

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY SAFETY BOARD held within WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 7 DECEMBER 2020.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Kirsteen Sullivan, Charles Kennedy and, Andrew McGuire; Graeme Struthers (Depute Chief Executive, West Lothian Council), AnnMarie Carr (Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services, West Lothian Council), Alison Smith (Housing, Customer and Building Services, West Lothian Council), Yvonne Beresford (Policy & Performance Officer, West Lothian Council), Tim Ward (Social Policy, West Lothian Council); Chief Inspector Alun Williams (Police Scotland); Lynne Gow (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service) and Brian Robertson (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2.2 MINUTE

The Board confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 9 March 2020.

3. MINUTES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING STEERING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2019

The Board noted the minute of the Community Planning Steering Group held on 29 October 2019.

4. COMMUNITY SAFETY - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - JOINT PRESENTATION BY POLICE SCOTLAND AND WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

The Board were provided with an overview of the partnership working that had been undertaken by colleagues at Police Scotland and West Lothian Council in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour which was one of the five priorities for the Community Safety Partnership.

First the Board heard from Alison Smith, West Lothian Council who explained what constituted anti-social behaviour which included Hate Crime. Alison continued by making the distinction between what complaints had been received by the partnership pre Covid-19 and post Covid-19 noting that as a result of more people being at home due to the pandemic then things such as loud music and DIY were being noticed more by neighbours. It was also noted that people's tolerance levels appeared to be lower than usual, again due to the pandemic.

The Board continued to be advised of the work that had been undertaken by the partnership in respect of anti-social behaviour and included weekly virtual meetings and regular attendance at Safer Communities Network. This had not been without its challenges due to the pandemic, but opportunities had also been identified and included making better use of

virtual meetings; a review and amalgamation of meetings and horizon scanning,

Chief Inspector Alun Williams continued the presentation by advising that for Police Scotland the pandemic had created new demands and had affected all areas of performance and community engagement. It had also necessitated new working practices for officers including the use of PPE, embedding social distancing in the workplace, maximising visibility whilst limiting unnecessary public contact and increased phone reporting.

The Chief Inspector continued to advise that anti-social behaviour had increased by 67% in the first quarter of 2020-21 and by 51% by the end of quarter 2 of 2020-21, however traditional core elements such as vandalism, public disorder and fire raising continued to fall.. There were also strong indications that the pressures of lockdown had created new tensions amongst communities which had resulted in an increase in complaints.

On a final note the Chief Inspector reported that as a result of the restrictions associated with Covid-19 the night time economy had been severely affected so serious violence was comparatively static. However domestic abuse had seen an increase of 27%.

The Chief Inspector concluded the presentation by advising that ongoing future challenges include the festive period and travel restrictions.

The Chair thanked Alison Smith and Chief Inspector Alun Williams for their informative presentation. The Board then took the opportunity to ask questions.

### Decision

To note the contents of the presentation

## 5. COMMUNITY SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the West Lothian Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group providing an update on performance 2020-21 for the indicators that supported the Community Safety Plan.

It was noted that there were a range of 40 performance indicators to monitor progress for the life span of the plan. Contained within the report was a table that provided a summary of the performance indicators for each of the five priorities in the plan. Full details were set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

A detailed explanation of those targets showing red, amber, data only or unknown were summarised in the report.

Partners from the council, Fire Service and Police Scotland all provided a commentary on those targets that were of note to the Board.

Decision

To note the content of the report

6. SFRS BONFIRE / FIREWORK 2020

The Board considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the West Lothian Safer Communities Strategy Planning Group providing an overview of the multi-agency preventative activities within the West Lothian Council area during the Bonfire/Firework period 2020.

It was noted that multi-agency partners met virtually on several occasions as part of the planned strategy for the Bonfire period of 12 October to 8 November 2020. The report then outlined the multi-agency approach which included a Demand Reduction Education Plan; Identification of Unlicensed Bonfires/Fireworks and Community Engagement. It was noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic many of these activities had been conducted using virtual means.

In the run up to Bonfire night information was shared via West Lothian Council social media channels capturing messages from internal council services and partners agencies.

Key topics covered included:-

- Sottish Fire and Rescue Service – directed members of the public towards the fireworks code in anticipation of home displays increasing.
- Police Scotland – Antisocial behaviour appeal shared from local police account in coordination with the Safer Neighbourhood Team to encourage safety amongst young people.
- Council Trading Standards – Series of messages to make people aware of the rules around selling fireworks and to point members of the public in the right direction should they have concerns.
- Council Waste Services – Directing local people to the correct contact number should they come across anything that resembled an unlit bonfire and Identification of Wheelie Bin collections and advice provided to residents to reduce build up.

The Board were invited to note the contents of the report

Decision

To note the content of the report

7. 2021 COMMUNITY SAFETY DATES

The Board considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the West Lothian Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group seeking approval of proposed meeting dates for 2021 of the Community Safety Board along with dates for the Safer Community Strategic Planning Group.

It was recommended that the Board approve the Community Safety Board meeting dates for 2021 as outlined in the report.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report