

Police and Crime Strategic Board

Date: 18th May 2020



Chief Constable's Report

1. Performance by exception

1.1 Op Talla – Response to COVID-19

- 1.1.1 On 17th March, Lincolnshire Police reacted to Government advice and pulled together an Op Talla Major Incident Room (MIR) to help us manage and steer the force response to the COVID-19 crisis. Under the Gold Command of ACC Wilson (with support from Supt Timmins), the MIR is made up of the following thematic cells:
- Information and Intelligence cell
 - Resourcing and Welfare cell
 - Powers and Policies cell
 - Logistics cell
 - Comms cell
- 1.1.2 With command areas represented we were able to formulate and deliver a coordinated, informed response to Covid-19 ensuring our public continue to receive a quality service and our staff understand what is expected of them in a very fast-moving environment. We have been able to change our whole operating model almost overnight from an office and station-based set-up, to embracing the world of flexible and remote working.
- 1.1.3 By having the MIR in place, we have been able flag issues quickly and ensure the right solution is found. We have been able to balance the changing demand from COVID-19 as well as the usual demand we expect at this time of year, utilising a common-sense approach to enforcing the coronavirus legislation.
- 1.1.4 As at the 12th May, 206 fixed penalty notices have been issued across the County to those who are breaching coronavirus legislation.
- 1.1.5 We have been particularly proactive and creative around our communications to our public, such as Facebook live Q&A sessions. The first live session achieved an average of 1,200 viewers. This has meant we have kept our communities on board at a very challenging time.
- 1.1.6 The OPCC investment and Force Strategic direction to create an agile workforce has paid dividends. In the first week after lockdown the Force recorded 800 people accessing Force networks through "Direct Access". This enabled the Force to allow large numbers of our vulnerable workforce to continue working from home as well as changing working practices in all other teams enabling home working across the whole force.

2. Distinctively Lincolnshire

2.1 Distinctively Lincolnshire Board

- 2.1.1 The Distinctively Lincolnshire Board took place on 15th April, which assesses our progress against the Distinctively Lincolnshire strategy.
- 2.1.2 Due to the current situation, focus was given to the activities that were continuing to be delivered against the strategy, as well as those that had stopped, assessing any risks of doing so. Discussions also focused on what 'returning to normal' may look like and any new activities that may become a focus in the next 6 to 12 months
- 2.1.3 It was clear that there were opportunities for increased activity in a number of areas including:
- Accelerated work with partners in areas such as mental health
 - The value of engagement with community volunteer networks
 - Work with licencing in anticipation of a surge in issues when lockdown is eased
 - Neighbourhood policing of a potential increase in tensions/disputes
 - Engagement with victims – particularly victims of domestic abuse
 - Officer wellbeing
- 2.1.4 The initial reduction in crime demand has also provided opportunities to work differently, including:
- Alternative deployment of officers/staff on 'restricted' duties
 - Remote working for most non-front line roles, supported by the ICT infrastructure
 - The use of new technology such as video conferencing as well as introduction of telephone statements
 - Opportunities to focus on administrative processes and reduce workloads
- 2.1.5 It was also noted that equality, diversity and inclusivity issues should be incorporated into the mainstream Distinctively Lincolnshire plans.

2.2 Corporate Planning

- 2.2.1 A corporate planning session took place on 1st May which looked to assess the current Distinctively Lincolnshire strategy and areas for revision over the next 6, 12 or 18 months. It was clear that there were 4 clear priority themes
- Understanding & Reducing Demand (External/Internal) – Maximising the use of technology to do so
 - Understanding communities and our effective engagement with them (Neighbourhood Policing)
 - Improving the effectiveness of preventing & investigating crime – maximising the use of partnerships
 - Investing in our people (wellbeing & leadership)
- 2.2.2 Work has begun to turn these four broad themes into some specific objectives, underpinned by some supporting principles, such as maintaining a balanced budget. These shall be discussed further at the next Corporate Planning session on 9th July 2020.
- 2.2.3 Time was also taken to discuss the lessons that were being learned during the response to COVID-19, ensuring they are being captured and disseminated, both locally and Nationally.

