

MINUTE

of

NEWTON MEARNS SOUTH, BUSBY, CLARKSTON AND EAGLESHAM AREA FORUM

Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Mearns Castle High School on 1 December 2015.

Present:

Provost Alastair Carmichael
Councillor Barbara Grant

Councillor Alan Lafferty

Inspector Alan Dickson and Sergeant Paul Murray (Police Scotland); George McLachlan (Busby Community Council); and John Seenan (East Renfrewshire Neighbourhood Watch Association).

Provost Carmichael in the Chair

Attending:

Eamonn Daly, democratic Services Manager.

Apologies:

Councillors Ian McAlpine, Stewart Miller and Jim Swift; and Station Manager David Fothergill, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting of 8 September 2015.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2015/16

2. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing an update on projects previously approved by the forum and the balance outstanding in the General Services budget for 2015/16.

In addition in view of the funding available and the time of the next meeting, the report sought delegated authority for the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services, in consultation with the Chair, to consider and approve any projects submitted up to the end of the financial year.

The forum noted the report and agreed to grant the delegated authority as outlined.

POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES – UPDATE

3. In the absence of a representative from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Provost Carmichael invited Inspector Dickson to give an update on the activities of the police in the forum's area since the date of the last meeting.

Inspector Dickson explained that overall there had been relatively low levels of criminal and antisocial activity in the area since the last meeting. He reported that the national drink-drive campaign would start on Friday 4 December and that a more targeted, intelligence-led approach was being used this year. In response to questions he confirmed that the number of drink driving offences had reduced since the introduction of the legislation last year, and that more people were deciding not to drink at all if driving.

Inspector Dickson also referred to the usual festive safety campaigns that were being repeated.

Discussion also took place on recent information released by DVLA suggesting that the number of vehicles with unpaid Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) had increased since the need for vehicles to display discs had been removed. In this regard inspector Dickson outlined the police role and power available to them and that checking for vehicles where no duty had been paid was principally a matter for DVLA to tackle, although some of the initiatives undertaken by the police in partnership with DWP and trading standards were outlined, as part of which VED checks were made.

Inspector Dickson also reported on the start of the local winter initiative and that patrols of shopping and other retail areas would be increased. In particular a lot of safety advice and information was being provided to premises that would be handling large amounts of cash over the festive period.

Finally Inspector Dickson reported that the former ward sergeant, Tom Devine had now retired and was being replaced by Sergeant Murray.

The forum noted the information.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

4. Mr Seenan referred to the recent tragic events in Paris and enquired if whether in light of these had the police priorities changed in terms of potential risk of similar events taking place in the UK. In reply, Inspector Dickson explained that the UK threat level had been at "severe" since the "Charlie Hebdo" shootings, also in Paris. Notwithstanding he explained that there was no specific evidence to suggest that there was any increased threat in Scotland following the recent shootings but that intelligence and associated plans were constantly under review. He explained that the key message from the police was that the public should be alert but not alarmed.

Following further discussion, the forum noted the position.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5. It was noted that the next meeting would be held in Williamwood High School on 1 March 2016 at 7pm.