

7. REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FOR PETITION ON SENTENCING FOR KNIFE CRIME

Deputation

Sharon Duffy addressed the Council Executive in relation to a Request for Support for a Petition on Sentencing for Knife Crime and explained that she was seeking the Council's support for a campaign which was launched in February 2012. The aim of the petition was to collect 100,000 signatures and to call on the UK Government to increase sentencing for knife crime.

Report by Head of Corporate Services

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services requesting it to consider the legal and other implications for the council in relation to the request for support for a petition seeking tougher sentences for knife crime. A copy of the request for support was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The report explained that the request asked for the council's support in terms of signing up to a petition calling on the UK Government to increase sentencing for knife crime, and to ask for permission to leave copies of the petition in council premises, such as libraries and social work centres, etc. The request was therefore in two parts and the report examined the legal position in relation to the two actions.

The report recalled that the council had previously, in March 2009, considered a position in relation to sentencing for knife crime, and an extract from the minute of that meeting was attached in Appendix 2 to the report.

The report recommended that the Council Executive:-

1. Consider the request for support for the petition seeking tougher sentences for knife crime as set out in Appendix 1, and its request for the use of council facilities.
2. Agree that appropriate notices and leaflets produced by the petitioners be displayed and made available at council buildings where such facilities and arrangements already existed, but that no other council facilities or resources should be made available.
3. Note the information contained in the report from Education Services in relation to the ways in which West Lothian children have been and were informed and educated about the dangers and consequences of carrying knives.
4. Note the information contained in the report from Lothian & Borders Police in relation to the work carried out through the Community Safety Unit and Community Police Officers in relation to knife crime.

Motion

To approve the recommendations of the report subject to the following:-

Recommendation 1 – to include “ and to Support the position of “In Loving Memory”

Recommendation 2 – No changes to be made.

Recommendation 3 – to add “and work to continue and be further developed.

Recommendation 4 – to add “and work to continue and be further developed.

Decision

To unanimously agree the motion.