

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 23 February 2017

Agenda Item	4
Report No	CIA/ 02/17

Inverness Community Safety Partnership

Joint Report by Inverness City Area Manager and Area Commander, (Highland and Islands Division, Police Scotland), Inverness

Summary

This report summarises the activities of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership (ICSP) since it last reported on 2015 activity to Committee in June 2016.

The Committee is invited to;

1. approve the ICSP report for 2016
2. endorse the work of the Operation Respect Daytime Group
3. endorse progress being made on linking to work of Third Sector and Social Enterprises across the City in support finding positive pathways for people in need. Specifically, it sets out preliminary planning around an initiative for a **3rd Sector coordination and action Hub** that seeks to best coordinate 3rd sector interventions with vulnerable people, some of whom feature in the work of statutory agencies including Highland Council services; the police; NHS Highland and criminal justice services.

1. Background

1.1 The Inverness Community Safety Partnership (ICSP) was formed in January 2011 with the aim of overseeing the activity of Community Safety initiatives across the city.

1.2 The partners involved now include

Highland Council
Police Scotland
N.H.S Highland
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Inverness Business Improvement District (BID)
Inverness Drug and Alcohol Forum
Apex Highland
Inverness Street Pastors
Highland Crimestoppers

The Partnership has also developed links with the following organisations

Scottish Prison Service, Signpost Highland, Eden Court, New Start Highland.

Cllr Jean Slater is the representative of the City Area Committee on the Partnership and acts as a key link between the community and the partnership in passing comment and feedback.

1.3 **The ICSP Mission Statement is**

'Working in partnership, to create an environment where our communities and visitors will remain safe and reassured.'

The Aims of the ICSP are aligned to the Single Outcome Agreements between the statutory agencies and The Scottish Government.

The partnership fits with the objectives of the Community Empowerment Act 2015, in respect of enabling public sector agencies and third sector organisations to work collaboratively in their support of common goals.

1.4 The ICSP acts as follows;

- it has tactical oversight over all Community Safety initiatives that may be undertaken by any other partner agencies within the boundaries of the geographical remit of the City of Inverness Area Committee.
- support Safer Highland in relation to all Community Safety / Business Crime initiatives
- the formulation of objectives to develop Community Safety / Business Crime initiatives on an annual basis
- where practicable to assist with the delivery of Community Safety initiatives
- promotion of good practice and making best use of funding opportunities
- delivery of an annual report to the City of Inverness Area Committee on the activities of the partnership and its themes for the forthcoming year.

2. **Progress in 2016**

2.1 Following partnership working with relevant agencies, through the ICSP, progress was made as follows;

- The provision of support to the Persistent Offender Project through development of links with this initiative
- Provision of support to the Community Mental Health Triage Project over the Christmas and New Year Period
- Provision of support to the Community Drugs / Alcohol referral pilot

within Police Scotland Inverness

- Improved links to the third sector agencies and groups supporting vulnerable people within the City, raising awareness amongst the group for the various referral pathways
- Provision of support to the newly established Houses of Multiple Occupancy (City Centre) Police Liaison Group, a group attended by Council Enforcement Officers from Environmental Health which reports through the Operation Respect Daytime
- Listened to the City Centre communities and improved communication path between them and the relevant agencies in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Continued support of the fortnightly Multi-Agency Tasking Group – Operation Respect Daytime Group. This tasking group makes use of the ICSP partners to deliver a programme of work with resources being directed to take action on a number of issues within the city centre such as
 - Anti-Social Behaviour with regard to City Centre persistent offenders
 - Development of environmental solutions to Anti-social behaviour issues
 - Support of and involvement in Op Respect Summertime 2016
- Operation Respect – Festive – winter 2016/17 – The Op Respect Festive Period Evaluation Report gives an appraisal of this year's operation and the benefits achieved
- Expansion of Operation Respect Festive and summertime to other areas within the Highland and Islands Division.
- Continued support of measures, including establishment of Cold Call Control Zones, to combat consumer detriment, and protect especially vulnerable individuals from criminal activity associated with Doorstep Crime /Cold Calling.
- Continued support and involvement in Naloxone intranasal training and harm reduction talks, delivered with N.H.S.

4. Work in Progress in 2016/17

- Developing the Inverness Foodstuffs Outreach Programme.

- Identifying diversion activities for young people and those involved in ASB
- Co-ordination of a Third Sector development meeting in support of the ICSP Themes.

As in many larger Scottish cities, there is an increasing 'visibility' around Inverness City Centre, of vulnerable individuals some of whom do not have accommodation, a number of whom also resort to begging or others who simply frequent public gathering and seating spaces.

The 3rd Sector Hub initiative is based on the premise that People, including those who often find themselves furthest or disenfranchised from services, nonetheless want positive social and meaningful activity opportunities in their lives. There are a number of initiatives voluntary and statutory established and available which are currently not well set up to communicate with each other despite often dealing with the same people. The identified client group's sometimes chaotic lifestyles can in of itself, frustrate consistent engagement. Coordinating interventions is clearly a key consideration in intervening effectively.

Inverness Foodstuff, based at the Ness Bank Church and Newstart Highland have agreed to convene a 3rd Sector hub which will seek to mitigate and positively divert negative social impacts into positive opportunities for individuals concerned.

The relatively small core of individuals moving in and out of this lifestyle, will in all likelihood, be known to a range of agencies already. They can be homeless but also are tenants of Highland Council and other Social or private housing providers. Those in tenancies are also entitled to Housing Support. This initiative is about ensuring clear lines of communication, non-duplication or undermining of effort and therefore, best outcomes for vulnerable clients and the communities they live in.

