

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**  
**POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD**

MINUTES of Meeting of the POLICE, FIRE &  
RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES  
BOARD held in Council Chamber, Council  
Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells on  
Friday, 9th February, 2018 at 9.30 am

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Present: Councillors W. McAteer (Chairman), D Moffat, E Robson, H Scott,  
G Turnbull.

Apologies: Mr D Davidson, NHS Borders, Ms J Mulloy (SBHA), Mrs M  
Simpson, Councillor E Small.

In Attendance: Chief Superintendent L Clark; E Gaw, Community Accountability  
Manager, Scottish Police Authority; K Hogg, Interim Chief Officer,  
Scottish Policy Authority; Group Manager A Girrity, Scottish Fire &  
Rescue Service; LSO S Gourlay, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service;  
Chief Inspector A McLean, Police Scotland; Mr G Jones, Safer  
Communities & Community Justice Manager, SBC; Mr D Scott,  
Senior Policy Advisor, SBC, J Turnbull, Democratic Services  
Officer, SBC.

Public 5

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Kenneth Hogg, Interim Chief Officer, and Eleanor Gaw, Community Accountability Manager from the Scottish Policy Authority (SPA) and thanked them for their attendance.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

2. **MINUTE**

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 10 November 2017.
- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute, Mr Scott advised that the themed based discussion for this meeting was Under Age Drinking.

**DECISION  
APPROVED the Minute.**

3. **PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES ON SERVICE MATTERS - POLICE SCOTLAND**

- 3.1 Chief Superintendent Clark began by advising that the shift pattern for the response unit was changing on 2 March 2018, to a 2:2:2 shift, which would ensure more resilience. Each of the 13 Divisions were establishing policing toolkits to enhance communication. This would be focused internally and externally and would be tailored to reflect local variances.
- 3.2 Chief Inspector McLean then presented the Draft Police Scrutiny Report for the period 1 October 2017 to 31 December 2017, copies of which had been circulated with the Agenda. He explained that there had been significant changes to the format of the report, which was now based on community feedback and tailored to reflect the area's priorities. The report did not provide statistics; instead focused on detailing the work

Police Scotland were undertaking to address local issues. He welcomed feedback on the new format and explained once this was received a final report would be prepared.

- 3.3 Domestic Abuse (incorporating all aspects of sexual offences). During the period incidents of domestic abuse had increased. This reflected an increased confidence in reporting of incidents and the support given. Chief Inspector McLean explained that every domestic incident that occurred, over a 24 hour period, was scrutinised and reviewed daily by the Local Area Commander and the threat and risk of harm to the victim assessed to ensure everything possible was being done to protect the victim and bring offenders to justice. In response to a question, he explained the officers proactively pursued offenders who were the subject of bail conditions. This involved maintaining contact with victims to ensure safety, along with robust enforcement checks on suspects. If bail conditions were breached then the offender was taken back to Court.
- 3.4 Road Safety (incorporating prevention, driver behaviour, road casualties). There had been a significant reduction in casualties during the period. Initiatives continued on the prevention and education side of casualty reduction, for example Drivewise, which targeting young people under 17 years of age. Over 20, over 65s refresher sessions with an Approved Driving Instructor had also been delivered. During the quarter, enforcement action had focused on the drink driving and no insurance campaign. Pop Up Bob had also been viewed in various locations to aid speed reduction.
- 3.5 Violent Crime (incorporating assaults, Serious Organised Crime Groups (SOCG) and Counter Terrorism). There had been a reduction in violent crime in the Borders. Police Scotland had initiated plans to manage the weekend, night time economy within the Borders. The purpose of which was to offer reassurance to the public and be vigilant to any developing incidents to ensure a prompt response to any criminality. In response to a question, Chief Inspector McLean reported that a number of arrests had been made to a group supplying drugs across the Scottish Borders resulting in significant custodial sentences.
- 3.6 Anti-Social Behaviour (incorporating online crime and hate crime). There had been some increase, albeit at a low level. Chief Inspector Mclean referred to an incident at the Transport Interchange in Galashiels where there had been significant police intervention with staff, regarding youth, anti-social behaviour. Regular patrols continued to be carried out and any offenders dealt with. In response to a question regarding arrests for breach of the peace, Chief Inspector McLean explained that when the behaviour was criminal they required witnesses and the public were often reluctant to come forward. Mr Jones added that if someone came to the attention of the team they would be monitored and ways to temper that individual's behaviour considered. Tenants causing problems and the fear of reporting because of reprisals was discussed. The Chairman suggested that this topic could be considered, in more detail, as one of the themes at a future meeting.
- 3.7 Drugs and Substance Misuse (incorporating SOSG). Chief Inspector McLean advised that the biggest misused substance was alcohol. The Police were engaging with school link workers to educate and inform young people about alcohol misuse and the effect on the community. The Chairman highlighted, of concern, drug related deaths over the period of one weekend. Chief Inspector McLean explained that a significant amount of work had being carried out on this matter through joint working with NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council. Following which dealers were arrested and drugs recovered. He emphasised the importance of the public reporting any information to Crimestoppers which was totally anonymous.
- 3.8 Acquisitive Crime (incorporating rural crime, housebreakings and thefts). There had been a number of prevention surveys on houses and businesses during the quarter. Chief Inspector McLean highlighted that working in partnership with Broomlands Residents' Association in Kelso another new "Cold Calling Zone" had been implemented. In

