

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE AND FIRE)

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 19 September 2019.

Present:

Councillor Colm Merrick (Chair)
Councillor Paul O’Kane (Vice Chair)
Councillor Caroline Bamforth

Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Barbara Grant

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:

Chief Superintendent Hazel Hendren, Inspector Bryan McGeogh and Inspector Archie Martin, Police Scotland; and Local Senior Officer Graeme Binning, and Group Manager Colin Martin, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Apologies:

Councillors Alan Lafferty and Stewart Miller.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1037. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

OPENING REMARKS

1038. Councillor Merrick welcomed Chief Superintendent Hazel Hendren to her first meeting of the Cabinet (Police and Fire) as the new Divisional Commander of the Greater Glasgow Division of Police Scotland following the recent retirement of Chief Superintendent Brian McNulty.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT OVER THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2019/20

1039. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the first quarter of 2019/20. The report also provided statistical information in relation to various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period together with comparative statistics for the corresponding period in 2018/19.

Chief Superintendent Hendren began by giving a brief summary of her career to date in the course of which she referred to the changes that had taken place in the Greater Glasgow Division in recent years referring in particular to the introduction of the Contact Assessment Model which was due to go live in October. At this stage, she invited Inspector McGeogh to report on the information contained in the performance report.

Inspector McGeogh reported on the performance of the police against the five local policing priorities contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2017/20, details of which were outlined in the report. He began by highlighting that there had been a 21% reduction in serious assaults from 14 in the corresponding period in 2018/19 to 11 in the reported period. Whilst noting that there had not been a single robbery reported during the first quarter of 2019, he reported there had been a significant increase in common assaults and due to the higher incidence of this type of crime there had been an overall increase in crimes of violence in the first quarter of 2019/20 compared to the previous year's figures. Furthermore, in terms of local policing priority in relation to homes being broken into there had been a 20% reduction in this type of crime compared to the corresponding period the previous year. In addition, a 17% increase in the detection rate had been recorded for this type of crime when compared to the corresponding period the previous year. It was noted that during the reported period there had been 5 fewer domestic housebreakings compared to the previous year's figures and almost a 50% reduction when compared to the 5 year average.

Commenting on the local policing priority of crimes associated with child abuse including child sexual exploitation, Inspector McGeogh explained that there had been a 54% increase in the number of sexual crimes that had been reported in the first quarter of this year compared to the corresponding period the previous year (i.e. up from 26 to 40). This reflected a national trend which was partly due to victims having the confidence to come forward and report ongoing and historical incidents. He explained that specialist officers continued to deal with these investigations which were invariably lengthy and complex. He reported that there continued to be positive results in addressing antisocial behaviour and disorder with incidents of antisocial behaviour down by 15% (i.e. 102 fewer calls made to the police) and crimes of vandalism being down by 31 which represented a 23% reduction compared to the corresponding period in 2018/19 year. Furthermore, it was noted that in the first quarter of 2019 there had been continued proactivity in relation to drug dealing and misuse with a variety of controlled drugs being seized and several key arrests being made.

Concluding his remarks, Inspector McGeogh stated that he was delighted to report positive results arising from Police Scotland's most recent public satisfaction survey where public levels of satisfaction of the police service remained incredibly high at 82.9% compared to 81.3% nationally.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Chief Superintendent Hendren and Inspector McGeogh responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the crime statistics recorded in the report.

At this stage, Chief Superintendent Hendren invited Inspector Martin to comment on the Mobile Working Project that was due to be rolled out across the Greater Glasgow Division in the coming months.

Inspector Martin provided an overview of the project in the course of which he highlighted that Police Scotland was equipping 10,000 officers with mobile devices as part of a rolling programme across the country which began in Tayside. He explained that the new devices had numerous functions that would assist policing in terms of more efficient use of officer time, visibility and access to information. He emphasised that by using the new devices whilst on patrol there would be no need for officers to return to the office as tasks such as completing crime reports can be carried out using the new devices. He also explained the security features of the new devices.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the position regarding the Mobile Working Project; and
- (b) otherwise noted the terms of the report.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2019/20

1040. The Cabinet considered a report by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS), providing details of the performance of the SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the first quarter of 2019/20. An analysis of the incidents identified in the six areas for demand reduction that had taken place in each of the Council's five wards during the reported period was outlined in the report.

Local Senior Officer Binning advised of a number of increases in fire related incidents over the reported period and emphasised that whilst the increase in numbers were low the percentage increases were high due to the figures having been so low in the past. He emphasised that the figures being reported were consistent in all three of the council areas he had responsibility for. Concluding his remarks, he stated that the SFRS Local Authority Liaison Officer was now embedded in the Council and was working every Thursday. He also commented on the high level of partnership working that continued in the Council area. At this stage, he invited Group Manager Martin to comment further on the terms of the performance report.

Group Manager Martin stated that there had been an increase in the number of incidents of accidental dwelling fires from 11 in 2018/19 to 17 in 2019/20. Whilst noting that SFRS was active in a number of areas with a view to driving down the number of fires recorded, he emphasised that in 53% of the cases reported no firefighting action was required due to early detection and that the single male casualty highlighted in the report only suffered slight smoke inhalation.

Whilst noting that the number of non-fire casualties had risen from 7 in 2018/19 to 13 in 2019/20, Group Manager Martin stated that whilst the incidents attended were diverse in nature almost half were Road Traffic Collisions. He also commented that there had been an increase in the number of incidents of deliberate fire setting which he suggested was down to the good weather enjoyed during reported period. He indicated that SFRS continued to work in partnership with Police Scotland by giving talks to school age children about the dangers of deliberate fire setting.

Group Manager Martin advised that the figures reported in relation to the number of incidents associated with non-domestic fire safety were low and remained the same as those reported last year. Furthermore, there had been a significant decrease in the number of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS). It was noted that the service now had a UFAS Champion working in partnership with the Council with a view to reducing the number of incidents and introducing best practice in managing fire alarms/red lines within Council properties. He also highlighted that nursing/care sector accounted for 23% of all UFAS incidents and in view of this SFRS was working together with the NHS as part of the national UFAS reduction group which delivered the TAKE5 initiative across all NHS premises in East Renfrewshire.

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

The Cabinet noted the position.

CHAIR