



## Kingston Police

### Public Agenda Information Report

To: Kingston Police Services Board

From: Scott Fraser, Acting Chief of Police  
Lillian Murdock, Acting Deputy Chief of Police

Subject: Queen's Homecoming 2023

Date: December 6, 2023

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#### Recommendation:

**That** the Queen's Homecoming 2023, Report Number 23-39 is for information only.

#### Background

Queen's University Homecoming celebrations began nearly 100 years ago as an opportunity for alumni to reconnect and support the school's football team. Over the years, this event has evolved into a large party for enrolled students and their out-of-town friends. In recent years, this student party has swelled to large numbers and poured into the streets surrounding the campus. The taking over of local streets, damage to property, and concern for the safety of the public has brought about the need for an organized response on the part of the Kingston Police.

#### Previous Events

An examination of the previous two Homecoming events and gathered intelligence assisted in the development of our operational plans for Queen's Move-In weekend, orientation week and subsequent weekends leading up to and including Queen's Homecoming.

#### Homecoming 2021

In 2021, there was a sanctioned Queen's Homecoming event on the weekend of October 16. Students also planned an unsanctioned, or "Fauxcoming," event on the weekend of October 22.

Police noted over the course of both weekends that crowds were hostile and aggressive. The gatherings that took place were fueled by alcohol and other substances, and there was a blatant disregard for gathering limitations as prescribed in the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-10) Act*.

Officers reported being randomly challenged by instigators in the crowds, including one officer who sustained a dislocated shoulder during a violent arrest.

On October 16, crowds of students were estimated to reach 8,000 on Aberdeen Street. On October 22, crowds of students were estimated to have reached 3,000 to 4,000 on Aberdeen Street.

The Kingston Police received assistance over both weekends from both the Ontario Provincial Police and Durham Regional Police Public Order Units.

Members of the Kingston Police Special Services Division identified individuals in the Queen’s University District who were believed to have drug and gang associations. The presence of dangerous individuals embedded in the crowds of students raised concerns for public safety. The events of October 16 reinforced the need for an organized and substantial police presence in the University District.

2021 Homecoming and “Fauxcoming” Charge Summary:

**Provincial Offences**

Open Liquor contrary to <i>Liquor Licence Control Act (LLCA)</i>	110
Public Intoxication contrary to <i>LLCA</i>	40
Person under 19 consuming alcohol	9
<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> charges	7
<i>Trespass to Property Act</i> charges	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>

**Criminal Code of Canada Charges**

Obstructing a Peace Officer	3
Possession of a dangerous weapon	1
Possession of a controlled substance	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

**Arrests**

Breach of Peace	8
Public Intoxication	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>

**Administrative Monetary Penalties**

Obstructing an officer	7
Attending, hosting, or sponsoring an aggravating nuisance party	41
Amplified noise	25
Yelling or shouting	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>

Homecoming 2022

In 2022, students planned an unsanctioned or “Fauxcoming” event on the weekend of October 22. The sanctioned Queen’s Homecoming event fell on the weekend of October 29.

Large gatherings of students were observed over both weekends who engaged in dangerous activities, including drinking on rooftops, climbing tress while intoxicated, and jumping from rooftops into the large crowd below. Projectiles were also seen thrown into the crowds. One individual received injuries from a projectile and required transportation to Kingston General Hospital for treatment. Another individual fell off a roof and broke their foot. Kingston Police also assisted with a severely injured student after they fell attempting to crowd surf in a shopping cart.

The Kingston Police secured the Ontario Provincial Police, Ottawa Police, Durham Regional Police, and Toronto Police Service Public Order Units, as well as the Toronto Police Service Mounted Unit to assist with the unsanctioned event. It was estimated that 7,000 students were present at the peak of the event.

Over the course of the sanctioned event, the Kingston Police received the assistance of the Ontario Provincial Police, Ottawa Police, York Regional Police, and Peel Regional Police, and Toronto Police Service Public Order Units, as well as Toronto Police Service Mounted Unit.

