

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 5th March 2015

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| Agenda Item | 6 |
| Report No | CIA/4/15 |

Public Space Amenity - Inverness Response Team

Joint Report by the Inverness City Manager and Chief Superintendent Highland and Island Division – Police Scotland

Summary

This report provides an update on the progress of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership initiative namely, Inverness Response Team, designed to address local Public space amenity issues on a daily basis. Sharing resources to ensure early intervention in preventing and tackling community concerns. Thereby freeing up resources invested in dealing with acute problems, delivering better outcomes and achieving value for money.

The Committee is invited to;

1. note the success of the trial to date;
2. note the willingness of agencies to continue working jointly to address anti-social behaviour
3. agree to support the work of the Inverness Response Team as it develops further.

1. Background

1.1 Inverness Response Team is a partner led approach developed to take forward the good practice and positive outcomes of ;

Operation Notebook - an existing and ongoing multi-agency operation, its activity aims to “make people feel, and be safer, by tackling antisocial behaviour in and around residential properties within our communities.

and

Operation Respect - aimed at the city centre and reducing street violence and disorder within public spaces and incidents linked to licensed premises by working with key partners to make our streets safer and to reduce the risk to the public.

Both of which are longstanding and successful initiatives where key partners work together to reduce antisocial behaviour within our communities and public spaces.

1.2 The focus of the Team is on prevention and early intervention with the recognition that effectively tackling low level antisocial behaviour can reduce the number of such incidents which can often escalate into more serious cases.

1.3 The core partners who participate in the daily tactical process include:

- Highland Council
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Police Scotland

The following partners participate on a case by case basis

- Albyn Housing Society
- Cairn Housing Association
- Street Pastors
- Inverness BID
- Apex
- VSS
- NHS Highland
- Care and Learning Service
- Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

During the period under review the Team have developed and agreed a Operating Protocol and Information Sharing Protocol.

2. Objectives

2.1 To develop a Inverness Response Team based on best practice and partnership working.

- 2.2**
- Collaborative planning and service delivery to achieve more efficient and sustainable solutions to community safety priorities.
 - Systematic analysis of information collected from all relevant Partners and analytical products to direct activities.
 - Operate at a tactical level but not exclusively.
 - Create a Response Team which will in the long term be based in a dedicated office environment for community safety partners.
 - Evolve over time in terms of membership and act as a catalyst for further integration and partnership working.
 - Improve information flow from communities, their representative and

colleagues direct to the professionals involved in the daily tactical process.

- Support other thematic groups deliver the Highland Single Outcome Agreement.

3. Outcome and Benefits

3.1 Since going live in September 2014, the main outcomes and benefits of the Response Team have been:-

- A new multi agency Tasking and Co-ordinating process which has become embedded in daily working practice whereby partners participate in a daily conference call to review incidents of anti social behaviour reported over the previous 24 hour period.
- Emphasis is placed on partnership working, relevant and proportionate actions are identified to ensure a dynamic response to deal with community concerns. This has the benefit of preventing any repetition of emerging issues.
- More efficient and effective use of resources by avoiding the duplication of effort for agencies who previously worked in isolation.
- The Team is quicker to identify problems, jointly agree actions plans and jointly deliver the service to the community, as a consequence the solutions are more sustainable.
- Significant multi agency contribution to improve community safety in relation to antisocial behaviour, community fire safety and violence priority business areas.
- Clear evidence of some excellent partnership working, with improved communication, information sharing and intelligence gathering between the partners.

4. Performance

Between 09/09/2014 and 27/01/15, Inverness Response Team have reviewed and responded to approximately 346 complaints involving anti social behaviour at 139 separate addresses within the Inverness area.

To date, issues addressed at 110 of these addresses have been completely resolved to the satisfaction of all parties or have substantially reduced the effects of anti social behaviour on the community. The remaining 29 addresses or problematic areas are subject of ongoing partnership involvement through the Response Team.

The daily meeting (conference call) is focussed and as a consequence takes

approximately 15 minutes depending on volume of incidents reported in the previous 24 hours.

OPERATION NOTEBOOK -

The following is a table of incidents of anti-social behaviour which meet the criteria for Operation Notebook. Since the introduction of the Inverness Response Team it is evident that the level of ASB within N Division and within the Inverness Area command and the 7 Wards of the Inverness Area have reduced and as a consequence the reduction on demand to services is being sustained.

Of note for the periods for Oct/Nov/Dec 14 and Jan 15 additional address have been added which do not meet the strict criteria. The team have reduced the demand of the high tariff addresses and now have capacity to identify new emerging addresses/issues and respond quicker in order to prevent issues/concerns escalating.

| Feb 14 | Mar 14 | Apr 14 | May 14 | Jun 14 | Jul 14 | Aug 14 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 | Jan 15 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 63 % | 57 % | 66 % | 62 % | 45 % | 62 % | 57 % | 50 % | 50 % | 40 % | 50 % | 40 % |

Of those repeat addresses the number which are consider “high-hitters” i.e 3 incidents or above for the month has shown a decrease. This can be attributed to the early intervention by the collective efforts of the Inverness Response Team.

Incidents are acted upon quicker thereby reducing repeat calls and reducing further demand on services.

| Feb 14 | Mar 14 | Apr 14 | May 14 | Jun 14 | Jul 14 | Aug 14 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 | Jan 15 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 % | 60 % | 45 % | 65 % | 33 % | 63 % | 56 % | 55 % | 57 % | 27 % | 35 % | 18 % |

REFERRALS TO THIRD SECTOR -

VSS- 2 referrals which has been successful in meeting the needs of the complainers and preventing further calls to agencies.

