

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE & FIRE)

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 22 September 2022.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Katie Pragnell (Vice Chair)

Councillor Caroline Bamforth

Councillor O'Donnell in the Chair

Attending:

Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Murray Husband, Head of Digital and Community Safety; Sharon McIntyre, Committee Services Officer and Liona Allison, Assistant Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Superintendent Alan Gray; Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie, Area Commander; Michelle Grant, Area Inspector of the Community Policing Team, Police Scotland; and Group Commander Alan Coughtrie, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service(*).

(* indicates remote attendance.

Apologies:

Councillors Andrew Anderson, Danny Devlin and Gordon Wallace.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

140. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

141. Councillor O'Donnell welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted and congratulated Police Scotland on the divisional awards received at Police Scotland's Greater Glasgow Divisional Awards ceremony held at Glasgow City Chambers. The ceremony showcased and recognised officers who had demonstrated bravery and excellence in policing. Several Officers from East Renfrewshire received awards:

- Four Officers for administering first aid and saving the life of a 15 year who was subject to an attempted murder,

- A Special Constable for having served 37 years' service,
- School Campus Officers received a Teamwork award for their Youth Diversionary Programme, which they have ran successfully over the past two summers.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 - 2022-23

142. The Cabinet then considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the first quarter of 2022-23. The report also provided statistical information in relation to various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period together with comparative statistics for the corresponding period in 2021-22.

Superintendent Gray firstly offered apologies for absence apologies from Chief Superintendent Mark Sutherland (Divisional Commander) who was on unable to attend. He welcomed the opportunity to address Members on behalf of Chief Superintendent Sutherland as the previous Area Commander for East Renfrewshire and introduced Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie, the new Area Commander for East Renfrewshire.

By way of introduction, Chief Inspector Gallie noted the exceptional partnership approach in East Renfrewshire and that he was looking forward to working with all partners to maximise the collective service delivered to residents and visitors in East Renfrewshire.

He advised that in relation to the crime data in the report, there were still some legacy effects of the COVID pandemic which would be reflected in the data for some time. He advised that the pandemic had altered how people lived their lives, with more people working from home or hybrid working, shopping online and using online deliveries more, and through the cost-of-living crisis there was an increased likelihood of more residents holidaying at home throughout the year. All of these factors impacted on crime patterns and demands on local services.

He advised that the COVID restrictions had ended during the quarter and preparations progressed for a summer that would see the full return of large scale indoor and outdoor sporting and music events. He noted that while none of these events took place in East Renfrewshire, taking place within the Glasgow area they could have a local impact.

The quarter had seen the launch and delivery of the summer safety campaign, working closely with partners in the Safe East Ren Group to maximise the safety of residents and visitors in East Renfrewshire.

He noted that the public health approach to policing continued to develop, with frontline officers in conjunction with partners in East Renfrewshire receiving bespoke Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) training which covered a range of mental health issues. He advised that this training was directly funded by the East Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and offered thanks accordingly.

He outlined the ongoing partnership working with vulnerable people and highlighted benefit of the early identification of those in society most in need and the signposting to Health and Social Care Partnership services. He noted the importance of the public health approach to policing and proposed that this would be covered within the Police Scotland report moving forward instead of as a standalone agenda item.

Chief Inspector Gallie, was then heard on the report. He advised that he had taken up post on 12 September and welcomed the opportunity to be present at the meeting. He outlined that the report before Elected Members was based on the East Renfrewshire Local Police Plan 2020-23 and areas of concern identified.

On reviewing the first quarter of 2022/23, he outlined that partnership working continued with the summer safety plan and bespoke projects such as 'I am Me' delivering for the people of East Renfrewshire. He outlined the successful delivery of Operation Unicorn (Scotland) involving East Renfrewshire Officers following the death of Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II whilst delivering policing services with East Renfrewshire.

