

Keeping People Safe in East Renfrewshire

AGENDA ITEM No. 3

Introduction



As Local Police Commander, I am pleased to present this policing plan update for the first quarter of 2020/21. This update relates directly to our East Renfrewshire Policing Plan for 2020/23. This plan highlights the issues of most concern in our communities and emphasises our commitment to addressing these concerns.

We have well established partnerships within East Renfrewshire and I am confident that through the various partner activities that we undertake, we

are improving the quality of life for people in East Renfrewshire. Through the first quarter of 2020/21, we have had to adapt our policing approach to respond to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. We did this to protect the communities that we work within and also to protect our own staff to ensure that we had sufficient resources available to respond to any incidents reported. Our teams adapted quickly and I am pleased to report that the morale of our teams remained high despite the challenges that were presented.

Local Policing Teams in East Renfrewshire were supported throughout the pandemic by divisional and national resources to ensure that we maintained a high visibility presence across the area to reassure the public. We also supported partner agencies whenever possible. A good example of this was the deployment of three Police officers to work alongside Community Safety staff in the East Renfrewshire Council CCTV Hub.

Our policing style in response to coronavirus legislation has been centred on the 4E's – Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce. This approach has worked well in East Renfrewshire where compliance has generally been high with a relatively small number of offences detected. We have continued with this approach as 'lockdown' has eased and remain committed to keeping our communities safe and working with partners to continue to deliver the best public service possible.

Drug Dealing & Misuse



Local Policing Priority: Crime (Drug Supply & Manufacture)
Fairer East Ren Plan: Reducing social isolation, loneliness & increasing safety

There has been continued proactivity in the first quarter of 2020/21 in relation to individuals involved in the supply of controlled drugs. We have made several arrests and seized a variety of controlled drugs, including heroin, cocaine and ecstasy.

The number of reports submitted to the Procurator Fiscal for persons involved in the supply, production and cultivation of drugs has slightly increased from 6 to 7 compared to the same period last year.

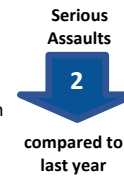


East Renfrewshire Local Policing Plan (2020-2023) Quarterly Report (Q1 — 2020/21)

Violent Crime



There has been a decrease in serious assaults with 8 reported compared to 10 last year. There was not a single serious assault reported in the first two months of this year and the majority of those that have now been reported occurred indoors. 2 robberies were reported this year compared to 1 last year; both of these crimes have been detected.



Local Policing Priority: Crime (Violent Crime)
Fairer East Ren Plan: Reducing social isolation, loneliness & increasing safety



Reducing and preventing violent crime remains a key priority and there has been an overall reduction in violent crimes. The number of common assaults recorded is slightly lower than last year with 116 crimes having been reported compared to 119 last year. Detection rates for robbery and serious and common assault have all increased.

We remain committed to dealing quickly and effectively with incidents of domestic abuse. A number of the assaults have occurred between partners or former partners and compared to the same period last year, the number of domestic abuse crimes has decreased from 88 to 83. Whilst this is a small decrease, the number of domestic incidents attended by the Police has increased from 125 to 151. The impact of restrictions on people's lives due to coronavirus may have resulted in increased tension within relationships which has increased the number of reports made to the Police. All domestic crimes were fully investigated and victims were referred on to appropriate support services.

Public Protection

Local Policing Priority: Crime (Sexual Offences)



This year has seen a decrease in the reporting of sexual crimes with 28 victims having come forward compared to 40 last year. This reduction in the number of sexual crimes is welcome, however we continue to work with partner agencies to provide support to victims so they have the confidence to come forward and report ongoing and historical incidents.



Acquisitive Crime



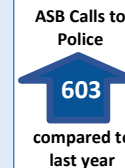
This year, there have been 11 less victims of domestic housebreaking against last year's figures, with 8 crimes being reported as opposed to 19 at the same point last year. This is also significantly lower than the 5 year average where there were 33 victims of domestic housebreaking.



Local Policing Priority: Crime (Crimes of Dishonesty)
Fairer East Ren Plan: Reducing social isolation, loneliness & increasing safety

The outbreak of coronavirus may have had an impact on domestic housebreaking with more home owners remaining within their property or working from home. However, officers have also carried out high visibility patrols across East Renfrewshire and positioned themselves at key locations to make it problematic for offenders to move about the area. Detecting those responsible for housebreaking can at times be difficult and protracted however, local officers have support from our specialist teams who pursue all available conventional and forensic enquiries.

Antisocial Behaviour & Disorder



In Q1 of this year, there were 1152 antisocial behaviour calls made to the Police compared to 549 last year. Crimes of vandalism are down from 103 to 88. This is also down against the 5 year average of 117.



Local Policing Priority – Crime (Disorder and Antisocial behaviour)
Fairer East Ren Plan—Reducing social isolation, loneliness and increasing safety

Reducing antisocial behaviour (ASB) remains a community priority and we continue to focus efforts on preventing disorder.

