

Minute of Meeting



Police and Fire and Rescue Board

Date	Time	Venue
24 May 2016	11am	Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith

Present:

Councillor Baxter	Councillor Montgomery
Councillor Muirhead	Councillor Parry
Councillor Wallace	Councillor de Vink

In attendance:

Kevin Anderson – Head of Customer and Housing Services	Rosie Kendall – Community Safety Manager
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Chief Superintendent Ivor Marshall (Police Scotland)	Inspector Michelle Ritchie (Police Scotland)
David Farries – Local Senior Officer (Fire and Rescue Scotland)	Dean Mack – East & Midlothian Group Commander (Fire and Rescue Scotland)
David Hume – Scottish Police Authority	

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

- 1.1 It was noted that no apologies had been received from Elected Members.
- 1.2 It was noted that Inspector Michelle Ritchie was in attendance in place of Chief Inspector Kenny Simpson.

2. Order of Business

- 2.1 The order of business was confirmed as outlined in the agenda that had been circulated.
- 2.2 It was also noted that Kyle Clark-Hay (Democratic and Document Services Manager) requested that reports in respect of Board meetings are submitted to the Democratic Services Inbox – Democratic.Services@midlothian.gov.uk

3. Declarations of interest

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were noted.

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 4.1 The minutes of the Police and Fire and Rescue Board meeting of 23 February 2016 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

5. Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	Consultation on Police Powers to Search Children and Young People for Alcohol	Head of Customer and Housing Services

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Board heard from the Head of Customer and Housing Services who presented a report dated 17 May 2016 which sought to bring the Board's attention to the consultation and to consider whether the Board would like to submit a response.

Councillor Montgomery sought clarification in relation to the situation where a young person had been stopped and searched for alcohol and during the course of the search something else had been found e.g. drugs. The Chief Superintendent confirmed that in such circumstances the relevant statutory powers would be invoked.

Councillor Parry asked what the proposed new powers would mean in the Midlothian context and further commented that her understanding was that it isn't illegal for someone under the age of 16 to be in possession of alcohol and therefore how would the proposed powers sit in this context.

The Inspector confirmed the some of the issues with the national stop and search

policies don't necessarily fit within the Midlothian context and that the stop and search utilised in Midlothian were under statute. Further the Inspector confirmed that Police powers should be invoked justifiably and ethically and this would continue to be the approach taken within Midlothian.

Councillor Parry queried if the proposed powers were necessary due to the by law in Midlothian preventing people from drinking in public places.

Councillor Baxter was heard raising his concerns in relation to the proposed powers and spoke of an issue within his constituency which highlighted his concerns specifically in respect of the potential stigma that might be attached to someone being subjected to the proposed powers.

The Inspector confirmed that there were Youth Community Officers in place that work with the schools and a common sense approach is employed, highlighting that there is a voluntary aspect to search prior to statutory powers being invoked.

Councillor Wallace raised concerns about the potential impact of the proposals in relation to knife crime.

Decision

The Board agreed:

- a) To draft a response to the consultation highlighting the concerns of the Board.

Action

Democratic Services / Chair

Report No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2	Designated Local Police Commander – Lothian and Borders	Head of Customer and Housing Services

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Board heard from the Head of Customer and Housing Services who presented a report drawing the Board's attention to the consultation undertaken by Police Scotland in appointing the new Local Police Commander – Chief Superintendent Ivor Marshall.

Councillor Parry formally welcomed the Chief Superintendent to the Board and further echoed the sentiments of Philip Gormley in relation to the ongoing partnership with the Board and Police Scotland.

Decision

The Board agreed to:-

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| a) Note the content of the report |
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Report No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Local Plan Performance Report	Scottish Fire and Rescue

Outline of report and summary of discussion
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<p>The Board heard from David Farries from Scottish Fire and Rescue who introduced himself to the Board and further introduced the report providing an overarching strategy update in relation to the current structure within the Fire Service. Following this David Farries introduced Dean Mack who spoke to the report that had been circulated.</p>
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<p>The Board heard from Councillor de Vink who, following on from Dean Mack's comment that the priority for the Service was supporting high risk properties, confirmed his view that one of key methods to do this was to have constructive dialogue with the community councils.</p>

<p>Following this comment, Dean Mack continued with his presentation of the report.</p>

<p>Councillor Parry sought clarification in relation to the increase in accidental dwelling fires at the end of quarter 4 of the reporting period and further in relation to the reduction to deliberate fires and the trend and pattern in respect of malicious fires and whether there were other social issues that need to be considered.</p>

<p>David Farries confirmed that in relation to accidental dwelling fires that as the numbers are so low, any variation to the trend may appear as a significant increase and further confirmed that there was no concern from Scottish Fire and Rescue in respect of the trend. Further he confirmed that the figures should be taken in context with the preventative work that has been carried out and the consequent reduction in casualties.</p>

<p>Dean Mack spoke in respect of the work that was being carried out in relation to malicious fires and confirmed that there are key areas in Midlothian where work is ongoing including targeting schools.</p>

