

# SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD held in Council Chamber, Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA on Friday, 28th August, 2015 at 9.30 am

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Present:- Councillors D. Moffat (Chairman), A. Nicol, R. Stewart; Mr G. Higgs, Voluntary Sector.

Apologies:- Councillors S. Aitchison, B. Herd, G. Turnbull; Mr H. Walti.

In Attendance:- Chief Superintendent A. MacInnes, Police Scotland, Chief Inspector A. McLean, Police Scotland, Mr J. Beresford, Community Accountability Coordinator, Police Scotland, Chief Inspector P. Clark, Safer Communities Team Manager, Mr P. Rooney, Scottish Police Authority, A. Perry, LSO, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Group Manager A. Girrity, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Inspector J. Scott, Safer Communities Team, Ms S. Young, Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority, Dr D. Steele, NHS Borders, Mr R. Robertson, Area Commander, HM Coastguard, Mr J. Mitchell, Senior Coastal Operations Officer, HM Coastguard, Mr D. Scott, Senior Policy Adviser SBC, Ms S Smith, Communities & Partnership Manager, SBC, K. Mason, Democratic Services Officer, SBC. Democratic Services Officer, Shona Smith and Douglas Scott

## 1. WELCOME

The Chairman extended a welcome to those present.

## 2. MINUTE.

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 15 May 2015.

## DECISION

**APPROVED the Minute.**

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 With reference to paragraph 7(b)(i) the Senior Policy Adviser advised that a breakdown of the figures requested for race crimes and hate crimes for eastern Europeans were now included in the Police report.

## DECISION

**NOTED.**

- 3.2 With reference to paragraph 7(b)(ii) the Senior Policy Adviser suggested that in the absence of Councillor Turnbull, discussions on this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Board.

## DECISION

**AGREED that discussions relating to correspondence between Councillor Turnbull and Mr Mundell MP relating to the significant VAT bill facing Police Scotland be deferred to the next meeting of the Board.**

- 3.3 With reference to paragraph 20, the Senior Policy Adviser advised that arrangements would be made to visit Hawick Fire Station before the end of the year.

## DECISION

## **NOTED.**

### **4. PROGRESS REPORTS**

#### **4.1 Police**

There had been circulated copies of the Police Progress report covering the period April 2015 to June 2015. Supt Angus MacInnes advised that the report was in a new format based on feedback received from partners. The report detailed the figures for the six Priority areas to date and compared them to the figures for the same period in 2014/15. In relation to Priority 1 – Protecting People figures showed only a slight reduction with 3 fewer referrals made in the number of adult at risk referrals made to partner agencies. There was a decrease in performance on the same time last year in relation to domestic abuse initial checks being conducted within 24 hours, but 2.1% better than target. Priority 2 – showed a positive picture with a 10.8% reduction in common assaults in the first quarter of 2015/16 compared to the same period in 2014/15, equating to 21 fewer victims and there had been a 12.7 reduction (185 incidents) in the number of anti-social behaviour incidents compared to the same period last year. A slight increase had been made in the number of recorded victims of hate crime. In relation to Priority 3, Police Scotland was undergoing a test phase on a new stop and search database which went online on 1 June 2015. Validation and testing of the data was ongoing and data collected would appear in future reports. There had been a 6.1 decrease in the number of visits to licensed premises, which equated to 29 fewer visits. Priority 4, Making our Roads Safer – showed a 50% reduction (15 fewer casualties) in the first quarter of 2015/16. The number of people killed in the first quarter of 2015/16 was 3, the same as for the first quarter of 2014/15. The number of serious injuries was significantly reduced, there had been 15 fewer seriously injured casualties compared to the same point last year, no children were killed or seriously injured in the first quarter, which was positive. Priority 5 – Tackling Serious and Organised Crime – there had been a promising start to the year with £105,025 in assets referred for restraint in the first quarter. It was positive to see there had been a 9.1% increase in the detections for drug supply with 12 detected offences for drug supply. Priority 6 - Tackling Acquisitive Crime (housebreakings to dwelling houses) – there had been a decrease in the number of housebreaking to dwellings which led to 3 fewer victims of this type of crime in the first quarter of 2015/16 when compared to the same time period in 2014/15. Tackling Acquisitive Crime (theft of motor vehicles) – there had been a 23.8% reduction in theft of motor vehicles in the first quarter of 2015/16 which equated to 5 fewer victims of this type of crime. In relation to overall crime it was noted that there had been a 1.7% increase in the detection rate in this quarter compared to the same quarter in 2014, which was positive. Mr Higgs referred to priority 1 relating to domestic abuse and asked why the achievement percent was not 100%. Chief Inspector Mclean advised that 100% was aimed for but explained that people did not want Police to be actively involved when domestic abuse crimes happened. In response to queries from Mr Higgs about the lack of publicity covering national campaigns in particular hate crime month, Chief Inspector apologised and he would feed back this information to Officers responsible for the campaigns. Chief Inspector Clark advised that figures relating to statistics regarding older people being involved in accidents were available. A general discussion took place relating to older drivers and it was noted that complete reliance was made in doctors writing to the DVLA regarding people who they considered were not fit to drive. The Communities & Partnership Manager advised that she would make enquiries regarding the provision of driver courses for older people although it was noted that by contacting the Institute of Advanced Motorists people could put themselves through an assessment. The Communities & Partnership Manager advised that figures were available relating to the attendance of elderly people at Accident and Emergency but this did not give a breakdown of why they were admitted. Discussions then took place over foreign drivers driving on the wrong side of the road and a suggestion was made that the Council install signs at Car Parks asking drivers to ensure they were driving on the correct side of the road. It was agreed that Councillor Stewart would take this up with David Mallin. A request was made that the speed limit on the A698 be reduced and an explanation was given advising that Police Officers worked with the local authority to ensure the right speed limits were in place for roads. Amending traffic regulations took

