



Inverclyde Alliance

**AGENDA ITEM NO: 9**

**Report To: Inverclyde Alliance Board Date: 2 October 2023**

**Report By: Ruth Binks  
Corporate Director  
Education, Communities  
and Organisational  
Development, Inverclyde  
Council** **Report No:**

**Contact Officer: Tony McEwan  
Head of Culture,  
Communities and  
Educational Resources,  
Inverclyde Council** **Contact No: 01475 715459**

**Subject: Inverclyde Partnership Hub Meetings**

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Alliance Board on the impact of the Inverclyde Partnership Hub meetings.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

2.1 At its meeting on 19 June 2023, the Inverclyde Alliance Board made a request to the Community Safety Partnership to provide an update on the Inverclyde Partnership Hub meetings.

2.2 Council Officers engaged with Police Scotland, who chair the meetings, to provide a background to the purpose of the meetings and also undertook a survey of stakeholders, which mainly comprised partners who attend the meetings.

2.3 The survey results indicate a largely positive response in relation to the meetings achieving the intended outcomes and were broadly supportive of the format, while also highlighting key benefits, challenges, and suggestions for improvements. Some examples of successful outcomes achieved are detailed in this report.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that the Alliance Board:

- notes the very good work undertaken by the Partnership Hub; and
- agrees that the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Group continues to support the work of the Partnership Hub and continues to monitor its impact.

**Ruth Binks  
Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 The purpose of Partnership Hub is to facilitate the sharing of information between Police Scotland and external and third sector parties and discuss any resulting partnership activity or actions. It involves several meetings per week between all parties to help address and reduce anti-social behaviour activity within the local authority. The meetings also cover welfare/concern incidents if required in situations where concern reports have been raised (which are submitted to Social Work Dept via the Interim Vulnerable Persons Database known as iVPD).

4.2 Partnership Hubs are undertaken in both local authority areas within K Division which serves Inverclyde and Renfrewshire. This is a predominately virtual group which can occasionally involve face-to-face meeting for specific issues.

4.3 The main community safety areas are discussed at the partnership hub meetings are detailed below:

### **4.4 Antisocial behaviour**

In situations involving Anti-Social Behaviour where all partners have looked at welfare options or they are not deemed appropriate then it may be appropriate to escalate the issue and incidents by having the person visited by their Housing Officer from the relevant Registered Social Landlord or Housing Services Manager in an attempt to dissuade the person from a course of anti-social behaviour, this is usually done in conjunction with Inverclyde Council Anti-Social Behaviour Investigators and community warden service.

### **4.5 Youth offending / concern / antisocial behaviour**

In situations involving young people engaging in anti-social behaviour or low-level offending, the local authority anti-social investigation team can issue "Parent Alert Letters" to make sure that the parents of young people involved in anti-social behaviour are aware of the issues and can take steps to address any offending by their children. This can be escalated to an Acceptable Behaviour Contract issued by the local authority if the anti-social behaviour continues and thereafter can be escalated by the local authority seeking an anti-social behaviour order through the civil courts. In this case the local authority would likely submit a data protection request to Police Scotland for information held by Police Scotland which would assist the Local Authority in seeking an Anti-social behaviour order. This can apply to adults as well as young people under the age of 18.

Education Services can also be made aware of relevant community incidents through information sharing that takes place at the hub meetings.

### **4.6 Antisocial behaviour – Registered Social Landlords**

If the person involved is a tenant of a registered social landlord and the issue has a bearing on their tenancy agreement or locality in which they live, this can also be progressed by the Registered Social Landlord to begin anti-social behaviour order proceedings or to seek a decree for eviction or termination of a tenancy.

## **5.0 OWNERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE**

5.1 The Partnership Hub meetings are chaired and led by Police Scotland. The partnership hub in Greenock Police Office is staffed full time by a constable, supported by a sergeant (Local Authority Liaison Officer) and the Community Policing Inspector / Deputy Area Commander.

The hub (or staff listed above) can also link in directly as and when required with the Head of Service of the Local Authority to make sure they are aware of welfare concern issues of children involved in anti-social behaviour and offending; missing children; alcohol or drug misuse; bullying; school-related cyber bullying and instances of youth disorder which may or are likely to have an impact on the day to day operation of the school, or for which the school can have an impact on the protection and safeguarding of the welfare of the child.

Any such discussions or notification to the local authority is also be recorded on the iVPD system to comply with data sharing requirements.

