

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**CABINET**  
**(POLICE & FIRE)**

**Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 14 September 2023.**

**Present:**

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)	Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)	Councillor Gordon Wallace(*)
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	

Councillor O'Donnell in the Chair

**Attending:**

Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Stephen Bell, Community Safety Manager; John Burke, Committee Services Officer; and Liona Allison, Assistant Committee Services Officer.

**Also Attending:**

Superintendent Patrick Murphy; Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie, (Area Commander); Michele Grant, Communities Inspector, Police Scotland; Watch Commander Paul McQueen; and Group Commander Alan Coughtrie, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

**Apology:**

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)

**CHAIR'S REMARKS**

**587.** The Chair offered his thanks and congratulations to Superintendent Patrick Murphy, who was retiring from Police Scotland.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**588.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 - 2023-24**

**589.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the fourth quarter of 2022-23. 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 2022-23.

Introducing the report, Superintendent Murphy first thanked the Chair and the Committee for their acknowledgment of his service in Police Scotland. He also thanked Chief Inspector Gallie and his team for their work in East Renfrewshire, which was backed up by the positive performance outlined in the report.

Chief Inspector Gallie then reported on the performance of the police against the five local policing priorities contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2023-26.

On referring to the report, he recognised the significant impact acquisitive crime and in particular theft by housebreaking, had on communities. He advised that there had been 34 offences during the quarter, which was 27% below the 5 year average for the period, with a third of those offences successfully detected. He explained that tackling acquisitive crime had been a priority with significant resources both locally and nationally dedicated to enhance prevention and bring offenders to justice. It was noted that this was not just an East Renfrewshire issue and the police were working with partners across the UK to share information, intelligence and best practise.

In respect of crimes of dishonesty, it was reported that crimes of this type had slowed in growth, with a 3% increase for the year and remained in line with the 5 year average. Significant arrests had been made of organised criminals targeting East Renfrewshire's retailers, with a 2% decrease in fraud over the year. Theft by shoplifting continued to climb with 75 more offences than last quarter. It was believed that the cost of living crisis was having an effect on these figures. He also highlighted the theft of high value motor vehicles, which was a subject of concern as it was up nationally, but was down 6% for the year and motor vehicle theft in general was down 17%.

Crimes of dishonesty had increased slightly compared to the period last year, up 3%. However, it was indicated that there had been a decrease in other Group 3 crimes and common theft. It was also noted that Fraud offences and Theft by Shoplifting had increased on the previous year's figures.

In relation to public protection, it was noted that there had been a 4% reduction in criminal domestic abuse incidents during the year, and domestic abuse related crime detection had increased from 6% to 54%. The domestic bail check 24 hours compliance rate remained at 100% with those checks, along with other policing measures, resulting in 13 offences being detected where offenders had been caught breaching domestic bail conditions.

Commenting on violent crime, Chief Inspector Gallie reported an increase in Non-Sexual Crimes of Violence, with 36 offences recorded during the quarter, up from 24 the previous year. Serious assaults had increased to 9 from 7 the previous year, with 7 of those successfully detected. While this increase was disappointing, it still represented a 14% decrease against the 3 year average. There was also an increase in offences relating to offensive of bladed weapons, with 36 offences recorded, an increase of 7 from the previous year.

In terms of antisocial behaviour and disorder, the number of complaints remained stable at 657, a 0.3% increase from the previous year, but substantially lower than the 1390 calls recorded during the same period in 2020/2021. Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes had reduced by 29% and 48% respectively.

It was highlighted that a significant focus had been placed on fire raisings, with fires being reported on or near school grounds. The number had increased from 9 to 18 from the previous year and Campus Officers were working with the Education Department, Youth Services and Scottish Fire and Rescue Services to implement a multi-agency approach to tackle the issue.

In relation to drug dealing and use it was noted that during the year there had been 48 recorded drug crimes, a 7% increase on the previous year, with 5 Supply of Drugs offences recorded. The public health approach to policing supported and protected young people and families by tackling the crime and arresting those who dealt drugs in East Renfrewshire communities.

Chief Inspector Gallie concluded by giving some examples of the work being done in East Renfrewshire by officers of Police Scotland on all of the areas of focus covered, which were highlighted within the report.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which Chief Inspector Gallie 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. In particular, there was discussion of the custody in court pilot scheme's outcome, the surge in deliberate fire raising offences and the approach to dealing with shoplifting offences during the cost of living crisis.

The Cabinet noted the report.

## **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2023-24**

**590.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the first quarter of 2023-24 against the key priorities in their local plan.

Introducing the report Group Commander Coughtrie referred to the work of the Community Safety Engagement Department, overseen by Watch Commander McQueen, who was present at the meeting. He provided a brief overview of the makeup and work of the team, highlighting its importance to preventative fire safety through education programmes and partnership working within communities. In particular, work on adult and child protection, experiential training, awareness of fire risk and water and road safety were highlighted as areas where the Community Safety Engagement Department were making progress.

Group Commander Coughtrie then reported on the performance of SFRS on performance over quarter 4.

Group Commander Coughtrie prefaced his remarks on the report by commenting on some of the engagement activity that had taken place and equipment supplied during the quarter. This included 25 community activities by the community action team and 81 by operational crews. 358 home fires safety visits were carried out, 114 in premises identified as high risk with 121 smoke detectors being fitted.

In relation to accidental dwelling fires a 24% decrease on the year on year figure was reported and a 2% reduction against the 3 year figure. It was noted that detection was present in 78% of premises and activated in 100%. Details of some of the ongoing community work that took place was provided, with the high engagement rates in East

Renfrewshire being noted. There had been 1 fire related casualty, with an individual requiring first aid at the scene and no hospital treatment required.

Group Commander Coughtrie highlighted the Post-Domestic Incident Response Programme, in which the fire crews in East Renfrewshire had the highest attainment rate in Scotland.

Group Commander Coughtrie reported that the figures in relation to unintentional injury and harm saw an 11% increase in the year-on-year average and an increase of 33% against 3 year average figures. However it was clarified this was against historically low figures. The largest number of those related to road traffic collisions.

Deliberate fire setting showed a 60% increase on the year on year indicator, with a 2% increase on the 3 year average. Again, this was reported as being against historically low figures. The Community Action Team and Operational Crews continued to carry out engagement activity to mitigate the risk of this type of activity, working in partnership with Police Scotland and other partners. It was indicated that certain groups had been identified and it was expected that a significant drop would be achieved in the next quarter.

Non-domestic fire safety showed a 60% decrease from the previous year and a 7% reduction on the 3 year average. Details of the incidents were provided.

Group Commander Coughtrie concluded by providing information in relation to UFAS. The year on year figure had decreased by 18%, however there had been a slight increase of 13% on the 3 year average. It was noted that the majority were in educational facilities with the main causes being accidental, system faults and cooking. The impact of poor maintenance was also highlighted.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which officers McQueen and Coughtrie responded to a number of questions and comments on a range of issues recorded in the report. Mainly, the discussion focused on the number of deliberate fire setting incidents and the response by East Renfrewshire based teams to fires outside of the East Renfrewshire area.

While welcoming the reduction in UFAS figures, it was highlighted that officers within the Education department were still concerned about the new approach and Group Commander Coughtrie indicated that he would come back to Cabinet with further information as required following further discussions with E

Thereafter the Cabinet agreed to note the report.

CHAIR