

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Community Safety Committee – 19 August 2015

**Summary Report from Community Safety and Environment Group Meetings –
20 March and 19 June 2015**

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report advises Committee of the subject matters considered by the Community Safety and Environment Outcome Delivery Group at its meeting held on 19 June 2015.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

At its meeting on 19 June 2015, the Outcome Delivery Group considered the following matters pertaining to Community Safety:-

1. An Overview of the Outcome Delivery Process between November 2014 and March 2015

The matters covered within this Progress Report are noted within the Minute of this meeting which is available to the members of the Committee.

Of interest to the Committee will be the observation that ‘the main risk to delivering progress on the local outcomes is that of the absence or departure of key staff tasked with key roles within the Plan’.

2 Action Plan Update November 2014 – March 2015

Once again, the full minute of this meeting will be available to Committee. Within this section of the minute, however, it will be noted that further information with regard to Hate Crime figures will be made at a future meeting of the Group for analysis and that discussions are under way between the Violence Against Women Partnership and the Council’s Housing and Community Care Service with regard to a Safe Accommodation Strategy.

One particular concern noted by the Group is that the number of buildings ‘at risk’ is greater than the target figure. This is a matter of some concern and will be the subject of continuing attention from the Environment Service.

3 Purple Flag

The Group then heard a presentation from L Brown, City Centre Manager, Perth and Kinross Council, concerning the above scheme. A Steering

Group has been formed to support a bid for Purple Flag status. The success or failure of this bid will depend upon a range of factors all pertaining to Community Safety within the City Centre. As noted earlier, considerable partnership work is now undertaken (not simply over the festive period, but throughout the year), in relation to street patrols, support and intervention. Some issues have been identified in relation to street lighting and a survey will now be conducted after concerns were raised with regard to the quality of lighting in certain parts of the City Centre area. No incidents of public disorder, however, were noted during an evening visit to the area by N Taylor and J McOmish, both Perth and Kinross Council Officers.

4 Road Safety Theme Update

A report was then provided by C Haggart, (Service Manager, Environment Service) which noted the successful work undertaken in relation to the Safe Drive Stay Alive event and, in particular, to the impact of Average Speed Safety Cameras on the A9. Early indications are that there has been a significant decrease in the incidence of motorists speeding. Further detail will be sought for the November meeting of the Delivery Group.

5 Safer Communities Theme Update

A report was then presented, updating the Group on the work of the Safer Communities Partnership. R Ross (Communities Safety Theme Lead, Perth and Kinross Council) advised the group of proposals to provide a similar night time support service to that provided over the festive period during the Rewind Festival and Perth Races – both due in the month of July.

Concerns were raised in relation to the continuing issue of Legal Highs and their potential impact on Community Safety. Mr Ross responded, however, that many people who are using Legal Highs are already using other drugs. To this extent, Legal Highs represent a further challenge through poly-use of a range of drugs – an issue already occupying the time and attention of the Drug and Alcohol Partnership.

6 Reducing Reoffending Theme Update

Mr Ross then presented a further report noting the significant reduction in reconviction figures within Perth and Kinross over the last year for which figures are available. The Council area now has the second lowest reconviction rate of any local authority in mainland Scotland. Reference, in this context, was made to the work of the Right Track Project in tackling youth crime and to the significant contribution now being paid by the OWLS Project.

7 Vulnerability Theme Update

A report was then presented by the Vulnerability Theme Lead from Police Scotland within which a particular focus emerged on suicide attempts. In response to a question posed, it was noted that evidence is now emerging that disrupting a suicide attempt may play a significant role in reducing the likelihood of a further such attempt by the same person.

8 Natural Benefits – The Contribution of the Natural Environment to Community Planning Partners Priorities

A report was then presented by Scottish National Heritage concerning the role which natural assets can play, when deployed effectively, in combating the risk of flood, water quality and soil erosion.

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