

## ANGUS COUNCIL

## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 MAY 2001

THREADS OF SUCCESS: A STUDY OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS  
IN SCOTLAND

## REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**ABSTRACT**

This report summarises the findings of the Pathfinder Study Team who carried out a seven-month study of five Community Safety Partnerships in Scotland; Angus was one of the Partnerships studied.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Policy & Resources Committee: -

- (i) Note the findings of the study team.
- (ii) Note the recommendations of the study team.
- (iii) Agree to develop an action plan which would bring about a proposed implementation plan taking account of the financial resource implications.

**2. STUDY AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The overall aim of the study was to assess the current status of the community safety partnerships in the five Local Authority areas, Angus, City of Edinburgh, East Dunbartonshire, Fife and South Ayrshire, and to review progress and realign future direction towards achieving an integrated preventative community safety strategy in each area that would achieve maximum local impact.

**3. THE MAIN FINDINGS**

The study team identified five main findings in community safety partnership working across Scotland:-

- (i) Community safety partnership structures are emerging across Scotland but their form, stage of development, potential and effectiveness vary.
- (ii) Partnerships are struggling at two stages:-
  - Into effective existence.
  - From reactive project work into planned, programmed preventative work.

- (iii) An upsurge in project-based community safety activity in Scotland is evident but in most instances is not yet:-
  - Built on joint local audit or joint planned action.
  - Connected to mainstream service delivery.
  - Accessing regular, recurring resources.
- (iv) Under-investment in establishing and sustaining a local platform for partnership, particularly in the following areas:-
  - Partnership building.
  - Information sharing.
  - Joint auditing and planning.
  - Communication within or between partners at all levels.
  - Core development funding
  - Monitoring and evaluating performance and impact.
- (v) Pathfinder partnerships are currently setting mechanisms in place and are aspiring to better structural organisation. Priority is also being given to partner commitment and involvement, securing funding, integration into mainstream decision-making and measurable service delivery across partners.

#### **4. KEY LOCAL ISSUE**

At an Angus level, the study team identified five key, local issues that they felt should be addressed immediately. They are to:-

- Build a platform for partnership by investing time and energy into building capabilities and competencies of the partnership. securing resources to provide staff and financial support for community safety
- Plan preventative community safety by conducting a community safety audit and jointly planning community safety priorities.
- Communicate the community safety message within and between partners by joint training and setting up operational networks.
- Mainstream community safety by integrating it into community planning, best value, service planning and service delivery for all partners.
- Evaluate the partnership's work by applying the Audit Scotland (Safe and Sound, 2000) Balanced Scorecard and Measuring Performance and Impact.

Work is already underway with regard to some of the above issues.

#### **5. KEY NATIONAL ISSUES**

While working with the partnerships, the study team found it apparent that, in order to achieve maximum local impact, there was a role for the national organisations, namely the Scottish Executive, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Association of Chief Police Officers for Scotland to lend their support in the following areas:-

- Reinforce community safety as a national priority, strengthen the Scotland wide strategy for community safety partnerships and undertake an annual scrutiny process.
- Share success, encourage innovation and build partnership quality by managing the development of information-sharing protocols, providing a national data base of credible practice, building a Scottish training knowledge and skills base and supporting innovation and partnership through a review of the community safety challenge funds.
- Mainstream community safety in the Scottish Executive, COSLA and ACPOS by ensuring relevant departments and agencies maximise their community safety impact, and by reviewing financial incentives to support a preventative community safety agenda.

## **6. FUTURE ACTIONS – RECOMMENDATIONS**

These recommendations came by as a result of discussion with the five partnerships that took part in the study.

Recommendations 1 – 8 reflect local issues while recommendations 9 – 14 relate to national issues

## **7. LOCAL ISSUES**

### **1. Building a Platform for Partnership**

- Ensure all senior partners are committed to the partnership.
- Re-affirm or adopt the three-tier partnership structure.
- Ensure that the senior, Operations and Task Groups have sufficiently senior chairs to deliver the tasks that have been prioritised.
- Ensure the regularity of senior partners' meetings.
- Establish clear lines of accountability and responsibility.

### **2. Securing Resources to Support Partnership**

The Local Authority Chief Executive and Chief Constable (Divisional Commander in larger forces) in liaison with Health Family representation should review arrangements for providing dedicated support for the partnership. Where support exists, senior Partners should satisfy themselves that the support is adequate to enable the partnership to undertake the scale of preventative work that needs to be done.

### **3. Securing Sustained Mainstream Funding for Community Safety**

- Secure dedicated staff support for community safety partnership working.
- Review current expenditure that is directly and indirectly related to community safety.
- Undertake a local cost of crime assessment.

Explore invest-to-save programmes by asking partners to:

- Identify areas where investment would create preventative savings.
- Ensure that sustained funding for community safety should be a standing item on senior partners' meeting agendas.

#### **4. Auditing, Joint Planning and Forward-Thinking Community Safety**

- Local community safety partnerships need to undertake a community safety audit that includes an element of joint planning, anticipates future trends and seeks preventative solutions.
- Establish a time-limited task group to identify useful community safety related information already being gathered by partners and bring that information together.
- Translate the highlights into 'community safety signposts'.
- Using the 'community safety signposts', prepare a preventative community safety strategy and performance targets for the locality.
- Establish an information system where reliable community safety information can be regularly collated and shared.
- Establish two mechanisms to tackle immediate community safety problems, namely;
  - (i) make 'immediate community safety problems' a standing agenda item for Senior and Operational partner meetings
  - (ii) create a 'local service response network'
- Ensure that partners understand the distinction between data-sharing and data protection and establish local community safety protocols where necessary.

#### **5. Communicating the Community Safety Message**

- Community safety partnerships should develop a community safety communication and training programme as a core component of the community safety strategy.

