

Shadow Police and Fire Committee  
27 February 2013

**Irvine, 27 February 2013** - At a Meeting of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

Anthea Dickson, Robert Barr, Jean Highgate, Ruth Maguire, Catherine McMillan and Peter McNamara.

**In Attendance**

E. Murray, Chief Executive, A. Fraser, Head of Democratic and Administration Services, C. Andrews, Senior Manager Legal Services and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

**Also In Attendance**

Chief Inspector R. Newbigging and Temporary Area Commander R. Hogg (Strathclyde Police) and Area Commander H. Kerr (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue).

**Chair**

Councillor Dickson in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Marie Burns, John Bell, Ronnie McNicol and Irene Oldfather.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct.

**2. Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the previous meetings of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee held on 31 October 2012 was agreed and the minutes signed in accordance with paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

**3. Local Plans**

**3.1 Local Policing Plans**

Chief Inspector Newbigging provided information on the draft Local Policing Plan. The draft Plan was prepared following consultation with communities, partner agencies and stakeholders and by evaluating the impact various crimes have on communities. The local priorities were detailed as:-

- serious crime;
- violence, disorder and anti-social behaviour;

- housebreaking and theft; and
- road safety and road crime.

Comments on the draft Plan have been fed back to Police HQ and the finalised Plan will be circulated as soon as it becomes available.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- the inclusion of housebreaking and theft in the local priorities despite a reduction in crime statistics for this category within North Ayrshire;
- separate ward plans for Arran and Ardrossan;
- the success of the Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Response Team; and
- the creation of a new Trunk Road Unit that will incorporate motorways and A class roads.

The Committee agreed to receive a report on the work of the Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Response Team at the next meeting.

### **3.2 Draft Local Fire and Rescue Plan**

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on the North Ayrshire Local Plan 2012/13.

The Plan provided information on the Strategic Assessment and set out the priorities, actions and outcomes for North Ayrshire. Six priorities and targets were highlighted:-

- reduction in dwelling fires;
- reduction in fire casualties;
- reduction in deliberate fire setting;
- reduction in fires in non-domestic properties;
- reduction in road traffic collisions; and
- reduction in unwanted fire signals.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- the impact of the wet weather on the number of outdoor fires in 2012;
- the recruitment of firefighters from existing retained firefighters; and
- successful partnership working.

Noted.

### **3.3 Fire Local Monitoring Plan**

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on the North Ayrshire Local Monitoring Plan 2012/13.

The aim of the plan is to set out the priorities and objectives for Strathclyde Fire and Rescue activities in North Ayrshire over the coming year. The Community Planning Structure within North Ayrshire is clearly aligned to the plan and demonstrates how to address local issues through analysing historic data and trends to target resources where they are most required. It balances the corporate direction of the Fire and Rescue Service against the local requirements of North Ayrshire's Single Outcome Agreement and Community Planning Partnership and identifies areas of commonality where joint activity may be appropriate.

The report set out the eleven priorities for North Ayrshire, provided statistical performance and target information. Details of engagement activities programmes such as Home Fire Safety Visits, post domestic incident responses, public engagement, education programmes, development programmes, intervention programmes were also provided.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue have a statutory duty to enforce fire safety legislation and promote fire safety. A Fire Safety Audit Programme for non-domestic premises is in place to reduce the risk and impact of fire on the community, to safeguard firefighters, local heritage and the environment, to reduce the loss of life, injuries and reduce commercial, economic and social costs.

Noted.

## **4 Performance Reports**

### **4.1 Strathclyde Police**

Chief Inspector Newbigging circulated a statistical report for quarter 3 of 2012

The report provided information on the targets for U Division and North Ayrshire for violence, disorder and anti social behaviour, public protection and road safety and road crime. Target totals were shaded in traffic light colours to illustrate whether the target level of performance had been achieved. The majority of targets were coded green and three categories, serious assault, robbery and public protection group 2 crimes coded red for the North Ayrshire area. In terms of violent crimes, overall there have been 61 less victims than in 2011.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- the use of electronic technology to detect uninsured and underinsured drivers;
- positive feedback received in respect of the Show Bigotry the Red Card campaign that took place in Kilwinning last year and further work with schools by the Campus Cops and Community Education Workers in this area;

- encouraging feedback from the public following the Myriad Campaign that targeted anti-social behaviour, drug dealing, road safety and road crimes;
- work that will be undertaken by the Multi Agency Problem Solving Group in the Blacklands, Woodwynd and town centre areas of Kilwinning; and
- the Scottish Youth Parliament's "We-CTV" anti-knife competition and the success of Irvine Royal Academy in reaching the finals of this competition.

Noted.

Councillor McNamara left the meeting.

#### **4.2 Strathclyde Fire and Rescue**

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on the quarterly performance for North Ayrshire and current activity by ward area.