response to a question, he explained that the Zone gave residents' confidence and it was open to their personal interpretation on how they wished to implement the scheme.

- 3.9 Protection People (incorporating child protection, child sexual exploitation (CSE) adults at risk & missing persons). The VPD (Vulnerable Persons Database) was working well and allowed the identification of risk and vulnerability in adults and children to partner agencies allowing them to provide support and intervention where required. Reports of missing persons were given a high priority, particularly if there was an immediate threat to life.
- 3.10 In the ensuing discussion it was requested that future Scrutiny Reports included response times for 101 and 999 calls, details of complaints, and figures on detection rates. The Chairman thanked Chief Superintendent Clark and Chief Inspector McLean for their attendance and on behalf of the Committee congratulated Chief Superintendent Clark on being awarded the Queen's Police Medal.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED to request that future Police Scotland Scrutiny Reports for the Scottish Borders included information on response times for 101 and 999 calls, details of complaints and statistics on detection rates.**

## **4. SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY**

- 4.1 Mr K Hogg, Interim Chief Officer and Ms E Gaw, Community Accountability Manager, Scottish Police Authority (SPA), were in attendance and Mr Hogg presented on the work of the SPA. He began by referring to the guiding set of principles informing the SPA, which was to provide simplification, transparency and clarity through a collaborative approach. He explained that some of the immediate changes which had been implemented included: ending closed SPA Board meetings - all meetings were now open and live streamed or on their website; re-establishment of the Complaints and Conduct Committee; strengthening and developing the Board; and, the development of structures, processes and practices which underpinned good governance. Mr Hogg advised that the SPA had a statutory responsibility to deal with complaints and misconduct allegations against senior Police Scotland officers, and the importance of conducting these matters in a confidential way. Mr Hogg further advised that going forward the SPA would maximise collaboration and partnership working and ensure that the voice of the public and communities was reflected in decision making. He highlighted that in practice, the SPA expected local policing to reflect local priorities. This would mean building a shared commitment with local government on the future of policing, delivering local flexibility, with the benefits of a national resource, and an accessible role for scrutiny to strengthen trust and confidence. It was emphasised that the new policing principles in the 2012 Act had significantly redrawn the main purpose of policing – to promote not only the safety but the wellbeing of communities across Scotland. To conclude, Mr Hogg advised that the one of the challenges ahead for the SPA was to build the right engagement and liaison arrangements with local authorities and ensure appropriate guidance and protocols were in place for consultation on matters of significant public interest. There was also a requirement to build a shared evidence base on the strengths of local policing and to identify where there was need for improvement.
- 4.2 The Board discussed the presentation, it was noted that nationally, confidence in policing was low and that a Chief Constable should be appointed as soon as possible. Greater transparency was also required and it was suggested that Police Scotland should provide more clarity on what they could and could not achieve. The Board was also keen to have regular SPA presence at meetings, which they considered would strengthen their relationship. They also asked that consideration be given to an Elected Member representing local authorities on the Scottish Police Authority Board. The Chairman thanked Mr Hogg and Ms Gaw for their attendance and Mr Hogg for his informative presentation.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED to invite a representative from the Scottish Police Authority to attend future meetings of the Board.**

### **5. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES ON SERVICE MATTERS - SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

