

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Community Safety Committee – 12 May 2010

ALCOHOL - YOUTH DIVERSION PROJECT

Report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care)

ABSTRACT

This report outlines the scope and purpose of a pilot scheme to deliver enhanced diversionary activity for young people within two areas in Perth & Kinross.

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Community Safety Committee:
- (i) notes the contents of this report;
 - (ii) requests a further report on the findings of the pilot following its conclusion in December 2010.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This project arose from multi agency discussions on how best to take forward priorities agreed at 'Real Unit Cost' conference in 2008, in particular to *support coordination of youth provision that is directed towards the prevention of community safety problems in local areas*. This was also an issue at the follow up conference in 2009. It has been recognised that targeted action is required to address concerns about the frequency with which alcohol features in incidences of antisocial behaviour involving young people. In addition, there has been growing concern as to the longer term health implications for the young people involved.
- 2.2 A sub group was established under the auspices of the Youth Justice and Community Safety Partnerships to consider the most appropriate way forward. Among the practice issues considered were the lessons from a pilot scheme developed by Fife's Community Safety Partnership under the 'Equally Well' initiative. Using a variation of the *Brief Interventions* model and targeted towards young people, an outreach service was developed which involved Police, youth workers, community wardens and NHS staff.
- 2.3 The service operated on two Friday evenings per month (7.00 - 11.00pm) targeting areas where young people were known to be drinking. As well as alcohol related matters, the NHS staff were able to explore other concerns such as sexual health. Contacts made during these times were followed up through a variety of partner agencies (depending on the circumstances of the individuals involved) such as school nurse, youth workers, children's services social workers etc.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 A pilot scheme will be established in two areas of Perth & Kinross – North Muirton and Highland, with a monthly ‘presence’ in each area. This would allow for a comparison in terms of issues affecting urban and rural settings and should help inform future service delivery in these areas. The pilot would involve an improved coordination of existing *diversionary* resources (Streetsports, Blue Light Disco, YMCA’s ‘Sidewalk’ detached youth work project, PKC Youth Service provision) along with a regular presence from local police and NHS staff.
- 3.2 It will run from mid June to mid December in the first instance. An evaluation would be undertaken at that stage, which would allow for analysis of the information gathered during the pilot and recommendations to be put forward as to future service delivery. Evaluation will focus on changes in key data – alcohol related admissions to A & E involving under 18’s, rates of youth disturbance calls – as well as feedback from young people and community representatives at local level.
- 3.3 It is expected that youth work staff should be involved only with the projects serving their particular area. They should also be in a position to identify other partners who may have a role to play. Staff from NHS Tayside and Tayside Police are contacting their Fife counterparts to discuss particular operational issues which may have arisen during the course of the pilot there. The issues here might include – whether officers should be in uniform; how referrals to other agencies are to be managed, followed up and evaluated; how the pilot ‘dovetailed’ with existing procedures and protocols etc.
- 3.4 The pilot will be coordinated by a sub group established under the auspices of the Community Safety and Youth Justice Partnerships and will involve representatives from the key partner organisations. The sub group membership is listed in Appendix I to this report.

4 MILESTONES

- 4.1 In order to ensure maximum impact, it is proposed that the pilot be ready to begin operations in time for the schools breaking for summer holidays at the end of June.
- 4.2 An initial evaluation of the pilot will take place in December 2010. This will take account of the data referred to at 3.2 above. The lessons learned from the pilot will form the basis of further discussions in early 2011 as to how any future services of this kind should be developed.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is not expected that establishing the pilot project for each area would require a significant level of additional expenditure. If there is agreement amongst local partners, then it should be relatively straightforward to ensure a staff presence from police and youth workers from each respective area on the agreed nights.

- 5.2 Given that NHS staff (eg Community Health Practitioner or Healthcare Assistant) would not normally be scheduled to work at that time, it might be necessary to find additional funding for 'backfilling' of staff hours taken from mainstream rotas. Ordinarily, this should not amount to more than eight hours per month.
- 5.3 NHS Tayside also has a 'Health Bus' which could be used for the initiative. This may require a contribution towards the overall running costs during the lifetime of the pilot project.
- 5.4 It is likely that these – and any other incidental costs (e.g. publicity, promotional materials) – can be met from within existing resources or via the Community Safety and Youth Justice Partnerships.

6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012

- 6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. The relevant three objectives are as follows:-
 - (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
 - (ii) Healthy, Caring Communities
 - (v) Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities

7. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.
- 7.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
 - i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).
- 8.2 However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal for the pilot scheme has been discussed with a number of key partners and is considered to be an effective approach to addressing the concerns in respect of the misuse of alcohol by young people in our communities.

David Burke
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Perth & Kinross Council

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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Date: 29 April 2010

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only, a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contact John Irons



Council Text Phone Number 01738 442573

Appendix I

Alcohol: Youth Diversion pilot - Sub group membership

John Irons.....Policy Officer, Community Safety
Andy Crichton.....Youth Justice Coordinator
Inspector Yvonne McGregor.....Community Impact Team, Tayside Police
Lesley Paterson.....Team Leader, Child Health NHS Tayside
Alexis Chappell.....Team Leader, PKC Drug & Alcohol Team
James Allan.....Youth Services Manager
Liam McLaughlin.....Coordinator, Drug & Alcohol Partnership
James Ballantyne.....YMCA 'Sidewalk' project
Stewart Skene..... PKC Community Wardens

