



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 17th March 2022

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

31st January 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Silvester (in the Chair)
Councillors Aisthorpe, Batson, Parkinson (substitute for K Swinburn)
Pettigrew and Sandford.

Officers in attendance:

- Helen Isaacs (Assistant Chief Executive)
- Carolina Borgstrom (Assistant Director Environment)
- Spencer Hunt (Assistant Director of Safer and Partnerships)
- Zoe Campbell (Scrutiny and Committee Advisor)
- Eve Richardson-Smith (Legal Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
- Paul Caswell (Head of Young and Safe)
- Helen Cordell (Domestic Abuse Co-Ordinator)

Also in attendance:

- Councillor Ron Shepherd (Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities)

There were no members of the press and one member of the public present.

SPC.41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillor K. Swinburn and Councillor Goodwin.

SPC.42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in respect of any item on the agenda for this meeting.

SPC.43 MINUTES

Councillor Aisthorpe referred to item SPC.36 (Crime Statistics for North East Lincolnshire) and the issue she had raised regarding East Marsh regularly being at the top of the local crime rates. She recalled reference being made to a plan for the East Marsh and agreement was sought for this to be added to the panel's tracking report for monitoring.

RESOLVED –

1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 11th November 2021 be agreed as a correct record.
2. That the matter of a ward plan for the East Marsh be added to this panel's tracking report.

SPC.44 QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public for this meeting.

SPC.45 FORWARD PLAN

The panel received the current forward plan and members were asked to identify any items for examination by this panel via the pre-decision call-in procedure.

RESOLVED – That the forward plan be noted.

SPC.46 TRACKING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF SCRUTINY

The panel received a report from the statutory scrutiny officer tracking the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Panel.

A Member referred to the 'Skip It' events in Appendix B and queried why they had not recently taken place. Ms Borgstrom confirmed that there was funding available to carry out the 'Skip It' events but, due to advice from Public Health on holding large gatherings because of the spread of Covid-19, the events had been temporarily put on hold.

RESOLVED – That the tracking report be noted.

SPC.47 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR/NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE YOUTH JUSTICE MODEL

The panel received a report that gave an overview of the current local arrangements in relation to the detection and prevention of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and youth crime.

Members welcomed the report and queried if there was a delay in ASB cases going to court and the costs that were incurred. Mr Caswell confirmed that the delays were due to covid however there was not a big waiting list, and the cost was done on a risk assessment basis. At present there was no significant risk identified or legal costs required.

Clarification was sought by a member on why the statistic ‘suspected of committing crime’ was reported. Mr Caswell explained that instead of waiting until a young person committed a crime and was charged with the offence, if intelligence suggested that a young person was suspected of a crime then early intervention work was carried out so it didn’t escalate and would reduce the risk of them going into the formal system.

A member queried where in the wards the youth engagement team were based. Mr Caswell confirmed that the team were not based in specific wards. It varied where the demand and intelligence came from as to where the team were located. Mr Caswell offered members the opportunity to go out with the youth engagement team to see the work they did with young people, which members welcomed.

The high number of reoffending rates was a concern to members. Mr Caswell explained that the rates had always been high due to shrinking cohorts. Reported reoffending rates referred to young people who had been in the system for a year and then reoffended again in the following year. Members were concerned that 33% of young people go on to reoffend. Mr Caswell confirmed there were fewer young people committing offences than two years ago and through the triage process meant that they didn’t go onto reoffend.

Members asked for clarification over the offending rates and whether they were skewed because of covid. Mr Caswell confirmed the figures were not skewed because of the pandemic, activity such as county lines for example had not stopped.

A member queried if young people had to comply and meet with the Youth Offending Team. Mr Caswell confirmed that they did, and the team build up good relationships with young people, although it took a while to build up the trust but with the partnership approach, good outcomes were achieved for most young people. However, the young people did not have to engage with the youth engagement team, so this was where it was important to build up that trusted relationship.

