



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THE KEEP SAFE INITIATIVE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Panel of proposals to establish "Keep Safe Places" at a range of council facilities across West Lothian.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Considers and notes the content of this report.
2. Notes that it is planned to present a further update report to the Panel in due course.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Outcome 4 - We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities; Outcome 5 - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Staffing - Staff training will be required. This will be provided free of charge by Police Scotland. Trade Unions will be consulted on any implications for staffing duties.

VII	Consideration at PDSP	This is the first consideration at PDSP.
VIII	Other consultations	Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services. West Lothian Leisure.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Introduction

The Keep Safe Initiative works with a network of local businesses such as shops, libraries and cafes who have agreed to make their premises a “Keep Safe Place” where vulnerable members of the public can go if they feel frightened, distressed or are the victim of crime when out in the community. The initiative is supported and promoted by Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity.

Members of the public wishing to use the initiative are issued with a contact card containing details of their name, health concerns, communication needs and contact details for nominated family members or friends.

Businesses taking part in the initiative are issued with a Keep Safe sticker to display in their premises window, letting vulnerable people know that they provide a Keep Safe Place. If a member of the public enters a Keep Safe Place and presents their contact card, a trained member of staff will reassure that person and contact one of the individuals named on their card, or the police if a crime has been committed.

The service is provided free of charge by the I Am Me charity and training for staff in participating premises is provided free of charge by Police Scotland. Any premises being promoted for inclusion in the Keep Safe initiative are vetted in advance by Police Scotland to ensure suitability.

Council agreed on 22 January 2019 that officers should report to Partnership and Resources PDSP to identify suitable council premises across the county that could potentially provide a Keep Safe Place for vulnerable members of the public.

D.2 Summary of Proposals

It is considered that prominent public buildings in accessible locations would best serve the aims of this initiative and that our Partnership Centres may be particularly well suited for that role. It is therefore proposed that the opportunity for establishing a Keep Safe Place at each of the following locations should be explored:

- Armadale Partnership Centre
- Bathgate Partnership Centre
- Blackburn Partnership Centre
- East Calder Partnership Centre
- Fauldhouse Partnership Centre
- Linlithgow Partnership Centre (Tam Dalyell House)
- Strathbrock Partnership Centre, Broxburn
- West Lothian Civic Centre, Livingston

In considering this matter, officers concluded that properties within the council's school estate should be disregarded on safety and logistical grounds. Community Education Centres were also discounted on the basis that these are leased to and run by individual management committees with widely varying opening hours, facilities and staffing capacities.

In addition to the foregoing, preliminary discussions have been held with representatives from West Lothian Leisure, who have confirmed a willingness to explore opportunities for establishing Keep Safe Places at suitable Xcite locations.

E. CONCLUSION

The Keep Safe is initiative can make a significant difference to the lives vulnerable members of our community in times of need and distress. The initiative is supported and promoted by Police Scotland, who provide staff training free of charge.

It is proposed that officers will work with Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity to explore opportunities for establishing Keep Safe Places at the aforementioned locations. These proposals will also be discussed with Trade Unions to ensure any implications on staffing duties are addressed. A further update will be presented to the Panel in due course on progress.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None

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