

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE AND FIRE)

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 21 February 2019.

Present:

Councillor Colin Merrick (Chair)
Councillor Caroline Bamforth
Councillor Tony Buchanan

Councillor Barbara Grant
Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Stewart Miller

Councillor Merrick, in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Murray Husband, Head of Digital and Community Safety; Claire Reid, Community Safety Manager; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Superintendent Craig Smith and Chief Inspector John McQuilter, Police Scotland, Group Manager Colin Martin; and Station Manager David Fothergill, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Apology:

Councillor Paul O'Kane (Vice Chair).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

786. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/19

787. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland providing details of the performance of the police in East Renfrewshire over the third quarter of the financial year 2018/19. A statistical report giving a breakdown of various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period together with comparative statistics for the corresponding period in 2017/18 and against the 5-year average was appended to the report.

Superintendent Smith began by referring to the positive results detailed the report which was a reflection of the good partnership working arrangements that existed in East Renfrewshire. He advised that the report had been amended to reflect more closely the number of victims affected by crimes in the course of which he emphasised that East Renfrewshire had the lowest recorded crime rates in mainland Scotland and remained a safe place to live and work. At this stage, he invited, Chief Inspector McQuilter to provide further details about the information contained in the report.

Chief Inspector McQuilter reported on the performance of the police against the 5 priorities that were contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2017-20, details of which were outlined in the report. He highlighted that the number of victims of domestic housebreaking continued to reduce when compared against the 2017/18 figures and the 5-year average. Similarly, there had been a 20% reduction in anti-social behaviour and disorder compared to the figures reported in 2017/18.

Commenting on the figures for violent crime, Chief Inspector McQuilter reported that there were 89 fewer victims of this type of crime compared to 2017/18 and 29 fewer than the 5 year average. However, whilst there had been a slight increase in serious assaults only 4 had been recorded in the reported period. Whilst noting that the number of robberies recorded was down on the figure reported in 2017/18, he advised that every robbery committed in 2018/19 year had been detected together with one from 2017. Furthermore, the number of all domestic crimes had also reduced when compared to the figures reported in 2017/18. It was noted that officers were being given enhanced training in domestic abuse incidents as a means of providing them with more guidance when dealing with victims of this type of behaviour.

Having commented that drug dealing and misuse at a local level resulted from organised crime groups supplying those drugs to smaller dealers within local communities, Chief Inspector McQuilter explained that there had been continued pro-activity in the third quarter of 2018 with seizures of a variety of controlled drugs with several arrests being made. The pro-activity had resulted in a 40% increase in the number of people being detected for the supply of controlled drugs compared to the same period the previous year. Whilst noting the measures being taken to tackle child abuse and child sexual exploitation, he stated that there had been an increase in the reporting of sexual crimes which was partly due to the continued trend of victims having the confidence to come forward and report ongoing and historical incidents. It was further noted that the police had a dedicated team of officers within the division who continued to investigate these incidents which were invariably complex and often protracted in nature.

Concluding his remarks, Chief Inspector McQuilter stated that in terms of road safety and road crime, officers were making ad-hoc visits to schools to address the problem of indiscriminate parking by parents in and around schools. However, he indicated that the police were receiving fewer calls about this problem although officers would continue to be deployed. In response to concerns expressed about speeding in local areas, he reported that the Safety Camera Partnership had carried out a number of checks in East Renfrewshire with one check resulting in 12 drivers being reported for speeding in a single day.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Superintendent Smith and Chief Inspector McQuilter responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire. In particular, clarification was provided in relation to how the police dealt with complaints about children being threatened online where the victim and their family did not want to pursue matters

further. The importance of reporting suspicious activity to the police by the general public was also emphasised.

The Cabinet noted the terms of the report.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THIRD QUARTER OF 2018/19

788. The Cabinet considered a report by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of the SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the third quarter of 2018/19. An analysis of the incidents in each of the Council's five wards during the reported period was appended to the report.

Group Manager Martin reported on the good performance of the service over the reported period which was down to the hard work of staff within the service and the good partnership arrangements in East Renfrewshire. He referred to the restructuring of the local command team advising that it had been further strengthened by the appointment of Stephen Smith, a Community Firefighter who would act as a local officer. He also recorded his thanks to the partner agencies that had participated in the recent emergency training exercise. At this stage, he invited Station Manager Fothergill to comment further on the terms of the performance report.

Station Manager Fothergill provided a summary of the six areas for demand reduction and current activity that had been undertaken by SFRS over the reported period which were broken down into the five electoral wards. The priority areas were noted as Accidental Dwelling Fires; Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties; Unintentional Injury and Harm; Deliberate Fire Setting; Non-Domestic Fire Safety; and Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. Details of the total number of incidents for each of the priority areas and a comparison against both the previous year's performance and a 3 year average were also outlined in the report. He referred to the activity summary detailed within the report which provided a snapshot of the activity over the reported period compared to the same period the previous year. In particular, he highlighted the economic cost of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals which was noted as £141,840.

Whilst noting that accidental dwelling fires showed a significant decrease in terms of 'year on year' average and a slight increase in the '3 year average', Station Manager Fothergill reported that the majority of accidental dwelling fires attended by SFRS was through the Telecare linked alarm system provided in partnership with the SFRS. It was noted that the main source of ignition of fires was cooking appliances. He also reported that 454 Home Fire Safety Visits had been carried out of which 130 were deemed to be high risk. Details of the accidental dwelling fire casualties were outlined in the report it being noted that there were only 2 incidents during the reported period and the injuries sustained were slight.

Station Manager Fothergill reported that there had been an increase in both 'year on year' and 3 year' averages for Non-Fire Casualties, which were predominately led by Road Traffic Collisions (RTC). However, the RTC casualties were mostly minor and only one casualty had to attend hospital with serious head and spinal injuries. He also reported that despite the bonfire season taking place during the reported period there had been a reduction deliberate fire setting in both the 'year on year' and '3 year average' figures. Furthermore, whilst there had been a reduction in the number of deliberate fires recorded over the reported period in the Barhhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor ward, there had been an increase in other wards. This issue had been discussed at the meetings of the Greater Results in Partnership (GRIP) and talks had been given to school pupils.

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Concluding his remarks, Station Manager Fothergill reported that in terms of Non-Domestic Fire Safety there was a positive downward trend in the performance statistics. Similarly, there had been a decrease in Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) compared to the corresponding period in 2017/18 with a spread across all wards. It was noted that UFAS accounted for 29% of all operational activity and therefore a reduction in this area was a priority.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Group Manager Martin and Station Manager Fothergill provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire.

The Cabinet noted the position.

CHAIR