

25 June 2018

Open Water Safety



Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Members of the Committee with background information in advance of a presentation by Kevin Lough, Occupational Health and Safety Manager on partnership work to have an improved understanding of open water safety within County Durham.

Background

- 2 *'Improved understanding of open water safety'* is an objective within the current Council and Safe Durham Partnership plans. To which, the Council Plan includes the following action, *'We will implement our water safety programme including management of risk of public open spaces near open water and the promotion of good practice across privately owned water sites'*.
- 3 The Committee has previously considered activity relating to water safety through work of the City Safety Group and County wide Open Water Safety Group at its meetings in September 2015 and March 2016. Building on this work, the Committee provided comment following a presentation on Open Water Safety at its meeting in June 2017.
- 4 The presentation outlined to the Committee work that had been undertaken within County Durham that included a wide range of education initiatives and media campaigns by the Safe Durham Partnership to raise awareness of open water safety. This activity also included engagement with schools, the safety carousel led by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service and the 'Dying to be Cool' campaign that aims to educate ten to sixteen year olds on the dangers of jumping into open water without acclimatising. The 'Dying to be Cool' campaign won the 'Excellence in Community Engagement' category of the prestigious Municipal Journal Awards in June 2017.
- 5 Within its response, the Committee acknowledged progress with this work to raise awareness with thousands of young people, noted future steps to target other at risk groups and to work with private landowners at high risk public locations. It is within this context that Members provided comment on the challenge to maintain resources to keep up the momentum of the campaign, the rural location of some high risk locations and ensure all efforts are made to engage with schools in these areas.

- 6 Kevin Lough, Occupational Health and Safety Manager will be in attendance at the Committee's meeting to deliver a presentation and seek comment from Members on activity that has been undertaken to raise awareness and prevent further tragedies and future work that is planned to be undertaken in 2018/19.

Recommendation

- 7 Members of the Committee are asked to note information contained within the report and presentation and comment accordingly.

Background Papers

None

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder –The report and presentation includes information on within the Altogether Safer element of the Council and Safe Durham Partnership Plans.

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None