

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

MINUTE of MEETING of the POLICE, FIRE &
RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES PATHFINDER
BOARD held in the Council Headquarters, Newtown
St. Boswells on Friday, 8 February 2013 at 9.30 a.m.

Present:- Councillors D. Moffat (Chairman), S. Aitchison, B. Herd, A. Nicol, R. Stewart, G. Turnbull.
Mrs. J. Mulloy, Scottish Borders Housing Network, Mr. G. Higgs, Voluntary Sector, Mr.
G. Bell, Business Sector, Mr. R. Strachan, Lothian & Borders Community Justice
Authority.

Apologies:- Councillor G. Logan, Mr. J. Raine, NHS Borders.

In Attendance:- LPC Superintendent A. Allan - LBP, Group Commander W. Allison – LBF&R, LSO J.
Mallin – LBF&R, Chief Inspector K Simpson – Safer Communities Team, D. Scott, Senior
Consultant - SBC, L. McGeoch, Democratic Services Team Leader – SBC.

WELCOME

1. The Chairman welcomed Mr. Pat Waters, Chairman of the new Scottish Fire & Rescue Board, Mr. Peter Murray, new Fire & Rescue Assistant Chief responsible for the East Scotland Hub, Mr. Peter Heath, new Fire & Rescue LSO for the Scottish Borders from 1 April 2013, Chief Superintendent Jeanette McDiarmid who would be responsible for policing in the Scottish Borders, East, West and Mid Lothian and Chief Inspector Andy Clark who would be covering the Scottish Borders Area.

MINUTE

2. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 30 November 2012.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute.

3. With reference to paragraph 5, Chief Inspector Simpson advised that in the previous 2 years there had been 102 and 73 breaches of ASBOs respectively. The figure for the current year to date was 51.

DECISION

NOTED.

4. With reference to paragraph 6, it was reported that Dave Thompson, MSP had raised the matter of cold callers in the Scottish Parliament and was seeking support for the Scottish Branch of the Trading Standards Institute who were looking to get legislation introduced to prevent cold calling. A number of other MSPs were supporting this but they did not include any of the MSPs representing the Scottish Borders. It was proposed that the Board write to both Constituency and List MSPs asking that they support this matter. Mr Higgs also requested that if there were any leaflets on cold callers that they be sent to the voluntary organisations for inclusion on their websites.

DECISION

AGREED that the Chairman write on behalf of the Board to all 9 MSPs representing the Scottish Borders seeking their support for the Trading Standards Institute Campaign.

5. With reference to paragraph 7, Chief Superintendent McDiarmid advised that there would be an expectation that the new Force would have a Lay Adviser Service, however the full detail had not yet been agreed.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

6. With reference to paragraph 8, Chief Inspector Simpson reported that the Pathway Project had been shortlisted for a COSLA Excellence Award. He also advised that the "1000 Rising" event was being held at the Border Union Showground, Kelso on 14 February 2013. This was part of the worldwide "One Billion Rising" designed to highlight the unacceptability of violence against women across the world and the Chairman encouraged Board Members to attend.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7. With reference to paragraph 12, Mr. Scott advised that the response to the consultation on the Strategic Police Priorities had been submitted indicating the areas where the document could be broadened.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

PROGRESS REPORTS

Police

8. There had been circulated copies of the Police Progress report covering the period April to December 2012. The report detailed the figures to date and performance against target in respect of a number of areas including antisocial behaviour, theft and dishonesty and drugs and alcohol. Chief Superintendent McDiarmid outlined the appointments which had been made to date in respect of the new single police force at a national level and the command structure for the Borders Area. Chief Inspector Clark commented on the various crime groups and advised that solvency rates had increased by 4%. The officers present answered Members questions on hate crime, ASBOs, test purchasing and Alcohol Brief Interventions.