- 5.1 Local Senior Officer (LSO) Gourlay referred to the Community Fire and Rescue Plan for Scottish Borders 2018, which had been circulated with the Agenda. He explained that the Plan had been through a consultation process and amendments had been made to reflect changes in the Local Community Plan. The Chairman congratulated the Fire Service on the Plan which he fully endorsed and advised that it would be presented to Council on 1 March 2018.
- 5.2 In response to questions regarding the out-of-hours cardiac arrest scheme, LSO Gourlay advised that it was the intention to roll out the pilot scheme across the whole of Scotland. However, owing to union negotiations this was not possible at the moment. With reference to the tragic fatal fire in Hawick on 4 January, he stated that there would be a multi-agency discussion to consider the circumstances around the fire.
- 5.3 The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) Transformation Proposal had also been circulated with the Agenda. LSO Gourlay explained that since the last meeting they had received a mandate from Scottish Government with extra funding, in addition to their existing budget, to support the transformation proposals. He further advised that the Fire Service was investing £10m on a dedicated training and health & wellbeing facility in the east of Scotland which was welcomed. In response to questions, LSO Gourlay advised that there were no high rise flats with cladding in the Borders. He further advised that since the Cameron House fire a safety review had been undertaken on all large and medium sized hotels across Scotland.
- 5.4 Group Manager Girrity then presented the SFRS Local Plan Performance Report for 1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017, copies of which had been circulated with the Agenda. In summary:
- 5.5 Reduction of 'Dwelling Fires'. The SFRS had attended 69 dwelling fires during the period, the same total as the previous year's reporting period. Cooking and cooking appliances continued to be the cause of over 50% of those fires.
- 5.6 Reduction of 'All Fire Casualties (fatal and non-fatal)'. There were 13 fire related casualties during the reporting period, seven less than the same period last year.
- 5.7 Reduction of 'All deliberate fires, excluding dwellings'. There were 136 deliberate fires in the year to date, an increase of 56 in comparison to the same period last year. The increase was associated with a spate of fires which had occurred in the wooded area adjacent to Galashiels Academy.
- 5.8 Reduction of 'Special Service – RTCs'. The SFRS attended 63 road traffic collisions, 13 less than the same period last year. There were 42 related casualties including four fatalities. The hydraulic rescue equipment was used on 24 occasions to extricate persons from trapped vehicles.
- 5.9 Unwanted Fire Alarms Signals – There were 216 unwanted fire alarms signals during the period, which was a slight decrease from the previous year. With reference to paragraph 5.10(b) of the minute of 10 November 2017, a report on 'Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals' had been circulated with the Agenda, which gave further details.
- 5.10 Group Manager Girrity then went on to discuss prevention and protection activities. Home Fire Safety Visits continued to be carried out across the Borders with 522 visits completed in quarter three of 2017-18. SFRS had also carried out a number of prevention activities

with other agencies in terms of youth engagement and vulnerable adults. He highlighted the Living Safely in the Home pilot project in Cheviot. The aim of the project was to reduce slips, trips, falls whilst assessing other vulnerabilities in the home. This pilot had been a success and planning was taking place to extend the project to other areas of the Borders. The SFRS assisted deliver of the Drivewise programme, 150 school children (S4 – S6) had attended the October 2017 sessions and received Road Safety Education and driving experience. Drivewise had proved an excellent prevention activity and similar SFRS resources would be allocated to Drivewise 2018. Group Manager Girrity went on to refer to future works streams and highlighted the Youth Engagement Programme which would be delivered to 10 youths from Galashiels Academy and also a Community Resilience Day at Peebles High School. In response to questions, Group Manager Girrity advised that hotels' sleeping risks were audited each year. With regard to fire safety on farms, he explained that they were already involved with Young Farmers and also that previous engagement activities had included developing CPR skills. With regard to partnership working, Mr Gourlay advised that they had a small community action team who worked extensively with a range of multi-agency partners. To conclude, he advised that there were a number of local authorities about to engage in a pilot with the blue light service, and that negotiations to review national terms and conditions were critical in order that the SFRS could move forward with their transformation programme.

- 5.11 The Chairman thanked Group Manager Girrity and LSO Gourlay for their report which had focused on SFRS's delivery of a range of services. He reiterated the Committee's comments regarding the out-of-hour's cardiac arrest pilot and hoped that negotiations were successful and that this project would resume as soon as possible.