<p>Councillor Muirhead commented the key aspect of the report is the reduction in casualties. The Councillor further sought clarification as to whether there were common themes in relation to RTCs in Midlothian. Dean Mack confirmed that there were key areas within Midlothian where work is ongoing in an attempt to reduce accidents on Midlothian's roads. Inspector Ritchie confirmed that 43 people had been killed or seriously injured on Midlothian's roads over the reporting period and referred to work that was ongoing to support the preventative agenda. David Farries further confirmed the impact of the increasing population within Midlothian that has an impact on road safety. Chief Superintendent Ivor Marshall commented that in relation to road safety the most significant consideration was driver behaviour and further that enforcement and visibility does make a difference which would form part of the ongoing strategy.</p>
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Decision

The Board agreed:

- a) To note the content of the report

Report No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.4	Midlothian Scrutiny Board Report 2015-16	Police Scotland

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Board heard initially from Chief Superintendent Ivor Marshall who provided an introduction to the report. The Chief Superintendent confirmed that the Division is performing to a very high standard and spoke in support of the strength of partnership working. The Chief Superintendent further confirmed that there was an ongoing piece of work to refresh the performance framework and a move that this takes an outcome based approach and further confirmed the priorities for Police Scotland – Meeting and Listening; Building relationships; Preventing and detecting crime; protecting people from harm; and promoting wellbeing.

At this point the Chief Superintendent referred to Inspector Michelle Ritchie who then spoke to the report that had been circulated.

Councillor Baxter spoke in support of the work that was being carried out in relation to the Bonnyrigg PSP which he felt highlighted the benefits of agencies working together. Further the Councillor raised a concern in relation to residents running garages businesses from the street to which the Inspector confirmed that she was happy to hear about the issue and feed it into the partnership meeting.

Councillor de Vink highlighted the issue of housebreaking and aired his view that this was an area that needed to be focused on within Midlothian to which the Inspector agreed that this was a priority area and that the focus was currently on prevention and getting these messages out to communities.

Councillor Montgomery picked up on Councillor de Vink's comments in respect of housebreaking and confirmed his concerns in relation to the situation where break-ins happen when the occupier is still within the home. The Chief Superintendent that this was particularly concerning and that the Police were identifying trends that would help them to prevent this type of crime.

Councillor Muirhead sought clarification as to whether partners could feed into the Vulnerable Persons database which the Inspector confirmed that it was a Police database that was fed into by the Police and the Chief Superintendent further confirmed partner intelligence would be added to the database.

Councillor Muirhead also requested further information in relation to travelling criminals committing housebreaking offences in Midlothian. The Inspector confirmed that there are travelling criminals who operate within Midlothian and outlined the type range of motivations for individuals committing this type of crime and the types of interventions that the Police are employing to prevent this.

Councillor de Vink requested further details in relation to the Stop and Search statistics. The Inspector confirmed that the Police approach was to encourage the correct mindset with Police Officers and to effectively use the intelligence that is received to use this type of power effectively which was further confirmed by the Chief Superintendent.

Councillor Wallace sought clarification in relation to hotspots in respect of alcohol related crime in Midlothian which the Inspector confirmed was mapped which then feeds into the weekly task and co-ordinating process.

Councillor Wallace also requested information in relation to the officer numbers within 'J' Division. The Chief Superintendent confirmed that as a result of reducing funding contributions from Scottish Local Authorities, some Police Officers were being re-assigned to other duties across the Force.

There then followed a short debate in relation to the Council funding reduction.

Decision

Following the discussion, the Board agreed to:

- a) Note the content of the report

Report No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.5	Midlothian Community Policing Team	Police Scotland

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Board heard from Inspector Michelle Ritchie who spoke to the report outlining the Community Policing Team Activity.

Councillor Parry sought further clarification in relation to the abstracted hours couple with the context of the Council paying for these Officers to carry out what was essentially 'police business'. The Inspector confirmed that the deployment of these Officers allow the service to focus on particular areas of need and offer a flexible service.

Councillor Montgomery raised concerns about the number of serious incidents supported by the Community Action Team and the Police to confirm their confidence levels in maintaining their response to these in the absence of the CAT. The Chief Superintendent confirmed that response to incidents would be on a priority basis based on the tasking and allocating process. The Chief Superintendent confirmed the reasons for abstractions including training of Officers and attempt to minimise abstractions.

Councillor Muirhead reminded the Board of the history in relation to the set up of the CAT and the assurances that were made in relation to how the Officers would be used with the co-operation of the Council. In conclusion Councillor Muirhead expressed his concerns in relation to the reduction of the CAT and the impact to the communities particularly in relation to proactive activity. Councillor Muirhead

asked whether there was a reason to the significant drop in positive household raids for drugs which the Inspector confirmed she would provide.

The Board then heard from Councillor Baxter who raised concerns in relation to how the performance is reported and whether the crime rate would show as dropping due to the fact there was no-one there to witness the crime and further to highlight the distinction between real crime and reported crime. The Chief Superintendent confirmed that the new performance framework would address this and agreed with the sentiments of Councillor Baxter in relation to statistics.

There then followed a lengthy and at times heated debate in relation to the reduction of the CAT.

The Chair confirmed she had also spoken to the Chief Inspector and had agreed to maintain an open dialogue in relation to the CAT.

Decision

Following the presentation the Board agreed to:

- a) Note the contents of the report; and
- b) Hear from the Inspector in relation to the drop in positive household raids for drugs.

The date of the next meeting is 23 August 2016 at 11am