#### **6. Connecting Community Safety, Community Planning, Social Inclusion and Wider Strategies**

- Local community safety partnerships should take the necessary steps to;
  - (i) Establish community safety as a core theme for community planning, social inclusion partnerships and community regeneration partnerships.

- (ii) Ensure where appropriate, drug action plans, children's services plans, criminal justice plans, housing improvement programmes, health improvement plans, inward investment plans, economic development plans, road and transport safety, fire safety, water safety and home safety plans reflect community safety priorities and are integrated into the local community safety strategy.
- (iii) Regularly scrutinise work on community safety as a core theme and the contribution to community safety being made through other related action plans.

**7. Integrating Community Safety into Service Planning, Development and Delivery**

- All community safety partners should bring forward proposals to the Senior Partners' Group setting out the steps being taken within each partner's services and organisation.
- The proposals should be considered and agreed by the Senior Partners' Group, incorporated into the partnership's community safety strategy and have performance reported annually to both Partner's Management and Senior Partners' Group.

**8. Evaluating Performance and Demonstrating Sustained Improvements**

- Local community safety partnerships should embed target setting, monitoring and evaluation into all aspects of their community safety work to enable them to assess and demonstrate sustained improvements in community safety.
- Use the performance management framework outlined in the Accounts Commission bulletin on performance measurement for community safety partnerships.
- Set performance indicators for their community safety programme by drawing upon the basket of performance indicators proposed by the Accounts Commission.
- Establish supplementary local indicators for each part of the strategy and programme.
- Measure the milestones towards a stronger partnership in terms of the five key local issues.
- Ensure preventative community safety is adopted across all services as a core component of the 'Best Value' process, that community safety targets are set as part of each relevant 'Best Value' review and that progress is reported every six months to the partnership.

## **National Issues**

The following recommendations are for the Scottish executive to consider.

9. **Strengthen the National Crime Prevention/Community Safety Strategy**
10. **Improving Data Sharing and Guiding the Development of Information-Sharing Protocols**
11. **Accessing Timely Advice and Support on Partnerships and Community Safety**
12. **Building a Scottish Community Safety Training Knowledge and Skills Base.**

## **WHERE ANGUS IS IN RELATION TO THE LOCAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 1**

- We are at Stage 4 of the Accounts Commission self-assessment review and will progress to Stage 5 on 23 May 2001, the date of the next Community safety, Health and Substance Misuse Strategy Group meeting.
- Senior partners have signed up to the partnership.
- Three-tier partnership structure in place, (Senior Group) Community safety, Health and Substance Misuse Strategy Group, (Operations Group) Community Safety Steering Group, (Task Groups) Various.
- Senior Group chaired by Chief Executive, Angus Council, Operations Group joint chaired by Chief Inspector, Support, Tayside Police and Head of Policy and Performance Unit , Angus Council, Task Groups chaired at a suitable level.
- Senior Group meets three monthly, Operations Group meets six-weekly and Task Groups as required but normally monthly.

### **Recommendation 2**

- A police officer of the rank of Sergeant is presently seconded to Angus Council as a Community Safety Development Officer.
- A member of staff from the Health Board is seconded to Angus Council as a Health Development Officer.
- Tayside Fire Brigade has recently created posts in relation to Community Fire Safety and a Station Officer has been given the responsibility of liaising with the partnership in relation to community safety in Angus.
- There is no dedicated member of staff for community safety within Angus Council.

### **Recommendation 3**

- There is no significant separate community safety budget within any of the partner organisations.

- A cost of crime assessment is taking place under the Safe Angus For Everyone project.
- Money for community safety initiatives normally comes via the Challenge Bid Competitions plus matched funding from Local Authority, other partners and the private sector.
- Some funding has been secured to continue the Safe Angus For Everyone project into a second pilot year.

#### **Recommendation 4**

- A community safety strategy was published in November 1999 and this has been reviewed. The results of the review are soon to be published.
- Members of the Community Safety Steering Group are working on a new Community Safety Plan and this should be in draft form for presentation to the Community Safety, Health and Substance Misuse Group.
- There are two mechanisms in place in Angus at the moment to deal with immediate community safety problems, Area Service Teams and Problem Orientated Policing Groups. Consideration is being given to the integration of these groups.
- Some local protocols are in place regarding information sharing but there is still a great deal of uncertainty in this area.

#### **Recommendation 5**

- A staff tutor has been appointed and joint training of education staff has taken place in relation to drug misuse.
- Joint training has also taken place in relation to sex offenders.
- Area Service Teams and Area Forums localise issues and bring together service delivery partners.

#### **Recommendation 6**

- The Community Plan clearly states that community safety is a central feature of it.
- All plans must now conform to a particular style.
- All plans must conform to and encompass the core strategies contained in the Community Plan.
- Chairpersons of the various Steering Groups must now report to the Strategy Group, on a six monthly basis, progress made.

#### **Recommendation 7**

- Tayside Police and Tayside Fire Brigade are aligning their Policing and Fire Plans to the Community Plan and the Community Safety Plan.
- Chairpersons of the six present Steering Groups and Forums present annually, their plans, to the Strategy Group.

## **Recommendation 8**

- The template now employed for all plans clearly shows targets, monitoring and evaluation tools.
- A review of the original Community Safety and Substance Misuse Strategy Document has been carried out and clearly shows progress and achievement levels.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There may be financial implications arising from this report if the recommendations are fully implemented. However, a further report on the detail implications and funding proposals will be submitted in due course.

**9.**

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

There are no human rights issues arising from this report.

**10.**

## **CONSULTATION**

The Directors of Law & Administration and Finance have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

A B Watson  
Chief Executive

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this paper.