For instance an effort is ongoing to coordinate a number of church based 'drop- in' events which offer lunch. This is in order to avoid duplication of effort and make availability stretch across as many days as possible.

Equally, there are several agencies in Inverness with ambitions to increase routes into employment with this client group; who might also see better results through being more effectively linked in with potential customers.

There are a range of possible explanations for vulnerable people [who sometimes can behave in challenging ways] frequenting busy areas some of the main ones are:

- 1) - Lack of positive appropriate diversional activity [Can we better coordinate available diversional employability and social activity?]
- A [Highland Council] employability officer who is placed within the

Councils Development and Infrastructure Service. is already based at 'Inverness Foodstuff' The volunteers there seek his guidance re signposting those attending who want to look at their employment prospects and motivating those who haven't considered this. Some of those attending have some considerable 'distance to travel' toward employment readiness. Nonetheless the project itself is a positive diversional opportunity and addresses basic equality issues; for example, by providing internet and addressing digital exclusion. Others attending have been able to use this facility to make job searches coached by our volunteers, seeking advertised positions and setting themselves up with small business grants. This Community Safety / 3rd sector initiative potentially allows clearer links into realistic employability opportunities for example with Newstart's Hawthorne Gardens Horticultural activities and its bikes project.

- 2) City centres are generally popular places to frequent to meet and congregate. Some of this activity is of course quite inoffensive and harmless. [Are there though, opportunities to better engage with those for whom time spent in the city centre might have negative implications?]

Foodstuff has had several successes in involving participants in the project. This gives service users the opportunity to become volunteers and reciprocate [give something back]. This is a key element of the 3rd sector hub initiative. Our ambition is to make best use of a range of training opportunities that already exist with Newstart and link into other statutory and 3rd sector initiatives that seek to improve this client groups lives through enhancing self-esteem. Agencies involved could include: HMP Porterfield Through care project; Persistent Offenders Project [Police Scotland, Criminal Justice Service; Drug Treatment and Testing]; Street Pastors; NHS: Harm reduction; Substance Misuse Services.

- 3) Financial reward [While a 'tough nut to crack'; offering 'drop in' where practical assistance, warmth and shelter are available, can be effective]. NB very few of those who portray themselves as 'rough sleepers' Eg: under blankets in shop doorways are actually 'roofless'-creating this impression can elicit more sympathetic responses [i.e. cash] from passers-by. These individuals are in fact likely to be in homeless applications and therefore accommodated. Initiatives here might be best illustrated through a case example:

The individual concerned was an EU national with limited English language skills. When Inverness Foodstuff initially encountered him he was rough sleeping near a medical practice in the Crown area. Initially his attendance at Foodstuff was only erratic and indeed problematic as he was entirely pre-occupied by accessing the internet and would not [perhaps more accurate to say, could not] respect the rules that were involved to ensure the equipment wasn't damaged. There was a 'low level' challenging behaviour incident that once reviewed by the Foodstuff Board, led to an interpreter facilitated meeting with him. This involved an interpreter and 'Foodstuff' conducting an 'outreach'

visit to re-establish contact. He was able to express his frustrations regarding what [it turned out] were his misperceptions as to how Foodstuff and statutory agencies were set up to; and could, assist him. Not only is he now accommodated but he religiously attends at the drop in centre and the time he spends in the city centre sees him smartly presented, politely selling the Big Issue as opposed to previous behaviour that had involved 'aggressive begging' and alcohol fuelled disruptive outbursts which distressed the general public..

Planned interventions

The vulnerable person 3rd sector coordinating hub's ambitions are therefore to :

- Identify those in need with statutory partners in liaison with relevant forums. (E.g. where clients might come to the attention of the Inverness Response Team).
- Assess and agree whether and what opportunities might meet individual needs or aspirations (E.g. offer introduction and referral to employability opportunities)
- Plan and coordinate their engagement. This in some cases may initially be restricted to attendance at the Ness Bank and other 'drop in centres' over the course of any given week.
- Review effectiveness or identify alternative activity Links are already established at 'Foodstuff' re Harm Reduction and Health improvement. Further work is needed now to link in with possibly via attendance from Community Mental Health and Addiction Services.
- Other Initiatives; continuing support of the N.H.S. Harm Reduction Service.
- Developing opportunities with U.H.I. to work in partnership with the student community in conjunction with the needs of our existing communities.
- Year-end review and planning meeting to identify priorities and objectives for 2017

5. **Resource, Legal, Equalities, Climate Change and Risk implications**

The activities detailed in this report are funded through existing partner contributions to the ICSP. There are no known other implications other than the positive ones highlighted in the appendices.

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to;

1. approve the work of ICSP for 2016
2. endorse the work of the Operation Respect Daytime Group
3. endorse progress being made on linking to work of Third Sector and Social Enterprises across the City in support finding positive pathways for people in need. Specifically, setting out preliminary planning around an initiative for a **3rd Sector coordination and action Hub** that seeks to best coordinate 3rd sector interventions with vulnerable people, some of whom feature in the work of statutory agencies including Highland Council services; the police; NHS Highland and criminal justice services.

Author: David Haas
Chief Inspector Ian Graham
Iver Forsyth

Designation: Inverness City Area Manager

Designation: Area Commander, Inverness

Date: 6 February 2017