Chief Inspector Gallie then reported on the performance of the police against the five local policing priorities contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2020-23. On referring to the report, he advised that for acquisitive crime, the number of homes broken into (including attempts) was 10, 28.6% lower than the same period the previous year. This was still well below the 5 year average figure with a reduction of 47.4%. Overall, crimes of dishonesty in Q1 were 30.7% higher than the same period the previous year and 10.4% higher than the five year average figure. The majority of acquisitive crime categories had seen a fall in numbers however, fraud remained a sub-divisional priority with 66 crimes being reported, one fewer than the same period the previous year. He noted that online fraud was significant because as people moved to online lifestyles the opportunities for criminality had grown. He referred to the good work of the banking protocol in dealing with fraud and outlined examples of the good work carried out by officers in East Renfrewshire. He advised that Police Scotland continued to use specialist national resources, experts from the wider Greater Glasgow Division and partners to address this trend and support victims.

In relation to public protection, up to and including Q1, sexual crimes had increased with 28 victims coming forward, mirroring the national trend. He advised this may indicate greater reporting following high profile cases in the media. He advised that the associated detection rate for this year was 35.7% which was lower than the 5 year average, however this rate would increase due to the protracted nature of enquiries. He outlined Police Scotland continued to work with partner agencies to provide support to the subjects of sexual crimes to ensure they had the confidence to come forward and report. He outlined examples of this investigation work into these cases carried out by officers within East Renfrewshire.

In relation to domestic abuse incidents, in Q1, 115 domestic abuse incidents had been dealt with. This figure was slightly lower compared to the same period the previous year of 136 reported incidents. The number of domestic abuse incidents with associated crime was 54 with a detection rate of 49.4%. He noted that child custody or property ownership were common in these cases although not all resulted in a crime being committed. He outlined that whilst not all domestic abuse crimes involved physical violence, patterns of escalation in behaviour within abusive relationships were recognised. He noted that high priority was placed on investigating and detecting all criminal conduct related to domestic abuse as this had a potential to prevent repeat offending and potentially more serious or more violent crime. He advised that Michelle Grant, Area Inspector of the Community Policing Team was Co-chair of the Violence against Women and Girls Group and was co-ordinating a multiagency approach to reducing domestic abuse. She had engaged in external training offered by colleagues in East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership and in Learning and Development and was working closely with partners to better inform frontline officers in their investigations and approach to people experiencing domestic abuse.

In relation to the detection of drug supply offences, he advised that Police Scotland continued to target the unlawful supply of controlled drugs within the community, in line with the public health approach to policing to protect the most vulnerable in society. In this quarter, 37 drug related offences were recorded, 36.2% fewer than the previous year and 47% fewer than the 5-year average. The detection rate remained high at 94.9% which was higher than the previous year and the 5-year average. He outlined that Police Scotland continue to work proactively in East Renfrewshire with the gathering and development of intelligence being vitally important. Intelligence allowed for the creation of targeted drugs action plans involving targeting criminals and signposting users to support available from partners. He outlined examples of this investigation work carried out in East Renfrewshire.

In relation to violent crime, he noted that in a population of approximately 100,000 only 3 serious assaults had occurred in the year to date, this was fewer than same period the previous year and the 5-year average. The detection rate was sitting at 50% which was lower than the previous year and the 5 year average however investigations were ongoing. One crime of attempted murder was recorded in this period. Reports of robberies had increased to 5, 3 more than the same period the previous year; detection rate was 80% and investigations continued as well as the provision of support to victims. Assaults on emergency workers remained low at 9 with a 100% detection rate. All incidents were scrutinised daily, particularly those which had the greatest impact on victims and communities to ensure that officers identified and progressed investigations and enquiries effectively using all local and specialist resources.

