

Minute of Meeting



Police and Fire and Rescue Board

Date	Time	Venue
30 May 2022	11.00 am	Virtual Meeting by MS Teams

Present:

Councillor Alexander
Councillor Curran
Councillor McEwan
Councillor McKenzie (Appointed Chair see 1.0)
Councillor Smail

In Attendance:

Midlothian Council	Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place
	Janet Ritchie, Democratic Services Officer
	Ross Neill, Democratic Services Team Leader
Police Scotland	Chief Inspector Catriona Paton
	Superintendent James Robertson
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Andy Anderson, Group Commander
	Hilary Sangster, Area Commander

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apology

Mrs Janet Ritchie welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited nominations for chair.

Councillor Alexander nominated Councillor McKenzie
Councillor Curran seconded

With no other nomination Councillor McKenzie was appointed chair and took over the meeting from Janet Ritchie

2. Order of Business

The order of business was as detailed in the agenda

3. Declarations of interest

There was no declarations of interest received.

4. Minute of Previous Meeting

Although no minute was submitted with the agenda,

Previous Committee members Councillor Curran and Councillor Smail proposed and seconded the previous minute as an accurate of the previous meeting 21 February 2022

5. Public Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	
5.1	Police Fire and Rescue Board – Membership, Terms of Reference	Executive Director Place
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
The Police Fire and Rescue Board is invited to:- (a) To consider the appointment of a Chair; and (b) To note its Membership and Terms of Reference Terms of Reference This Board will report to Midlothian Council and link in to the wider Midlothian Community Planning arrangements. This governance structure of the Board will comply with the requirements of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. The Board remit includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scrutiny of Police and Fire Plans• Performance Reporting and statistical reports of complaints and policing and fire and rescue Midlothian;• Notification of any Midlothian policing and fire rescue matters subject to independent national review bodies;• Providing comments/replies on any consultation documents pertaining to policing and fire and rescue services; and• Recommending improvements in local policing and fire and rescue		

Service.

Janet Ritchie introduced the report and as previously noted invited nominations for Chair from the Elected Members

Decision

Councillor McKenzie appointed Chair

Action

The Board noted the content of the report

Agenda No.	Report Title	
5.2	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service 9 week consultation on the draft Strategic Plan (2022-25)	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-25?</p> <p>The SFRS was established in April 2013. Since then we have produced strategic plans every three years to detail the activities we undertake to contribute to the safety and wellbeing of Scotland's communities, whilst keeping our firefighters safe.</p> <p>This Strategic Plan outlines the high-level outcomes through which we will continually work towards our overall purpose, as outlined in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022:</p> <p>'To work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on prevention, protection and response to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.'</p> <p>The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022 also sets for us seven strategic priorities and we have a statutory duty to have regard to these when developing our Strategic Plan:</p> <p>SFRS Long-Term Vision</p> <p>As well as considering the Fire Framework, this Strategic Plan supports the achievement of our SFRS Long-Term Vision.</p> <p>Our Vision is an aspirational document which was shaped by our staff and stakeholders. It sets out our future direction and outlines where we want to be in ten years' time. This Plan outlines the next stage in that journey.</p> <p>Our Plan has been developed with these important documents in mind, with our seven Outcomes complementing the strategic priorities of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. We have developed this Plan in consultation with our people, a range of our partners across the country and the people of Scotland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevention and Protection• Response• Innovation and Modernisation• Climate Change• Effective Governance and Performance• Partnership• People <p>Hillary Sangster introduced the consultation highlighting areas of interest and encouraging all to participate in shaping the future strategic aims of the Fire Service. It was noted the local area plan will be more specific to Midlothian.</p> <p>All Members welcomed the consultation and requested outcomes to be included to benchmark progress over the next three years.</p>		

Hillary Sangster noted a number of challenges including the opportunity some officers may take to retire and the need then to recruit while maintaining the skills base. This would require more collaborative work with partners, there would be other competing priorities that would need managed.

Councillor McKenzie asked if the Eskbank site was too old now to be used.

Hillary Sangster explained that currently it was not fit for purpose and it and other facilities would be considered whether a new build at that site or another, or colocation with other partners, options would be appraised. No timescale as yet, as the Fire service does this Nationally and it depends on National priorities. Population, Housing type etc. is included in the assessment for provision. This is a continual assessment by the Service. There is currently no requirement for another fire station in Midlothian.

Responding to further questions Hilary Sangster stated she wasn't aware of any issue with response times to calls. Options would be presented to the board as part of the consultation.

Decision

None

Action

The Board noted the content of the report

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Midlothian Fire Service Quarter 4 Scrutiny Performance Report	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>This performance report provides information on our prevention, protection and operational response activities within Midlothian for Quarter 4 of 2021-22 (1st January – 31st March 2022) including information on the year to date figures.</p> <p>The Scottish Government provides an overarching vision for public services. This vision supported by 11 National Outcomes, which demonstrate commitment to creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable growth. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) can make a significant contribution to improving these outcomes for Midlothian by contributing to the Community Planning arrangements across the area.</p> <p>The national priorities for the SFRS are set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The SFRS Strategic Plan 2019-2022 outlines how the SFRS will deliver against these priorities and the outcomes against which this delivery can be measured.</p> <p>The priorities contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Midlothian 2021 contribute towards the priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan.</p> <p>The aims of the local Fire & Rescue Service in Midlothian are to reduce fire deaths and to reduce injuries from fire and other emergencies in the community. We aim to achieve this by working in partnership, being pro-active and targeting our prevention and protection activities to where they are required, based on evidence.</p> <p>The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Midlothian 2021 identifies the following five objectives as the main focus for service delivery locally:</p> <p>Local Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of a Community Partnership approach, we will make people safer in their homes. 		