5.2 The partner agencies who may attend partnership hub meetings include (although not all partners attend all meetings)

- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service;
- Homelessness Services Inverclyde Council;
- Registered Social Landlord Housing Manager and Housing Officers;
- Health and Social Care Partnership Nurses and Addiction Workers;
- Inverclyde Council Antisocial Behaviour Investigator;
- Team Lead for Community Wardens Service Inverclyde Council (Deputy if required);
- Officers from the British Transport Police;
- Trading Standards from Local Authority – also performs role as licensing enforcement;
- Inverclyde Council Community Safety and Resilience Team Leader;
- PSoS Officers; and
- HM Coastguard.

## 6.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

6.1 In discussing members of the public all agencies have agreed boundaries of confidentiality. The agencies within this meeting respect those boundaries and hold the meeting under the shared understanding that:

“Information discussed by participants at this meeting is strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties who have not signed up to an Information Sharing Protocol (ISP), without the agreements of the partners of the meeting, it should focus on building safer communities and public protection concerns and a clear distinction should be made between fact and professional opinion. Participants agree that you will only record that information which you can action.”

All work undertaken at the meetings is informed by a commitment to human rights; respect for individuals and their information; equalities and effective practice issues in relation to age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and religion or belief. All attendees understand that any unauthorised release or carelessness in the handling of this confidential information is considered a breach of the duty to maintain confidentiality and that action would be required to be undertaken by individual agencies.

6.2 In Inverclyde daily, the Local Authority Liaison Officer LALO and a community officer embedded within the Greenock Partnership Hub interrogates STORM (command and control system for logging of police incidents) for relevant occurrences for raising within the hub. The STORM incident is logged on a locally held Spreadsheet “Action log”. This is not sent out with Police Scotland. This provides a recorded log of what was disseminated verbally and by whom and for what purpose.

Incidents to be discussed are primarily anti-social behaviour related and can include:

- drugs;
- vandalism;
- noise complaints;
- neighbour complaints;
- concerns for person;
- disturbances;
- assisting members of the public;
- public nuisance;
- animals;
- fires; and
- external agency requests

- 6.3 If the LALO deems the information on a particular incident is sensitive this will not be shared at the meeting but discussed with the appropriate partners individually, if necessary and where this is proportionate, and justifiable. The Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) will be made aware of incidents at the end of the meeting in the absence of other partners to whom the information is not relevant and in which an iVPD has been submitted which in turn allows HSCP to act as early as possible to safeguard the wellbeing and interests of persons in need of help or further support.

If any partner requires further information after the meeting, they can complete a Data Protection Request i.e. to progress an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO).

The partnership hub officer, LALO and Deputy Local Area Commander can also update the chronology section of concern reports held on police Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (iVPD) which ensures that Public Protection Unit (PPU) is sighted on further discussions and work undertaken by partners.

## **7.0 PARTNER SURVEY**

- 7.1 To inform the evaluation of the hub meetings Council Officers conducted a survey of both partners who attend the meetings and other stakeholders who's work can be influenced by the information shared at the meetings. The survey was split into two sections with different questions for those who do not attend meetings.

- 7.2 In total 22 partners responded to the survey, comprising of 17 attenders of meetings and 5 other stakeholders.

- 7.3 For those regularly attending the meetings the perception of the effectiveness of the meetings in achieving intended goals rated at 4.7 out of 5. All these respondents felt that the meetings facilitated relevant information sharing and coordination of activity among different agencies effectively, and that frequency of these meetings was appropriate for addressing the needs and challenges faced by agencies.

3 of the 5 stakeholders who do not attend the hub felt that the partnership hub meetings assist their organisation/service to achieve intended goals, while the other two were unsure.

- 7.4 The survey reported the following benefits of the partnership hub:

- Increased partnership engagement;
- Partnership actions expedited;
- Greater understanding of local risks;
- Improved joint working and sharing of deployment plans;
- Sharing information and intelligence to achieve common goals;
- Regular updates to ongoing issues;
- Facilitates information sharing outside of meetings due to establishing familiar contacts;
- Building relationships and trust between agencies;
- Improved processes towards early intervention and support for safety of vulnerable people;
- Almost real time flow of information for emerging issues; and
- Real time solution development.