- 2.2.4 It was clear that under difficult and uncertain circumstances, we have pulled together to work flexibly and have responded positively to an ever changing situation, recognising the challenges which are ahead internally, as well as for the communities of Lincolnshire.

3. Proactive Policing and other good news stories

3.1 Murder / Manslaughter

- 3.1.1 Officers were called to Norfolk Street in Boston at 9.25pm on Friday 8 May following a report that a 57-year-old man had fallen and hit his head. On attending officers found that the man had died. A 50-year-old woman and a 45-year-old man were arrested and have been bailed whilst enquiries continue.
- 3.1.2 Operation Lagoon is the sad death of a female at the hands of her partner at their address at Chestnut Grove in Grantham. Officers and staff worked to ensure the scene could be secured as well as locating and arresting of the suspect. Teams across the force worked together to ensure evidence could be secured and the family of the deceased female supported, during such a horrific incident. The investigation was led by the East Midlands Specialist Operations Unit Major Crime Unit, resulting in the suspect being charged and remanded for offences of manslaughter and assault.
- 3.1.3 Operation Copenhagen is the investigation into a sad case of Manslaughter where the victim was punched with a single hit to the head outside of the Kings Arms in Grantham. Swift response from officers at the time of the incident led to the offender being located nearby, effectively leaving the scene in a taxi. The victim was initially held on a life support system, with the offender being charged and remanded into custody for Section 20 Grievous Bodily Harm. Sadly the victim later passed away, resulting in an application to the Attorney General for the charge to be amended to that of Manslaughter.
- 3.1.4 Operation Lesson is the cold-case investigation into the murder of Kath Hemsall who was found stabbed to death in the hallway of her own home on 11th October 1994. Two men were charged with this offence and one was convicted but later freed on appeal. Following a forensic review, there is a request to obtain a fresh DNA sample from one of the original suspects as it is believed that some of the components of a DNA sample analysed may be a match. This would be ground breaking as during the original investigation; officers couldn't put the suspect at the scene. Work continues on this case around our other business.

3.2 Protecting Vulnerable Persons Unit (PVP)

- 3.2.1 PVP staff have been working remotely wherever possible from home or with direct deployment to incidents. During lockdown our PVP Detectives have taken a different approach of deploying to reported incidents as the 'Primary response' allowing for earlier evidence capture and the avoidance of evidence attrition. During May Bank Holiday, PVP staff across the force went into uniform to support their response colleagues and maximise visibility during VE day. They received positive comments from their uniformed colleagues.

3.3 Domestic Abuse

- 3.3.1 Lockdown has not affected our powers to protect victims of domestic abuse and will not stop us from removing an abusive person from their home. Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) provide us with powers to protect victims of domestic abuse by removing a violent partner from the home. Failure to

adhere to these conditions is an offence and we continue to use these effective tools in order to keep our County safe.

