

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

MINUTE of MEETING of the  
POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND  
SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD  
held in the Council Headquarters,  
Newtown St. Boswells on Friday,  
13 February 2015 at 9.30am.

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Present: Councillors D. Moffat (Chairman), S. Aitchison, A. Nicol, R. Stewart, G. Turnbull. Mrs J. Mulloy, Scottish Borders Housing Network, Mr G. Higgs, Voluntary Sector, Ms F. Young, Lothian & Borders Community Justice Authority,

Apologies: Mr H. Waltl, Mr P. Rooney, Mr J. Raine

Absent: Councillor B. Herd.

In Attendance: Chief Superintendent G. Imery, Police Scotland; LSO J. Dickie, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Group Manager A. Girrity, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Chief Inspector A. McLean, Police Scotland; Inspector J. Scott, Safer Communities Team; D. Scott, Senior Policy Adviser SBC, Ms S Smith, Communities & Partnership Manager, SBC; K. Mason, Democratic Services Officer.

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**WELCOME**

1. The Chairman extended a welcome to those present and introduced Ms F. Young, Lothian & Borders Community Justice Authority who was attending her first meeting of the Board.

**MINUTE**

2. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 November 2014.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED the Minute.**

**MATTERS ARISING**

3. (a) With reference to the decision at paragraph 7 of the Minute, Inspector Scott advised that information in relation to the Skills for Life Young Drivers course had been circulated by the Community Planning Partnership in a bid to encourage young members of staff to undertake the course. Information on the details of the next course would be circulated to elected Members.  
  
(b) With reference to the decision at paragraph 8 of the Minute, Chief Supt Imery advised that PC Jamie Hood would give updates as and when further information was available on raptor activity in relation to the killing of young lambs.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

### **4. Police**

There had been circulated copies of the Police Progress report covering the period October to December 2014. The report detailed the figures for the six Priority areas to date and compared them to the figures for the same period in 2013/14. Chief Inspector McLean highlighted key areas of the report and noted that there had been a reduction of 5.8% in the detection rate for Groups 1 – 5 crimes. He went on to detail the figures in the context of the report and noted that Adults at Risk referrals made to partner agencies had increased by 21.3%, from 989 to 1,200 compared to the same period in 2013/14. The number of Domestic Abuse initial checks that had been conducted within 24 hours had increased by 0.9%. Chief Inspector McLean also advised Members that the number of common assaults compared to the previous year had decreased by 17.6% and that this trend was mirrored across crimes of violence as a whole in the Scottish Borders, equating to 118 fewer victims in the area compared to the previous year. The report noted that there had been an increase of 2.9 % in the number of Antisocial Behaviour incidents. Chief Inspector McLean reported that there had been a welcome decrease of 26.3% in the reporting of hate crime compared to the same period in 2013/14. The report detailed the trends in relation to the type of prejudice and noted that incidents for Race crime had reduced from 38 to 29, Homophobic had decreased from 12 to 9, and there had been 1 report of Transgender crime and a reduction of 1 in respect of Disability. There had been a decrease of 1 incident of Religious Hatred compared to the same reporting period last year. In relation to Stop and Searches for drugs, the report noted an increase of 6.5% in the proportion of positive searches. It was noted that visits to Licensed Premises had reduced by 32% this year to date and this was mainly attributed to the focus of activity in this area in the previous year. It was encouraging that the figures in relation to making our roads safer had decreased. There had been a reduction in the number of people seriously injured from 61 to 55 and the number of people killed in road traffic incidents had decreased by 4.6%. The report noted that no children had been killed or seriously injured and this was extremely encouraging. Members noted that there had been an increase in the number of people detected for drug supply over the same period in 2014/15. The report identified an increase of £1,210,354 in the amount of Assets referred for Restraint. Both housebreakings to dwelling houses and thefts of motor vehicles had decreased by 2.8% (5 fewer victims) and 28.4% (19 fewer victims) respectively.