Referring to the development of the Horizon Youth Zone, a member asked what difference it would make. Mr Caswell explained that it was delayed due to covid. However, during this time it was clear the need to work with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) was important in terms of the access to services the youth zone would offer young people and that it was seen as an enhancement to current services that were available.

The panel appreciated that working with VCS organisations and the council complimented each other. Mr Caswell agreed and highlighted that the activities taking place in the youth zone would support young people and sign post them to professionals to get the right help and support that was required, which the panel welcomed.

Anti-social behaviour of speeding cars on the Cleethorpes seafront was a concern raised by a member, who asked what involvement there had been with the police as it was a serious anti-social behaviour problem. Mr Caswell explained that there were warning signs put up under section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 and sections of the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 which enabled the police to seize a vehicle if it was being used in an anti-social way. He highlighted the use of the rapid deployment cameras on the Kingsway car park which enabled officers to respond to anti-social behaviour and prosecutions had taken place for those offences.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPC.48 DOMESTIC ABUSE

The panel considered a report that gave an update around the ongoing work to tackle domestic abuse across the borough with details around the progress to embed the partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024.

A concern raised by members was why victims were not coming forward to report domestic abuse earlier. Ms Cordell explained that this was a national trend and confirmed that views of victims/survivors were sought to determine the reasons why and encourage earlier disclosure. Ms Cordell explained that for a range of reasons victims were reluctant to come forward initially and the challenge was to encourage people who were experiencing domestic abuse to come forward earlier and receive the right support. It was key to ensure that services were in place when the victims came forward for practitioners to refer them to.

Members queried if there was support available for men as well as women who were victims. Ms Cordell confirmed that all communications around domestic abuse highlighted services that were available to both men and women, except for the refuge. Male victims would be supported, if necessary, around alternative housing. A new Communications Officer post had been created that would help drive the communication plan forward.

Councillor Shepherd suggested that panel members attend a MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) meeting to give them an insight into how multi agency working supported high risk victims of domestic abuse.

A member queried if the figures in the report included repeat victims and whether this would reduce with extra measures put in place and how did

we fair nationally. Ms Cordell explained that the national recommended level for repeat cases to MARAC (high risk victims) was between 28-40% however this level was set pre-Covid and did not reflect national increases in repeat cases. North East Lincolnshire repeat incidents were higher but work had been done to encourage victims attending MARAC to report incidents so additional support could be provided. She referred to MARAC meetings where several criteria could trigger a repeat referral. Interventions were being put into place to reduce the levels of repeat offending and make sure the services were in place.

A member asked how services worked with perpetrators. Mr Hunt confirmed there wasn't currently a non-convicted self-referring perpetrator programme in place in North East Lincolnshire and this remained a gap in provision.

Ms Cordell also highlighted there was a lack of local housing for perpetrators, that was currently being looked into to ensure they had alternative accommodation options following incidents where it was deemed unsafe to return to the family home. Members were concerned and agreed that this needed to be addressed in collaboration with local housing providers as part of the overall strategy to reduce rates of domestic abuse.

Members were concerned what would happen if domestic violence refuges were full, how would the victim and their family be helped. Ms Cordell explained it depended on each individual because the refuge was not suitable for all, especially those with more complex issues and each case had to be looked at individually. Capacity had not been an issue, however, Ms Cordell would come back with data on how often the local refuge had been full. Mr Hunt confirmed that no victim of domestic abuse was left without accommodation.

The panel suggested the following recommendations to be forwarded to the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP), Safeguarding Adult's Board (SAB) and Community Safety Partnership for collective consideration:

- Consideration be given to a (non-convicted) perpetrator programme.
- Provision of support/safe accommodation for all victims be reviewed.
- Introduce a target and actions to reduce the 2-5 years it currently takes local victims to report the abuse/seek help.
- Further work on data/information at more granular level (e.g., ward level)
- Supporting the focus on prevention, the panel were keen to ensure that impact of any preventative initiatives were measured.
- Ensure elected members are considered in the new communications, marketing and engagement plan to ensure the voice of residents was represented.

