

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, 31st August, 2018 at 9.30 am

Present: Councillors: G Turnbull (Chairman) D Moffat, N Richards, E Robson, H Scott, E Small, Mr M Dickson - NHS Borders, Ms J Mulloy – SBHA, Mrs M Simpson - Voluntary Sector.

In Attendance: Superintendent D Walker, Chief Inspector A McLean, Police Scotland; Group Managers - D Girrity and M Jaffray & LSO S Gourlay, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Ms A Beavon – Violence Against Women Coordinator, SBC, Mr D Scott, Senior Policy Advisor SBC, J Turnbull, Democratic Services Officer SBC.

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Neil Richards and Superintendent David Walker to their first meeting of the Board. The Chairman thanked Councillor McAteer, the outgoing Chairman, for his valuable contribution to the Board.

2. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 June 2018.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE

3.1 With reference to paragraph 5.13(b) and (c) of the Minute, it was noted that a briefing on the armed response deployment model and an update on CCTV would be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

3.2 With reference to paragraph 5.12 of the Minute, it was noted that the Borders General Hospital (BGH) would continue to provide statistics on persons presenting at A&E as a result of a violent incident. With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute, Group Manager Jaffray advised that the collaboration with the BGH on the Falls Strategic Group had been successful and would continue.

DECISION

NOTED:

(a) That a briefing on the armed response deployment model be presented to a future meeting of the Board; and

(b) That an update on CCTV be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

4. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES ON SERVICE MATTERS - POLICE SCOTLAND

4.1 Superintendent Walker, representing Chief Superintendent Clark, advised that Iain Livingstone had been appointed as the next Chief Constable of Police Scotland. Mr Livingstone was well respected within the police service and officers were delighted at his appointment. Superintendent Walker then gave a brief overview of service matters

explaining that road safety continued to be a challenge in the Scottish Borders, particularly with regard to motorcyclists. He then discussed the work of the Community Action Team (CAT) successfully tackling rural crime. He concluded by advising that Mental health issues continued to be a challenge with 80% of incidents requiring police attendance, not being crime related. Police Scotland continued to work with the NHS, Scottish Ambulance Service and local councils to try to improve mental health provision in rural areas.

- 4.2 Chief Inspector McLean then presented Police Scotland's Scrutiny Report for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018, copies of which had been circulated with the Agenda.
- 4.3 Domestic Abuse – During the period there had been a reduction in domestic abuse incidents which positively reflected the work being carried out by police and partner agencies. The introduction of TecSOS technology had also contributed to this reduction.
- 4.4 Road safety – The report showed that during the period there had been two motorcyclist fatalities, both motorcyclists were from outwith the area. The report advised that motorcyclists were encouraged to attend the Drivewise Borders programme which had been introduced to enhance safer driving practices for motorcyclists. Police Scotland also supported the National Motorcycle Safety Plan engaging with local and visiting motorcyclists to provide advice and guidance on their driving behaviour. Chief Inspector McLean advised that although there had been a decrease in under 25s and over 65s involved in collisions, education and enforcement needed to be expanded. Chief Inspector McLean referred to the deployment of 'Pop up Bob' which was still being well received and it was intended to introduce further life size images of police officers in the future. In response to a question, he advised that he would request monitoring the speed of farm vehicles at Westruther
- 4.5 Violent Crime – There had been a 14% reduction in violent crime which reflected the work being carried out by police and partners in the Scottish Borders. Chief Inspector McLean referred to the importance of the Best Bar None scheme, Challenge 25 and weekend high visibility patrols in certain areas. However, these initiatives could not influence excessive alcohol consumption in the home
- 4.6 Antisocial Behaviour – Incidents were down by 5.1%. Chief Inspector McLean explained that this figure also included social media incidents. There were regular meetings with the Antisocial Behaviour Core Group and work with landlords to influence behaviour. There had been an increase of 33.3% (2 additional) racially aggravated incidents, both of which had been at the lower end of the scale. Chief Inspector McLean praised the work of the Street Pastors which freed up police time to allow for the continuation of their high visible patrols.
- 4.7 Drugs and Alcohol Misuse – There were no specific figures to report. However, Chief Inspector McLean referred to the partnership working with the Licensing Board, licensees and event organisers to ensure Challenge 25 and Don't Buy, Don't Supply were being adhered to at events and festivals. Police Scotland together with the CAT were also providing a high visible deterrent at these events.
- 4.8 Protecting People – There had been a 22% increase in missing person incidents (31 incidents). Chief Inspector McLean clarified the grading of incidents and advised that any person graded high risk involved all police officers and backroom staff. Police Scotland's focus on doorstep crime also continued, especially crimes targeting the vulnerable and elderly. The Banking Protocol initiative was discussed and Chief Inspector McLean referred to a recent incident when the Protocol had prevented a large cash withdrawal.
- 4.9 Acquisitive crime – There had been a 27.6% decrease, resulting in 19 fewer premises being broken into. This positively reflected the work the police and community were doing

to increase security and deter criminals. Collaboration also continued with the NFU which had contributed to the decline.

