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Select Scrutiny Committee

17 December 2013

- Present:** Councillors Councillor Karen Lee (*in the Chair*), Bob Bushell, Gary Hewson and Ronald Hills
- Apologies for Absence:** Councillor David Jackson and Smith
- Also in Attendance:** Marion Cooney, Matthew Corrigan, Inspector Judith Kent and Chief Inspector Lee Pache

1. **Confirmation of Minutes - 7 May 2013**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2013 be confirmed.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None received.

3. **Updates (Verbal Report)**

a. Policing in Lincoln

Chief Inspector Pache provided an update on policing in Lincoln and advised as follows:-

- Anti social behaviour in Lincoln is down 14.7%
- There are three distinct problem areas – Street Drinking, Vagrancy and Noise Nuisance
- Inspector Judith Kent is new in post and is targeting the top 5 offenders
- Begging is an issue in the city centre, however when arrests are made prosecutions are not undertaken so the deterrent side is limited. The Police are currently looking at alternative sanctions.
- Persistent offenders in the City Centre are being served with exclusion notices.
- Street drinking is not illegal it is the behaviour of individuals that is the problem.
- The Police are targeting individuals who act anti socially. The increase in the number of Off Licences is a problem. There has been a 120% increase in anti social behaviour in certain areas. These hot spot areas including the High Street are to be prioritised.
- Overall crime in the City is down 5%. Not all crimes are recorded.
- Lincolnshire Police is a beacon force in National Crime Recording Standards.
- Police are working with retail premises in respect of shoplifting, nationally there has been a 54% increase and a 29% increase in Lincoln.
- Work has been undertaken with Lincolnshire Coop in respect of providing additional security in their stores. This has led to a reduction in crime and some displacement to the neighbouring county – Nottinghamshire.
- Independent retailers do not have the capacity to put measures in place. However the Police are working with them through the Business Crime Strategy to try and minimise shop thefts.

- The next Comprehensive Spending Review may lead to further cuts in budget, however it should be noted that Lincolnshire has one of the most efficient forces in the country.

Members commented as follows:-

1. How do you equate falling crime statistics with reducing resources?.

Response – The Police function is different now. There used to be a lot of officers in uniform. The Police now concentrate on vulnerable people and persistent offenders, we now have 10 Officers who's particular function is to respond to urgent priority incidents in a 10 minute response time.

2. Under reporting appears to be a problem, why?.

Response – Under reporting has always been a problem. All calls received are recorded and included in Police statistics. Both funding and crime are reducing.

3. Police attendance at the Carholme Community Forum has been sporadic which has led to the relationship between the residents and the Police not being as good as it was. Whilst "Freshers Week" might not have appeared to be that bad it was actually horrendous.

Response – The Police have many challenges, and the public have high expectations. The Police have to target their resources at hotspot locations. Offences within the night time economy are down.

4. The City Centre has recently won the Purple Flag award which implies it is a safe environment. However there are problems in other areas of City especially in respect of anti social behaviour.

Response – Lincoln is a very safe place and whilst it has appeared in the top10 list of alcohol related admissions to A and E it is not out of control.

5. In respect of street drinking has this been displaced to further down the High Street because of the imposition of the DPPO and has the changes the City Council has made to CCTV had any affect?.

Response – The areas of significant concern High Bridge, St Martins Square relocated to St Mary le Wigford. However there have been a significant increase in incidents in the vicinity of G H Shaws. It is to early to comment on whether the changes to CCTV will affect the Police.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

b. West Lincolnshire Community Partnership

Chief Inspector Pache provided an update on the West Lincolnshire Community Partnership and advised as follows: _

- The Partnership is no longer in force and from November 2013 the CSP will monitor policing arrangements in Lincoln.
- A planning meeting will be held in January to discuss Portfolio leads and action plans.

- That he is the current temporary Chair of the partnership.
- There was a need for Councillor representation on the partnership which could be either a district or County councillor.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

c. Lincoln BIG

Matt Corrigan, provided an update on the work of Lincoln BIG and advised as follows:-

- They focus their resource on the City Centre, spending approximately £150,000 annually on safety and security.
- Key issue within the City Centre is shoplifting. A new database is being developed detailing offences and offenders. There was a need to engage with businesses.
- A lot of businesses in the City Centre do not have internet access which is an issue.
- Shops have been more effective in banning persistent offenders.
- The award of the Purple Flag award sends out a positive message. In addition the Evening Safety Officers provide enforcement when necessary.
- Comments are often received on vagrancy, begging and street drinking. There is a need to provide a pleasant safe environment for shoppers and Lincoln BIG are encouraging the public not to donate to vagrants/beggars.

Members commented as follows:-

1. Taking into account the Purple Flag Scheme and the comments made at the meeting, a lot of people might get the impression that businesses are targeting people with disposable income. Is there any evidence that we are trying to move to a more continental environment?.

Response – The majority of businesses want a safe sustainable environment. Removing premises does not necessarily prevent people coming into the city. Managing people in drink is the main problem as authorities have a wider responsibility to the community. Staggered closing times often work better.

2. Would input from shopkeepers assist in controlling the sale of alcohol?.

Response – Yes possibly, many shops employ security staff due to problems with street drinkers.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

d. City of Lincoln Council – ASB Team

Sam Barstow, Public Protection and Anti – Social Behaviour Service Manager, provided an update on the work of the Public Protection and Anti – Social Behaviour Team and advised as follows:-

- The current team had been in place since June 2013 and since that date had received 1,711 requests for assistance.
- The team had a wide variety of responsibilities and of the enquiries received 380 had been ASB complaints which appeared to be increasing.

- Current satisfaction levels were being ascertained however 86% of complainants were either fairly or very satisfied.
- Vagrancy and begging were significant issues.
- Fly tipping was an issue in Abbey/Park Wards and this has increased since the bulky waste collection service had stopped. This was currently being monitored.
- Because of legal highs there has been a rise in the number of ASB complaints connected with them. 75 – 80 young people have been identified as offenders.
- In respect of noise complaints the numbers received by the Police are increasing whilst the numbers received by the Council are decreasing. This is currently being looked at.
- The Crime and Anti – Social Behaviour Bill is likely to remove some of the powers that authorities currently use.
- The provision of the DPPO was reviewed by the Policy Scrutiny Committee.
- There had been some displacement of street drinkers to Marley's on the High Street.

Members commented as follows:-

1. What about fly tipping on private land, who is responsible for its removal?.

Response – It is the responsibility of the land owner.

Resolved that

1. the report be noted; and
2. a report on the Crime and Anti Social Behaviour Bill be presented to the next meeting.

4. Progress on the Street Drinking Strategy (Verbal Report)

Sam Barstow, Public Protection and Anti Social Behaviour Service Manager, provide an update on the Street Drinking Strategy and advised as follows:

- The Alcohol Intervention Officer was now in post.
- A co-ordinated approach had been used to develop the strategy and manage individuals. All relevant partners had been involved in its development.
- A number of persistent offenders had signed up to ABC's, 1 interim ASBO had been served and there were 3 pending prosecutions.
- A voluntary code in respect of the sale of super strength ciders and lagers would be launched in February 2014.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

5. Anti Social Behaviour By Students in the Central Wards of Lincoln - Update on Success of Initiatives to Date (Verbal Report)

Steve Swain, Principal Democratic Officer, advised that initial discussions had been held with the University and other parties in respect of anti social behaviour

by students in the central wards of the City. A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

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