

Police and Crime Strategic Board

Date: 18th March 2021

Chief Constable's Report



1. Performance by exception

1.1 Op Talla – Response to COVID-19

- 1.1.1 Since 5th January 2021, the whole of England has remained in lockdown, meaning that people should remain indoors at home, other than for specific exemptions, including but not limited to, work (where you cannot work from home), exercise or to obtain goods and services. The government has now released a roadmap out of these restrictions, which started to take effect from the 8th March, when schools re-opened to all children (not just keyworkers). The next major change for policing will be the 29th March, when the rule of 6 will apply outdoors, and local travel restrictions are eased.
- 1.1.2 Policing teams are currently working through 'Unlock plans' to ensure that we fully understand, are prepared and are able to adapt to each change as restrictions ease.
- 1.1.3 The main way out of this pandemic is through testing and vaccination. Lincolnshire continue to perform well with vaccinations for the 55-59 age category from Monday 8th March, and are looking to start the 50-54 age group the week after. Lincolnshire Police staff are able to access asymptomatic testing at community testing sites at Lincoln, Boston, Sleaford, Market Rasen, Bourne and Louth. We are currently looking to expand testing via home test kits and are awaiting Public Health to give authorisation for this to happen. We have ordered 20,000 kits ready for distribution for when we get the necessary approval.
- 1.1.4 The current infection rate has fallen significantly since January, as has the number of fatalities. This has meant that we have now been able to close the emergency mortuary facilities at RAF Woodhall, and staff posted there have resumed normal duties.
- 1.1.5 Our current abstraction levels have dropped significantly (at the time of writing just 42 staff with a COVID related absence), this includes those in receipt of shielding letters from the government (a list which has expanded as the government has added additional medical issues to the list, including some forms of diabetes).
- 1.1.6 We continue to keep only Lincoln South Park, Boston, Grantham, and Skegness enquiry offices open due to lockdown protocols, but these will be re-visited prior to April 12th, when other non-essential premises can re-open.

1.2 Violence

- 1.2.1 Lincolnshire has continued to see significant reductions in violence for the 12 months to end of February 2021, with violence against the person as whole having reduced by 12%

(compared to the previous 12 months). When broken down, violence without injury offences have reduced by 19% and violence with injury offences have reduced by 17%. We have seen business robbery reduce by 41% and personal robbery reduce by 21% and lastly, possession of weapons has reduced by 9%.

- 1.2.2 We launched our first Operation Raptor initiative of the year on 1st March 2021, which ran for six days and covered Lincolnshire's main towns and the City of Lincoln. The focus was on disrupting and detecting people who were willing to travel into Lincolnshire with weapons, as well as those identified through intelligence already resident within areas that had been identified as hot spot locations. There was an emphasis on highly visible action at Railway Stations across the County which involved working with British Transport Police and utilising Knife Arches (metal detectors), to catch those carrying weapons.
- 1.2.3 As well as the distinctly overt approach, we deployed a number of teams of officers in plain clothes to our hotspot locations to target known and suspected offenders with the use of stop and search powers, which was supported by Local Authority CCTV, network of ANPR cameras and police dogs.
- 1.2.4 The initiative resulted in 3x search warrants being executed, 15 arrests, 1 report for summons, 2 vehicles being seized, 7 knives and 2 knuckle dusters seized, 26 stop and searches, as well as £7,000 in cash seized from criminality, drugs and stolen property.
- 1.2.5 The force has now adopted a County Lines Vulnerability Tracker, whereby the force will identify those at risk of harm as a consequence of County Lines drug dealing and the identification of a dedicated plan owner to work in partnership with other agencies to reduce the risk of violence, harm and exploitation.

2. **Strategic Delivery**

2.1 **Corporate Planning**

- 2.1.1 A corporate planning day took place on 26th February, which was a further opportunity to consult with Senior Leaders across the Force regarding the proposed force strategy. Chief Constable Haward led the session, explaining the vision of *'Working together to make Lincolnshire the safest place to live, work and visit'* and 3 clear purposes of *'Stop Crime and ASB'*, *'Protect from harm'* and *'Help those in need'*. These are supported by five stands; People, Partners, Communities, Culture and Capability.



- 2.1.2 Senior leaders provided feedback on the activities required to deliver the strategy and their level of priority. This feedback is being considered and a refined strategy and delivery plan will be agreed by the Chief Officer Team prior to commencing in April.
- 2.1.3 Work is also underway to ensure the right governance and performance framework is in place to support the strategy.