3.4 Drugs

- 3.4.1 Drugs are a key driver of criminality and exploitation in Lincolnshire and over this reporting period the Force has been proactive in targeting those creating harm through the distribution/supply of drugs. As previously highlighted, the Force is working with other partners to take a whole system approach in addressing the risks drugs and wider substance misuse presents to our communities. This has been delayed due to our response to COVID-19 but will be progressed as soon as possible.
- 3.4.2 The supply of drugs is also linked to violence and the enforcement action taken forms part of our wider Violent Crime Reduction Initiative, Operation Raptor, which was launched in January.
- 3.4.3 The East Midlands Specialist Operations Unit, have continued to support us in tackling Serious and Organised Crime – recent enforcement includes:
- Disruption to the supply of drugs between Leicester and Skegness with 2 kilograms of cocaine and £1,200 cash recovered
 - Enforcement against those involved in the supply of drugs between Leeds and Lincoln/Gainsborough with £2,500 cash and a knuckle duster seized along with £26,000 in a bank account being restrained
 - A warrant was executed as part of disruption to drugs supply between the West Midlands and Lincoln where £36,600 cash, baseball bat, machete and hunting knife was recovered
 - Six people were arrested on 5th May on suspicion of conspiracy to supply Class A drugs following a series of early-morning warrants in the Gainsborough area, in one of our largest operations of recent years. Drugs including cocaine, heroin and cannabis, as well as £12,000 cash and weapons were recovered. Five people have been remanded in custody.
- 3.4.4 We have been working hard across the County regarding street level drug dealing. With fewer people on the street, those that have been suspected of drug dealing have been “sticking out” and so local police officers have been able to be more proactive in dealing with them, including enforcement of lockdown breaches. Information was received that two females were dealing drugs in Brook Street, Grantham. Excellent work from Special Constables, supported by regular officers, identified the females getting into a taxi and seemingly leaving the area. A proactive stop check was carried out on the taxi, with the females found in possession of Class A drugs, £1,000 cash, a machete and some pepper spray. The females were later charged with offences of being in possession of cocaine with intent to supply, possession of criminal property (seized money), and possession of offensives weapons.
- 3.4.5 A number of proactive intelligence-led warrants have been executed which have resulted in arrests made and significant quantities of drugs being found and seized. Two warrants were executed in the Lincoln area relating to the supply of controlled drugs. The outcome led to two people being arrested, found in possession of over £20,000 cash, approx. 1,000 pills and a very large lump of suspected cocaine. Both people have been released under investigation at this time whilst the investigation continues into the larger conspiracy to supply controlled drugs.

- 3.4.6 Following the report of a burglary in Gainsborough officers attended and located a trail of soil leading from the attacked premises into another address over the road. Fast thinking from the officers saw the scene secured and a number of suspects being located within the address. Searches of this address located a number of cannabis plants that were identified as being taken from the attacked property; with the attacked property having been set up as a large-scale cannabis grow. Enquiries identified a further 7 addresses in the local area relating to the suspects, with warrants executed at each and substantial cannabis grows located in each of the premises. These have all been dismantled with a large amount of illegal cannabis plants having been recovered and destroyed. Three people have been arrested from out of the force area in connection with this organised criminality and the investigation is ongoing.
- 3.4.7 Operation Infrared relates to a proactive search of an address in North Kyme, Lincoln where a sophisticated cannabis farm was located. Approximately 5,700 plants were found with their estimated net worth ranging up to a full yield potential of £4,000,000. Six people were arrested from this location; with 4 being charged and remanded for the cultivation of cannabis and 2 being released on police bail.

3.5 Acquisitive Crime

- 3.5.1 A series of burglaries in Skegness was identified during the earlier part of lockdown. Local CID took a very proactive stance, and having viewed CCTV tentatively identified a suspect. Officers went and arrested a male, who was previously unknown to Lincolnshire, but had been bailed here from Nottinghamshire for a harassment offence. They found an “Aladdin’s Cave” of stolen items from burglaries in the Skegness area. In total, he was charged and remanded for 9 burglary dwellings and 4 attempted burglaries. The CPS lawyer sent an early email of thanks recognising the team for their hard work, good humour and great team spirit.
- 3.5.2 An increase in residential shed burglaries was identified in the North Lincoln area. Operation Kirkwood was implemented to proactively target this issue, to prevent further offences and identify those committing crime in the area. Following proactive patrols and identification of opportunities for enforcement, three people were arrested in quick succession and searches carried out. This identified an address with a significant amount of what is believed to be stolen property from these offences, which was recovered and returned to its owners. The main suspect currently remains on police bail whilst the evidence is collated, and these offences have now stopped at this time.

3.6 Assault on Emergency Workers

- 3.6.1 Officers attended a report of a man acting aggressively on De Wint Avenue, Lincoln, on 5th May 2020. During the incident, an Ambulance Technician and two Police Officers were assaulted. Grant Proctor was arrested and subsequently charged with three offences of assault on an emergency services worker. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to one-year imprisonment. The emergency workers assaulted received minor injuries and all have continued to work.