- We will promote Community Resilience whilst contributing to improved outcomes for people involved in non-fire emergencies.
- Together with our Community Partners, we will contribute to making roads in Midlothian safer.
- As part of a Community Partnership, we will challenge anti-social behaviour.
- In partnership, we will aim to reduce the occurrence and impact of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Andrew Anderson referred to the report taking the board through some of the content, highlighting areas of improvement and areas of challenge. He highlighted throughout the key relationships with partners including the Council Services and Police Scotland.

It was noted that the changes to smoke detectors requirements take responsibility away from the Fire Service and assistance is available to those that meet the criteria. The Fire Service can fit smoke to those who do not meet the Scottish Government Criteria, but these detectors are not linked and it's merely to provide some sort of early warning system. Those residents/ landlords who do not meet the criteria for linked Alarm system fitting assistance are required to take responsibility and source their own.

Members asked if the council is making the most of referrals to the Fire Service

Derek Oliver replied that annual gas checks give opportunity and other council workers with access to properties would make referrals as required. He added that he would reinforce the importance to the teams.

Councillor Curran asked if car parking concerns raised in certain streets and access routes to beauty spots were causing delays in response times.

Councillor Smaill highlighted the need to have caution and not over react and affect access to reservoirs.

Andrew Anderson stated he was not aware of access issues and none that have hampered response teams.

It was noted that on some land Scottish Water had responsibility to maintain access and parking/ no parking signs.

Decision

The Board noted the content of the report

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.4	Police Scotland Midlothian Quarter 4 Performance Report 2021/22	Police Scotland
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
Crimes and offences are grouped under recognised categories for statistical purposes. The Scottish Government defines these categories, as follows;		
Group 1 – Non Sexual Crimes of Violence		
Group 2 – Sexual Crimes		
Group 3 – Crimes of Dishonesty		
Group 4 – Fire-raising, Malicious Mischief etc.		

Group 5 – Other (Pro-activity) Crimes
Group 6 – Miscellaneous Offences
Group 7 - Offences Relating to Motor Vehicles

Police Scotland publishes management information on an annual and quarterly basis by local authority and police division, as well as at a national level. These reports are produced to demonstrate Police Scotland's commitment to transparency. Police Scotland publishes all of these reports on the 'Our Performance' section of the Police Scotland website. The reports can be accessed here:

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/our-performance/>

The Midlothian Policing Plan uses the following Police performance indicators, and these have been mirrored in the Scrutiny Report to maintain parity of understanding:

1. Protecting the most vulnerable people;
2. Reducing Violence and Antisocial Behaviour;
3. Reducing acquisitive Crime;
4. Improving road safety;
5. Tackling Serious and Organised Crime.

All figures quoted in this report are for the period April 2021 to March 2022 and are compared against the same reporting period from the previous year. Where figures are quoted on rate per 10,000 population, these are based on Midlothian's population of **92,460 in 2019** (Scottish Government figures, published April 2020).

James Robertson referred to the report highlighting key areas noting overall improvement and also two areas as noted in the report that improvement is required. Mr Robertson also noted the close working relationship with partner agencies such as the fire service and the Council in particular Social Services, he also added that other specialist Police Scotland departments assist with specialist knowledge in combatting 'County Lines' activities.

It was noted that between Covid and the COP, last year resources were stretched. Due changes and retirement there is a recruitment and training catch up ongoing within Police Scotland. Adding that being part of a National Service allows for a degree of flexibility.

In general the statics pointed toward a reduction in crime and increased detection rates.

Councillor Curran welcomed the 31% increase in bail checks.

Councillor Smail suggested that in comparison with the Scottish Average Midlothian is out performing other areas.

James Robertson highlighted the partnership work and its ongoing positive impact of crime in Midlothian, no one specific area, more a combination of various work streams.

Councillor Alexander raised concerns about access to online drugs. She also raised the issue of a flat in Dundee being taken over by drug dealers, the resident being forced out. Also enquired about protection for those who report this type of activity or live close to it.

James Robertson stated that the dark web is active and does allow the public to access drugs, however border security and specialist within the UK and Scottish Police Service were the frontline in protecting the population and stopping entry to the UK. He went onto encourage anyone who has any information to report it to Police Scotland. The county

Lines issue is the area of the drug problem that will often take over property for the cultivation or supply of drugs and again any information should be reported to Police Scotland. All public members reporting this type of activity will have their risk assessed and appropriate measures put in place for their protection based on that assessment.

Councillor McKenzie made reference to the NCAT team and their recent high visibility noting the very positive feedback from residents. He added, in general, it would be good to compare more of the statistics in the report with a national average.

Councillors request the opportunity to meet the officer of both Police Scotland and the Fire Service

ACTION – 1 - Police Scotland to provide a national average comparison for future reports

ACTION – 2 - Police Scotland and Scottish Fire Service to arrange meet and greet opportunity

Decision

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

Next Meeting to be held on 29 August 2022
The meeting terminated at 12.51 pm