- 4.10 Demand Analysis – The report explained that although there had been a reduction in crime this did not correlate to a reduction in demand for police in the Scottish Borders. A significant amount of the work carried out by Police Scotland was not for a reported crime but related to concerns for the wellbeing of a person or an appropriate referral to partner agencies. Chief Inspector McLean, concluded his report by advising that during the period there had been 45 complaints against Police Scotland, including 56 allegations, 32 on duty complaints and 52 regarding quality of service. The majority of complaints were resolved by discussion although some would be upheld. It was requested that statistics on detection rates be included in the next report.
- 4.11 Police Community Action Team
Chief Inspector McLean then gave a briefing on the work of the Police Community Action Team (CAT) and circulated at the meeting copies of an impact report for quarter 1 – April to June 2018, detailing the tasking being carried out in the five localities. The report showed that the CAT had undertaken 69 stop and searches with a 35% success rate. Warrants for searches had also resulted in 90% success rate. The CAT had also been involved in the recovery of a significant amount of drugs as well as issuing 219 parking tickets.
- 4.12 In response to questions, Chief Inspector McLean advised that with regard to online abuse, if an incident was reported then Police Scotland's Online Investigation team would assess. Incidents should also be referred to online agencies e.g. Facebook, Twitter who had a duty to investigate any abusive content on their sites. With regard to the notification of drug raids to local Members, he advised that as part of partnership working, elected Members were advised, he would investigate why this had not occurred on the occasion referred to. Regarding removal of items during stop and searches, he advised that this was dependant on the type of equipment found and if removal was covered by the appropriate legislation. With regard to police attendance at road accidents, he confirmed that if there were no injuries or allegations, and the drivers had exchanged insurance details, there was no necessitate for police attendance.
- 4.13 The Board then discussed cyclists and suggested a safety media campaign reminding cyclists to wear helmets, use reflective equipment and lights. Chief Inspector McLean advised that as a part of their Winter Campaign, Police Scotland would target paperboys and newsagents reminding them of the need to use lights and reflective equipment when cycling. Chief Inspector McLean then clarified that proxy buying of alcohol was an offence and that regular operations were carried out to try to deter proxy buying. The Board welcomed the Banking Protocol Initiative and Chief Inspector McLean advised that he would explore if there was an opportunity to include local post offices within the Protocol. The Board suggested that it would be useful if future reports could include longer trend statistics e.g. over the three to five year period and Inspector McLean advised that they were still developing the format but reports could be tweaked to meet the demands of the Board.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

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

- 5.1 There had been circulated copies of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) Local Plan Performance Report. Local Senior Officer (LSO) Gourlay began his report by advising that Ash Denham MSP had recently been appointed Minister for Community Safety. He further advised that the SFRS Chief Officer would be retiring in March 2019; recruitment to the post was underway and was at the shortlist stage. Regarding the SFRS transformation programme, national negotiations were ongoing and it was hoped

would allow for the reinstatement of the Out of Hour's Cardiac Arrest scheme and the expansion of the Falls in the Home project - successfully piloted in the Cheviot area. As part of the transformation, he had bid for two rural full time Watch Managers posts. These posts would be based in Duns and Peebles and would cover a cluster of fire stations.

5.2 Newbridge Training Project

With reference to paragraph 7.10(d) of the minute of the 22 June, there had been circulated copies of a report on the Newbridge Training Project. The report detailed the planned facilities, including road traffic collision, urban search and rescue and petrochemical training areas. LSO Gourlay advised that the project was scheduled for completion and handover in March 2019. He extended an invitation to the Board for a tour of the facility, following the partial handover in December. In response to a question he advised that it would be possible for collaboration with other agencies for joint training, when appropriate.

5.3 Group Manager Jaffray then presented the SFRS Local Plan Performance Report for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018, copies of which had been circulated with the Agenda. In summary, Group Manager Jaffray explained:-

5.4 Reduction of 'Dwelling Fires'- There had been an increase from 19 to 24 dwelling fires recorded for the same period last year. All, apart from one were minor. The causes were smoking, cooking and electrical faults, with two deliberate.

5.5 Reduction of 'All Fire Casualties' – There had been five casualties all of which had suffered slight smoke inhalation to varying degrees.

5.6 Reduction of 'All Deliberate Fires Excluding Dwellings' – There were 45 deliberate fires, a reduction of 23 from the same period last year. This trend was well below the rest of Scotland highlighting the importance of prevention activities and the positive work being carried out by local area liaison officers

5.7 Reduction of 'Special Service – RTCs' – There had been 16 RTCs, five less than last year. Four occasions required the use of hydraulic rescue equipment.

