

Shadow Police and Fire Committee
31 October 2012

IRVINE, 31 October 2012 - At a meeting of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Anthea Dickson, Marie Burns, John Bell, Jean Highgate, Catherine McMillan, Peter McNamara, Ruth Maguire and Irene Oldfather.

In Attendance

I. Mackay, Solicitor to the Council and C. Andrews, Legal Services Manager (Corporate Services); J. Montgomery, General Manager (Policy and Service Reform), and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

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

Chair

Councillor Dickson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Councillor McNicol and E. Murray, Chief Executive (North Ayrshire Council).

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 Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 June 2012 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Performance Reports

3.1 Strathclyde Police

Chief Inspector Newbigging circulated a statistical report for the second quarter 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 policing.

Strathclyde Police has identified four very high force priorities based on consultation with communities, partner agencies, stakeholders and by evaluating the impact various types of crime have on communities. The Force priorities are:-

- violence, disorder and anti social behaviour;
- serious crime and terrorism;
- public protection; and
- road policing.

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

- the variety of methods used to set targets for future years that includes the use of statistical information from previous years, comparisons to similar geographical force areas and the identification of areas for improvement;
- targets for U Division and North Ayrshire that can differ;
- the creation of a Domestic Abuse Team, comprising a Social Worker, Housing Officer and Police Officers;
- a reduction in domestic abuse crime of 21% in 2011;
- domestic abuse initial bail checks undertaken by officers to ensure bail conditions are being adhered to;
- a 20% increase in the number of stop and searches undertaken that recorded a 66% reduction in the number of knives recovered;
- the low rate of homophobic incidents and the inclusion of this category in the target information for the first time;
- the Scottish Strategic Assessment that will be presented to the new Policy Authority in November 2012 and Strategic Assessment Plans for each local authority area; and
- asset mapping of the Force's vehicles, properties, equipment etc. that will be undertaken.

The Committee agreed that Members consider the current format and design of the performance report and advise the Chief Inspector of any suggested modifications for future reports.

3.2 Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Area Commander Kerr circulated the Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service Delivery Plan for North Ayrshire 2012-13. The plan provided information on the Strategic Assessment.

The Plan set out the priorities and objectives for North Ayrshire. Six priorities and targets were highlighted:-

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

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

- the wide range of information provided in the Tactical Assessment reports provided to the Council's Area Committees and the provision of a Council wide Tactical Assessment report; and
- Home Fire Safety visits to elderly and vulnerable individuals to ensure homes are fire safe.

Noted.

4. Police and Fire Reform: Key Appointments

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Key Appointments in terms of the Scottish Police Authority and the Scottish Fire & Rescue Board.

The Committee was previously advised of the appointment of Stephen House as the Chief Constable for Scotland and Alastair Hay as the Chief Fire Officer for Scotland. The Committee was also provided with information on the appointment of Vic Emery OBE as the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority and Pat Watters as the Chair of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Board. The appendix to the report provided information on the background and current activity of the 13 Scottish Police Authority Board Members and 12 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board Members.

Noted.

Councillor Bell left the meeting.

5. Links to Community Planning

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the links between the Community Planning Partnership, Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

At the meeting of the Police and Fire Reform Steering Group on 31 July 2012, the Steering Group agreed that a discussion paper be prepared for the next meeting on how the Shadow Police and Fire Committee links to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

The Shadow Police and Fire Committee reports currently to North Ayrshire Council meetings. Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are members of the Safer North Ayrshire Strategic Partnership (SNAP), which is a Strategic Partnership of the Community Planning Partnership. The SNAP is tasked with delivering on the outcomes, actions and indicators relating to the "Safer" priority within the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). Reports on the activities of SNAP are submitted to the Strategic Management Team (SMT) and to the CPP Board for scrutiny and direction.

The report provided details of the governance arrangements of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee, the SNAP and the CPP Board and the remits of the Shadow Police and Fire Committee, the SNAP, the Local Policing Plan and Local Fire and Rescue Plan. The links between the groups was illustrated in a diagram attached as an appendix to the report.

The Committee agreed that (a) the current governance arrangements and links to community planning are fit for purpose; and (b) these be reviewed again in six months time.

6. Local Scrutiny and Engagement Learning Network: Write-up

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Local Scrutiny and Engagement Learning Network Event held on 26 September 2012.

The Scottish Government hosted a Local Scrutiny and Engagement Learning Event on 26 September 2012. Councillor Anthea Dickson attended the event with officers from the Council and the Police and Fire and Rescue Services. The Scottish Government's Police and Fire Reform Secretariat produced a write-up of the event. A summary of the write-up was attached at Appendix 1 with the full write-up attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

Noted.

7. Police and Fire Reform: Pathfinder Newsletter

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Police and Fire & Rescue Pathfinder Projects across Scotland.

The Council agreed to act as a Pathfinder as part of the Scottish Government's Local Scrutiny and Engagement Implementation Network. The Network provides an opportunity to plan, trial, evaluate, refine and share learning about the implementation of local arrangements before the Scottish Police and Scottish Fire and Rescue Services 'go live' in April 2013. All 32 Scottish local authorities have agreed to participate in the Network, 21 as Pathfinder and nine as Networkers.

The Scottish Government's Police and Fire Reform Secretariat produced its first Pathfinder Newsletter in October 2012. The newsletter provides information on developments in terms of Pathfinders Projects across Scotland as well as general information in terms of Police and Fire Reform and was attached as an appendix to the report.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.15 p.m.