### **5. Discussion took place in relation to the hate crime category and a request was made for this to be broken down for age to provide statistics against older people and Chief Inspector McLean undertook to look at this together with a request for more publicity in relation to policing events. It was noted the Fire and Rescue report showed a considerable increase in road traffic but this was not reflected in the figures in the Police report. It was explained that this was because there was a change in protocol in that all three services (including the Ambulance service) were now called at the same time to road traffic incidents. Members discussed SB Alert which was a free service supplied by Scottish Borders Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Borders to enable up-to-date information to be shared relating to emergencies and crime prevention advice to individuals and organisations within communities across the Scottish Borders and it was agreed that a flyer giving information on the service be emailed to all members of the Board.**

## **DECISION**

- (a) NOTED the report.**

- (b) AGREED that
- (i) Chief Inspector McLean would investigate the request to provide statistics in relation to older people in the age hate crime category and giving more publicity regarding policing events; and
  - (ii) a copy of the flyer relating to SB Alert be issued to Members.

**Fire and Rescue Service**

6. There had been circulated copies of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report covering the period April to December 2014. In summarising the report, LSO Dickie advised that with regard to Priority 1: Reduction of Dwelling Fires, the SFRS had attended 108 dwelling fires during this reporting period, this represented a 13% decrease from the previous year and there had been two deliberate dwelling fires recorded for this YTD period. Priority 2: Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties, the report noted that there had been no fatalities during the quarter however there had been nine reported casualties, most having resulted from slight smoke inhalation and requiring precautionary checks by the ambulance service. This represented a 47% reduction in fire casualties in comparison to the same reporting period last year. Priority 3: Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting indicated an increase of eight 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 main causes continued to be grass/scrubland and refuse. Priority 4: Reduction in Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) indicated that the SFRS attended 78 incidents during the quarter; this represented a 30% increase in comparison to the same period in the previous year. There had been 37 RTC related casualties in this period; tragically this included 4 fatalities in the last quarter. Priority 5 related to the Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals and it was noted that there had been 215 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) during this quarter, representing an increase in 6 incidents compared to Quarter 3 in 2014.
7. Discussions took place relating to the number of unwanted fire alarm signals and it was noted a new policy was in place to bring this figure down through partnership working and this was a work in progress. It was noted that all three services were working together and a request was made that a representative from the Ambulance Service be invited to a future meeting to talk about their operations and how they linked in with the Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue Service and the NHS.

**DECISION**

- (a) NOTED the report.
- (b) AGREED that a representative from the Ambulance Service be invited to a future meeting to give a presentation on their operations and how they linked in with Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue Service and the NHS.

**Safer Communities**

8. There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Performance Report covering the period April to December 2014. Inspector Scott highlighted the key points in the report and it was noted that, in respect of domestic abuse, there had been an increase in the number of reported incidents, including those to the dedicated Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service (DAAS). The report also explained that the

percentage of self-referrals to specialist support services had decreased compared to the same period the previous year. The report also identified an increase of 2% in the number of children on the Child Protection Register where domestic abuse had been identified as a risk factor. Further work was to be carried out to understand the reasoning. In relation to the homeless prevention service, there had been the first increase in the past two years. The new domestic abuse STEPS workers had been in post from 2 February and they would work proactively with housing providers to maintain people in their own tenancies and reduce any further homelessness. The report noted that there had been minor reduction in the number of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents. Members were advised that youth-related incidents had decreased by 202 (14.2%). Early interventions made by Anti-Social Behaviour partners resulted in an increase of 5% (39 cases) which demonstrated a very positive and proactive approach. There had been 45 less incidents of reported vandalism compared to the same period last year. There was a decrease of 1% in the number of alcohol-related ASB incidents. A rise of 5% in incidents involving needles/drugs paraphernalia was reported. In terms of Home Injury Prevention, the report recorded that the number of hospital admissions for people aged 75+ caused by falls had decreased by 179 (42.1%) and there were 7 less emergency hospital admissions due to a home accident of children under 5 years. The figures for road Injuries indicated that 6 fewer road users had sustained serious injuries compared to the same period in the previous year and that no children had been killed or seriously injured in a road crash. It was noted that the number of persons killed had increased by 3 compared to the same period last year. However there had been a 9.8% decrease in the number of persons seriously injured during the same period.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11.10 a.m. and reconvened at 11.20 a.m.

**SAFER COMMUNITIES TEAM PATHWAY PROJECT – ANNUAL REPORT  
2013/2014**

9. There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Team Pathway Project – Annual Report 2013/2014. The Pathway Project (Pathway) was designed to provide a coherent pathway and accessibility of services for victims of domestic abuse and their children. The report detailed the first full year of operation and highlighted the outcomes, target and benefits achieved for users across all three services. Pathway was split into three operational services: (a) Domestic Abuse Advocacy Support Service, (b) Domestic Abuse Community Support Services, and (c) Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery Group Work Programme. Ms Andrea Beavon (Violence Against Women & Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator) gave detailed information in respect of the project and answered Members' questions. The Pathway was funded until 30 September 2015 and she advised that negotiations for further funding were ongoing.

