

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

Tuesday, 15 May 2018 at 10 am

Motorcycle Community Improvement Partnership

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
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Executive Summary

The Council agreed a motion calling for a report to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee on what further action could be taken to address the underlying issues which lead to crime and antisocial behaviour as part of a longer-term strategy on the issue of motorcycle crime. This report outlines the ongoing work within the multi-agency Motorcycle Community Improvement Partnership (CIP) to address motorcycle theft and associated antisocial behaviour.

Motorcycle Community Improvement Partnership

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To note the contents of the report.

2. Background

- 2.1 Theft of motorcycles and their associated dangerous or anti-social misuse has been a persistent and increasing issue for many years across Edinburgh. In addition to the distress and financial impact of these thefts on victims, the most significant risk relates to the reckless riding of the machines in public spaces.
- 2.2 Following the theft of the motorcycles, the subsequent use frequently occurs in off-road locations such as parks and paths, which poses a critical risk to legitimate users. The safety risks associated with chasing offenders in a potentially high-speed pursuit necessitates a cautious approach. Coupled with the overt actions of the riders, this can result in a perceived lack of police action/protection and gives rise to public criticism of Police Scotland and other public bodies, with inevitable reputational exposure.
- 2.3 The Stronger North initiative was established in 2014 as a multi-agency response to concerns raised by the local community about youth disorder, antisocial behaviour and crime in North Edinburgh. In 2016, the Council and Police Scotland decided to revitalise the partnership as the #StrongerNorth brand along with its support structures and place-based partnership and community collaboration. #StrongerNorth is now a widely recognised community banner behind which partnership working has secured community support and confidence.
- 2.4 In November 2016, a joint letter signed by a cross party group of six Edinburgh MSPs was forwarded to the Lord Advocate and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, petitioning for further investigation and action to be taken to address the issue of “motor cycle theft and antisocial joyriding in Edinburgh”. The letter was strongly supportive of the collaborative approach adopted by Police Scotland, the Council and other partners.
- 2.5 In June 2017, Operation Myriad was launched in Muirhouse and West Pilton as a targeted multi-agency initiative led by Police Scotland, in response to antisocial behaviour and violence, during which a number of stolen motorcycles were recovered. Residents welcomed and supported this initiative, which was repeated in

October 2017. Both rounds of Operation Myriad resulted in arrests, drug recoveries, and recovery of stolen goods, including motorcycles. A communications strategy ensured wide coverage through the press and social media.

- 2.6 The Motorcycle Community Improvement Partnership (CIP) monitors and addresses city-wide motorcycle theft, harm and associated antisocial behaviour. Partners meet every two months to deliver a joined up and streamlined approach, with committed partnership working central to the process.

3. Main report

Stronger North

- 3.1 As stated above, the aim has been to address key issues and direct resource to areas of greatest need, specifically in the Forth Ward which has had a disproportionate experience of the impact of motorcycle crime. This additional tasking and coordinating capacity has been added to the wider effort in support of the Motorcycle CIP. The Stronger North Silver Group continues to meet monthly, with sub groups on children and families meeting more frequently to action plan for specific young people/families.
- 3.2 The commitment to engaging with the community in the North has resulted in several neighbourhood events, often attended by MSPs and elected members. There is also a communication strategy to support this under the banner of #StrongerNorth, led by the Locality Manager. Discussions are underway about a further local meeting focusing on motorcycle crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 3.3 Police Scotland have a dedicated officer from the local Licensing and Violence Reduction Unit tasked with oversight and investigation into all North-West motorcycle calls, working with CCTV and partners to identify riders and progress enforcement action such as charges or warrant applications.

ORBIT

- 3.4 In 2016, Operation Soteria, the city-wide multi-agency response to motorcycle crime, succeeded in temporarily securing the Community Motorcycle Unit, which is based in Glasgow, to provide targeted patrols over a period of a week.
- 3.5 The Motorcycle Unit tackled antisocial off-road motorcycle use by detecting and deterring the riders and utilising antisocial behaviour legislation to give warnings to seize legitimately owned motorcycles should their owners re-offend whilst off-road. This was augmented by theft prevention and evidence gathering patrols. A crucial benefit was the recovery of stolen motorcycles, which are frequently secreted in off-road locations for later recovery and use. The recovery of these motorcycles helps to improve public safety by removing the means for offenders to put others at risk.
- 3.6 In addition to the positive public response to this additional measure, an unexpected benefit was the breaking down of barriers with youths who normally

never interact with police officers. The apparent shared interest and opportunity for a proactive approach brought about conversations offering advice over safe motorcycle use and legitimate ownership/training.

- 3.7 The City of Edinburgh Council has now procured four off-road motorcycles and the Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership launched the ORBIT team during a press release on 3 April 2018. The funding of the motorcycles and associated equipment came from an underspend in the funding for the Partnership Agreement between the City of Edinburgh Council and Police Scotland for community policing.
- 3.8 The motorcycles are specialist vehicles and require to be used by eight appropriately trained Police Officers, called the ORBIT team. They are specifically directed toward the prevention, disruption and detection of motorcycle related crime and disorder in hard to reach areas, as well as providing high visibility re-assurance in vulnerable public locations such as parks, paths, and housing estates under the recognised partnership initiatives Operation Soteria and Stronger North.
- 3.9 The motorcycles will not be used for emergency response, or pursuit and will be limited to providing high visibility presence, investigation, and public engagement similar to the community policing tactic used successfully in Glasgow.
- 3.10 Police Scotland will facilitate the ongoing maintenance and associated costs and will ensure compliance with relevant legislation.
- 3.11 The off-road motorcycles are a city-wide resource. Localities will be able to request the resources through the Community Improvement Partnerships, based on analytical evidence of their requirement.
- 3.12 In March 2018, Police Scotland announced a pilot scheme in the Muirhouse and Drylaw areas that will have specially trained officers using a handheld device which sprays joyriders with a fine mist with a specific DNA coding which stays on skin and clothes, enabling suspects to be later identified.