some time and unless the Police felt there was a problem it was difficult to progress matters. In response to a question raised, Supt. MacInnes advised he would look into the target for Priority 5 because the target would be difficult to reach because of the exceptionally large amount of cash seizure made within the same quarter last year.

## **DECISION**

- (a) NOTED the report.**
- (b) AGREED that**
  - (i) Councillor Stewart would liaise with David Mallin relating to the installation of road signs in car parks asking drivers to ensure they were driving on the correct side of the road;**
  - (ii) Supt. MacInness would look into the target figure for Priority 5.**

### **4.2 Fire and Rescue Service**

There had been circulated copies of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report covering the period 1 April to 30 June 2015. In summarising the report, Group Manager Girrity advised that with regard to Priority 1: Reduction of Dwelling Fires, the SFRS had attended 32 dwelling fires in comparison to 24 for the same YTD reporting period last year, this represented a 33% increase. Four dwelling fires had been started deliberately. Priority 2: Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties, the report noted that there had been seven fire related casualties in this reporting period, and this was in comparison to five for the same period last year. There had been one fire fatality with a 62 year old male who had been helping renovate the old village hall near Nenthorn and the cause of the fire continued to be subject to investigation. There were a further six fire casualties for this reporting period with the most seriously injured being the occupier of a flat at Galalaw Road Hawick. Priority 3: Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting indicated an increase of twelve from the previous year and it was noted that the trend line per 10,000 head of population regarding this type of incident continued to be well below that of the East Service Delivery area and Scotland as a whole. The ward areas of Galashiels and District and Tweeddale East had showed significant increases for this period. Further analysis showed that woodland fires and camping accounted for the majority of fires in the Tweeddale East ward and most fires in the Galashiels District ward occurred over a five-day period with probably one or a group of individuals responsible for all. These fires in Galashiels had resulted in a high profile campaign by the SFRS and the Safer Communities team via local radio and social media. Local crews also carried out reassurance visits to affected areas. Priority 4: Reduction in Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) indicated that the SFRS attended 18 Road Traffic Collisions and this was in comparison to 24 in the same period last year. There had been 11 RTC related casualties in this YTD period with two fatalities. One fatality was an 18 year old girl on the A6105 at Chirnside, the other was a 47 year old male on the Lauder to Stow Road. Priority 5 related to the Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals and it was noted that there had been 198 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) during this quarter, representing a decrease of 12 incidents compared to Quarter 4 in 2014. Discussions took place in relation to farm safety and the important of students working on farms being aware of the dangers and a suggestion was submitted that the Fire and Rescue Service might consider attending local agricultural shows to enable them to engage with farmers. In relating to forthcoming events Members were advised of an exercise taking place at Floors Castle on 27 September 2015 from 11.00 a.m. until 1.00 p.m. Mr Higgs thanked the Fire and Rescue Service for their attendance at the Gypsy Fair in the Borders when free smoke detectors were distributed.