**DECISION  
AGREED that an update on the Pathway Project be provided at the meeting  
of the Board on 13 November 2015.**

## **CCTV PROVISION IN THE BORDERS**

10. There had been circulated copies of a consultation paper by the Service Director Commercial Services, Scottish Borders Council. He advised that the Council currently operated a number of CCTV systems in towns across the Borders. Questions had arisen as to the viability of the Council continuing to provide and fund the service, particularly since the prime reason for having them installed was to assist the Police with investigations into criminal activity. There was an argument therefore that CCTV provision was a Police Scotland matter and the Police should at least fund these systems. The paper therefore proposed that the Council withdraw from the direct provision of CCTV systems and instead worked with the Police to assist local communities who wished to have CCTV systems to retain and install them. In doing so, the local communities would have to arrange and pay for installation and future maintenance and follow the advice of the Police and the Council with respect to the management and use of their CCTV system. In addition the Council would assist with providing accommodation for CCTV monitors where practicable. With recent technological advances CCTV systems had reduced very substantially in price and therefore for those communities that wished to, the installation and maintenance of CCTV systems were much more affordable. In this context Hawick had decided to extend its CCTV system.
11. Chief Supt Imery submitted that CCTV was not for the benefit of the Police but for the benefit of communities. She advised that although the information was not readily available she would liaise with Criminal Justice to try to ascertain the percentage of court cases where CCTV had played an important part in proceedings

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED that**

- (a) **consideration should be given to consulting with communities and the public before any final proposals by the Council were made on the future of CCTV; and**
- (b) **Chief Supt Imery would liaise with Criminal Justice to ascertain the percentage of court cases where CCTV had played an important part in proceedings.**

## **UPDATE ON CONSOLIDATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Police Scotland**

12. Chief Supt Imery provided a verbal update to the Board. She referred to counter terrorism security both internationally and nationally since the last meeting of the Board and referred to events in Paris, Belgium and this week in Australia. The threat assessment level remained at a severe attack being highly likely. A meeting of the Scottish Police Authority was being undertaken today (Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015) on stop and search activities including the stop and search of children under 12 years of age which was high on the media agenda and that of politicians for obvious reasons. She explained that there had been no searches of children under 12 years of age in the Scottish Borders. Stop and Search incidents were recorded and 1,506 had been carried out from which 349 had been positive. Police Officers did not have legal powers to stop and search for alcohol but alcohol if seen could be confiscated; there was a gap in the legislation which needed to be taken into account concerning young people and alcohol. In discussing by-laws, Inspector Scott undertook to report on the current position within the Council to a future meeting. It was perceived that members of the public were not confident in making 101 calls and it was agreed that Members visit the call centre at Bilton Glen to have the grading system and the allocation of calls explained to them. Chief Supt Imery advised that Police numbers had not changed in the Scottish Borders or in the Division and gave reassurance that there was no intention to change that. 914 Officers were working in her Division.

Support staff and estates had been reduced since the formation of Police Scotland and further savings needed to be made and more co-location and shared services were being explored. In discussing lay advisors Chief Supt. advised that she would bring back information on lay advisers to a future meeting.

#### **DECISION**

- (a) **NOTED the report.**
- (b) **AGREED that**
  - (i) **arrangements be made for Members of the Board to visit the control centre at Bilston Glen;**
  - (ii) **Inspector Scott would provide information to the next meeting of the Board in relation to by-laws in the Scottish Borders; and**
  - (iii) **Chief Supt. Imery would provide information to the next meeting of the Board in relation to lay advisers.**

