

# AGENDA ITEM NO 10

REPORT NO 248/10

ANGUS COUNCIL – 25 MARCH 2010

ANGUS COMMUNITY SAFETY SURVEY

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

**ABSTRACT:** This report and attached appendix informs Members of the findings of the Angus Community Safety Partnership Community Safety Survey; highlights improvement since the previous survey of 2007; and identifies areas for further work.

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:-

- (i) Note the contents of the survey attached as an [Appendix](#);
- (ii) Note the improvement since 2007;
- (iii) Agree that the report forms the basis of public dissemination of the survey results;
- (iv) Agree the areas for further work.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In 2007, the Angus Community Safety Partnership undertook an Angus-wide survey of residents in an effort to gauge the perceptions of safety within the communities of Angus. The Angus Community Safety Partnership recently launched the Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy 2009 - 12, (Report 570/09 refers). As part of the ongoing commitment to the delivery of Community Safety services across Angus the partnership undertook to continue with the bi-annual Community Safety Survey, in line with the Strategy, to assess the general perceptions of safety of Angus as with a view to building on areas of improvement and understanding, and addressing areas where communities expressed further work was needed.

## 3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 The survey highlights that Angus is considered to be a good place to live: 92% rated it as a very good or fairly good place to live. This is reflected in the wider Citizens Survey 2009<sup>1</sup> which highlighted a 93% approval rating. There were some significant variations including:

- Rural Angus had the highest rating (99.5%);
- Carnoustie/Monifieth, Brechin/Montrose and Arbroath all saw significant improvements in these ratings between 2007 and 2009.

3.2 Just over 1 in 4 felt unsafe going out alone after dark. Concerns about being at home alone at night (9%), home alone during the day (2%), and going out alone during the day (3%), were much lower. The key findings were:

3.3 Respondents of Arbroath felt least safe out alone at night (33%) and those of Rural Angus felt safer (14%) all areas saw significant improvements in perceived safety between 2007 and 2009.

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<sup>1</sup> Angus Citizens Survey, December 2009

- 3.4 It is important to place these figures in context and the 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings<sup>2</sup> reported that “*across Scotland the majority of adults (73%) said that they felt safe (very 29%; fairly 37%) but 12% of adults said they felt very unsafe walking alone in their local area after dark and 21% said they felt a bit unsafe*”. Angus matches this in that 72% of respondents felt very safe and fairly safe. However, 16% of residents polled in Angus felt a bit unsafe and only 3% felt very unsafe, which is markedly less than the national figure of 21% who felt a bit unsafe and 12% of adults who feel very unsafe.
- 3.5 Whilst the headline figures do show an improved, and improving, position with regard to perception of Community Safety, the survey has been used to investigate, capture and highlight areas where local communities feel improvements could be made. This aspect of the survey is particularly important as it will be used to support the targeting of resources and efforts on working with communities to support the journey of continuous improvement, focussing on what communities are feeding back through this, and wider, Community Planning engagement.
- 3.6 The measure of how worried communities are regarding specific types of crime and negative behaviour is a widely utilised question within crime surveys, utilised by both the British Crime Survey<sup>3</sup> and the 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey<sup>4</sup>. In Angus, the categories reflect the issues raised in previous community safety surveys as well as reflecting national areas of concern.
- 3.7 Dog fouling has been recorded as the respondents’ chief worry (55%); the next significant worry, and some way behind dog fouling, was a group of 4 issues: rubbish lying around (39%), drinking or using drugs (38%), vandalism or property damage (35%) and young people hanging around (34%).
- 3.8 The survey, for the first time, highlighted the general public perception within Angus on the issues of domestic and racial abuse. The findings highlight an initial perception that these matters do not cause widespread community worry. However Members are asked to note that this does not mean that these issues are not significant issues for the Community Planning and Community Safety Partnerships, but do highlight that further work in these areas in association with partnerships such as APODA (Angus Partnership on Domestic Abuse), with the aim of raising the profile of the unacceptable nature for these crimes, and also continuing to pursue an agenda of cultural change, is required.

#### 4. FUTURE TARGETS

- 4.1 As well as tracking community views between surveys, the survey is intended to capture the views of local communities and to harness these views as part of a continuous improvement exercise. The views highlight the following areas as areas for focus:
- **Going out alone at night** – town centre safety and alcohol related issues;
  - **Home alone at night** – general behaviour with further research needed;
  - **Worries about crime and negative behaviour** - dog fouling and drink/drugs;
  - **Experience of crime and negative behaviour:** rubbish and litter and noise nuisance;
  - **Priorities for crime reduction:** tackle assault, robbery and house breaking issues;
  - **Cars and road traffic** – Road Safety, anti social driving;
  - **Domestic and Racial Violence** – Further research needed via APODA (Angus Partnership on Domestic Abuse).

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<sup>2</sup> 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings

<sup>3</sup> British Crime Survey 2008/09

<sup>4</sup> Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2008/09

4.2 The intelligence regarding issues raised by the Community Safety Survey will now compliment the analytical work of the annual strategic and monthly tactical assessments, which inform the tasking model utilised by the Angus Community Safety Partnership. The issues of dog fouling will also be specifically addressed in the review of Warden's Services which will also be presented to Members in the coming months.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

## **7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective. An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken.

## **8. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT**

8.1 The Report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus:

- We live our lives free from crime, disorder or danger;
- Communities in Angus are safe, secure and vibrant.

## **9. CONSULTATION**

9.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance and Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

10.1 This report represents the headline findings of the 2009 Community Safety Bi-annual Survey. It is a snap shot of community perceptions of community safety and shows that between 2007 and 2009 there has been an improvement in the Community perception of Angus as a safe place to live and work. The survey reinforces the Community Safety Partnership's view that despite recorded improvements in the perception of Angus as a safe place to be, there can be no room for complacency and further work and focus is needed to build on the improvements to date.

**RON ASHTON  
DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**NOTE:** The 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 the above report are:

- 570/09