## **DECISION**

- (a) NOTED the report.**

- (b) AGREED that LSO Perry would feed back to the partnership about the request to engage with farmers at local agricultural shows.**

#### 4.3 Safer Communities

There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Performance Report covering the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015. Chief Inspector Paula Clark highlighted the key points in the report and it was noted that, in respect of domestic abuse, there had been a decrease of 22.2% in the number of reported incidents. The report also explained that the percentage of self-referrals to specialist support services had increased compared to the same period the previous year. The report also identified an increase of 11 / 16% in the total number / percentage of children on the CPR where a domestic abuse had been identified as a risk factor. There was a decrease of 7 / 4% in relation to the homeless prevention service, in the number / percentage of Homeless Assessment Presentations due to dispute within households: violent or abusive. New services were being established relating to (a) the number of cases on exit from specialist service which had a reduced risk; and (b) service user satisfaction on exit from a specialist service. The report noted that there had been a significant reduction in the number of calls received in the first quarter in respect of the number of calls to national domestic abuse helpline (female). Total call numbers to the National helpline had been declining over the past 3 years, therefore the reduction might also be attributed to the general national shift from the centralised helpline support. There was one less call to national domestic abuse helpline (male). There was a small increase of 1.7 in the number of recorded ASB incidents per 1,000 population. Members were advised that the new report format was easier to understand. In relation to tackling Domestic Abuse members considered that it was important a report was prepared for the Council on the Future of the Pathway Project. Members of the Safer Communities Team were thanked for attending schools events and the Kelso Show. With regards to the promotion of the young drivers initiative a request was made for information to be sent to Councillors and Community Councils and Officers undertook to put together a communications plan to ensure all avenues of communication were covered. Mr Higgs requested that he also be included in the circulation list.

#### **DECISION**

- \* **AGREED TO RECOMMEND to Council that a report be prepared for the Council on the Future of the Pathways Project and that Officers would promote the young drivers initiative and a communications plan would be put together to ensure all avenues of communication were covered.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10.50 a.m. and reconvened at 11.00 a.m.

#### 5. **PRESENTATION - COASTGUARD SERVICE - IMPACT ON BERWICKSHIRE COAST.**

The Chairman welcomed Robbie Robertson, Area Commander and Joe Mitchell, Senior Coastal Operations Officer, HM Coastguard, to the meeting. Mr Robertson advised on the functions of the Coastguard. In accordance with the Coastguard Act HM Coastguard was responsible for the initiation and coordination of civic maritime search and rescue within the UK search and rescue region. This included the mobilisation, organisation and tasking of adequate resources to respond to persons either in distress at sea, or to persons at risk of injury or death on the cliffs or shoreline of the UK. In terms of resource management he explained that a distress alert initiated the opening of an incident. This would be coordinated by the Coastguard Centre with responsibility for that area on that day. All on-duty teams nationally would be aware of this, and all other incidents, as they shared the same VISION system. As demands of an incident increased the workload on the team at the coordination centre, the Team Leader responsible for that Centre had a number of options for managing the workload. These included any combinations or all of (a) delegating away non-emergency work across the network; (b) adding resource (virtual operators) and (c) reducing the size of the area. In this case, in consultation with the Shift Manager a change of area of responsibility for the coordinating centre and flank centres was agreed therefore enabling the coordinating team to focus on the incident. Mr

Robertson advised on the National Coastal Structure and advised there were 3,200 coastguard rescue officers, men and women aged between 18 and 65 who could be mobilised in minutes at all times. Twenty-two of the most modern and sophisticated SAR-configured aircraft were available and operated from ten dedicated search and rescue facilities. Mr Robertson answered questions in relation to the high-water mark and the prioritisation of the use of the SAR-configured aircraft.

