

**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 At Boswells on  
Friday, 8th November, 2019 at 9.30 am

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Present:- Councillors H Scott, (Chairman), D Moffat, N. Richards, E Robson, E Small.  
Mr M Dickson - NHS Borders and Ms M Simpson - Voluntary Sector  
Mr H Coyle, SBHA.

Apologies:- Councillor G Turnbull.

In Attendance:- DC Chief Superintendent J McKenzie, Chief Inspector S Reid, Chief  
Inspector J O'Connor, Local Senior Officer S Gourlay, Group Commander M  
Jaffray, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Safer Communities and Community  
Justice Manager, Localities Development Co-ordinator and J Turnbull,  
Democratic Services Officer SBC.

1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 30 August 2019.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED the Minute.**

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE**

3.1 With reference to paragraph 4.12(b) of the Minute, the Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Jocelyn O'Connor who was in attendance to provide a presentation on Police Scotland's Contact Assessment Model (CAM) project.

3.2 With reference to paragraph 6(b) of the Minute, the Council's Senior Policy Advisor, had followed up the missing 'No Swimming' signage with Neighbourhood Services.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

4. **PROGRESS REPORTS UPDATES ON SERVICE MATTERS**

4.1 Chief Superintendent McKenzie began his report by advising that the Contact Assessment Model (CAM) project would be introduced in Lothian and Scottish Borders by March 2020. He anticipated that CAM would improve service delivery for officers to deal with issues and incidents. Chief Superintendent McKenzie then referred to the new mobile working project, advising that the Scottish Borders officers were in the process of completing their training and devices will be seen live on the streets of the Scottish Borders in the coming weeks, with full deployment scheduled by February 2020. The device will allow officers to be visible within the community by allowing them to complete administration and reporting tasks without returning to the police station. An introduction to mobile working would be presented to the next meeting of the Board. Chief Superintendent McKenzie continued, that with regard to planning for Brexit, the force reserve would remain in place into 2020 and further update on this subject

would be provided at the Q3 meeting. With regard to the Community Action Team, he thanked the Council for their continuing support and advised that two additional CAT officers would be in place by December 2019.

- 4.2 Chief Inspector Stuart Reid then presented Police Scotland's Scrutiny Report for Q2 - April 2019 to September 2019 compared to the same reporting period the previous year. Copies of the report had been circulated with the Agenda. He began by advising that there had been an increase of 15.3%, 1930 in total crimes recorded during the period.
- 4.3 Protecting People (Q2 2018/19 figures shown in brackets)  
There had been a decrease in missing person incidents to 332 (350). This remained an area that Police Scotland committed resources to on a daily basis. In relation to missing persons associated with Looked after Children, a local protocol had been implemented with the aim of securing improved outcomes for children.
- 4.4 There had been an increase of 57% in Racially Aggravated Conduct to 11(7). The detection rate was 72.2%. There had been an increase in Sexual Crimes of 48.7% to 116 (78) which was one of largest increases. Reports of rape had also increased by seven. Chief Inspector Reid explained that although rape and sexual crime remained under reported, through work with partners, victims were gaining confidence to report these crimes.
- 4.5 Domestic Abuse incidents had also increased to 575 (513) with the rate of detection also increasing by 79.6% (73.3%). At the end of Q2, seven crimes under Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Scotland Act (coercive and controlling behaviour) had also been recorded.
- 4.6 Reducing Violence (Q2 2018/19 figures shown in brackets)  
There had been a decrease in Crimes of Violence to 45 (48). However this should be considered alongside the context of Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act which accounted for seven crimes. Within this group, serious assault had reduced to 21 (22); robbery from 10 (4) and Common Assault had increased to 410 (396). Chief Inspector Reid highlighted that violent crime continued to be a priority, with Galashiels town centre an area of concern for public safety disorder. Patrols had been increased in this area along with an increase in activity around licensed premises. Chief Superintendent McKenzie highlighted the increased 77% detection rate, and reinforced that perpetrators would be pursued as a priority.
- 4.7 Reducing Antisocial Behaviour (Q2 2018/19 figures shown in brackets)  
Incidents had reduced by 135 to 2931 (3066). Presently there were five applications with the Court for interim Antisocial Behaviour Orders in respect of repeat perpetrators. Chief Inspector Reid highlighted a joint project with Live Borders providing evening activities at Teviot Leisure Centre in Hawick. In response to a question regarding holding similar events in other towns, Chief Superintendent McKenzie explained that funding would be required but they could consider a joint venture with the Council.
- 4.8 Tackling Substance Misuse (Q2 2018/19 figures shown in brackets)  
Drug Supply, Production and Cultivation – There had been a reduction of 7.4% to 25 (27). It was noted that a reduction in detections did not automatically equate to a reduction in seizure. The Community Action Team (CAT) continued to play a proactive role in tackling substance misuse.
- 4.9 Road Safety (Q2 2018/19 figures shown in brackets)  
There were 4 fatal (8), 50 serious (39), and 69 (86) slight road casualties during the period. Road checks continued to form part of daily tasking within the Scottish Borders.
- 4.10 Reducing Housebreaking  
There were 65 (35) house-break-ins; 25 (22) in relation to sheds and garages and 26 (42) other businesses. In response to this, increased Operation Talonstrike activities had been actioned. Partnership working with Northumbria and Cumbria Constabularies had also been enhanced to tackle cross border criminals. Chief Superintendent McKenzie highlighted that

intelligence indicated that individuals committing house break-ins were traveling into the borders. Evidence sharing with Northumbria and Cumbria Constabularies would ensure progress in targeting these criminals. Police Scotland had adopted a National Rural Watch and the Safer Communities and Community Justice Manager, Mr Jones, added that the Rural Crime Strategy would form the basis of joint working with partners to reduce rural crime.