2022 Homecoming and “Fauxcoming” Charge Summary:

**Provincial Offences**

Open Liquor contrary to <i>Liquor Licence Control Act (LLCA)</i>	138
Public Intoxication contrary to <i>LLCA</i>	20
Person under 19 consuming alcohol	3
<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> charges	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>

**Arrests**

Public Intoxication	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

**Administrative Monetary Penalties**

Attending, hosting, or sponsoring an aggravating nuisance party	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>

## Homecoming 2023

Planning for the 2023 Homecoming event started in July 2023, at which time a mission statement was identified:

*“Using an integrated response, the Kingston Police along with policing and City partners will keep the peace, enforce legislation and maintain public safety for the duration of the 2023 Queen’s Homecoming Event with the utmost respect to the individuals Charter of Rights and Freedoms with priority on community and emergency services personnel safety and wellbeing.”*

It was recognized that for this mission to be accomplished, pre-emptive measures were required at the onset of the Queen’s move-in weekend (Labour Day) and subsequent weekends leading up to Queen’s Homecoming. Six (6) Deployment Strategies were identified and employed:

### 1. Corporate Communication and Media Messaging Strategy

Messaging was broadcasted via social media prior to and during the Homecoming event in support of the mission statement to discourage illegal behaviour and unsanctioned gatherings; and to educate on the negative impacts these behaviours have on the Kingston Community.

### 2. Police Liaison Team Outreach Strategy

Police Liaison Teams (PLT) are a key part of police planning and response to major events. The teams are focused on proactive relationship building to assist in resolving issues to help facilitate peaceful events. PLT members work to establish and maintain open and transparent lines of communication with all stakeholders who might be affected, directly or indirectly, by major events. By using effective negotiation and mediation techniques, PLT intervention is a useful way to communicate and avoid conflict.

Members of PLT, (which was comprised of the Ontario Provincial Police and Kingston Police Community Oriented Response and Engagement Unit), engaged with community members in the University District in cooperation with Queen’s University to provide consistent education and messaging as per the corporate communication and media messaging strategy.

### 3. Intelligence and Open-Source Strategy

Kingston Police monitored online activity before and during the event to assist with intelligence gathering and evidence collection.

4. Collective Proactive Presence Strategy

A unified proactive presence through the area of operation was provided by utilizing PLT, traffic officers, uniformed police officers, Rapid Response Teams (Tactical), Queen’s University Security, specialized response and engagement by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, and other City/Municipal Services such as Bylaw officers.

5. Enforcement Strategy

Early and continuous alcohol interdiction, and firm enforcement of municipal, provincial, and federal statutes by police and City partners were utilized to manage illegal activities and suppress public disorder.

This strategy involved using discretion sparingly when encountering liquor and other offences. Kingston Police utilized a dedicated Enforcement Team for firm enforcement of *Liquor Licence and Control Act* violations.

6. De-escalation / Interdiction Strategy

Police presence, PLT, and enforcement measures were utilized to maintain safety. Given the potential of high-risk situations that can evolve within crowds, it was recognized that regular police presence may need to be replaced with a specialized crowd management/public order element to effect an appropriate intervention for the safety and wellbeing of all involved.

Move-in Weekend, Orientation Week and Weekends leading up to Homecoming

To have a more positive impact on crowds and changing behaviours, modifications were made in the way we deployed our resources over the move-in weekend and weekends leading up to Queen’s Homecoming. An invitation was extended to specific officers who have continuously demonstrated high enforcement numbers, which replaced a volunteer overtime response.

The move-in weekend and orientation week charges were as follows:

<b>Provincial Offences</b>	
Open Liquor contrary to <i>Liquor Licence Control Act (LLCA)</i>	497
Public Intoxication contrary to <i>LLCA</i>	4
Person under 19 consuming alcohol	36
<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> charges	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>549</b>
<b>Criminal Code of Canada Charges</b>	
	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>

It was estimated that the total number of Provincial charges for the move-in weekend and orientation week was increased by over 1,000% from 2022, at which time we laid 46 charges.

Although open-source intelligence indicated that there would only be one Homecoming event taking place on October 21, 2023, enforcement officers were called in the weekend prior to assist in our momentum of education and enforcement.

Charges for the weekend of October 16 were as follows:

<b>Provincial Offences</b>	
Open Liquor contrary to <i>Liquor Licence Control Act (LLCA)</i>	107
Person under 19 consuming alcohol	6
<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> charges	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Arrest</b>	
Warrant in the 1 <sup>st</sup> instance executed	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>

On October 3, 2023, it came to the attention of the Kingston Police that a movement called “Hands off our Kids” were advertising a call to action on the part of its members. This event was scheduled to take place on October 21, 2023, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

A previous “Hands off our Kids” protest was staged at the front of City Hall on Ontario Street on September 20, 2023. This event drew supporters for the movement and counter protesters. In total, approximately 500 people engaged in a two-sided protest and tension between the opposing sides was notable. The protest caused traffic disruption on Ontario Street. Kingston Police dispatched a contingent of officers to the scene where they managed the crowd and maintained safety. A second operational plan was established for the “Hands off our Kids” event.

