

**Police and Fire and Rescue Committee
9 February 2021**

9 February 2021 - At a Meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m. involving participation by remote electronic means.

Present

John Glover, Ellen McMaster, Davina McTiernan, Donald L. Reid, and Angela Stephen.

In Attendance

A. Craig, Senior Manager (Legal Services), A. Little and H. Clancy, Committee Services Officers (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Chief Superintendent Hussain and Chief Inspector B. Shaw (Police Scotland); Area Commander I. McMeekin, K. Hankinson and J. Alexander (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

Chair

Councillor Glover in the Chair.

Apologies

Todd Ferguson and Jimmy Miller.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted.

2. 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.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 27 October 2020 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

4. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

5. Chair and Vice Chair Verbal Updates

The Chair advised of a successful meeting with Kilwinning residents and Police Scotland to consider traffic issues. A traffic survey was arranged, and a report would be forthcoming from Transport Scotland shortly. He commented on a recent robbery in Kilwinning that had resulted in an arrest.

He further advised of a recent press report where the Vice Chair, Councillor Miller, had stressed the importance of older people taking up the opportunity to be vaccinated. Reference was also made to local fire stations in rural areas providing their premises to the NHS to use as facilities for testing and vaccinations.

6. Presentation: Fire Safety Enforcement Activities

The Committee received a presentation from Area Commander McMeekin on Fire Safety Enforcement Activities, that included information on:-

- the composition of the Enforcement Team which was responsible for the five key areas of Fire Safety Enforcement, Fire Investigation, Community Safety Engagement, Fire Engineering; and Performance and Area Liaison;
- Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act and the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 that came into force in October 2006;
- the Enforcement Framework that was risk based and targeted audits to a range of premises including, care homes, hospices, hospitals, hotels, houses in multiple occupation, premises where there had been excessive unwanted fire alarms and following up on complaints or intelligence from partner agencies; and
- statistical information and financial costs of fire incident activity and unwanted fire alarm signal activity from 2015 – 2020.

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

- Care Home audits planned and undertaken since 2006;
- good standards in place throughout the Care Home sector;
- virtual audits currently in place for Care Homes and visits to be made in the outcome of any incident; and
- regular audits to hotels and learning from incidents in other areas.

Noted.

7. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report

Submitted report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) which provided information on the progress against the North Ayrshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 December 2020. Appendix A to the report provided an analysis of the performance across six indicators, using the rolling three-year average as a basis of measuring performance.

Review of performance against the six indicators identified four indicators were below, one indicator is above, and one remained constant with no change in comparison to the three-year average. Two indicators had seen a reduction in the three-year average by more than 12% and two others had reduced by 4% and 1%. The statistical information illustrated reductions in the total number of incidents by 3%, which included primary and secondary fires decreasing by 19%. Data on Home Fire Safety Visits, Fire Safety Audits and the retained duty system was also provided within the report.

It was noted that Watch Commander Grant Colman had been appointed to a new rural full-time post to support on-call stations across the North Coast, Arran and Three Towns localities.

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

- mobile testing facilities that had been set up in Kilwinning and Dalry stations, with an appointment only system and an appropriate one-way traffic system that in place;
- partnership working with Public Health and the Army to set up facilities in five venues in Ayrshire to provide lateral flow testing for asymptomatic individuals, with a go live date planned for 22 February 2021;
- staffing of these facilities, that would include the use of recently retired staff, who would be fast tracked for vaccination;
- new fire regulations that had been deferred for one year and would require domestic dwellings to have interlinked smoke and heat alarms (either hardwired or via long-life battery-operated Bluetooth units);
- a presentation on Fire Home Safety Visits that could be provided to a future meeting of the Committee;
- further analysis that would be undertaken to ascertain the increase in accidental dwelling fire casualties in the Three Town area; and
- learning from the Community Hubs that had identified where the need and potential risk was in the community.

Noted.

8. Police Scotland Performance Report

Submitted report by Police Scotland on performance in relation to the North Ayrshire Local Police Plan for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020..

The report provided details of North Ayrshire's performance including a 0.7% rise in the total number of crimes. The executive summary outlined progress in the priority areas of drug supply and misuse, violence and anti-social behaviour, dishonesty and road safety. Statistical and contextual information was provided in respect of recorded incidents that included: -

- Operation TALLA, Police Scotland's operational response to the pandemic and the use of the four Es approach – Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforcement;

- the issue of 162 Fixed Penalty Notices in North Ayrshire for not adhering to COVID restrictions (although there was overall compliance with Covid restrictions by the residents of North Ayrshire);
- a reduction in sexual crimes, fire-raising/vandalism, shoplifting and speeding; and
- an increase in motor vehicle crimes, fraud and drink/drug driving.

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

- a recent speeding survey at Kilwinning Road of 800,153 vehicles (including emergency vehicles) that found 0.9% were travelling in excess of 40mph and a more detailed report that would be compiled and provided in due course;
- 3 incidents in the Kilmarnock area that resulted in a 39 year old woman and 24 year old woman being injured and subsequently dying and a fatal road crash where the driver died at the scene;
- guidance on Covid restrictions that was available to officers via their mobile devices, Police Intranet and electronic briefings that were undertaken before each shift;
- a common-sense approach being taken by officers when dealing with individuals who had infringed restrictions, alongside the Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforcement operational response to the pandemic;
- an appeal process in place for those who wished to dispute any fine for infringing Covid restrictions;
- the Specialist Computer Crime Unit based at Gartcosh and dealt with computer related fraud;
- excellent work by Special Constables in North Ayrshire on a daily basis and particularly during the pandemic; and
- the use of tasers by officers in North Ayrshire (detailed below) and the addition of this information in future Police performance reports.

Timescale	Use of Tasers	No of Incidents
1 April 2019 – 31 December 2019	22	36
1 April 2020 – 31 December 2020	26	69

Statistically there was a 37.7% usage rate per deployment, with 2 discharges of the device, equating to a 2.9% discharge rate per call attended. The discharge rate was 7.7% per usage, with tasers being drawn 14 times, aimed twice, 8 red dots and discharged twice.

Noted.

9. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency to allow action to be taken without delay.

9.1 Public Engagement in relation to Body Worn Video Cameras

The Senior Manager (Legal Services) advised of the planned roll-out of Body Worn Video Cameras to police officers and staff. An online survey seeking the views of the public and key stakeholders would commence on 1 February 2021 and run for three weeks.

The Committee agreed that the Senior Manager (Legal Services), in consultation with the Chair, prepare a response to the consultation on body worn video cameras, in order to meet the deadline for responses.

The meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.