Whilst the number of ASB calls have more than doubled it is important to note that a large volume of calls were made to the Police in relation to non-compliance with Scottish Government legislation and guidance on coronavirus. These reports included people not socially distancing, holding parties within houses and gardens, and large groups gathering in parks and open spaces. However, there were increased reports of antisocial behaviour and disorder across the area. These reports became more prevalent as 'lockdown' eased. As a result, we enhanced or sub-divisional disorder action plan and secured support from the Flexible Response Unit and off-road motorcycles. This plan focused on the parks and open spaces across the Local Authority, however we also ensured that our patrol plan included built up areas.

CRIME

Our Area of Focus: Violent Crime

Violent crime continues to be a concern for our communities and alcohol consumption remains a factor when incidents occur. In the first quarter of this year, the majority of licensed premises were closed due to coronavirus, however, our Community Policing Teams ran an initiative in conjunction with East Renfrewshire Council's Licensing Department which focused on the responsible sale of alcohol by off license premises. A large number of premises were visited as part of this initiative.

Our officers have dealt with a number of violent offenders in the first quarter of this year. During one particularly challenging incident, officers arrested a male who was in possession of a knife and had seriously assaulted two members of the public. He was detained in custody to appear at Court the following day and is awaiting a trial date in relation to this incident.

Our Area of Focus: Drug Supply and Manufacture

The first quarter of 2020/21 has seen some significant seizures of controlled substances. The number of search warrants executed has reduced due to coronavirus, however several properties were searched under warrant. One such search resulted in a male being charged with supply offences after a large amount of heroin was recovered.

Local officers have continued to glean information and intelligence which they have used to identify individuals who were supplying drugs on the street or from motor vehicles.

After one motor vehicle was stopped, two males aged 20 and 21 were charged with supply offences after significant amounts of cocaine and ecstasy was recovered from the vehicle. A quantity of money was also seized under Proceeds of Crime legislation.

Our Area of Focus: Crimes of Dishonesty

Proactive work by local officers resulted in the apprehension of two prolific offenders within the Barrhead and Newton Mearns areas of East Renfrewshire. A 40 year old male was identified after significant work by officers who traced and arrested him. He subsequently appeared at Paisley Sheriff Court on a number of charges including Attempt Housebreaking and Attempt Theft of a Motor Vehicle. He was found guilty and is now awaiting sentencing.

A 40 year old female was also identified and charged with numerous offences relating to housebreaking and theft. A report has now been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal with her scheduled to appear at Court at a later date in respect of these charges.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Our Area of Focus: Vulnerable Road Users

Community engagement continues to highlight road safety as a priority for the residents of East Renfrewshire. Officers on patrol have identified a number of offenders for a variety of road traffic offences which has impacted positively upon driver behaviour.

In separate incidents, a 25 year old male and a 26 year old male were both identified and charged for dangerous driving. In another incident, a 26 year old driver was observed driving carelessly and when stopped was found to be over the prescribed limit for drink driving. He was thereafter charged with a number of related offences.

Along with local officers, specialist Road Policing officers have also been proactive at areas highlighted by communities for speeding. Twenty motorists were found to be driving above the national speed limit, these individuals were issued with Fixed Penalty tickets.

We have received positive feedback from local communities who have noted the increased police presence throughout the first quarter of the year. We continue to use social media to highlight the importance of safe driver behaviour.

Our Areas of Focus: Domestic Abuse— Adult Protection—Child Protection

Greater Glasgow Division has recently set up a new Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit. The officers in this Unit investigate cases with the highest associated risks, providing support to victims in current relationships and those that have suffered historic domestic abuse. They also support local officers with their expertise and are on hand to offer assistance with any complex investigations.

This experience was beneficial when a significant enquiry was undertaken to arrest and report a 36 year old male for his role in causing significant fear and alarm to his ex-partner and several other people. A protracted enquiry resulted in this individual appearing at court and being remanded in custody for the offences. A number of partner agencies were consulted throughout the investigation which is further evidence of the strong partnership working across East Renfrewshire.

Our Areas of Focus: Young People

During the school holidays, our campus and community police officers have worked alongside local authority Youth Workers, engaging with young people from hard to reach backgrounds in East Renfrewshire. Officers attended and engaged with young people who were partaking in social and leisure activities in local parks, where they worked to break down barriers and develop positive community relationships.



CONCLUSION

As Local Policing Commander, I am pleased to present this update on the activities carried out by officers in the first quarter of the year. We have achieved a number of positive outcomes through our partnership working which have been to the benefit of the communities we serve.

We have all been affected by the coronavirus pandemic in our personal and professional lives. These past few months have been unprecedented and have resulted in major changes in how we go about our business. This report highlights some of the diligent work carried out, in conjunction with our partners, to keep communities across East Renfrewshire safe.

I expect my officers to continue to deliver the highest standard of policing across East Renfrewshire as we move through the easing of lockdown measures. We will meet any future challenges head on to ensure the communities in which we serve are kept safe through our continued collaborative approach.

Thank you sincerely for your continued support and access to vital roles and assets.

Chief Superintendent Hazel Hendren
Divisional Commander