



Perth & Kinross Council
Community Safety Committee

30 January 2014

Report by Chief Inspector Whitford, Perth & Kinross Local Policing Area

SUBJECT: OPERATIONAL REPORT PART ONE

Abstract:

The attached report provides members with background operational information to the performance information submitted separately to provide context.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that members note and question this operational report.

2 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide some context to the information provided in relation to performance and to elaborate on some of the work which has taken place within the Perth & Kinross Local Policing Area.

Making the centres of our city and rural towns safe has been a priority from the start of Police Scotland. In line with the national drive to reduce violence across Scotland, policing in Perth and Kinross has focused on reducing violent crime and keeping people safe. The relationship between alcohol and violence is well documented and is the ground stay of the approach to policing referred to as 'Centresafe': Dedicated patrolling around areas where violence regularly occurs and at times of the day and night where violent and anti-social behaviour has had a blighting effect on commercial and residential life.

It is based on 'ring fencing' officers from the normal demands of dealing with calls from the public, to allow them to become proactive in preventing crime rather than managing the response to crime. This 'Centresafe' approach' is now part of the weekly planning and management of policing Perth City and is being rolled out to each of the main towns in the county.

3 PERFORMANCE

3.1 Centresafe

Using dedicated officers on foot we have been policing Perth City centre in this way for a number of months. As a result, we have seen a reduction in violence and anti-social behaviour through targeting areas, individuals and

locations known for violence. Our aim is to prevent violence and disorder and where it does occur to arrest offenders promptly to prevent escalation or further victims.

Officers dedicated to this activity have had their hours varied to ensure their presence is visible during the day and night time economies and this activity has had a significant impact on reducing the call demand within the city centre.

To complement this work, policing licensed premises has significantly changed. With alcohol being the most common aggravator for violence, both in public areas and private dwellings, it is essential that licensees run their premises in a professional and lawful manner, not selling alcohol to young people or those already drunk; operating with a real public safety responsibility.

As part of Centresafe, officers are visiting licensed premises on a frequent basis, with particular focus on the critical nights of Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Officers report their observations via the Innweb system so that critical issues and emerging trends can be monitored by the Head of Licensing with a view to enhanced reporting to the Licensing Board.

When Incidents occur in or near licensed premises, or where the actions of perpetrators or victims of crime have been significantly affected by alcohol bought or consumed on licensed premises, a licensing investigation is carried out in parallel to any criminal enquiries.

The aim of such investigations is to identify if the licensee has been negligent in the manner their business has operated or in breach of licensing conditions. If this is the case, they are called in for interview with the Local Area Commander and Head of Licensing to consider the issues and if appropriate develop actions plans for the business to improve the safety of the public.

In extreme cases, consideration is given to submitting a Review of their license to the Board. This specific type of action has seen sanctions imposed on one premises in Perth City and the swift and robust action taken by local officers and partners ultimately resulted in the closure of that premises.

Within the Centresafe plan, office based resources from across Tayside Division regularly participate in 'Campaign Against Violence' operations (CAV). This involves office based officers coming out in uniform to bolster existing numbers in Perth City (and other cities across Scotland) on a regular basis. Since the beginning of Police Scotland, this has fallen on specific Friday nights. However, as of January 2014, this will now include Saturday nights, as it has been identified that more violence is occurring on those nights in this area.

In addition to normal Centresafe operations, CAV officers are specifically tasked with a view to reducing violence and as such they also check on the welfare of identified domestic victims, visit offenders released with specific bail conditions, and search for persons wanted on warrant for crimes of violence.

All of this work is supported by considerable resource planning and partnership working with Perth and Kinross Council, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Divisional Violence Reduction Team and Licensing and Co-Ordination Unit.

Community officers working within Perth City have recently been increased from 6 to 15, providing three teams of 5 officers to ensure there is coverage at all times within the city centre. Community officers in the city centre have taken on a Centresafe style of policing, but take the lead in tackling longer term community problems, in close coordination with the Safer Communities Team, wardens and partners. This approach has seen significant reductions in the level of daytime anti-social behaviour in Perth City Centre and closer working around key and vulnerable locations, such as common closes used for drug abuse or identifying active brothels etc.

This Centresafe model has been developed and trialled within Perth City and the intention is to implement this model in the major towns in Perth and Kinross. To accommodate this, as of January, officers from across the LPA will start working similar shifts to those in Perth City, supporting dedicated anti violence patrolling in Kinross, Crieff, Pitlochry and Blairgowrie with a responsibility to policing licensed premises and local night time economies.

It is anticipated that this type of activity will enhance the policing style within these towns and will allow beat officers to concentrate on community matters and emerging issues.

Once local night time economies have finished, officers patrolling these towns will then be free for deployment into Perth to bolster the numbers of Centresafe officers patrolling the city centre, where there is a need for extra resources to be deployed until 0400 hours. This is an example of the flexibility now achievable in the LPA as a result of recent changes in officer deployment, where we can target officers to key locations at times when there is the highest risk to the public.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

5. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no staffing issues as a result of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- 6.1 This report does not have any impact on the environment.

7. SUMMARY

- 7.1 The attached report updates members regarding significant operational matters and gives context to the performance of the local policing area.

8. COMPLIANCE

Is the proposal;

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| (a) Human Rights Act 1998 compliant? | YES |
| (b) Equality & Diversity compliant? | YES |