



## Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods & Housing

### Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006

Subject: Freshers' Week

#### Electoral Wards Affected:

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council  
Function

Delegated Executive  
Function available  
for Call In

Delegated Executive  
Function not available for  
Call In Details set out in the  
report

### Executive Summary

Since March 2006 a group consisting of Members, residents, Leeds City Council officers and university representatives has been meeting to co-ordinate activities during the annual influx of students to inner north west Leeds.

The group concentrated on issues highlighted by residents, such as the distribution of promotional material ('flyering'), noise nuisance and traffic congestion.

As a result of this multi agency approach significant improvement was seen in and around central Headingley during this period. There was a marked improvement in terms of street litter, noise and the use of promotional vehicles such as monster trucks.

#### 1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Inner North West Area Committee with information on the planning, implementation and outcomes of the Freshers' Week Planning Group.

#### 2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Freshers' Week Planning Group initially met in March 2006 to begin the process of planning for the annual influx of students into inner North West Leeds. A decision was taken at this meeting to focus the planning work on central Headingley only, with the aim of widening this out in future years if successful.

2.2 Involved in the project have been the following organisations/groups;

- Community representatives
- Ward Members
- Police
- Streetscene
- Environmental Enforcement
- Environmental Health
- Community Safety
- Area Management
- University of Leeds
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- Leeds University Students' Union
- Leeds Metropolitan University Students' Union

2.3 At the first meeting the following issues were identified;

- Bins not being emptied frequently enough, therefore overflowing
- Litter picking not being frequent enough or at the right time
- Lack of enforcement officers at peak times i.e. late evening/early morning
- Anti-social behaviour
- Level of police presence
- Flyposting
- Advertising hoardings being towed around the area
- Promotional vehicles causing traffic congestions and noise through playing loud music
- Taxis parking on Headingley Lane
- Mobile unit parked outside the Oak giving out promotional goods
- Noise nuisance from vehicles and bars

2.4 The group met on 2 further occasions ahead of Freshers' Week, twice during the period and once after for a de-brief session. Section 3.0 below, provides detail of feedback on activities carried out and resultant outcomes from all services involved.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

#### *3.1 The Police*

Officers were deployed nightly on extended tours from Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>, patrolling between 6pm and 2am. The team included a Sergeant, 3 Constables and a minimum of 6 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO). Between Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October officers were deployed daily in the area as above, with the exception that extended tours were only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

On each tour of duty every licensed premise in central Headingley was visited, door staff and management were spoken to and reminded of their responsibilities in relation to sensible drinking and the DPPO. Feedback was received from members of the public stating that police patrols and licensed visits were appreciated and reassuring.

Support was given to officers from the Council's private hire licensing. This presence was sufficient to prevent taxis plying for hire in the area.

Although promotional vehicles were seen in the area, there was a reduced use of these from previous years. There was a limited appearance of the Vodka Nation 'monster truck' which is street legal and with whom there has been positive co-operation. A 'big screen' TV van was used to convey public safety messages, the operator of which had given, free of charge, 50% of its use. A promotional trailer was situated at the entrance to the Original Oak car park (private property so no license needed to hand out flyers) for the full duration of Freshers' period. This was generally orderly and well run. The number of people issuing flyers was low and all those seen had consent, there was however a substantial increase in the use of hand held picket boards.

Several minor arrests were made for drunkenness, none were students.

### 3.2 *Streetscene*

There was an increased frequency of litter patrols and street litter bin emptying in the central Headingley area, resourced through extra weekend cover during both the day and night. This additional resource did have a positive impact on central Headingley in terms of levels of cleanliness. The Streetscene Area Manager was on site each evening which allowed a more effective deployment of resources to hotspot areas, rather than operating a blanket service as has been the case in previous years.

Weekend mechanical and manual street cleansing resources were deployed in the area, over and above that offered by the core service. An extra 5 members of staff were used to ensure sufficient manual cleaning took place during the weekends.

Temporary street bins were provided throughout the period, from the Dry Dock to the Skyrack.

Portable urinals were used in the area, having proved effective in the city centre. These were placed at Ash Road/North Lane near the Rose Garden and by the telephone exchange next to the Original Oak.

Contact was made with both universities and some of the fresher event organisers, with a view to coordinating streetscene services with planned events.

Streetscene and enforcement officers worked closely together, ensuring a swift response to the distribution of illegal flyers. The quantity of discarded flyers on the ground was significantly lower than previous years.

### 3.3 *Environmental Enforcement*

Between the 15th and 29th September 2006 the majority of the city's enforcement officers were deployed around Headingley and the University.