5.8 Reduction of 'Special Service Casualties' – There had been 19 casualties a reduction of four from last year. Group Manager Jaffray highlighted that four of the incidents were affecting entry for emergency medical response and persons who had fallen in the home.

5.9 Reduction of 'False Alarm – Equipment Failure' – There had been 235 false alarm signals (UFAS) 64 were of good intent with 11 of a malicious nature.

5.10 In response to a question Group Manager Jaffray advised that with regard to fires in disused properties, there was no trend. As part of the SFRS thematic action plan they proactively targeted derelict properties and engaged with owners and partners to make such properties secure. Fires in derelict properties posed a risk, not only to the person starting the fire but to fire officers, as structures in derelict building were often unsafe. With regard to youth engagement, Group Manager Jaffray explained that youth engagement work such as TD1 and work with Peebles High School had been positive. Through national forums they were sharing the best practice from these initiatives.

5.11 Group Manager Girrity then went on to advise on Prevention and Protection Activities, copies of a report from the Quarter 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018 had been circulated with the agenda. GM Girrity explained that the report showed that Home Fire Safety Visits were below target. He explained that the SFRS were now focusing on highest risk households which would ensure that resources were used with greatest effect. An update on progress would be given at a future Board meeting. GM Girrity went on to discuss SFRS road safety prevention activities and highlighted the successful road safety event delivered at Hawick Fire Station which it was intended to roll out to other areas. GM

Girrity concluded his report by referring to UFAS. He explained that this issue did not just affect the Scottish Borders but was UK wide. All local authorities and the NHS had been advised of the burden UFAS caused to the SFRS. SBC's Director of Education was engaging with the SFRS to consider ways to reduce the number of UFAS.

Predominantly, UFAS were due to equipment failure and the SFRS were suggesting a call filtering system which would negate the need for the fire service to initially attend. The alarm would still be activated in schools and they would be evacuated. GM Girrity reassured the Board that the fire service would be mobilised following a 999 call or when more than one fire detector had been activated at a premises. In response to questions, GM Girrity advised that they were adopting a staged approach to UFAS, schools being the initial focus. However, they would be looking at a range of UFAS offenders going forward. Regarding UFAS in hospitals, LSO Gourlay advised that an initiative introduced by NHS Lothian had been successful in reducing UFAS. The SFRS would be considering introducing the initiative to NHS Borders, although the number of UFAS was in the minority.

DECISION

NOTED:

(a) the report; and

(b) an update on the transformation programme would be presented at the next meeting

6. SAFER COMMUNITIES UPDATE AND KEY ACTIVITIES

6.1 There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Performance report covering the period Ms Andrea Beavon, Violence Against Women Coordinator, presented the report and highlighted the key points:-

6.2 Priority 1 – Reduce the level and Impact of Gender Based Violence through effective partnership working - Referrals to specialist domestic abuse services had increased compared to last year. Ms Beavon advised that a new Domestic Abuse Act would come into force in 2019. The Act would mean changes to the classification of certain actions deemed to be an offence. Ms Beavon also advised that following a recent positive ITV media piece on the work of the Domestic Abuse Service in rural areas, they had received a number of referrals.

6.3 Priority 2 – Reduce the level and impact of Substance Misuse through effective partnership working. Analysis had been undertaken of police demand during various festivals and had shown a general reduction in incidents compared to last year.

6.4 Priority 3 – Reduce the level and impact of crime and antisocial behaviour through effective partnership working – There had been improvement compared to the same period last year. This was likely to have been the result of a range of activities with partner agencies, for example, Safety Advisory Group, multi-agency Core Group and Community Action Team

6.5 Priority 4 – Reduce the level and impact of poor driver behaviour through effective partnership working - Successful initiatives such as the Drivewise Borders 2018/19 and the relaunch of the 17-25 advance driving training continued to have a positive impact.

6.6 Priority 5 – Reduce the level and impact of incidents in the home through effective partnership work - Adult and child protection referrals from RSLs had increased by 70 referrals since the previous quarter. Ms Beavon highlighted the work of the Early Years Subgroup campaign being delivered through nurseries and schools to try to reduce the number of under 5s admitted to hospital with accidental poisoning caused by household chemicals such as dishwasher tablets.

- 6.7 In response to a question regarding the multidisciplinary visits to individual properties where there was a disproportional level of antisocial behaviour. Ms Marsden explained that the Antisocial Behaviour Team automatically worked in partnership for a multidisciplinary response to individual cases. Chief Inspector McLean added that no one agency should have to tackle these issues and that partnership working was the nucleus to success. Ms Simpson added that the third sector also had a part to play and they were looking at opening more centres within the Scottish Borders to encourage dialogue.
- 6.8 Ms Beavon then clarified that the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) did not undermine existing protection levels that were in place, when there was a certain level of risk or threat GDPR did not apply.

DECISION
NOTED the report.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and advised that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Friday 9 November 2018 at 9.30 am.

DECISION
NOTED.

The meeting concluded at 11.55 am