol related harm was emphasised, which included addressing the availability of alcohol.

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- A change in culture which moved away from advertising alcohol for celebration and as a marketing tool was emphasised. It was requested that details of the overall cost of alcohol use to society be investigated and circulated to the Committee.
- The Committee welcomed the use of a preventative approach with a focus on alcohol and substance misuse as a health issue rather than as a criminal offence. Assurance was provided that the criminal justice system had increased the number of options to reduce the criminal sentence of those misusing drugs and alcohol, such as putting them on a treatment pathway offering support for substance misuse issues and mental health support. However, it was acknowledged that issues around crime needed to be addressed appropriately.
- The Committee recognised the enormous impact of alcohol misuse as potentially more significant than drug misuse.
- Many schools were proactive in educating children around the impact of drug and alcohol abuse and 'stay safe' days were always well received within schools. The specialist drug and alcohol service within Lincolnshire also attended schools to educate children or provide a safe space for children to raise concerns. The Committee emphasised a need for proactive work within schools, particularly given the rise of County Lines groups.
- The benefits of local intelligence, through Councillors and other means, in targeting areas of support, was highlighted.
- Specialist services offered a range of support including through counselling, the prescribing of methadone, medical support and inpatient detoxification. Treatment pathways were decided by the individual and key worker. A move to community-based treatment had been adopted in recent years as this often helped individuals to overcome addiction whilst within their community rather than removing them from their usual surroundings.
- The use of Naloxone within Lincolnshire was welcomed.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be endorsed;
2. That satisfaction on the activities undertaken that demonstrates the efforts of the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership to discharge its statutory duties in combatting drug and alcohol misuse in the County;
3. That the feedback and comments made be taken under consideration by SLP Officers and Portfolio holders.

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm

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