4.11 Community Action Team (CAT)

During the period the CAT had carried out 117 hours of foot patrols, 14 static road checks, issued 160 parking tickets and undertaken 15 premise searches. In response to specific targeting, antisocial behaviour had reduced by 70% in Eyemouth, Eildon – 12 persons were searched with a 33% positive rate and 15 properties were searched with 87% positive. Enquiries were also progressing in Tweeddale against prolific antisocial driving incidents.

4.12 Board members raised a number of questions which were answered by officers. With regard to under reporting of wildlife crime, officers had undertaken training recently with the Tweed Commission regarding anti-poaching. There had been no recent reports of hare coursing, and the public were asked to be more proactive in reporting such incidents. Regarding the increase in reports of sexual crime, Chief Superintendent McKenzie advised that he anticipated reports would increase as victims felt confident in reporting historic incidents. It was noted that with regard to forensic examination for such crimes, local health boards, including the Borders General Hospital, would be investing in forensic units. Regarding domestic abuse incidents, Chief Inspector Reid explained that their Domestic Abuse Liaison Officer worked with victims, if required the capacity existed for relocation. Chief Superintendent McKenzie added that domestic abuse incidents were scrutinised on a daily basis and remained a priority.

4.13 With regard to bail checks on perpetrators, these would be pursued for the protection of victims and the wider family. Mr Jones added that the Council were refining some of their performance reporting to identify repeat perpetrators. There was also an advocate who worked with victims to rehome victims or ensure they were safe within their own homes. There was a discussion on the Council's recent decision to pilot alcohol byelaws in areas within the Scottish Borders, Chief Superintendent McKenzie welcomed the approach taken by Council, explaining that byelaws could enhance events for family participation.

## **DECISION**

### **NOTED:-**

- (a) **The report; and**
- (b) **That an introduction to the mobile working project be presented to the next meeting.**

## **5. PROGRESS REPORT/UPDATE 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. Local Senior Officer (LSO) Gourlay began by referring to the national negotiations around pay and conditions, explaining that recent proposals would be subject to a ballot in the next few weeks. LSO Gourlay then advised that Bonfire night had been busy but had passed without any recorded attacks on firefighters across the East of Scotland.

5.2 Group Commander (GC) Jaffray then presented the SFRS Local Plan Performance report for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda. He began by advising that SFRS had responded to 822 incidents over the period, a reduction of 43 compared to the same period last year. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals continued for 57% of incidents. 21% of incidents related to dwelling fires and 22% Special Service incidents.

5.3 Reduction of 'Dwelling Fire' – There had been 33 dwelling fires, a 27% decrease since the same period last year. Three had been started deliberately, only one of these fires had spread beyond the room or origin.

- 5.4 Reduction of 'All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal) - There were seven casualties, one less than the same period last year. All casualties were over the age of 30, with three over 70 years of age. GC Jaffray advised that post domestic, incident response involved engagement with neighbouring households to offer reassurance and provide fire safety advice.
- 5.5 Reduction of 'All Deliberate Fires Excluding Dwellings' – There had been 85 incidents, the same as the reporting period last year. Unfortunately, many of these were linked to antisocial behaviour. Where trends were identified the SFRS's CAT worked with partners to mitigate the risk of reoccurrence. In response to a question GC Jaffray advised that the spike in Mid Berwickshire to 11 incidents from 3 had been addressed with visits to local schools and delivery of consequential learning input. Mrs Simpson, advised that the voluntary sector would support any initiatives and GC Jaffray would liaise out with the meeting.
- 5.6 Reduction of 'Special Service – RTCs' – The SFRS attended 45 RTCs, a slight increase of one compared to last year. Hydraulic rescue equipment was required on 17 occasions to extricate persons trapped in vehicles.
- 5.7 Reduction of 'Special Service Casualties – All' – There were 49 Special Service casualties, an increase in five in comparison with the same period last year. The report highlighted the amount of non-traditional incidents the SFRS had to attend, for example assisting Scottish Ambulance colleagues with effecting entry into homes.
- 5.8 Reduction of 'False Alarm – Equipment Failure' – There had been 465 false alarm incidents, with equipment failure accounting for 344 (74%). In response to a question GC Jaffray advised that the majority of calls were from schools with causes such as dust, and testing the system activating alarms. Mr Jones advised that he would raise the issue again with SBC's Education department.
- 5.9 GC Jaffray then went on to discuss Prevention and Protection activities. Copies of a report detailing figures from Quarter 2 (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) had been circulated with the agenda. GC Jaffray explained that there had been a slight dip in Fire Safety Enforcement audits due to new staff required to undertake training and development. However, he reassured that all high risk premises were audited on an annual basis. GC Jaffray went on to advise that partnership working to deliver youth engagement continued, with the successful delivery of the Multi-agency Drivewise initiative at Charterhall, Berwickshire. Successful Drivewise courses had been delivered in September and the SFRS had also been involved in 36 community safety events, providing road safety advice, CPR training and water safety talks to residents of the Scottish Borders.
- 5.10 In response to questions, LSO Gourlay advised that fire sprinkler systems were standard specification for new builds. Following the Grenfell Tower inquiry, a government ministerial group were reviewing legislation and changes were expected in terms of the built environment.