- 7.5 The survey however did report the following challenges:

- Occasional difficulties in progressing work streams that are discussed at hub but may be outside the scope of direct attendees;
- Nature of the meetings schedule means that there is no crossover between certain agencies such as HSCP or SFRS with housing associations;
- Not all issues discussed are relevant to all partners at the meeting, however focused nature of meetings means wasted time is minimised;

- Occasional conflicts with diary can impact attendance;
- Lack of understanding of work streams of teams that are not represented at the meetings can lead to unrealistic expectations; and
- Balancing adherence to data protection principles against statutory obligations to safeguard the wellbeing and welfare of our communities, within a multi-agency meeting.

7.6 Respondents have also provided suggestions for improvement which will now be considered by the Community Safety Partnership:

- lower level police incidents excluded, but appreciate priority may differ according to partner organisation.
- increase number of partner agencies attending i.e. HSCP, SFRS and RSL attending meetings together.
- more formal sharing of information outside of meeting as well as the verbal at meetings;
- ensure other stakeholders are invited to meetings when issue may be relevant to them e.g. HM Coastguard and water safety issues;
- review of membership to ensure right people are attending;
- ensure there is clarity on roles of organisations and services between partners to avoid unrealistic expectations;
- development of short-term groups to address emerging community issues from the hub meetings;
- better impact monitoring and evaluation of hub management information data and meetings; and
- Increasing the instances of in-person meetings.

7.7 The Community Safety Partnership Strategic Group recognises that there needs to be an improvement in the provision of quantitative impact data provided to the group on the effectiveness of the partnership hub which needs to reflect the resourcing of the meetings. It is however clear from the survey that partners are seeing benefits to this approach. Some positive outcomes from the partnership hub that were reported in the survey include:

- resolving drug dealing cases;
- identifying offenders sought by Police;
- improving services to vulnerable people at risk and reducing risk to neighbours;
- improved collaboration of RSLs and Police to address cases involving tenants with ongoing mental health issues;
- Travel Safe Team, British Transport Police (BTP), Community Wardens and Police Scotland working together to disrupt youth disorder throughout Inverclyde;
- collaborative efforts with partners led to successful resolution of several anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases. The Kelburn estate's demolition in Port Glasgow progressed smoothly with extra patrols from Police and Wardens addressing boiler thefts. In a separate incident, wardens helped catch a drug dealer through video evidence, resulting in arrests and the end of ASB and drug dealing. These partnerships and proactive measures effectively resolved these issues.
- successful evictions for serious anti-social behaviour (ASB), including drug dealing, with the help of Police Scotland and Inverclyde Council's ASIST Team. The collaboration has led to obtaining ASBOs for prolonged ASB cases. The agencies also work together to support affected individuals, promoting real-time reporting, ensuring confidentiality, and providing intelligence for effective surveillance that resulted in drug recovery. This strengthened court cases to remove these individuals from properties and mitigate the negative community impact of their actions;
- greater level of awareness of community incidents which are relevant for schools;
- key partners attending schools during winter months as to deter children from walking on frozen ponds;
- using information sharing from the partnership hub to target multiagency support for vulnerable young people within Inverclyde. An increase in young people involved with knives or weapons encouraged a delivery of the No Knives Better Lives programme across all high schools within Inverclyde;

- information shared during partnership meetings has resulted in arrests, seizures of drugs and money and the recovery of properties from tenants who have been responsible for anti-social behaviour;
- anti-social behaviour workshops being held with RSLs and Police Scotland;
- working together to address community concerns where significant violent crimes have been reported;
- the development of new working practices and relationships between Police Scotland, Community Safety and Resilience, and Education Services;  
Radiolink, work by local Police Scotland officers from the partnership hub led to the successful bidding of and funding for of Radiolink handsets across Greenock and Port Glasgow town centres;
- officers from the partnership hub worked on and brought into operation Exclusion Zones as bail conditions for offenders involved in acquisitive crime across Greenock and Port Glasgow town centres; and
- following on from a series of willful fire raisings, a number of young people were identified as being responsible. As a result of the relationships enhance through the hub, Police, Education and Scottish Fire and Rescue were able to work together to carry out fire safety inputs with the specific youths involved as part of the SFRS outreach program with a view from deterring them from future instances of such behaviour.

7.8 The Community Safety Partnership Strategic Group will continue to support the work of the partnership hub and work with partners to develop and improve the service.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Legal

None

8.2 Finance

None

8.3 Human Resources

None

8.4 Equality and Diversity

None

8.5 Repopulation

None

8.6 Inequalities

None

## **9.0 CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 No additional consultation in addition to the one summarised in this report.

## **10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 No background papers