

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26 SEPTEMBER 2014

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

Fire and Rescue

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue continues to be one of the most cost effective Fire and Rescue services in the UK, continuing to deliver a high quality service to the communities of Lincolnshire with high satisfaction reported by service users.

Retained Firefighters

The Fire Service relies heavily on retained duty system firefighters to deliver the service in Lincolnshire. These are public spirited men and women who make themselves available to respond to fires and other emergencies from their primary work place or home when they are needed. This allows the service to deliver an efficient and appropriate level of fire cover across the county. It is pleasing to report that there has been a record number of people recruited to fulfil this vital role over recent months.

New Fire Engines

The Service is just completing the roll out of the latest replacement fire engines to the county's fire stations. These, along with the two new high reach vehicles for Lincoln and Boston, ensure that our firefighters have effective and fit for purpose equipment to protect our communities.

Fire Control

Our collaboration with Humberside, Norfolk and Hertfordshire Fire Authorities is moving along well and earlier this year saw the first upgrade of new technology in the Lincoln Control Room for a number of years. There will be further upgrades over the coming months to all of the control rooms (including a further improvement in Lincoln) which will result in a fully integrated and resilient control system across the four Fire and Rescue services.

Fire Deaths

The number of fires and other incidents has followed the national trend and continued to reduce. The number of people killed and seriously injured by fire in Lincolnshire is thankfully low; however the majority of those who do lose their lives in a fire in the county have been as a result of carelessly discarded smoking materials. Fire and Rescue, in partnership with Trading Standards, have run a media campaign to highlight the dangers of smoking in bed and the increased risks associated with, if you do choose to smoke, smoking unregulated counterfeit and illegal cigarettes.

Prince's Trust

The Fire and Rescue Service continues to be the local delivery partner for the Prince's Trust, with 12 team programmes run across the county. The programme is delivered in partnership with many other agencies from both within the County Council and external, such as the Royal Air Force, and continues to deliver outstanding results for the young people who attend the 12 week programme. At the end of the event the vast majority have either gained employment or have entered into a further training or education programme.

Emergency Planning

Emergency Planning is also taking the opportunity presented by Exercise Cygnus to promote business continuity planning to local small businesses. Supported by the Local Enterprise partnership, Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses, Emergency Planning will be holding a series of events (including a 'breakfast club' hosted by Siemens and an engagement event for local health & social care providers) to encourage businesses to think about plans to deal with emergencies, or staff absences caused by pandemics, ensuring they get back up and running as soon as possible.

Trading Standards

During the early part of the summer season, Trading Standards have been working with organisations on the east coast to ensure consumer products on sale do not pose a danger to children and adults. This work includes regular visits to markets and car boot sales.

We have maximised social media to warn consumers of the latest product safety issues and current scams. Recent scams have included "slimming pills" and phone banking, and lottery scams are still prevalent. We are working to ensure vulnerable adults are protected from specific targeting of these crimes.

Working closely with Police and District Council colleagues, Trading Standards have used powers available to them to tackle the growing problems with the supply of novel psychoactive substances (legal highs) across the county.