Youth Work

- 3.13 In partnership with school liaison officers, a full-page activity has been developed and incorporated into the Risk Factory workbooks for attending P7 groups. A suitable message highlighting the risks of dangerous motorcycle use has been used to raise awareness among children. The activity page is being submitted for print in August, for the upcoming cohort attending the Risk Factory. The booklet will reach 7000 young people and their families across four local authority areas.
- 3.14 Additional resources have been added to youth services to target young people thought to be at risk of being drawn into further criminality in the North West.
- 3.15 A new process has been developed for identifying people coming to the attention of agencies for antisocial behaviour and criminality. This is a development of previous practices sometimes called "Top 10" or "Youth TACs". This involves multi agency discussion of both young people (Stronger North Children) and young adults

(Stronger North Families), including Criminal Justice Social Work staff, to ensure that young adults are being identified and supported to change their behaviour.

- 3.16 Council Family and Household Support teams exist in all localities, providing early intervention to families who are experiencing difficulties or whose behaviour is impacting on communities. Each of the 12 teams has a link community police officer funded through the Partnership Agreement between the Council and Police Scotland.
- 3.17 The Scottish Government Youth Justice Division and Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice in Strathclyde University have been engaged to ensure that the partnership youth work approaches are wide ranging and drawing on national expertise.
- 3.18 The Young People's Service delivers a voluntary throughcare service to young people in custody in HM Young Offenders Institution, Polmont, to develop transitions from custody back to the community. This aims to build on enhanced motivation and efforts by young people to change, including the development of employability and training opportunities.
- 3.19 The Young People's Service has engaged with the Scottish Children's Reporters Association (SCRA) and the Crown Office Procurator Fiscals Service (COPFS) regarding young people who have not responded to interventions offered and are continuing to offend. This has resulted in some young people being placed in secure establishments and young adults receiving custodial sentences. This has had some success in interrupting offending levels, and some have desisted from further offending.
- 3.20 It has been observed that when certain young people/young adults from the North-West area are in custody, antisocial behaviour and/or crime reduces significantly.
- 3.21 As part of Edinburgh's response to Serious and Organised Crime, there is ongoing work looking at alternative provision of services/interventions along with Fife, East Lothian, and Glasgow with specific focus on motorcycle use and the links to crime. A multi-agency (Police Scotland, Social Work, Family and Household Support, Young People's Service) field trip to Glasgow in May 2018 has been arranged to find out more about the use of peer mentoring within Serious and Organised Crime Groups.

Biker Down

- 3.22 Biker Down is a Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) led initiative focused on equipping motorcyclists with basic knowledge and skills to use in the immediate aftermath of an accident.
- 3.23 Designed for motorcyclists of all ages and experience, the free programme offers motorcyclists the chance to learn practical skills to help avoid being involved in a collision as well as essential first-aid training and advice on what to do should they find themselves first on the scene of a collision where someone is injured. The aim of the initiative is to help reduce motorcyclist injuries and fatalities.

- 3.24 The SFRS has been working in partnership with the Pilton Youth Community Project (PYCP) to deliver a sustained programme of engagement with young people who use this local support service.
- 3.25 This Biker Down style initiative will educate young people on the consequences of their actions for themselves, friends, families, other road/footway users and the community. By building the initiative to engage with these young people four times a year, the aim is to teach lifesaving CPR and safe riding techniques.
- 3.26 The underlying message throughout has highlighted the dangers associated with reckless motorcycle riding and the impact on the young people's own communities, and people living in the local area.

Media Campaign

- 3.27 Work with Visit Scotland has been undertaken to highlight the safe storage of motorcycles owned by tourists coming to Edinburgh. Several advertisements have been placed in motorcycle magazines in countries across Europe.
- 3.28 Ongoing discussions are being coordinated through Police Scotland on how best to undertake further publicity and raise awareness of secure motorcycle storage for tourists without impacting on the positive reputation Edinburgh has as a safe city to visit.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The reduction of motorcycle theft, harm and associated antisocial behaviour.
- 4.2 The diversion of young people involved in motorcycle related antisocial behaviour and crime.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. All activities are undertaken and managed through current budgets.

6. Risk, policy, compliance, and governance impact

- 6.1 This update report does not impact on risk, compliance, or governance for the Council.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 Creating more cohesive communities by reducing crime, antisocial behaviour, and harm by addressing a key community safety issue causing public concern (motorcycle theft and antisocial use of motorcycles)

- 7.2 The initiatives undertaken through the Motorcycle CIP will reduce the risk of injury or death from antisocial use of off-road motorcycles in public areas
- 7.3 Increase public confidence in police to keep public spaces safe for all users, and provide public reassurance to communities that public space is safe to use

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The intervention will create safer parks and public spaces by reducing risk to injury or death, recover stolen motorcycles and protect the environment by recovering motorcycles hidden/stored in inappropriate public spaces.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation with all relevant partners and potential stakeholders

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 None.

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11. Appendices

None.