3.7 Roads Policing

- 3.7.1 Speeding - We are seeing some irresponsible drivers and riders taking advantage of the emptier roads and have taken the opportunity to let those drivers know our specialist operations officers are on patrol, both in cars and motorbikes, marked and unmarked and we will enforce speed limits on our roads.

- 3.7.2 We continue to receive reports of drivers speeding across the county so we have stepped up our patrols and enforcement. Drivers who do not comply with the law may face having their vehicle seized, may be arrested or reported for offences.
- 3.7.3 Alongside our speed checks, the counties fixed and mobile safety cameras continue to check the speed of drivers at collision hotspots and where we know people exceed the speed limit.
- 3.7.4 We've also had the opportunity to proactively police some of the quieter roads which may not always have the attention that they need due to their rurality and capacity of officers. An example of this is a suspicious vehicle in Boston which was stopped and drug dealing paraphernalia was found within the vehicle. The offender was arrested for possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply and enquiries continue.

3.8 Licencing

- 3.8.1 Every report received by Lincolnshire Police of bars and pubs being open during lockdown is being investigated by our licensing team – and reassuringly no breaches have been found. Any pub or bar which continues to open could lose its licence and face being fined. Businesses are allowed to remain open if they are operating a collection or delivery service only.

3.9 Anti-Social Behaviour

- 3.9.1 Officers attended Twyford Woods near Grantham on 19th April following reports of people gathering and riding quad bikes. When officer attended, there was a group of around 15 people, including riders and spectators. The group fled the scene when our officers arrived but some were located soon after in a nearby carpark. Eight people were issued Fixed Penalty Notices and six were given a Section 59 warning. All were from the Bedfordshire area.

4 Recruitment

4.1 Horizons Programme - Officer Uplift

- 4.1.1 The force remains on target to meet its allocation of the national uplift recruitment for year one and is planning to recruit and train 120 new student officers during the current year.
- 4.1.2 Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19 the force has adapted its recruitment and pre-employment processes. As a result, whilst still complying with Public Health England guidelines we have been able to maintain the pace of our current recruitment drive, thereby ensuring that future planned cohorts of student officers are delivered on time.
- 4.1.3 The force has established a project board which continues to meet monthly in order to monitor and review our plans for the enabling functions which includes training, kit, fleet, estate capacity and finance.
- 4.1.4 Our most recent cohort of student officers commenced their initial training on the 4th May 2020, the force has ensured that appropriate social distancing measures are in place to safely deliver this training and has identified contingencies which will allow us to deploy these student officers to the frontline during their training phase, should it become necessary in the current climate.

4.1.5 The Force is seeking approval to recruit a second training team through the PCC's Strategic Partnership contract to deliver training to the increased number of recruits with an expected doubling of intake numbers from March 2021 to meet the Government's commitment of increasing police officer numbers by 20,000. In addition, the Force is seeking approval to develop the currently empty site attached to Skegness Police Station. This would meet our commitment to shifting the focus of Force operations to the East of the county.

4.2 Specials / Volunteers

4.2.1 We have welcomed 22 new Special Constables to Lincolnshire Police. The new recruits range in age from late teens to mid-50s, and come from a variety of backgrounds including a Teaching Assistant, a Wealth Manager, and a Detention Officer. As we continue to tackle the spread of COVID-19, having an extra team of dedicated officers is invaluable.

4.2.2 Whilst maintaining our service to the people of Lincolnshire during these challenging times, recognition should be given to the fantastic support that have been provided by not only those employed by Lincolnshire Police, but from our volunteers and Special Constabulary colleagues. A number of these volunteers are using the fact that their own workplace has had to close down to effectively support Lincolnshire Police on a full time basis. This is a credit to those who continue to support Lincolnshire Police through giving up their own time, and recognition of their dedication and personal commitment.