In terms of antisocial behaviour and disorder, there had been a reduction in calls compared to the previous year. Calls classified as "Public Nuisance" were down by 49% with "Noise" complaints down by 3% compared to 2021-22 figures. Continued collaboration with partners in identifying opportunities to tackle all forms of anti-social behaviour was making a positive impact. This quarter saw the launch of the Safer Parks and Open Spaces campaign working jointly with colleagues in British Transport Police, Scottish Fire and Rescue, East Renfrewshire Council Community Wardens and Youth Workers. Campus Officers developed and delivered a hugely successful youth diversionary project supporting young teenagers through the summer months. Feedback received from young people was hugely positive with all reporting a sense of inclusion and reassurance, as many found themselves isolated and lonely through school holidays in particular. The Water Safety Campaign was launched with partners educating young people on the dangers of open water swimming and how to keep themselves safe. The success of this can be measured by the lack of incidents during the unusually warm summer this year.

Chief Inspector Gallie then reported on the incidents referred to in the report under the areas of violent crime, drug supply and manufacture, crimes of dishonesty, vulnerable road users, domestic abuse including adult and child protection, and young people.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which Superintendent Gray, Chief Inspector Gallie and Inspector Grant responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the crime statistics recorded in the report. These included attendance at Community Council meetings and issues regarding speeding, farm vehicles using the by-pass; damage of crops and animals disturbed at Picketlaw Reservoir, Eaglesham; burglaries within the Maidenhill development, online fraud and impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

During this session it was agreed that a Police Scotland briefing on online fraud would be arranged prior to a full Council meeting and that Police Scotland would be invited to the cost-of-living Information and Consultation Session on 26 October 2022.

The terms of the report were noted.

POLICE SCOTLAND - PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO POLICING - QUESTIONS

143. No questions were raised other than those in the course of other discussions.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2022-23

144. The Cabinet considered a report by the Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the first quarter of 2022-23.

Group Commander Alan Coughtrie firstly provided apologies for Area Commander David McCarrey who was unable to attend and explained that he was joining the meeting remotely due to providing operational cover at this time.

Group Commander Coughtrie advised that as a service SFRS was continuing good progress in implementing their Covid recovery strategy and applying business as usual where possible, whilst maintaining appropriate controls to keep personnel safe and the property and fleet portfolio with maximum resilience to meet the needs of communities.

He noted the recent establishment of a co-located Scottish Ambulance Service Response and Training Facility base at the Clarkston Community Fire Station. The sharing of this facility commenced in October 2021 with nine staff from the Scottish Ambulance Service, comprised of five paramedics and four technicians. It operated as a training and development station for the Scottish Ambulance Service, with the official opening taking place recently following postponement. He advised that this was an example of multi-agency working and training between the Scottish Ambulance Service and SFRS. He noted this move increased the response from Scottish Ambulance Service to residents within East Renfrewshire and ensured operational crews were even more aligned in their preparations and response to emergencies. He further explained that co-location allowed for colleagues to share knowledge, train together and share expertise, while building relationships through working in the same building and understanding each other's challenges. These co-locations within SFRS properties were part of the Scottish Ambulance Service demand and capacity programme which had seen an additional 540 front line staff recruited in the last financial year with plans for further recruitment in the west region. He thanked those who attended the official launch of this facility.

Group Commander Coughtrie then advised that during the reporting period crews and the Community Action Team carried out 25 community activities whilst operational crews carried out 96. Operational crews carried out 170 home fire safety visits, with 102 of these being high-risk visits. 66 post-domestic incident responses had been carried out, with 71 home fire safety visits resulting from the post-domestic incident responses. 120 smoke detectors had been fitted.

It was further reported that for accidental dwelling fires, there had been an increase in the year on year indicator of 55%. However this was against an extremely low figure of 11 in the same reporting period the previous year, with an increase of 6 incidents over the 13 week period. He advised that it was pleasing to note an overall reduction of 2% on the three-year indicator. Cooking was again the main contributor, accounting for over 76% of activity. However, it was positive to note that detection was present in 94% of the premises and the detection actuated in 100% of them giving an early warning. This confirmed a continued awareness regarding the importance of the installation and maintenance of fire detection equipment within the home.