The report provided a range of statistical information for Quarters 1 - 3, the targets for 2012/13 and comparison statistics for 2011/12. Target totals were shaded in traffic light colours (red, amber and green) to show whether the target level of performance had been achieved. The majority of targets were coded green. The category, accidental dwelling fires, was shaded amber, with an explanatory paragraph detailing the main causes as distraction and occupiers with alcohol/mental health issues. Unwanted fire alarm signals had been shaded as red and work is ongoing to find solutions to the higher than targeted unwanted fire alarm signals that have been received during quarter two.

The Committee noted the report and that future reports would use electoral ward numbering and naming.

#### **5. Scottish Police Authority - Consultation on the Draft Strategic Police Plan**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Scottish Police Authority's Draft Strategic Police Plan and the Council's response.

The Draft Strategic Police Plan prepared by the Scottish Police Authority is intended to provide clear strategic direction to policing in Scotland which will form the basis for the Chief Constable to develop specific activities to deliver the outcomes described in the Strategic Police Priorities. A consultation on the SPA's Draft Strategic Police Plan was published on 23 January 2013 with a deadline for responses of 22 February 2013. The Police Plan consultation was contained at Appendix 1 and the Council's response at Appendix 2 to the report.

The Committee agreed to (a) homologate the Council's response to the Scottish Police Authority's Draft Strategic Police Plan submitted for the deadline date of 22 February 2013; and (b) invite a Member of the Scottish Police Authority to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **6. Consultation on a Draft Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013.

The Scottish Government's consultation on the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013 was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The document set out the priorities and objectives for the new Scottish and Fire Rescue Service (SFRS) with guidance and support on the carrying out of its functions, in terms of public safety, efficiency and effectiveness.

Consultation responses required to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 18 February 2013. A copy of the consultation paper was circulated to members of the Committee and comments were sought to inform the Council's response. The Council's response was attached at Appendix 2 and was submitted by the deadline of 18 February 2013.

The Committee agreed to homologate the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013.

## **7. A Collaborative Statement of Good Scrutiny and Engagement - Non Statutory National Guidance**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Guidance recently published by the Scottish Government, COSLA and the Improvement Service.

On 17 January 2013 the Scottish Government, COSLA and the Improvement Service published non-statutory guidance for those involved in implementing the new Local Scrutiny and Engagement arrangements created by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. The Guidance is aimed primarily at local authorities.

The Collaborative Statement of Good Scrutiny and Engagement was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. It promotes five principles for good scrutiny and engagement, based on good practice. Characteristics of good and best practice were set against each principle and a checklist question for scrutineers provided.

The Committee agreed (a) that consideration be given to the completion of the checklist of questions to evaluate the extent to which arrangements can be shown to demonstrate the characteristics of good or best practice at the meeting in October; and (b) to otherwise note the report.

## **8. Scheme of Administration - Police and Fire and Rescue Committee**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the proposed replacement of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee by a Police and Fire and Rescue Committee.

In June 2012 the Council agreed to set up a Shadow Police and Fire Committee which would discharge all duties of the Council in connection with provision of Police

and Fire Services in the run up to the new Services being created. On 31 March 2013 the existing Strathclyde Police and Fire Boards will be disbanded. In their place the Council will have to make arrangements for scrutiny of Police and Fire and Rescue Services in their area. The report provided information on the functions which will require to be carried out by the Council in relation to the Police and Fire and Rescue Services.

Some local authorities have chosen to form a Police and Fire Committee of the Council not dissimilar to North Ayrshire's Shadow Police and Fire Committee and others have chosen to place these duties with the Community Planning Partnership. The Shadow Police and Fire Committee arrangements have worked well and the creation of a Police and Fire and Rescue Committee would essentially be a continuation of the work of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee. The alternative of exercising these functions via the Community Planning Partnership has the disadvantage that two members of the Partnership (Police and Fire) would be scrutinised by the other members of the Partnership who would not be subject to scrutiny.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council that (a) the existing Shadow Police and Fire Committee be replaced by a Police and Fire and Rescue Committee; (b) the existing members of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee are appointed to serve on the new Police and Fire and Rescue Committee; and (c) after 6 months to review the effectiveness of the governance arrangements relating to Police and Fire and Rescue, both in relation to the Committee and Community Planning arrangements.

## **9. Urgent Items**

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency to allow the Committee to be provided with an update.

### **9.1 Local Scrutiny and Engagement Event - 20 February 2013**

A Local Scrutiny and Engagement Event was held in Edinburgh on 20 February 2013. Justice Kenny MacAskill advised the event that local arrangements for Police and Fire and Rescue are making excellent progress ahead of new single services going live on 1 April 2013.

The key messages of the event were:-

- ambitious reform;
- protecting frontline services;
- keeping services local; and
- community engagement and multi-agency working.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.