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

- 13. (a) **Resources Based within the Scottish Borders 2010-14**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service updating Members on resources based with the Scottish Borders area. The report advised that the wholetime establishments at Hawick fire stations remained constant for the period 2010 -14. Implementation of Resourced Based Crewing (RBC) at Galashiels had meant that from early November 2014 operational staff had reduced from 44 to 28. Retained Duty System (RDS) establishment had remained constant however, it should be noted that this figure could vary slightly depending on a number of factors including staff turnover and recruitment difficulties. On occasion and where required the Service would over-establish RDS stations. The Day Shift Duty System (DSDS) based at Duns fire station was discontinued during 2013 with staff being relocated to wholetime watches at Galashiels fire station. Staff at Galashiels acted as a flexible resource and when required were deployed to all Scottish Borders RDS stations in order to maintain fire cover to local communities. Protection and Prevention staff numbers had increased in the Scottish Borders since Service Reform with 10 officers now responsible for carrying out fire safety engagement and enforcement activities throughout the area. The post of Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO) was introduced in 2013; this was a Watch Manager who is embedded in the Safer Communities Unit at St Boswells. The amount of Training and Employee Development (TED) staff had also seen an increase in officers from 6 to 10; these officers supported the operational crews in all aspects of training and development with the primary aim of firefighter safety. The number of senior officers had increased with three officers responsible for station command at Duns, Gala and Hawick, a Group Manager oversaw these officers. The Service also introduced a Local Senior Officer as part of the reform process; this was an Area Manager who had strategic responsibility for Midlothian, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders. The provision of fire appliances throughout the Scottish Borders had not been affected by Service reform. This included the introduction of RBC at Galashiels fire station, which maintained the availability of the Incident Support Unit. The introduction of RBC had only changed the way the service staff the appliances based at Galashiels, both appliances were still available for deployment throughout the Scottish Borders 24/7. In response to questions raised regarding the use of the High Volume Pump

(HVP) LSO, Dickie stated that there was always a need to identify a place to pump flood water and this could often be difficult. Without a location to pump this water in reality the flooding would be transferred from one place to another. The HVP was not an immediate response appliance or on the pre-determined attendance for flooding. It was worth noting that the HVP had never been utilised at a flooding incident in the Scottish Borders.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

**(b) Future Projects**

There had been circulated copies of a briefing report on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services future projects, which provided an awareness of key projects which the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was undertaking in the short, medium and long term. Where relevant and appropriate, specific implications for the Scottish Borders area communities, partners and stakeholders had been included in the report. The report explained that the creation of the SFRS, which replaced eight antecedent Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs), had provided an opportunity for the new service to review its legacy service delivery arrangements, working practices and all aspects of how an efficient emergency service was delivered to the whole of Scotland. Whilst there were many drivers for change, the Police and Fire and Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and the Scottish Governments, Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013 provided a legislative framework around how the SFRS designed and delivered its services. As part of the ongoing journey that the SFRS was on in bringing together 8 legacy FRSs arrangements, a vast range of transformational and transactional projects and initiatives were currently being designed, developed and implemented which supported the SFRS Strategic Plan 2013-16 and the SFRS annual Operational Plans. In addition to delivering projects which supported the current Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan/s, the SFRS was currently looking into the future to develop projects and initiatives which would support future Strategic Plans and Operating Plans. This ensured the Service was a forward thinking organisation which continued to deliver an efficient and effective emergency service fit for purpose, securing best value and delivering a world class fire and rescue service to all communities, partners and stakeholders across Scotland. The report went on the cover (a) Senior Management Restructure, (b) Implications for the Scottish Borders Area; (c) Special Equipment/Appliance review, and (d) Implications for the Scottish Borders Area. Concern was expressed about the implications for the Scottish Borders Area and of the problems of recruiting retained fire officers and was it not possible to recruit full time officers as there was dependence on retained fire officers this caused concern owing to budget restrictions and it was suggested that consultation should have been carried out first. LSO Dickie explained the consultation and engagement framework was not ready therefore it was not passed by the Board. He further advised that the duty system for retained fire officers fluctuated occasionally because of those working away from home during day time but this was monitored to enable other resources to be deployed. There were no changes to the profiles of retained stations. An emergency cover review was ongoing at the movement looking at deployment of appliances throughout Scotland. It was noted that emergency medical response was an excellent way forward with

defibrillators in appliances making communities safer. LSO Dickie advised this was his last meeting in his capacity as Temporary LSO although he realised that some of the information he had provided had been frustrating he thanked the Board for its welcome. He would however, be attending the next meeting of the Board to introduce the new Officer The Chairman thanked LSO Dickie for all his work. Members were satisfied with the format of the new report.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

**DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

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

Friday 15 May 2015;  
Friday 28 August 2015;  
Friday 13 November 2015;  
Friday 12 February 2016; and  
Friday 13 May 2016.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

*The meeting concluded at 1.15 p.m.*