## **DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation and thanked Mr Robertson and Mr Mitchell for their attendance at the Board.**

## **6. UPDATES ON CONSOLIDATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

### **6.1 Police Scotland**

Supt. MacInnes referred to the forthcoming retirement of the Chief Constable in December and gave reassurance that policing would continue to be delivered over the coming months. He referred to ongoing issues of concern at Bilston Glen and advised that reviews and investigations were ongoing. Officers in the "J" Division would continue to answer calls and develop a different management structure to ensure incidents were dealt with and all calls were appropriately recognised. If members of the Board were aware of or heard of any issues he asked them to report these issues directly to him. Complaint issues were covered in performance reports and in relation to the "J" Division there had only been two allegations since last year. The complaints process would be turned round as quickly as possible with feedback being given to the complainer, hopefully to their satisfaction. The new report format would be developed over the coming months and he asked that members of the Board feed back to him their views regarding the content of the report. He referred to benchmarking and explained that Scottish Borders Council could not be given any information on any of the other local authorities in the Division. This was being developed to allow local authorities to make comparisons, but it should be borne in mind that the national figures included cities where there was a different crime profile and therefore benchmarking needed to be against other rural areas. All scrutiny reports would be submitted to the Scottish Police Authority and then local authorities would have the opportunity to see the figures. Figures in relation to the stop and search data would also be included in the scrutiny reports. Supt. MacInnes referred to cross borders operations involving other Scottish Local Authorities and with police in Northumberland. He referred to the opening of the Borders Railway, although this would bring significant benefits to the Scottish Borders, there would also be challenges with criminals travelling in and out of the area using the railway and local officers had been briefed on railway policing. Planning meetings were scheduled regarding the Police involvement in all the events taking place relating to the opening of the railway, including an ecumenical service in Galashiels on 6 September. Police would also be actively involved in The Tour of Britain. He referred to the forthcoming retirement of Chief Inspector Paula Clark who had been actively involved in setting up the safer communities team and said it was fitting that she finished her career with safer communities. He wished Chief Inspector Clark well in her retirement and advised she would be replaced by Inspector Tony Hodges, and they would work together over the next three weeks to ensure there was a good handover. The Chairman thanked the Supt. for Police officers input in relation to the counterfeit money in Greenlaw, Coldstream and Duns. Members commented on the turnover of police officers and the Supt. advised that when Chief Superintendent Imery was unable to attend meetings of the Board he would represent her and it was noted that local Police officers would move on because of career opportunities. Discussions took place in relation to benchmarking and the sharing of information across local authorities. John Beresford, Community Accountability Coordinator, Police Scotland advised two new members of staff were in place to help with benchmarking issues, and that he could be the conduit if members wished to speak to officers in Dumfries and Galloway. The Communities & Partnership Manager referred to benchmarking families and advised that Scottish Borders Council was keen to work with Police Scotland to have reasonable comparisons. It was noted that the Police had an increased interest in Community Councils and a request was made for more proactive low key work from the Police within schools.

- 6.2 Members went on to discuss the decriminalisation of parking enforcement and Supt. MacInnes advised that it at the discretion of local authorities whether or not to decide on decriminalisation. Presently, in carrying out their daily business, Police Officers would deal with vehicles which were dangerously or inappropriately parked. Scottish Local Authorities were all at different stages in dealing with decriminalisation. A request was made that a report on the Council's position in relation to the proposals for the decriminalisation of parking enforcement be considered at the next meeting of the Board. Mr Higgs requested comparison figures between the number of tickets issued before and after the change.