## **DECISION**

**NOTED the report.**

## **6. SAFER COMMUNITIES UPDATE AND KEY ACTIVITIES**

- 6.1 There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Performance Report covering the period 1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017. Mr Graham Jones, Safer Communities and Community Service Manager highlighted the key points in his report:
- 6.2 Priority 1 – Reduce the level and impact of Gender Based Violence through effective partnership working. Referrals to the Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service (DAAS) were on an upward trend and had increased 65% when compared to the same period last year. This increase could be attributed to the new referral mechanism from Police Scotland and an increased awareness among client groups who self-referred and among referring partners. The DAAS continued to maintain their target of responding to referrals by the Police within 24 hours on 90% of occasions, and within 48 hours 100% of the time for referrals from other agencies. A Modern Apprentice position for the DAAS service was being developed which would lead to the completion of a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Level 3 in Health and Social Care. It was noted that the Board would receive a presentation at the next meeting on gender based violence.
- 6.3 Priority 2 – Reduce the level and impact of Substance Misuse through effective partnership working. Under the Best Bar None scheme, 23 premises were being considered for awards and accreditation was underway. The Safer Communities Team had supplied information to the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership for inclusion in the submission to inform development of the new Licensing Board policy document. The Partnership had also delivered the initial phase of the underage drinking campaign promoting attitudinal change to those people who supplied alcohol to under 18s and highlighting the new legislation.
- 6.4 Priority 3 – Reduce the level and impact of Crime and Anti-social Behaviour through effective partnership working. There had been a reduction of 8.9% in people being monitored for anti-social behaviour which correlated to the 6% increase in early interventions undertaken by anti-social behaviour partners. There was now a greater

awareness of the mediation service which was returning an increase of 26.5% in referrals to the service. Plans were in place to resurrect the Safe T programme designed for school pupils before they completed secondary school education and was a continuation from Crucial Crew in the safety messages and practical life skills it aimed to provide.

- 6.5 Priority 4 – Reduce the level and impact of poor driver behaviour through effective partnership working. Anti-social Driving would be brought under Drivewise and the content of Crucial Crew and the re-establishment of Safe T would have road safety components. The Institute of Advanced Motorists intended running a road safety event at Galashiels Fire Station during April 2018.
- 6.6 Priority 5 – Reduce the level and impact of accidents in the home through effective partnership working. Through Scottish Borders Alert, safety messages have been circulated highlighting the dangers that toddlers and young children could be exposed to in the home resulting in accidental falls, poisoning, choking, strangulation, burns and scalds. This was an area for further development.
- 6.7 The Chairman thanked Mr Jones for his comprehensive report which provided detail for the Board to consider the whole issue of community safety across the Scottish Borders.

#### **DECISION**

##### **NOTED:**

- (a) **The report; and**  
(b) **That the theme for the next meeting would be Gender Based Violence.**

#### **7. UNDER AGE DRINKING CAMPAIGN**

Mr Jones, followed his report by giving a brief presentation on the Underage Drinking Don't Buy It, Don't Supply It Campaign. The Campaign had ran successfully over the festive period and would be extended over the next 12 months. He explained that the background to the Campaign had been a concern about the supply of alcohol to young people and the increase in ASB (anti-social behaviour) instances involving young people. The Campaign's objective was to reduce instances of proxy purchase in particular by parents, to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and to reduce hospital admissions relating to young people and alcohol and to raise awareness of legislation relating to the supply of alcohol to young people. The Campaign had involved an integrated community safety approach with the Alcohol & Drugs Partnership, TD1 Youth Hub, Galashiels Academy, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and Scottish Borders Council. Mr Jones then showed the imagery associated with the Campaign, and explained that the background colour would change depending on the event. The Campaign had been launched at TD1 Youth Hub in Galashiels on 8 December 2017 and had been well attended. The Campaign had also received good media coverage to raise awareness including ITV Borders, Radio Borders, BBC Scotland website and local newspapers. Every licenced premises in the Borders had received a letter and posters to display. Banners had also been displayed in supermarkets. Over the next 12 months, the Campaign would be targeted at the rugby 7s, Common Ridings, end of summer term parties and Halloween. In response to questions, Mr Jones advised that the maximum fine for the supply of alcohol to a young person was £5,000. However, the difficulty was in providing evidence that an adult had supplied alcohol for consumption outside the home. The Chairman thanked Mr Jones for the presentation and congratulated the team on the success of the Campaign which had raised the profile of the issue and would hopefully change attitudes.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation.**

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and extended a welcome to a representative from the SPA to attend future meetings. The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Friday, 1 May 2018.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

*The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm.*