A Flyer Control Zone came into effect in mid September, from the city centre through Woodhouse and into Headingley. This mechanism allows the City Council to require on street distributors of promotional material to apply, and pay for a permit to carry out their work. Due to the introduction of this new byelaw there was a significant decrease in the number of street distributors in the area over Freshers' week. Those that had been granted consent were, by the terms of their permit, responsible for ensuring their flyers were not littering the streets.

During the Freshers' period the following notices were issued by enforcement officers:-

- 89 x £75 fixed penalty notices for flyering without consent
- 153 x £75 fixed penalty notices for littering of some kind
- 6 x £50 fixed penalty notices were issued for dog fouling
- 2 x £300 fixed penalty notices were issued for vehicles found transporting waste without the correct license
- x £300 fixed penalty notices were issued for businesses who failed to provide proof of legal waste transfer
- x £100 fixed penalties were issued for businesses who have previously been served a notice to contain their waste but failed

### 3.4 *Environmental Health*

Extra finance was allocated to provide additional resources to the noise service during the Freshers' period, along with priority response rates for the Out of Hours noise service (OOH) regarding any complaints in the Headingley area.

An additional OOH shift was resourced to cover Sunday nights/Monday mornings operating until 5am, meaning full coverage on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights.

The OOH service operates a maximum 1 hour response rate and as far as can be determined this was achieved over both weekends.

Officers from the area team also identified all the licensed premises in the area, contacting them prior to the period with a reminder of the conditions attached to their licenses. As a result of this proactive work environmental health did not receive any complaints related directly to licensed premises, a significant improvement on previous years.

In previous years environmental health has experienced high levels of noise/refuse complaints. This year the total number of complaints received was no higher than an average weekend.

There has, however, continued to be complaints regarding noise from student parties after the initial fresher week.

Noise nuisance complaints from the first weekend of Freshers' were:-

15/9/06 - 9 complaints for Headingley  
16/9/06 - 10 complaints for Headingley  
17/9/06 - 8 complaints for Headingley

### 3.5 *Universities*

Both universities undertook their usual Freshers' Fair activities, with a strong community and personal safety message.

In conjunction with one another the universities have committed to following up complaints regarding students outside of their campus areas. The first step towards achieving this has been undertaken through the re-launch of the Neighbourhood Helpline<sup>1</sup>, which is a joint venture between the universities. This is being backed up by a procedure for dealing with complaints about student behaviour, which will involve students signing up to a code of conduct.

### 3.6 *Community Safety*

Neighbourhood Wardens were deployed, Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm, to carry out dedicated patrols between the Universities and Arndale Centre. This was with the aim of providing high visibility reassurance, assist students new to Leeds and to deal with any situations arising within the warden's capabilities e.g. dealing with aggressive begging.

Traffic congestion was highlighted as a problem due to lack of road markings around the universities. Wardens spoke to drivers causing obstructions, asking them to move on.

Wardens assisted Enforcement officers with checking permits for distribution of flyers, litter as a result of flyering and liaising with distributors and their personnel.

No street begging was observed, as had been the case in previous years.

LeedsWatch mobile CCTV van was present in the area between the hours of 2pm and 12am on 5 days, including the weekend of 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of September.

### 3.7 *Headingley Pub Watch*

Headingley Pub Watch produced flyers which were distributed within each licensed premise in Headingley. Association members ensured that there were additional door staff on duty throughout the period. In addition a new ring around system was introduced in July/August which has proved very beneficial, this was introduced to replace the old radio system.

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<sup>1</sup> 0113 3431064 or [neighbourhood.helpline@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.helpline@leeds.ac.uk)

#### **4.0 Implications For Council Policy and Governance**

4.1 There are no implications.

#### **5.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

5.1 There are no implications.

#### **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 There has been a general sense from both residents of Headingley and agencies involved, that this year's Freshers' period saw a marked improvement in terms of impact on the community and area in general.

6.2 Although there may be some other influencing factors on this improvement, the work and impact of the Freshers' Planning Group cannot be over looked. It is proposed to continue the group in order to spread its geographical remit to surrounding areas in Kirkstall, Hyde Park & Woodhouse and Weetwood.

6.3 As a result of the effectiveness of this co-ordinated approach it is proposed that the group will continue to meet, concentrating not only on the annual influx of students, but also the exodus at the end of the academic year.

#### **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Area Committee is requested to:-  
a) note the contents of the report; and  
b) provide feedback on the information provided.