#### **DECISION**

**(a) NOTED the report.**

**(b) AGREED that:**

- (i) the Senior Policy Advisor was asked to make contact with the relevant Council service to bring a report to the next meeting of the Board with an update on the Council's position in relation to the proposals for the decriminalisation of parking enforcement in the Scottish Borders.**
- (ii) Supt. MacInnes provide members of the Board figures comparing the number of parking tickets issued before and after the change.**

#### **6.3 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

There had been circulated copies of a briefing paper by LSO Perry on the Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Initiative explain that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was committed to supporting the Scottish Government's Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) Strategy which was designed to improve survival rates for those who experienced a cardiac arrest out with a hospital environment. OHCA was a significant healthcare challenge in Scotland. Approximately 3,500 people underwent attempted resuscitation each year after OHCA, but currently only around 1 in 20 survived to hospital discharge. The benefits and costs of co-responding; the science around the 'chain of survival' and the importance of providing early defibrillation in OHCA cases was well-understood. The Resuscitation Council (UK) advised that for every minute of delay, the chances of successful defibrillation decreased by about 10% and recommended strongly a policy of attempting defibrillation with the minimum of delay in victims of cardiac arrest. This context presented a unique opportunity for the SFRS to develop a closer working relationship with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), bringing major benefit to those suffering OHCA and which would quickly make Scotland an area of best practice for joined up public services in this area. The SFRS was currently working closely with a range of stakeholders, including trades unions and the Scottish Ambulance Service to develop plans for four OHCA pilots to take place in East Lothian, West Lothian, the Scottish Borders and Aberdeenshire later this year. The pilot would see SFRS resources being mobilised to OHCA where their resources could be in attendance before the SAS, in all cases however, the SAS would still be mobilised and would respond as normal. The SFRS response would therefore augment not replace the SAS response. The evaluation and outcomes from these pilot schemes would be monitored by their OHCA/Emergency Medical Response Strategic Steering Group to assess the effectiveness of SFRS's contribution in this area and identify the scope for wider implementation across Scotland. Collaborative work with the Ambulance Service had identified the following Fire Stations as suitable locations for the pilot in the Scottish Borders. These were Hawick, Coldstream and Lauder. There would be a 6-month review period during which it was anticipated that additional stations would be brought into the pilot. Training of personnel at the identified stations would take place with a view to the pilot going live in October 2015. Therefore personnel should be suitably equipped and confident, to manage the challenges of an OHCA incident. It should be a collaboratively designed and delivered programme, built and managed in association with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). Clinical

governance for the training and subsequent operational response was being provided by Doctor Jim Ward (Medical Director) on behalf of SAS.

- 6.4 In response to questions from Members LSO Perry that he had not been involved in deciding which Fire Stations were suitable locations but it was hoped that after the pilot that further training would take place and the project would be rolled out to other areas, in particular Jedburgh and Kelso. A request was made for information to be provided to the next meeting relating to how many cardiac arrests the SF&RS had responded to and the criteria for selection of the identification of the suitable locations. In discussing statistics for retained crew members it was noted that a new national process was in place which meant that retained fire officers could be in post four months after the post had been advertised, previously this could take up to 12 months. A member referred to a fire appliance from Edinburgh being seen in Duns and A. Girrity advised although this did not happen regularly gaps needed to be filled strategically. LSO Perry advised that he would prepare a report for the next meeting explaining coverage because of problems with the retained service.

#### **DECISION**

(a) **NOTED** the report.

(b) **AGREED** that:

- (i) **LSO Perry would provide information to the next meeting relating to how many cardiac arrests the SF&RS had responded to and the criteria for selection of the identification of the suitable locations; and**
- (ii) **a report by LSO Perry explaining coverage of the SF&RS in the Scottish Borders which had resulted in problems with the retained service.**

#### **7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.**

Future meetings of the Board were scheduled to take place at 9.30am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells on:-

Friday 13 November 2015;  
Friday 12 February 2016; and  
Friday 13 May 2016.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

#### **8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraph should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to keep Members informed.

#### **9. ATTENDANCE OF POLICE HORSES AT LOCAL EVENTS**

Mr Higgs requested information on the attendance of Police horses at community events. Supt. MacInnes advised that bids could be lodged asking for Police horses to be in attendance at events but sometimes this might not be successful, owing to other events taking place at the same time.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

***The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm***