

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE & FIRE)

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 24 November 2022.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Andrew Anderson

Councillor Katie Pragnell (Vice Chair)
Councillor Gordon Wallace(*)

Councillor O'Donnell in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Murray Husband, Head of Digital and Community Safety; Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager and John Burke, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Chief Superintendent Mark Sutherland (Divisional Commander); Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie, (Area Commander); Inspector Michelle Grant, Communities Inspector, Police Scotland; Area Commander David McCarrey(*); and Station Commander Charlie Tymon(*), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

Apologies:

Councillors Caroline Bamforth and Danny Devlin.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

238. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2 - 2022-23

239. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the second 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.

Chief Superintendent Sutherland introduced the report by stating that it was a largely positive report which showed many measures returning to pre-pandemic levels. There were

also impacts being felt of the cost of living crisis, with theft by shoplifting going up given as a particular example. Furthermore, Chief Superintendent Sutherland reported that the local policing plan would end on 23 March 2023 and the draft of the new Plan was available to view online. A copy of the document had been sent to Cabinet members electronically and he indicated that he would be happy for it to be presented to the Council if required. He then invited Chief Inspector Gallie to summarise the report.

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 of and visitors to 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 previous quarter and the full return of large scale indoor and outdoor sporting and music events had taken place during the term of this report. He noted that even where events took place outside of East Renfrewshire, they could have a local impact.

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 33, this was equal to the same period the previous year. However, it was below the five year average figure with a reduction of 18%. Overall, crimes of dishonesty in Q2 were 30% higher than the same period the previous year and 6% higher than the five year average figure. Fraud remained a sub-divisional priority with 126 crimes being reported, 20 more 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 outlined examples of the good work carried out by officers in East Renfrewshire and that the Police continued to work with Trading Standards and local groups to target this area of crime.

In relation to public protection, up to and including Q2, sexual crimes had remained static against the five year average, with 56 victims coming forward, mirroring the national trend. He advised that the associated detection rate for this year was 38%. He outlined that 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 Q2 256 domestic abuse incidents had been dealt with. This figure was 5% lower compared to the same period the previous year and 2% down on the five year average. The number of domestic abuse incidents with associated crime was 112 with 82 offences detected during the period. He noted that the annual "16 Days of Action" campaign was due to begin on 25 November 2022, aimed at ending violence against women and girls.

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, 62 drug related offences were recorded, 40% fewer than the previous year. The

detection rate for those offences was 100%. He outlined that Police Scotland continued to work proactively in East Renfrewshire with the gathering and development of intelligence being vitally important, outlining examples of this investigation work carried out locally.

In relation to violent crime, he noted that 7 serious assaults had occurred over the period, this was 50% fewer than same period the previous year. The detection rate was sitting at 71% which was higher than the previous year. Two crimes of attempted murder were recorded in this period. Reports of robberies had increased to 8, 4 more than the same period the previous year; detection rate was 75% and investigations continued as well as the provision of support to victims.

In terms of antisocial behaviour and disorder, there had been a reduction in calls regarding disorder, down 23% on the previous year. Vandalism offences were down 15% on the 5 year average but had increased by 31 compared to the previous year. Continued collaboration with partners in identifying opportunities to tackle all forms of anti-social behaviour was making a positive impact.

Chief Inspector Gallie concluded by giving some examples of the work being done in East Renfrewshire by officers of Police Scotland on all of the subjects covered.

Chief Superintendent Sutherland and Chief Inspector Gallie then responded to a number of questions from Members. These included aftercare following reports of break-ins, upcoming Police campaigns during the festive period, particularly around drugs and alcohol and issues raised by community councils in relation to vehicles being parked in cycle lanes. It was also confirmed that both Chief Inspector Gallie and Inspector Grant were involved in the East Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

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

240. 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 second quarter of 2022-23.

Area Commander David McCarrey explained that he and Station Commander Charlie Tymon were joining the meeting remotely due to providing operational cover at the time.

Area Commander McCarrey advised that as a service SFRS was continuing good progress and, in particular, highlighted their success around water safety, with water safety awareness training delivered to 7,500 school pupils across East Renfrewshire and with no water related incidents to date in East Renfrewshire. He also indicated that new fire appliances had been put into service at Clarkston and Barrhead Stations alongside significant building upgrades.

He reaffirmed the SFRS commitment to partnership working, in particular noting the recent establishment of a co-located Scottish Ambulance Service Response and Training Facility base at the Clarkston Community Fire Station. He advised that this was an example of multi-agency working and training between the Scottish Ambulance Service and SFRS.

Area Commander McCarrey then advised that during the reporting period crews and the Community Action Team carried out fire safety training and established referral pathways with over 200 foster parents, home care and care home staff across East

Renfrewshire. Operational crews had carried out over 750 home fire safety visits, particularly targeting vulnerable residents.

In terms of adults at risk of harm, a new internal electronic system had been implemented to ensure the most vulnerable people in communities received the support they required from SFRS and partners. A 360 degree feedback system had been put in place alongside this to allow SFRS to share information to support current and future needs.

Over 50 non-domestic fire safety audits had also been carried out to relevant premises in East Renfrewshire to ensure that they were compliant with their duties under Section 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act.

It was also reported that the Bonfire Strategy had been concluded and no attacks on fire crews had taken place over the bonfire night season. The Area Commander highlighted the importance of partnership working to allowing these strategies to go forward successfully.

Area Commander McCarrey then advised that during the reporting period crews and the Community Action Team carried out 18 community activities whilst operational crews carried out 64. Operational crews carried out 282 home fire safety visits, with 116 of these being high-risk visits. 46 post-domestic incident responses had been carried out, with 37 home fire safety visits resulting from the post-domestic incident responses. 117 smoke detectors had been fitted.

It was reported that for accidental dwelling fires, there had been a decrease in the year on year indicator of 38%. He advised that it was pleasing to note an overall reduction of 11% on the three-year indicator. Cooking was again the main contributor, accounting for over 60% of activity. However, it was positive to note that detection was present in 92% of the premises and the detection activated in 83% 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 there had been no accidental dwelling fire casualties in the reporting period with a 100% reduction on the 3 year indicators. 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 a 36% decrease on the year on year indicator and there was a 13% reduction on the three year marker. He advised during this reporting period, crews attended 3 road traffic collisions one of which involved 8 casualties with minor injuries.

He outlined that the Community Action Team carried out a total of 82 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 while there was one water related incident recorded, it was not a water rescue, it was assisting an individual who had fallen down an embankment near water. 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 reported that there had been a significant reduction of 24% in deliberate fire setting within the year on year indicator and a 8% increase on the three year average, with the vast majority of these being secondary fires within grass and refuse. 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 an increase in non-domestic fires in both the year on year indicator as well as the three year average. However, he pointed out that this was against historically low figures. He advised that the majority were accidental. There had been one deliberate fire reported and the Area Commander provided further details on each of the incidents.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) increased within both indicators with the majority again being within educational facilities with the cause primarily being accidental, system faults and contaminants 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 maintenance 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 Area Commander McCarrey provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the statistics recorded in the report. These included UFAS engagement with the Education Department. The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships 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 Cabinet agreed to note the report.