2.2 Wellbeing Board

- 2.2.1 The Wellbeing Board took place on 9th February, which assesses our commitment to having a happy, healthy, valued, safe and engaged workforce.
- 2.2.2 A new wellbeing lead has been appointed who will take forward the wellbeing strategy and structure in line with the Force strategy development.
- 2.2.3 Psychological support is in place for those staff in high risk roles and external supervision of counsellors has commenced. All staff have been asked to complete a psychological assessment questionnaire to ensure key themes are identified and the appropriate support can be put in place.
- 2.2.4 A resilience workshop took place on 29th January, led by Alan Dovey, a Consultant Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist and Director of Working Minds UK. He discussed the science behind what makes us feel anxious and how this may manifest itself, as well as providing useful tips on how to build resilience.
- 2.2.5 Wellbeing remains a key priority and work is being undertaken to get the relevant services in place, at the right quality.

3. National & Regional

3.1 Criminal Justice

- 3.1.1 All Lincolnshire courts have remained open albeit on a reduced capacity to accommodate the extra safety measures required to keep people safe. The magistrates courts continue to gradually increase their listings whilst supporting the County and Family courts (reducing the capacity at Boston).
- 3.1.2 The police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have continued to work through their recovery plans prioritising key cases and looking for opportunities to reduce trials by better use of out of court disposals. Police have worked with Her Majesty's Court & Tribunal Service (HMCTS) to ensure no court space is lost and traffic matters continue to be heard outside normal process hours to tackle the backlog. HMCTS report that whilst there is still a significant workload within the system there are no backlogs awaiting court listing dates in the Magistrates courts. New charges and postal requisitions are first listed in the normal way with current volumes not exceeding the available listing space. However, Lincoln Crown Court progress is still a concern, although there is now the capacity and space to run two courts which will alleviate the situation.
- 3.1.3 Non-attendance linked to COVID remains a challenge resulting in avoidable adjournments and use of court listing space. The Police, CPS and HMCTS are currently developing a process to prove certain cases in absence, which will speed up proceedings.

4. Good news and Other Points of Interest

4.1 Seizure of 10,000 counterfeit cigarettes

- 4.1.1 A joint operation conducted with Trading Standards on 3rd March 2021 resulted in the seizure of 10,000 counterfeit cigarettes after the attempts to conceal the product behind a brick wall of a premises on Lincoln High Street were no match for our sniffer dog!
- 4.1.2 Counterfeit cigarettes are not duty paid, do not meet safety regulations and are not labelled according to regulation and the illicit tobacco trade funds organised crime and the products for sale are often dangerous.
- 4.1.3 Anyone with information about the sale of illegal cigarettes and tobacco in Lincolnshire can report it anonymously through CrimeStoppers by calling 0800 555 111 or through crimestoppers-uk.org

4.2 New East Midlands Cyber Secure website launched

- 4.2.1 Over the past 12 months, as the world slowed down due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the cyber world has notched up a gear, with cloud-based video conferencing platforms being used to live-stream school classrooms, weddings, birthday parties and funerals as well as an increase in on-line shopping.
- 4.2.2 This has provided new opportunities for criminals to commit theft and fraud offences on-line so the new East Midlands Cyber Secure website has everything you need to know about how you can best protect your personal details, teach children how to be safe online in respect of the Computer Misuse Act, and safeguard your business from hackers and other cyber criminals.
- 4.2.3 The Cyber world is constantly evolving and it can be easy to feel overwhelmed by it all. The aim for the website is to make sure that all of the information provided is as accessible as possible including downloadable resources and easy-to-follow video guides. Visit the website at: www.EastMidlandsCyberSecure.co.uk

4.3 Flying the flag with PRIDE for LGBT+ History month

- 4.3.1 Our officers, staff and communities celebrated LGBT+ History month in February, ensuring that Lincolnshire is a safe place for all, including LGBT+ communities.
- 4.3.2 The aim of LGBT+ History month is to primarily educate the wider community about the history of the gay rights movement and to promote an inclusive modern society. As part of Lincolnshire Police's commitment to celebrating equality, diversity and inclusion we chose to raise the Pride flag at our Headquarters in Nettleham.
- 4.3.3 Lincolnshire Police supports the inclusion of all LGBT+ people, regardless of their background or characteristics. This includes seeking to promote an environment where all people, including trans women, trans men and those with a non-binary gender identity are made to feel welcome and supported.
- 4.3.4 This is a fundamental part of our public sector duty so that we can continue to build trust and confidence in communities and to enable our colleagues to fulfil their potential and provide the best possible service to the public. We do not tolerate hate crime and we

continue to encourage anyone who has been the victim of any crime to report it by calling 101.

