

Police and Fire and Rescue Committee
15 August 2016

IRVINE, 15 August 2016 - At a Meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Catherine McMillan, John Bell, Grace McLean and Irene Oldfather .

In Attendance

A. Fraser, Head of Democratic Services and M. Anderson, Committee Services Team Leader (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Chief Superintendent G. MacDonald, Chief Inspector T. Ross and Chief Inspector B. Shaw (Police Scotland); and J. Scott, Local Senior Officer and A. Lindsay, Watch Manager) (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

Chair

Councillor McMillan, Vice-Chair in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Marie Burns and Peter McNamara.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 May 2016 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Review of Local Police Plan

Reference was made to the decision taken at the last meeting to seek to establish whether an alternative descriptor might be applied to the category 'youths causing annoyance.'

Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that the category 'youths causing annoyance' had been discontinued, with incidents previously falling within this category now attributable to other categories, such as 'public reported incidents of disorder'.

Noted.

3.2 Police Scotland Performance Report

Reference was made to the decision taken at the last meeting to (i) establish whether further detail might be provided on the Ayrshire figures for complaints against the Police to allow the Committee to scrutinise this area more thoroughly and (ii) include in future performance reports on complaints more narrative to accompany the figures provided.

Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that, whilst it would not be possible to incorporate the requested detail for North Ayrshire within future performance reports, a copy of the wider report submitted to the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) could be routinely circulated, albeit that the data included would relate to the quarter prior to that cited in the Police Scotland Performance Report.

The Committee agreed that the SPA report in question be circulated to Members of the Committee as a background paper in future.

4. Performance Reports

4.1 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Submitted report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on progress against North Ayrshire's Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2014/17 and which provided other key Fire and Rescue updates. A copy of the North Ayrshire Performance Report from 1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016 was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Local Senior Officer (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service) advised of a minor typographical error within Appendix 1 to the report, clarifying that, with regard to the figures for deliberate fire raising incidents, there had been an increase, rather than a decrease, of 3.6% when compared with the corresponding 3-year average.

Section 2.1 of the report provided an analysis of operational activity for the period 1 April to 30 June 2016, which identified a 32% increase in activity levels across the local authority area, compared with the corresponding activity period in the previous year. Performance during the year showed five indicators currently adrift of the three-year average target and one indicator unchanged from the previous three-year average. It was noted that three indicators have seen a reduction in activity from the corresponding year on year figure.

The report also provided updates in respect of personnel changes, and invited the Committee to consider the appropriate timescale for the introduction of the next Local Fire and Rescue Plan for North Ayrshire.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- the type of incidents which might fall within the category of 'deliberate fire setting';
- the nature of 'other sleeping accommodation' cited as part of the outcome of fire safety audits; and

- factors which might influence the timing of work in preparation for the next local Fire and Rescue Plan for North Ayrshire, including Locality Planning and the timing of local government elections.

The Committee agreed (a) to note (i) the content of the performance summary and associated report for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016 and (ii) the appointment of Deputy Assistant Chief Officer Peter Heath as the new Head of West Service Delivery Area; and (b) that the Local Senior Officer (i) seek to provide further information on the nature of the 'other sleeping accommodation' referred to within the fire safety audit information set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and (ii) submit to the next meeting of the Committee some pre-consultation proposals, to allow the Committee to determine the most appropriate timescale for the introduction of the next Local Fire and Rescue Plan for North Ayrshire.

4.2 Police Scotland

Submitted report by Police Scotland on performance in relation to the North Ayrshire Local Police Plan for the period from 1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016. Appendix 1 to the report provided detailed information on performance against the Plan's priorities and associated objectives, and gave information on complaints against the Police.

Section 3 of the report provided information on Police Scotland's current review of supervisory structures and deployment across all of its Local Policing and Specialist Divisions, including a reduction in North Ayrshire of one Chief Inspector, Director of Community Safety post, one Community Policing Inspector post and one Sergeant post.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- the likely impact of Old Firm football fixtures on rowdy and drunken behaviour in public areas and incidents of domestic violence, and work to address this;
- the mechanism for testing those who might be guilty of driving under the influence of drugs;
- whether the reduction in supervisory roles within Police Scotland would result in a reduction in frontline police officers;
- work being carried out within the Council to address any gaps arising from the reduction in terms of the Director of Community Safety post;
- whether child abuse data formed part of the local policing priority information presented; and
- the potential inclusion of child and vulnerable adult abuse as future local policing priorities.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the performance information set out in the report; and (b) that Chief Superintendent MacDonald would submit to the next meeting of the Committee (i) a report on the work of the Multi-Agency Risk and Concern Hub and (ii) proposals in respect of the preparation of the next Local Police Plan for North Ayrshire.

5. Police Scotland - Update on National/Local Policing Matters

Submitted report by Police Scotland on local and national policing matters which fall outwith the local Policing Plan progress update, namely the Quarter 1 update on Your View Counts, the end of the i6 contract, Scottish Government consultations on Policing, the Air Weapons Surrender campaign, an increase in the number of armed officers in Scotland, the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016, the introduction of a Procurator Fiscal Liaison Officer, the Police Scotland Supervisory Structures/Development Review, and the Open Golf Championship.

Noted.

6. Consultation Papers

6.1 Draft Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the terms of the Council's response to the consultation paper on Draft Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland. The consultation paper was attached at Appendix 1 to the report and a proposed response set out at Appendix 2.

Members discussed including within the consultation response a reference to data and indicators in support of the Committee's scrutiny role and the value and importance of comparator information.

The Committee agreed to approve the draft response set out at Appendix 2 to the report as the Council's response to the consultation paper, subject to the inclusion of a reference to the importance of data and indicators, including comparator data, to support the Committee's scrutiny role.

The Meeting ended at 3.15 p.m.