- Risk-stratify MARAC repeat incidents to understand the underpinning reasons and ultimately reduce them.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the recommendations made by the panel be forwarded to the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP), Safeguarding Adult's Board (SAB) and Community Safety Partnership for collective consideration.
3. That the panel be provided with the data on the number of times the local women's refuge was full in the period since April 2020.

SPC.49 KERBSIDE RECYCLING

The panel considered a verbal update on the kerbside recycling changes, bring to site review and progress of the food waste trial.

Members noted they had received positive feedback on the use of food caddies within their wards throughout the pilot.

A member enquired about the removal of bring to sites. Ms Borgstrom explained that since the new recycling bins were introduced, officers monitored the use of the bring to sites and they were being underutilised as a result.

There was a concern about lack of recycling on the seafront at Cleethorpes if the bring to sites were to be removed in that area. Ms Borgstrom confirmed that new smaller recycling bins were provided along the seafront that enabled the public to recycle or put rubbish in the general waste.

The panel welcomed the use of food bins and queried how it worked alongside the general waste collections. Ms Borgstrom explained that due to the weight in the food boxes, the collections were rotated because there was a concern over the long-term health effect of operatives especially around repetitive strain injuries, so this system reduced the impact on the crews.

Members felt there needed to be clearer communication about what and how to recycle. Ms Borgstrom stated that as national changes in packaging requirements came into force, it was likely that the advice would improve substantially. In addition, as technology evolved there would be new ways to process recycling, to reduce contamination. At present officers were waiting for implementation of new guidelines from DEFRA for the packing industries, that was likely to reduce the use of single use plastics.

A member asked if there had been a ward-by-ward review on the data to decide which wards were part of the food waste trials. Ms Borgstrom explained that the trial had been set up to represent several different ward and housing types.

A member referred to the bins on the East Marsh that were overflowing at times. Ms Borgstrom confirmed that around 50% of the ward did not actively participate in recycling and this contributed to domestic waste bins overflowing. A member asked if officers had investigated why residents did not recycle and asked if there was any support for people who did want to recycle. Ms Borgstrom confirmed that there was a wide variety of reasons as to why residents chose not to recycle, and the council had offered different recycling options and education to help.

The panel queried what happened to wet paper. Ms Borgstrom explained that when the Council operated a boxed recycling system, wet paper was from time to time rejected because of the moisture content, however, the new bins with lids was keeping paper dry and removing the risk of paper being rejected by the buyers.

A member was concerned about the increase in fly tipping in the East Marsh ward, in particular in the alley ways, and that it appeared that deprived areas suffered from this activity. Ms Borgstrom confirmed that some of the issues of fly tipping could be controlled by residents managing their domestic waste differently and using their bins or boxes effectively. She referred to the West Marsh ward where with similar housing, residents had managed well with the new bins, presentation rates for recycling were high, and the fly tipping levels were much lower as a result.

Members queried if the remaining bring to sites would be reviewed and would there be an option to keep them. Ms Borgstrom confirmed that the bring to sites listed in the last part of the removal programme (October 2022) were still being monitored to see where the waste was coming from as these had higher usage. There was a concern that the sites were being used by businesses especially at Doughty Road and Waltham. The service had the aspiration of improving recycling on the kerb side to remove the need for a bring to site, so by monitoring the use officers could better understand waste origins and look at solutions.

The panel welcomed the changes to the kerb side recycling and were keen to monitor the outcome of the usage of the remaining bring to sites.

RESOLVED –

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. That the panel monitor the outcome of the usage of the remaining bring to sites in the work programme for 2022/23.

SPC.50 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

There were no questions for the portfolio holder at this meeting.

SPC.51 CALLING IN OF DECISIONS

There were no formal requests from members of this panel to call in decisions of recent Cabinet and portfolio holder meetings.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 4.32 p.m.