Befrienders- 1 referral which is ongoing.

SFRS- 4 referrals which have resulted in visits and appropriate advice/action

in order to prevent domestic dwelling fires.

CASES ESCALATED TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR GROUP -

There has been no requirement to date to escalate any case to the local ASBPG for consideration of further legal action such as a Anti-social Behaviour Order as the Inverness Response Team has successfully managed to deal with the cases..

Two cases have been referred to the Procurator Fiscal for consideration of a criminal ASBO which would be issued on conviction for repeat incidents of anti-social behaviour.

5. Case Studies

The following case studies are examples of the benefits of collaborative working between the Response Team partners:

1. Noise Complaint – Central Ward

Between 01/01/2010 and 19/11/2014, 236 calls were made to Police Scotland Force Operations Room, Inverness from a resident of a Highland Council property. The householder made numerous complaints in respect of noise nuisance by immediate neighbours, alternating between two addresses.

The issue was quickly identified by the Response Team and it transpired that the complainer had also been contacting partners in Highland Council Housing and local Health Services on a daily basis.

The matter was discussed at the daily Inverness Response Team meeting and a joint action plan developed this was delivered collaboratively in order that a unified and consistent approach and message was given to the complainer. No further calls have been received to date. This has resulted in significant time and money savings for all agencies who had previously been trying to the resolve the issues in isolation.

The complainer in this case has the appropriate supports in place and the community impact has been reduced.

2. Anti social behaviour – Neighbour Noise

Between 11/01/14 and 12/12/14 15 complaints were made by the occupant of a privately owned semi-detached property in respect of noise nuisance from a neighbouring property tenanted from Highland Council. An action plan was developed and joint visits carried out. This resulted in noise insulation material being fitted to cupboard doors etc within the offending property and no further complaints have been received.

3. Anti social behaviour – Neighbour noise

Between 22/01/2014 and 18/10/2014 in excess of 40 complaints were received in respect of noise nuisance a single address. Response Team intervention resulted in joint visits being carried out and noise monitoring equipment being installed. The process was expedited due to well established partnership working . This subsequently resulted in legal action. No further complaints have been received since.

4. Anti social behaviour – Children/Youths

A disabled householder reported repeated minor incidents of nuisance/antisocial behaviour by local youths. Incidents included bins being tipped over and eggs being thrown at the property. Inverness Response Team worked together and developed an action plan. Amongst other things the Highland Council Community Wardens carried out local enquiries and completed a letter drop in the area. Through the combined efforts of the Team the youths responsible were identified and warned in the presence of their parents. The householder was referred to SFRS for a fire safety visit following observations made during a joint visit and a referral also made to Victim Support Scotland. There have no further complaints received.

5. Anti social behaviour – Vandalism

Repeated incidents of vandalism were reported at a local authority care centre. Incidents included smashed windows and small fires be set. Following Inverness Response Team intervention and with support from the APEX team undergrowth was cleared away from the premises increasing visibility and the potential for detections for those responsible. There have not been any further incidents reported

6. Evaluation

- 6.1** Comments from the public - using a simple questionnaire we have been able to capture comments from a small number of the community who have received the joint services of the Inverness Response Team.

All report being satisfied with the service they have received and have no suggestions on how to improve. Importantly they all would have greater confidence in reporting any further incidents of antisocial behaviour.

Some of their comments include;

“its good to have nominated persons as this is good for working relationships”

“I am much more relaxed at home and very satisfied overall with the intervention”

“the service is the best – 100%”

- 6.2** Comments from staff involved in providing the service - using a survey monkey we have been able to capture comments from staff
SFRS-25%

1. What was the nature of the ASB reported to the organisation?

General Noise- 75%
Excessive Noise- 25%
Other (Fireraising)- 25%

2. How satisfied were you with the ease of bringing the issue to the notice of the response team?

Very Satisfied- 75%
Satisfied- 25%

3. How satisfied were you with the resolution to your reported issue?

Very Satisfied- 75%
Satisfied- 25%

4. Could the service be improved?

No- 100%

5. Would you be confident to report matters of Anti-Social Behaviour for the Response team to deal with in the future?

Yes- 100%

6. Do you think that that any other Agencies need to be involved in the process?

No- 25%
Yes- Third Sector, Alcohol and Drug teams, Mental Health.

- 6.3** Inverness Response Team has proved to be a successful initiative and has quickly become embedded in the working practices of Partners. There has been no additional burden on partners given the commitment to the daily process. Partners report benefits in terms of;

1. a quicker process to address anti-social behaviour complaints
2. increased joint working
3. increased information sharing
4. reduction in calls to repeat addresses
5. more effective service is being provided to the public
6. solutions are more sustainable because they are developed and supported by all partners
7. reduction in demand on services allowing them to focus on the high priority areas of business.

7. Resource, Legal, Equalities, Climate Change, Rural and Risk implications

There are no known implications arising from the proposals contained in this report, other than in relation to Equalities. The Council's policy and guidance recognises that anti-social behavior toward a person or groups of people may

or may not be motivated because of a person's race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, faith and may constitute a hate incident or crime and appropriate responses are in place.

Resource implications are neutral as existing resources will be used including accommodation and Information technology.

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to;

1. note the success of the trial to date;
2. note the willingness of agencies to continue working jointly to address anti-social behaviour
3. agree to support the work of the Inverness Response Team as it develops further.

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