**DECISION
NOTED the report.**

Fire and Rescue

9. There had been circulated copies of the Fire and Rescue Progress report covering the period October to December 2012. Group Commander Allison highlighted the main points and advised that this would be his last meeting of the Board as Peter Heath had been appointed as the new LSO for the Borders under the new Fire and Rescue Service Structure. The Service continued to work closely with the Police and Community Safety. With regard to unwanted fire signals he advised that a national strategy was about to be released. The problem in the Borders continued to be mainly caused by faulty equipment in business premises and an event to invite business owners to meetings at their local fire stations. These would also involve the police. Guy Fawkes night had passed with very few incidents due to early engagement with the SBC Wardens, Community Fire Fighters and Schools. The Newcastleton Fire Station was now also being used by the Community Police Officer and greater use of facilities at fire stations was being encouraged with Borders College now using a room at the Eyemouth Fire Station to deliver ESOL courses. GC Allison answered Members questions. The Chairman noted that this was Mr. Allison's last meeting of the Board and thanked him for his help over the previous months.

DECISION
NOTED the report.

Safer Communities

10. There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Progress report covering the period April to December 2012. Chief Inspector Simpson commented on the increase in the number of reported incidents of domestic abuse. Whilst this could be viewed in a negative way, he highlighted that the success of the Pathway Project has increased victims confidence in reporting such matters. The number of youth related antisocial behaviour incidents had shown an overall decrease over the last 3 years, however recent months have shown a slight rise and was being monitored closely. With regard to road casualty figures November and December had been very bad months. He advised Members of a scheme supported by John Clelland who provided funds for young drivers to take advanced driving courses. He also provided 4 cars fitted with black box technology that helped show young drivers the good and bad aspects of their driving. John Clelland was lobbying central Government in an effort to widen this approach with young drivers. Members also commented on the problems caused by speeding and drivers using mobile phones. Chief Superintendent McDiamid confirmed that tackling these matters would be a priority in the new policing plan. Chief Inspector Simpson advised that 3 new laser guns had been funded. The Chairman commented on a scheme in England where those caught speeding at a maximum of 5mph over the limit were given the option of either receiving points on their licence or undertaking an advanced driving course. It was proposed that the Chairman write to both the Transport and Justice Ministers suggesting that this be introduced in Scotland.
11. In relation to falls by older people Chief Inspector Simpson advised that there was partnership working with the NHS. He also commented on the pilot Care & Repair Scheme. Mr Higgs advised that he was now the Chairman of Elder Voice and could perhaps help to secure future funding.

DECISION
(a) NOTED the report.

- (b) AGREED that the Chairman write to both the Transport and Justice Ministers suggesting the introduction of the scheme for dealing with minor speeding offences similar to that currently operated in England.**

STAIR AWARE PROJECT

11. Group Commander Allison gave a presentation on a scheme to help reduce the number of accidental fires in the home. An area which caused problems was shared common areas such as stairways in flatted properties. The dumping of combustible items such as rubbish, toys, prams etc caused blockages in stairways and could cause significant damage if they were accidentally set on fire. The issue was being tackled on a partnership basis with the Police, RSLs, SBC Wardens, postal workers and members of the public. When reports were received items causing a danger could then be removed. The scheme would commence in about 6 weeks time and leaflets would be issued. Known problem areas would be targeted in the first instance and if required leaflets would be printed in other languages. Members indicated their support for the project.

DECISION
NOTED the report.

UPDATE ON NATIONAL REFORM

12. Mr. Strachan provided an update on the work of the Criminal Justice Authority. He advised that their main focus was to prevent re-offending. The main priorities with the Area Plan for the Lothian and Borders were (a) prolific offenders, (b) high risk offenders, (c) women in the justice system and (d) young people leaving Polmont Young Offenders. An improvement framework had been developed to address the issue of resources not being targeted to the priority areas and to address

inconsistencies in provision of services for young people and women. Discussion on the future provision of Criminal Justice was ongoing and any outcomes would be reported to future meetings. The Chairman proposed that future agendas should include an update on Criminal Justice.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the report.

(b) AGREED that future agendas include an update on Criminal Justice.