Kingston Police also learned that there was a Palestinian reading occurring at Douglas Library on Queen’s campus on October 21, 2023, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Flyers had been disseminated on campus and it was unknown prior to the event how many individuals would be in attendance.

### Resource Deployment

Open social media accounts advertised the Homecoming event to take place on October 21, 2023. Attached to these advertisements were images from previous events highlighting disruptive and potentially dangerous environments. The images appear to celebrate and support large alcohol fueled street parties. The existence of a “Queen’s Party Life” social media account displayed a level of planning and organization on the part of those attending the event. The real-time organization of a

group this large can pose additional risk to police as we attempt to safely manage large crowds.

As in years past, Kingston Police activated an Incident Command and control structure to manage and deploy police resources and logistics on Friday October 20 and 21. Upon consideration of current intelligence, and engagement with Public Order Unit subject matter experts, Kingston Police requested the assistance of the Ontario Provincial Police, Ottawa Police, and York Regional Police Public Order Units on October 21.

In addition to the highly trained public order contingencies on October 21, we also had a number of officers assisting us from Brockville Police, Gananoque Police, Smith Falls Police, and Belleville Police.

This year, Kingston Police implemented a new "Bylaw Liaison Team." Police officers were assigned to work in partnership with Bylaw officers to ensure their safety and assist in conducting bylaw enforcement.

On Friday October 20, 120 Kingston Police personnel were deployed. This included the command structure, supervisor, sworn and special constables, and civilian support staff. Friday night proved to be quieter than what we have seen in previous years.

On Saturday October 21, 161 Kingston Police personnel were deployed. This included the command structure, supervisor, sworn and special constables, and civilian support staff.

Over the weekend, Kingston Police responded to large unsanctioned gatherings in the University District. Although officers reported seeing more cooperation, they still dealt with a substantial number of residential parties along with a street takeover. We also observed several students gathered on the rooftop of a house on Aberdeen Street.

A Nuisance Party was declared on Aberdeen Street from Johnson to Earl just after 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 21. Traffic to the area was immediately restricted and attendees were ordered to disperse or be liable to penalties. At this time, it was estimated that 4,000 students were on Aberdeen Street, and approximately 4,000 students were in backyard parties in and around the area. We experienced rainfall in the afternoon which assisted in dispersing the crowd. Police and Bylaw Enforcement successfully cleared the gathering, and the Nuisance Party declaration was lifted at 4:00 p.m.

Despite the cold and damp weather, at 9:30 p.m. large crowds were present in the area known as the "Hub" (Princess Street east of Division Street). Long line ups were present to enter bars at this location. A team of officers were redeployed to this area to manage the large crowds and maintain public safety.

Charges for the weekend of October 22 were as follows:

**Kingston Police**

**Provincial Offences**

Open Liquor contrary to <i>Liquor Licence Control Act (LLCA)</i>	134
Public Intoxication contrary to <i>LLCA</i>	3
Person under 19 consuming alcohol	9
<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> charges	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>

***Criminal Code of Canada* Charges**

Obstructing a Peace Officer	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

**Administrative Monetary Penalties**

Failure to Comply with an Order to Leave Premises	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>

**Bylaw Enforcement**

**Administrative Monetary Penalties**

Hosting a Nuisance Party	2
Failure to Comply with an Order to Leave Premises	90
Amplified Sound	16
Failure to Comply with Signs	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

Over the course of the weekend, most students in attendance were respectful to police. Officers did not observe any projectiles being thrown and Kingston Police were not made aware of any serious injuries, nor were there any injuries to police.

The initiation of our Police Liaison Teams, which were deployed weeks in advance of the Homecoming event coupled with a strong enforcement initiative, led to an overall positive weekend in the University District.

Providing a necessary measured police response since student move-in throughout October put considerable strain on all our members. Our sworn personnel worked many long hours, often on overtime. All of our members – both sworn and civilian – should be commended for their hard work and professionalism.

We are very fortunate to have strong community partners including Queen’s University, Frontenac Paramedics, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, Kingston Fire & Rescue, and City of Kingston Bylaw and other City services who worked with us in the preceding weeks and over the weekend to ensure safety for the entire community. The Kingston Police will continue collaborating with Queen’s University administration and student representatives throughout the year, in anticipation of future events.



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