

Police and Fire and Rescue Committee
7 February 2023

At a Meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m. involving a combination of participation by remote electronic means and physical attendance within the Council Chambers, Irvine.

Present (Physical Participation)

Donald Reid, Donald L. Reid, Angela Stephen and John Sweeney.

Present (Remote Attendance)

Nairn McDonald and John Glover.

In Attendance

W. Turpie, Senior Manager (Waste Operations) (Place); R. Lynch, Senior Manager Legal Services, D. McCaw, C. Stewart and S. Wilson, Committee Services Officers (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Superintendent D. Frew and Chief Inspector G. Grant (Police Scotland); Area Commander I. McMeekin, Station Commander M. Spence and D. Wilson, Local Authority Liaison Officer (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

Chair

Councillor Donald Reid in the Chair.

Apologies

Scott Davidson, Jean McClung and Davina McTiernan.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 11 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee held on 14 November 2022 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Performance and Service Update

Submitted report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) which provided information on progress against the North Ayrshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 December 2022. 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.

The statistical information identified a 1.9% decrease in activity levels across the local authority when compared to the corresponding period in 2021. A further

review of the three-year average indicated a 1.7% increase in overall operational activity during a similar timeframe. Data on false alarms accounted for 58% of all demand within North Ayrshire, with fire related and special service activity accounting for 25.4% and 16.6% respectively. The Service also carried out 711 home safety visits across the period.

Updates were also provided in relation to a review of high reach vehicle deployments across Scotland resulting in one vehicle being located within the Ayrshire region, the development of business continuity measures to enable a form of response to be provided to local communities as a result of a decision in favour of industrial action, the hosting of a 'Conservation Station' competition in support of the climate change emergency, and the recruitment process for a new Chief Officer.

Area Commander McMeekin further advised that an update would be provided to the Committee on deployment of resources during any period of industrial action, to allow a more informed position to be given on arrangements for Ayrshire.

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

- monitoring systems within Fire Stations utilised to measure savings;
- the various unions represented across the Fire Service workforce and engagement with non-union members of staff;
- communications updates to the public in connection with prevention measures during any industrial action period;
- operational demand in connection with high reach units;
- partnership working measures to reduce deliberate fire setting;
- the transition to new Ward boundaries resulting in some crossover data;
- non-domestic fire category descriptors; and
- support provided on the Isle of Arran.

Area Commander McMeekin offered to meet with local Members for the Garnock Valley area to further discuss concerns around deliberate fire setting.

Noted.

4. Police Scotland Performance Update

Submitted report by Police Scotland on performance in relation to the North Ayrshire Local Policing Plan for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 December 2022 together with an overview of year end performance. A summary of current local policing plan priorities was also detailed.

The report provided information on North Ayrshire's performance, including a 4.3% decrease in the total number of crimes. The report further outlined progress in the areas of serious crime, safer communities, acquisitive crime, community wellbeing, road safety and public confidence with additional contextual information being provided by Superintendent Frew to the meeting.

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

- partnership working in connection with community wellbeing and measuring outcomes;
- monthly figure variances in connection with domestic crimes;
- any trends recognised by Campus Officers in connection with disablist/abelist and misogynistic hate crime;
- Specialist Crime Division Analysts, including 4 dedicated to Ayrshire;
- the forthcoming use of quad bikes by Police Scotland to tackle anti-social behaviour;
- ongoing work nationally to highlight prevention advice and encourage reporting in terms of online fraud;
- partnership work with North Ayrshire Trading Standards to tackle the sale of illegal vapes;
- the attendance by Campus Officers at Locality Partnership meetings;
- links with Community Planning in connection with the 6-monthly survey of householders in North Ayrshire; and
- transparency in connection with complaint handling.

Superintendent Frew encouraged Members to advise Police Scotland on local areas where the use of the quad bikes would be beneficial to tackle anti-social behavior.

Noted.

5. Local Policing Plan 2023-26

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Democratic) in relation to the North Ayrshire Local Policing Plan 2023-26 which has been updated following feedback from the Elected Member Briefing Session held on 12 January 2023. The full draft of the Plan was detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

Information was provided on the five policing priorities detailed within the Plan, namely, Serious Crime, Violence Against Women and Girls, Safer Communities, Community Wellbeing and Road Safety. The Plan reflects Community Planning Partner priorities and is also aligned with the Police Scotland and Scottish Police Authority Joint Strategy for Policing.

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

- the promotion of the Philomena and Herbert protocols to support the response to young people and those with dementia at risk of going missing; and
- the inclusion of 'development of engagement strategies for young carers' within the Youth Engagement Area of Focus section of the Plan.

The Committee agreed to remit to the Senior Manager, Legal Services, in consultation with the Chair, the final consultation response in terms of the North Ayrshire Local Policing Plan for submission by the deadline of 13 February 2023.

6. Elected Member Briefings: The Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Act 2022 and Operation Moonbeam

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Democratic) providing updates in relation to (i) recent and upcoming legislative changes relating to fireworks; and (ii) North Ayrshire's approach to Operation Moonbeam. Appendix 1 to the report detailed legislation surrounding the provision of fireworks. Appendices 2, 3 and 4 provided briefing notes by Streetscene, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, respectively, on the North Ayrshire approach to Operation Moonbeam.

The Committee agreed to (a) note the content of the briefings set out in the Appendices to the report; and (b) receive a further report in terms of firework control zones and other parts of the Legislation which are not yet in force to a future meeting.

The meeting ended at 4.15 p.m.