

Police and Fire and Rescue Committee
22 January 2019

IRVINE, 22 January 2019 - At a Meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Donald L. Reid, Ellen McMaster, Davina McTiernan, Jimmy Miller and Angela Stephen.

In Attendance

D. McDowall, Solicitor (Litigation) and D. McCaw, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Chief Superintendent P. Main and Chief Inspector B. Shaw (Police Scotland); and Area Manager J. Scott, Group Manager K. Hankinson and Station Manager S. Corrigan (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

Chair

Councillor Donald L. Reid in the Chair.

Apologies

Todd Ferguson and John Glover.

1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair advised on the forthcoming retirement of Chief Superintendent Paul Main. He referred to Chief Superintendent Main's long and varied career and took the opportunity to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Committee, wishing him well in his retirement and with new opportunities.

The Chair also welcomed David McDowall and Station Manager Corrigan to their first meeting of the Committee.

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 20 November 2018 was confirmed and signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, subject to the amendment of "Also In Attendance" to replace Inspector J. Convery with Inspector C. Convery.

4. Chair and Vice Chair Verbal Updates

The Chair provided a verbal report on his attendance at the Police Scotland Youth Volunteer event in December 2018. The event included marches and a slide show of activities carried out over a 12 week period. The volunteers are now able to provide support at community events across North Ayrshire.

The Chair intimated the thanks of the Committee to PC Bysouth who organised the event and worked with the volunteers.

Noted.

4.1 Performance Report: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Submitted report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) which provided an update on progress in Quarter 3 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 31 December 2018 was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The report identified a 1% increase in activity levels across North Ayrshire compared with the corresponding period in 2017, and a 4% increase in terms of the preceding three year average. False alarms accounted for 50% of all activity within North Ayrshire, with fire related activity and special service activity accounting for 37% and 13%, respectively. Review of performance against the six agreed performance indicators noted that 3 indicators were above the 3 year average due to a rise in activity, one had seen a reduction in the respective three year average of more than 5% and a further 2 indicators had reduced by less than 5%.

On 13 December 2018, the SFRS published the independent analysis of the 'Your Service Your Voice' consultation which received 1563 responses from the public, stakeholders and SFRS employees and was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

The report also detailed the announcement that Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Martin Blunden had been selected to take over from Chief Officer Hay, taking up formal duties on 15 February and becoming the accountable officer. Officer Hay would retire at this point.

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

- deliberate fire setting in the Stevenston area and a way forward in partnership with Police Scotland;
- engagement by Chemring Energetics Ltd with SFRS on the possibility of a fire reach course;
- the issue of youth disorder in this area of Stevenston;
- the regular educational visits to schools which SFRS undertake to highlight dangers, the intention being also to build this into the Easter thematic action plan;
- partnership links to education in schools through the campus cops and the locality policing teams;

- the success of previous social media campaigns run by young people in other Local Authority areas and the possibility of taking this approach in North Ayrshire in future;
- the rise in 'special services' activity due to the increasing support provided by SFRS with regard to health and wellbeing; and
- comments within the 'Your Service Your Voice' consultation response in relation to the proposed changes to the workload of the fire service, and the consultation's low response rate.

Noted.

4.2 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 December 2018.

The report provided details of North Ayrshire's performance, including a reduction in terms of total crime, a rise in the demand on services this year due to the 1.8% increase in incidents and approximately 5% increase in priority 1 and 2 calls. Contextual information was provided in respect of domestic abuse incidents, reporting of hate crime, an increase in violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour, serious organised crime, terrorism and domestic extremism, protecting people at risk from harm (including the increase in reporting of sexual crimes which is in line with other areas of Ayrshire and elsewhere in Scotland), road safety and road crime, public confidence and house breakings.

The report also provided information on the National Festive Drink/Drug Campaign 2018 from 1 December 2018-2 January 2019. Results and detections over the festive period indicate that many across North Ayrshire continue to drive while over the prescribed limit.

Chief Superintendent Main and Chief Inspector Shaw also reported verbally on:-

- the slight increase in domestic incidents with numbers moving closer to the Scottish Average;
- an increase in hate crime reporting attributable to engagement with minority groups;
- that the statistics for hate crime within the report were from April-November and not to September;
- challenges in relation to the increase in robberies;
- the slight decrease in drug supply detections and issues in relation to cocaine use in licensed premises; and
- data in respect of Police complaints and user satisfaction.

Chief Superintendent Main further advised that Joe McKerrans would attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide information around Police complaints with Chief Inspector Shaw.

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

- staffing pressures around the increase in sexual offending reporting (including historic cases);
- age profiles in relation to inappropriate behaviour and grooming;
- concern around the increase in instances of driving while using mobile phones and failure to wear a seatbelt;
- the fact that the majority of complaints against the Police are concluded via dialogue and explanation;
- the lack of available figures to date in relation to the increases to alcohol unit pricing and any impact this may have had in terms of reducing violence; and
- whether purer cocaine creates a quicker addiction in users.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.30 p.m.