13. LSO Mallin commented on the progress with regard to Fire and Rescue and the appointment of Peter Murray and Peter Heath, both of whom were present at the meeting. A Strategic Plan was being developed and all Stakeholders would be consulted on this. It was anticipated that this would be issued by October 2013 and then local officers would develop local plans. Mr. Watters commented on the need for National Board Members to attend local partnership meetings. He confirmed that the Fire and Rescue Service would continue to be delivered in the same way and only the way it was managed would change. It was up to each local authority to determine how they wished to interact with the National Board and the Members would be part of whatever mechanism was developed. Mr. Murray commented on the work he had carried out to date and confirmed that the good work carried out at local level would continue.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

POLICE AND FIRE AND RESCUE BOARDS

14. Councillor Stewart reported on his attendance at the second last Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Board and noted that there were still some issues to be resolved including the return of funds to Local Authorities and the future of the Museum at Lauriston Place. Mr Watters advised that he was aware of local tradition such as museums in some areas. He saw no reason why these should not continue but there might be a need to relocate to a different property as part of the rationalisation of property. Councillor Stewart also advised that David Miller had been awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal and suggested that the Chairman write on behalf of the Board to congratulate him.
15. With regard to the Lothian & Borders Police Board, the Chairman reported that it had been agreed to sell the police post in Earlston. He also advised that following the theft of speed cameras more use was to be made of mobile units.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the reports.

(b) AGREED that the Chairman write on behalf of the Board to congratulate David Miller on his award of the Queen's Fire Service Medal.

CONSULTATIONS ON SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLAN AND FIRE AND RESCUE FRAMEWORK

16. There had been circulated copies of the Draft Strategic Police Plan. It was considered that the Plan was generally a well balanced document but that the following amendments should be made:-
- Reference should be made to equality and diversity in the introduction
 - Page 5 needed to include references to the links with the Single Outcome Agreement and the Community Planning Process
 - Page 7 – paragraph 2 should also include Antisocial Behaviour, Domestic Violence, Road Safety and substance abuse

DECISION

AGREED that the above comments be submitted.

17. There had been circulated copies of the draft Fire and rescue Framework for Scotland 2012. It was considered that it was generally a strong document but that the following comments should be made:-
- Page 11 – the chart showing the accountability chain also needed to show links between the local authority and the Board not just the LSO
 - That the document also needed to include references to the links with the Single Outcome Agreement and the Community Planning Process

DECISION

AGREED that the above comments be submitted.

NEW BORDERS RAIL JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY GROUP

18. Chief Inspector Simpson reported on the newly established Borders Rail Joint Community Safety Group which included representatives from Network Rail, Bam Nuttal – contractors, British Transport Police, Lothian & Borders Police and the Council. There had been a productive first meeting which had discussed various initiatives including a small pot of funding for community safety initiatives, safety awareness sessions for schools, buddy engineer scheme for secondary school pupils and funding for local youth groups and neighbourhood watch groups. There would be 41 access points for the contractor and road safety on the A7 was a concern. With regard to concerns over metal thefts it was noted that the British Transport Police had a specialist team to deal with this. It was proposed that Inspector Angela McGregor from the British Transport Police be invited to give a presentation at the next meeting of the Board. Members welcomed the work of the Group.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the report.

(b) AGREED that Inspector Angela McGregor from the British Transport Police be invited to give a presentation at the next meeting of the Board.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

19. It was noted that the next meeting of the Board was due to be held in Friday, 3 May 2013. However, this was now the date for the counting of votes in the Leaderdale and Melrose Ward By-Election. It was agreed that the next meeting be held on 17 May 2013.

DECISION

AGREED that the next meeting be held on Friday, 17 May 2013 at 9.30 a.m.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

20. **DECISION**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

Draft Interim Local Police Plan 2013/14 and Draft Local Multi Member Ward Police Plans.

1. Members considered the draft Plans and agreed that these now be submitted to Scottish Borders Council for consideration.

The meeting concluded at 12.35 p.m.