

Police and Fire and Rescue Committee
21 August 2018

Present

Donald L. Reid, John Glover, Todd Ferguson, Ellen McMaster, Davina McTiernan, Jimmy Miller and Angela Stephen.

In Attendance

A. Craig, Senior Manager, Legal Services and D. McCaw, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Chief Superintendent P. Main and Chief Inspector B. Shaw (Police Scotland); Area Manager J. Scott and Station Managers R. Fallon and K. Murphy (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); and Eleanor Gaw, Community Accountability Manager (Scottish Police Authority).

Chair

Councillor Donald L. Reid in the Chair.

Apologies

Group Manager K. Hankinson.

1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair took the opportunity to welcome Station Managers Raymond Fallon and Kevin Murphy to the meeting and also Eleanor Gaw from the Scottish Police Authority.

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 accuracy of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Committee held on 15 May 2018 was confirmed and signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

4. Chair and Vice Chair Verbal Updates

The Chair provided a brief verbal report, intimating his thanks to Area Manager Jim Scott for the opportunity for Members to view the new rapid response unit vehicle which will be housed on Arran and his hope that the new unit would work well for the retained firefighters on the Island.

The Chair also reported on the appointment of Iain Livingstone as Chief Constable for Scotland and advised that a letter would be issued expressing the best wishes of the Committee.

The Chair concluded his report by commenting on the Annual Police Awards which took place in Ayr on 28 June, acknowledging the individual and team awards gained by officers across Ayrshire, and advised that Karyn McClusky of Community Justice Scotland would make a presentation to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 20 November 2018.

The Vice Chair had no update for this meeting, but commented on the recent baseball bat attack in Kilwinning.

The Committee agreed (a) that the Clerk make the necessary arrangements to issue a letter to the new Chief Constable for Scotland expressing the best wishes of the Committee; and (b) to note the update provided.

5.1. Performance Report: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Submitted report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service which provided an update for quarter 1 on progress against the North Ayrshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan and gave other key Fire and Rescue updates. A copy of the North Ayrshire Performance report from 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018 was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The report identified a 3% decrease in activity levels across North Ayrshire compared with the corresponding period in 2017, and a 9% increase in terms of the preceding three year average. False alarms accounted for 46.4% of all activity within North Ayrshire, with fire related activity and special service activity accounting for 43.4% and 10.2%, respectively. Review of performance against the six agreed performance indicators noted that four indicators were above the three year average due to a rise in activity, one had seen a reduction in the respective three year average of more than 5%, one indicator remained unchanged over the three year rolling average and four indicators have seen an increase in activity levels.

The Audit Scotland report from a follow-up inspection of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was attached at Appendix 2 to the report. Findings reported the need for modernisation of the Service to reflect the different risks faced by Scotland's population and to tackle the inherited capital backlog of £389m required to maintain and invest in property, vehicles and equipment.

The report also provided an update in terms of (i) the retirement of Chief Officer Hay in March 2019 and the process to appoint his successor; (ii) the Fire Board succession planning arrangements; and (iii) trainee firefighter programmes and staff resilience.

Area Manager Jim Scott also reported verbally on:-

- ward based activity data which was now provided within the performance report;
- comparator information on where North Ayrshire sits in relation to East and South Ayrshire;
- a letter from the Director of Prevention and Protection to Council Chief Executives and NHS premises around unwanted fire alarm signals, a copy of which was available for the Committee's information; and

- the confirmation of a full time rural firefighting post for North Ayrshire which should see the Garnock Valley as the principal location for the successful applicant, while retaining the flexibility to be utilised where needed.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- an explanation on the meaning of unwanted fire alarm signals;
- continuing efforts with partners and local councillors to tackle the issue of deliberate fires;
- reasons for the high instances of deliberate fire setting within the Stevenston area;
- the number of females who have passed out this year, information on which would be provided to the Clerk for Members of the Committee;
- the level of counselling and support services provided within the Fire Service;
- the activity levels at Dreghorn retained station being attributable to its status as a whole time appliance station;
- methods for assessing risk in terms of home safety fire visits;
- the anticipation of no capital investment changes for North Ayrshire arising from the inherited capital backlog of £389m;
- effective working with Police Scotland and the Scottish Ambulance Service;
- measures to ensure the workforce have the right skills and capacity to deliver the transformation programme;
- the possibility of a national performance management system for the whole of Scotland allowing for more tailored reports based on locality rather than electoral wards; and
- whether statistics for Ardrossan and Arran could be further broken down.

The Committee agreed that (a) Area Manager Scott provide to the Clerk (i) a copy of the Director of Prevention and Protection's letter to Council Chief Executives and NHS premises around unwanted fire alarm signals and (ii) information on the number of females who passed out this year; and (b) that the Clerk then circulate the information in question to Members of the Committee.

5.2 Performance Report: Police Scotland

Submitted report by Police Scotland on performance in relation to the North Ayrshire Local Police Plan for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 July 2018.

The report provided details of North Ayrshire's positive performance over the course of 2017/18, including a reduction of 2.3% in terms of total crime. Contextual information was provided in respect of domestic abuse incidents which are now nearer to the Scottish average, reporting of hate crime, violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour where 40% of robberies are carried out by friends or acquaintances, serious organised crime, protecting people at risk from harm, road safety and road crime, public confidence and house breakings.

Members were advised of the success of the recent visit to the local area by President Trump, which represented a challenging operation for Police Scotland at a time when

major sporting events were also taking place. Members commented on the professionalism and courtesy of the local Police when dealing with the visit.

Chief Superintendent Paul Main also reported verbally on:-

- the commitment to provide a more detailed breakdown around hate crime for all Ayrshire Local Authorities;
- differences around common and serious assaults;
- the reduction in drug supply cases from the same period last year;
- future reports to Committee outlining successes in terms of the volume of drugs and cash seized and court sentences;
- the increase in drink and drug driving across North Ayrshire and more publicity around speeding activity;
- campus officers in place for the start of the new school year;
- staffing changes within the local service, including the retiral of Chief Inspector John Hogg in October 2018; and
- forthcoming community events.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- Scottish Government data to be provided in October/November around domestic abuse incidents which will update the graph provided to the next meeting;
- how the Syrian refugees are integrating within local communities;
- the recent Safer Shores operation which engaged with British Transport Police in terms of young people visiting the local areas of Troon and Irvine;
- the congregation of youths in the Kerelaw area;
- community policing work with charities and partners and integration with local communities; and
- information on the carriage and use of tasers.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.50 p.m.