

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY SAFETY BOARD held within MS TEAMS VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 5 OCTOBER 2021.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Kirsteen Sullivan and Andrew McGuire, Graham Hope (Chief Executive, West Lothian Council), Graeme Struthers (Depute Chief Executive, West Lothian Council), Marjory Mackie (Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services, West Lothian Council), Yvonne Beresford (West Lothian Council), Tim Ward (West Lothian Council), Area Commander David Sharp (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service), Chief Inspector Alun Williams (Police Scotland), Lisa Blackshaw (NHS Lothian) and Willie Clark (Neighbourhood Watch Scotland).

Absent – Councillor Charles Kennedy

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTES

The Board confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on Monday 21 June 2021 as a correct record.

3. COMMUNITY SAFETY - PRESENTATION BY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCOTLAND

The Board was provided with a presentation by Willie Clark, the national coordinator from Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, on community safety and their communication platform 'ALERTS'.

The presentation was an opportunity for the Board to learn more about Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, their partnership working and how this related to their system of neighbourhood alerts.

The presentation explained that the purpose of the 'ALERTS' platform was to provide the "right information to the right people at the right time". Partners, such as the Police, Local Authorities and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service could send information through the platform to users who had registered to receive alerts from Neighbourhood Watch Scotland. Users could choose to hear from national and local partners communicating in their area and once registered, would receive timely, trusted, direct and relevant information via email, text or voicemail. Examples were given of recent information which included fire alarm legislation, rural crime, COVID19 alerts and illegal parking.

On conclusion of the presentation members of the Board queried how users signed up to receive alerts. It was confirmed the process was straightforward and clearly detailed on the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland website.

Chief Inspector Alun Williams expressed the view that the use of the 'ALERTS' platform was an opportunity for collective partner use and provided an extra avenue to share wider messages on public safety.

The Chair thanked Willie Clark for the presentation which highlighted the scope, extent, effect and success of Neighbourhood Watch Scotland.

Decision

To note the content of the presentation by Willie Clark on community safety and the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland communication platform 'ALERTS'.

4. WEST LOTHIAN MULTI AGENCY BONFIRE PLANNING 2021

The Board considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the West Lothian Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group providing an overview of the multi-agency preventative activities planned within the West Lothian area during the Bonfire / Firework Period 2021.

It was recommended that the Board note the contents of the report and make any comments.

The Board highlighted the work undertaken in the Blackburn community in relation to the Blackburn Bonfire Night Action Group and queried if similar partnership working could be replicated in the Craigshill area. Area Commander Sharp advised contact would be made with partners to arrange similar engagement to that available in Blackburn.

Members sought clarification on the term "unlicensed bonfires" detailed in the report under the section 'Removal of Bonfires'. Area Commander Sharp explained the circumstances relating to the removal of such bonfires and advised it would be more accurate to have described these as "unorganised".

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report;
2. To request similar engagement for the Craigshill area as that received by Blackburn through the Blackburn Bonfire Night Action Group; and
3. To note the description of bonfires as "unlicensed" detailed under the 'Removal of Bonfires' section of the report would more accurately be described as "unorganised".

5. PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-2022

The Board considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the West Lothian Community Safety Partnership providing an update on

Quarter 2 performance 2021/2022, for the indicators that support the Community Safety Plan.

It was recommended that the Board note the updated performance 2021/22.

The Board were informed that as the Community Safety Plan 2019 – 2022 was in its third year the 40 existing performance indicators used to support the plan would be reviewed throughout the final year. The review would assess whether current performance indicators were 'fit for purpose' post COVID with a new suite of performance indicators likely for the new Community Safety Plan from 2022.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. WEST LOTHIAN COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2022-2025

The Board considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the West Lothian Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group providing an overview of the development of the new Community Safety Plan 2022-2025.

It was recommended that the Board note the content of the report and make any comments.

Officers provided an update on the review process underway that would assist in the development of the new Community Safety Plan 2022-2025. The Board were advised that the first review was close to completion and a three year thematic plan would be included with the new Community Safety Plan. A further update would be brought to the Board on 24 January 2022.

Following a query from the Board on whether the survey underway on 'Public Places and Spaces' would feed into the work, it was confirmed by officers that this would be included together with other relevant community safety documents and partnership collaborative work.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.