4.4 Clamp down on people smuggling

- 4.4.1 Lincolnshire Police is supporting a new national Government-backed campaign to clamp down on illegal lorry drops and people smuggling, following the recent tragedy that saw 39 Vietnamese migrants suffer a painful death by suffocating in a lorry trailer on their way to Purfleet in Essex.
- 4.4.2 The campaign commenced on 8th February and runs for eight weeks including social media posts, leaflets and out-of-home advertising to remind hauliers and the public that people die in HGVs and to urge them to report anything suspicious, particularly at service stations and lorry parks.
- 4.4.3 The campaign is also aimed at HGV drivers and company owners as they are often approached by organised crime groups to help them facilitate people smuggling. These criminal networks treat migrants as a commodity to be profited from, charging large sums of money for their illegal service, without care for the safety of those they transport. Crimestoppers along with HMRC and Border Force are distributing informative leaflets, available in 17 languages, to lorry drivers highlighting the signs to spot of people smuggling.
- 4.4.4 Lincolnshire Police have a dedicated team working on all types of Organised Immigration Crime and there were 51 clandestine entries recorded in Lincolnshire in 2020. Lincolnshire is statistically the safest area in the East Midlands in terms of people smuggling and one of the safest in the country, however, it is important for the public to remain vigilant.

4.5 Road Safety – Operation Snap launched

- 4.5.1 On 1st February, together with the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, we launched an online portal where people can upload dash cam footage of suspected driving offences which we believe will result in a safer driving environment for all our road users.
- 4.5.2 In Lincolnshire in 2019 there were 535 people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions. A further 52 people lost their lives last year. A system to effectively process evidence of road traffic offences and poor driving will assist greatly in dealing with poor driver behaviour that can and does lead to collisions, serious injury and death on the roads of Lincolnshire
- 4.5.3 Footage can include evidence of dangerous, careless or inconsiderate driving, drivers failing to wear seat belts, failing to stop at a red traffic light, crossing solid white lines, not being in proper control or dangerous loads, for example.
- 4.5.4 Submissions will be reviewed by a police officer or authorised person and provided that certain criteria are met we have a number of options available to us, ranging from a warning letter, a national driver offender retraining scheme course, a fixed penalty notice, and where appropriate prosecution through the criminal justice system.
- 4.5.5 For us to be able to use the footage, it will need to be good quality and clearly show the alleged offence. Anyone submitting footage will be required to complete an online statement and be prepared to attend court should that be necessary further down the line

- 4.5.6 Members of the public can easily submit footage on the [Report a driving offence](#) page of the Lincolnshire Police website.

4.6 Rural Crime

Harecoursing

- 4.6.1 The 2020/21 Season started with a significant increase in the volume of reported incidents – over 400 per month in October, November and December – and although that reduced in January, this season will still be the highest for over 4 years.
- 4.6.2 The significant number of incidents has understandably caused alarm amongst the farming community, though feedback on the Policing response, Operation Galileo, has been positive. The Operation encompasses 21 other forces (up from 12 last year) and seeks to develop an effective approach to preventing Hare Coursing nationally.
- 4.6.3 Nationally, our work continues with partners including the National Farmers Union (NFU), Country Land & Business Association (CLA) and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to secure changes in Criminal Justice outcomes, including forfeiture of seized dogs, that will have a meaningful impact on offending.

Acquisitive Crime

- 4.6.4 At the start of March two tractors were stolen from the Lincs/Notts border, and recovered within 24hrs. They were hidden near to the A1 seemingly awaiting collection and to check for any tracking devices. These are concerning incidents as they indicate a return to the theft of large farm vehicles, which had reduced significantly in the run-up to Brexit due to challenges around getting the stolen items out of the UK.

5. Forward Look

5.1 Horizons Programme - Officer Uplift

- 5.1.1 We have 2 x cohorts of 30 students starting their training this month (March), including the first 3 officers to be selected onto the new DC Fast Track scheme. The first cohort will start their training in an off-site location but then migrate to our new training facility at Skegness where they will be joined by the second cohort who start at the end of the month. This will then allow us to carry out the planned refurbishment to the training site at Headquarters. Future cohorts will then be split between both Headquarters and Skegness based on future recruitment and posting requirements.
- 5.1.2 Due to successful positive action during the latest recruitment window, which ran from the 12 October to 6 December, we are beginning to see improvements in terms of gender disparity, with 45% of those currently in the recruitment pipeline being female, compared to our current workforce mix which is only 31% female. We also received 25 applications from candidates who have English as their second language, improving our representation from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.
- 5.1.3 We have a sufficient number of candidates for the next intakes planned for September and October 2021, and we are planning to open our next recruitment window in June, where the aim will be to continue the work to increase the diversity of our officer workforce.

5.2 New Victims Code of Practice

- 5.2.1 The new Victim Codes of Practice (VCOP) comes into effect from 1st April 2021, with improved rights for victims including a clearer expectation of how the Police and partner agencies will ensure victims are well informed of their rights and how to access support services, how they are to be updated throughout the lifecycle of a crime investigation and how the information is to be provided once a decision has been made on a crime being filed.
- 5.2.2 We have been anticipating these changes and have developed our *'Putting Victims First'* strategy to reflect them, including a review of our website to ensure it is accessible to victims with relevant information.
- 5.2.3 A communications campaign is also being launched internally and externally to explain the new code and ensure members of the public are aware of their rights.