## **DECISION**

### **NOTED**

- (a) **The report, and**  
 (b) **To request the Safer Communities and Community Justice Manager raise with SBC's Education Department the issue with Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting from 11.05 am to 11.10 am.

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

- 6.1 There had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Performance report covering the period from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019. The Safer Communities and Community Justice Manager, Mr Jones, highlighted the main points:-

- 6.2 Through effective partnership working fewer adults and children experience Gender Based Violence. The number of domestic abuse incidents had increased to 575, this was expected given the introduction of the new domestic abuse legislation. The number of referrals to domestic abuse services had also increased. Mr Jones advised that one of the priorities for the service was for changes to the IT recording system to enable a clearer understanding of repeat offenders, this would also be relevant when they moved into the new public protection service, which would ensure synergy between child protection and adult protection services. Another area for development was a clearer understanding around the time taken when responding to referrals 24 or 48 hours depending upon the referral agency. Mr Jones then referred to the decrease in the number of children accessing the CEDAR Group Programme, advising that this was owing to temporary staff turnover. Mr Jones advised that a member of staff provides support to keep people, experiencing domestic abuse, in their own homes or supports the identification of alternative accommodation options. MARAC training, risk assessment and Domestic Abuse Awareness training continued to be provided.
- 6.3 Through effective partnership working fewer people experiences antisocial behaviour. The number of incidents had decreased by 4.4% due to a range of in activities such as mediation and work with partners such as the multi-agency Antisocial Behaviour Review Group. Mr Jones advised that mediation was the first point of call for antisocial behaviour. He also advised that the Antisocial Behaviour Officer would attend the next meeting to give a presentation on the different aspects of the antisocial behaviour process and changes to guidance. In response to a question regarding bail conditions for antisocial behaviour, Chief Inspector Reid advised that reoffenders, whilst on bail were pursued.
- 6.4 Work in partnership to reduce injury and prevent accidents. Mr Jones advised that the Don't Buy It, Don't Supply it campaign continued, with a campaign which had coincided with the first Sevens tournament and other cultural events. It was also recognised that Common Ridings/Festivals could be problematic and localised social media messages had reinforced the campaign. The team had also attended events, including the Border Union Show, to highlight the potential dangers of accidental poisoning in the home. Drivewise Borders for over 65's had delivered eight events across the Scottish Borders.
- 6.5 In response to questions, Chief Inspector Reid advised that with regard to domestic abuse incidents, there would be a marker on the (police) system which would highlight any information they needed to be aware of. Regarding the number of motorcyclists' accidents, Mr Jones advised that as a number of accidents were the result of a variety of factors and at times these were difficult to predict. Mr Jones added that the team were trying to move away from stand up delivery, which was often to a small audience, to using social media which ensured a broader reach into the community.

## **DECISION**

**NOTED the report.**

## **7. CONTACT ASSESSMENT MODEL PROJECT**

Chief Inspector Jocelyn O'Connor was in attendance to give a presentation on the Contact Assessment Model Project. Chief Inspector O'Connor began by advising that there were 3 million, 999 calls each year to Police Scotland. The Contact Assessment Model (CAM) was a new way of assessing calls, based on 'THRIVE' (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, Engagement). She explained that every call was assessed individually to identify the appropriate level of response. This might be immediate attendance; prompt attendance (within four hours); scheduled attendance (by phone or office visit, or attendance by caller); or non-attendance (the resolution team gives advice, DCR or remote investigation). CAM moved away from the default call grading, empowering staff to make decisions based on facts and circumstances. Chief Inspector O'Connor went on to advise that they were presently recruiting experienced police officers to the Resolution Team. Chief Inspector O'Connor then referred to Dumfries and Galloway where CAM had already been introduced successfully. During the first nine weeks, 36,000 incidents had been notified, 20% of which

had been dispatched within five minutes with 15% managed by the new Resolution Team. Chief Inspector O'Connor concluded the presentation by advising that staff would receive training and support to gain confidence in the new process. There were also appropriate safety measures in place. Chief Superintendent McKenzie added that he anticipated that J Division would be expected to provide resources to the Resolution Team. The Chairman thanked Chief Inspector O'Connor for her attendance and informative presentation.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation.**

**MEMBERS**

Councillor Robson and Mrs Simpson left during consideration of the above presentation.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Friday, 7 February 2019 at 9.30 am.

***The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm***