

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE AND FIRE)

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 24 May 2018.

Present:

Councillor Colin Merrick (Chair)	Councillor Barbara Grant
Councillor Paul O’Kane (Vice Chair)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Tony Buchanan	

Councillor Merrick, in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Jim Sneddon, Head of Democratic and Partnership Services; and Paul O’Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Chief Superintendent Brian McNulty and Chief Inspector Angela Carty, Police Scotland; and Local Senior Officer Graeme Binning; and Group Manager Colin Martin, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Apology:

Councillor Danny Devlin.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

440. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

OPENING REMARKS

441. Councillor Merrick welcomed Local Senior Officer Graeme Binning of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to his first meeting in his new role following the retirement of Local Senior Officer David Proctor from the service.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/18

442. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police in East Renfrewshire for the financial year 2017/18. 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 2016/17 and against the 5-year average was appended to the report.

Chief Superintendent McNulty advised that this was the final performance report for the financial year 2017/18 in the course of which he highlighted that as noted in the report the partnership working with the Council and other community planning partners continued to go from strength to strength. At this stage, he invited Chief Inspector Carty to provide further details about the information contained in the performance report.

Chief Inspector Carty explained that the crime statistics detailed in the report only covered the period up to February 2018 it being noted that Police Scotland's official year-end figures would be published by the Scottish Government after it had carefully reviewed and ratified them in line with nationally approved crime recording rules.

Whilst summarising the performance of the Police, Chief Inspector Carty highlighted that the East Renfrewshire Police Scotland Youth Volunteers had been in existence for almost one year and the group had become ambassadors for the 'No Knives Better Lives' campaign to take the message to their peers. She highlighted that a young person from the group had addressed her school assembly on the issue and had received a positive response. She also commented on the work of the campus officers in delivering presentations to school pupils and the partnership work of the local authority liaison officer with 'I AM ME' and the Council to implement the Keep Safe Premises initiative throughout East Renfrewshire.

Chief Inspector Carty then reported on the local policing priorities as contained in the Policing Plan 2017-20 and in particular, to the problem of housebreaking. She stated that whilst a significant number of Asian households had been broken into, a number of arrests had been made associated with these crimes. However, it was noted that the number of crimes of associated with houses being broken into had decreased compared to the corresponding period the previous year.

Furthermore, Chief Inspector Carty stated that there had been a significant increase in the number of calls received by the police about anti-social behaviour compared to 2016-17. It was noted that the police were working in partnership with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to tackle the problem of the theft and subsequent setting on fire of wheelie bins in the Netherlee area. In addition, officers were giving presentations to secondary school pupils about the dangers and the impact such behaviour had on communities. Reference was also made a number of other types of crime detailed in the report including violent crime, child abuse and child sexual exploitation, serious and organised crime and road safety. Concluding her remarks, she highlighted that the police were still receiving a positive response from members of the public regarding satisfaction with the police in keeping people safe within local communities.

At this stage, Chief Superintendent McNulty commented on the spate of housebreakings of Asian households in the course of which he emphasised that these households were being targeted for cash and gold and re-iterated that a number of arrests had been made. He also clarified that the statistics for robberies included opportunistic thefts such as mobile phones from members of the public in the street. He stated that the police were targeting the perpetrators of such crimes and were trying to educate members of public as to how to keep their possessions safe.

Chief Superintendent McNulty stated that this was Chief Inspector Carty's last meeting before her retirement, and took the opportunity to pay tribute to the significant contributions that she had made in East Renfrewshire. He highlighted that she had been an extremely committed officer who had worked tirelessly to keep people safe throughout her service, and thanked her for all the support she had provided to him, and wished her a very long and happy retirement. He also reported that Chief Inspector McQuilter would be her successor as the new local area commander.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Chief Superintendent McNulty and Chief Inspector Carty provided clarification on a number of operational issues. These included amongst other things how cash and assets seized by the police from individuals involved in serious and organised crime was dealt with by the Scottish Government; whether consideration had been given to the Council and the local police operating from a joint campus; measures being taken to tackle anti-social behaviour by youths during the summer months; and minimising road safety risks in local communities.

The Cabinet noted the terms of the report.

VALEDICTORY – CHIEF INSPECTOR ANGELA CARTY

443. Councillor Merrick referred to the forthcoming retirement of Chief Inspector Carty and paid tribute to the excellent working relationship the Council had enjoyed with her as Local Commander and on behalf of the Council wished her a long and happy retirement.

Chief Inspector Carty replied in suitable terms.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR FOURTH QUARTER OF 2017/18

444. 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 fourth quarter of 2017/18. An analysis of the incidents in each of the Council's five wards during the reported period was appended to the report.

Local Senior Officer Binning began by giving a brief summary of his career to date in the course of which he explained that in his role as Local Senior Officer, he was responsible for the three council areas covering East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire. Since taking up his appointment he had reviewed the governance arrangements that were in place and had decided to restructure them and indicated that the new structure would involve two senior officers being dedicated to East Renfrewshire who would report to Group Manager Martin who in turn would report to him.

Concluding his remarks, Local Senior Officer Binning referred to the engagement activities undertaken by SFRS, particularly in relation to Home Fire Safety Visits and to the terms of the Fairer East Ren Plan. He stated that in his new role he wanted to consult and review arrangements and be accessible to the Council and looked forward to working with partners in the future. At this stage, he invited Group Manager Martin to provide further details on the performance report.

Group Manager Martin explained that the performance of the service was measured against the key performance indicators as contained in the East Renfrewshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2017/18. These were noted as Accidental Dwelling Fires; All Non-Fatal Fire Casualties; Deliberate Fire Raising; Fires in Non-Domestic Buildings; Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals; and Road Traffic Collisions. He summarised the performance by comparing each of the indicators against the performance achieved in the corresponding period in 2017.

Whilst noting that the number of incidents of accidental dwelling fires had increased from 15 in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to 26 in the current reported period, Group Manager Martin advised that more than half of these fires had not required intervention by the SFRS and this was a positive outcome. It was further noted that the total number of all non-fatal fire casualties had also increased from three in the corresponding period in 2016/17 to five in the current reported period.

However, it was noted that the total number of incidents involving deliberate fire raising had decreased from 22 in 2016/17 to 16 in the current reported period. Furthermore, the total number of fires in non-domestic buildings remained unchanged and that in terms of the total number of unwanted fire alarm signals this had increased from 61 in the same period in 2016/17 to 63 in the current reported period.

Group Manager Martin highlighted that the SFRS was aware of who the repeat offenders were in relation to unwanted fire alarm signals such as shopping centres with the main cause being faulty alarms. The total number of road traffic casualty incidents attended by SFRS which resulted in non-fatal casualties had decreased from 11 in the same period in 2016/17 to 7 in the current reported period and this figure was very good when compared to the Scottish average. Details of the range of partnership and targeted engagement activities undertaken by SFRS during the course of the fourth quarter of 2017/18 were also outlined in the report.

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 number of operational issues. It was noted that accidental dwelling fires were mainly caused by individuals losing concentration whilst cooking in kitchens, and that despite previous publicity campaigns to highlight the problem it was noted that a multi-agency approach was required. However, it was hoped that the number of incidents of this type of fire would decrease in the future. Details of the measures proposed to combat deliberate fire raising were outlined including strengthening the work being carried out in schools by engaging further with young people about the risks involved of deliberate fire raising.

The Cabinet noted the terms of the report.

CHAIR