To support reduction in this type of activity, the Community Action Team continued to be actively involved in engaging with partners and prioritised high risk home fire safety visits through the website and various partner referral pathways. Operational crews also carried out targeted local initiatives, including leaflet drops and public engagement, to identify the areas where there had been more than one accidental dwelling fire. He advised that fire service experiential training continued to be delivered to home carers within East Renfrewshire to assist them in identifying individuals at risk within homes, and that early identification and intervention gained through post-domestic incident response and partnership referral was reducing the occurrence of this type of incident.

In terms of accidental dwelling casualties he advised that it was disappointing to note that there has been a significant increase on both the year on year and three year indicators however it should be noted that this was against extremely low figures over the previous five

years. It was positive to note again that early detection had proven to be crucial in reducing injury sustained from dwelling fires. He noted East Renfrewshire fire crews were working with the residents of any affected property and surrounding properties to ensure that they had appropriate smoke detection and conduct a home fire safety check. He highlighted East Renfrewshire fire crews continue to have the highest attainment rate of this type of activity across Scotland.

In terms of unintentional injury and harm, he advised it was pleasing to note that there had been no increase on the year on year indicator and there was a significant reduction on the three year marker for non-fire casualties. He advised during this reporting period, crews attended four road traffic collisions one of which involved three casualties with serious injuries and with the remaining incidents having a total of five casualties with minor injuries.

He outlined that the Community Action Team carried out a total of 25 multi-agency engagement activities across the area during this period with a focus on road safety campaigns, including promoting Road Safety Scotland as well as engaging with local schools to deliver the Young Driver Initiative, an educational programme focussing on young and new drivers. He advised that it was also pleasing to note in this reporting period, which included a significant period of warm and dry weather, that there were no water related incidents or casualties. He advised that this showed the benefits of the East Renfrewshire Water Safety Group and commitment to youth engagement. He outlined that SFRS had continued to develop their education and response model to this type of incident and that training was delivered to over 4,000 primary and secondary pupils in East Renfrewshire during this period.

He reported that there had been a significant reduction in deliberate fire setting within the year on year indicator and an 18% reduction on the three year average, with the vast majority of these being secondary fires within grass and woodland during two periods of dry weather in April and June. Deliberate fire setting and fire related antisocial behaviour continue to be a challenge for SFRS although it was pleasing to note that the demand reduction strategy was having a positive impact on reducing activity in this area. He advised that the Community Action Team and operational crews continued to deliver youth engagement initiatives to schools, with the Protection Team providing advice to the relevant premises and local businesses. A collaborative approach continued to be adopted with internal and external stakeholders including Police Scotland and East Renfrewshire Council.

It was reported that there had been a significant reduction in non-domestic fires in both the year on year indicator as well as the three year average. He advised it was also pleasing to report that the majority were accidental and firefighting action was only required at one of the incidents. The damage to the property affected was also minimal with only heat and smoke damage. Of the five incidents attended within this period four were accidental and one deliberate. He provided further details on each of these incidents.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) increased slightly within both indicators with the majority again being within educational facilities with the cause primarily being accidental, system faults and cooking which highlighted that the majority were avoidable and were being caused by either human error or deliberate action. Human behaviour continued to drive this type of incident and even with direct engagement through crews attending incidents and the phased reduction of appliances through the UFAS strategy, the main contributors were individuals failing to follow procedures when testing alarms, deliberate activation of fire alarms and poor housekeeping causing detector heads to become contaminated. The reduction of UFAS continued to be a key priority within East Renfrewshire with UFAS champions appointed in each station who continued to engage with the duty holders at each incident to advise and support them by providing reduction guidance. UFAS champions monitored activity daily and highlighted areas of concern to the enforcement team to allow them to engage at the earliest opportunity to investigate the most appropriate solution,

whether it be mechanical, staff training, the replacement of equipment or where deliberate identify the cause and pursue through the appropriate channels.

There followed further questions in the course of which Group Commander Coughtrie provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the statistics recorded in the report. These included domestic fires and the impact of the new interlinked alarm systems and UFAS engagement with the Education Department. The Head of Digital and Community Safety provided an update on the position regarding UFAS within the Education Department and it was agreed that a collaborative approach was required regarding this issue.

The report was noted.

CHAIR

