

Minute of Meeting



Police and Fire and Rescue Board

| Date | Time | Venue |
|------------------|----------|--|
| 17 February 2020 | 11.04 am | Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith |

Present:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Councillor Curran (Chair) | Councillor Muirhead |
| Councillor Munro | Councillor Parry |
| Councillor Small | |

In attendance:

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Midlothian Council Verona MacDonald, Democratic Services Team Leader | Alison White, Head of Adult Services |
| Police Scotland Chief Superintendent John McKenzie | Chief Inspector Arron Clinkscales |
| Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Stephen Gourlay, Area Commander | Andy Anderson, Group Commander |

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor McCall.

2. Order of Business

The Chair advised the order of business was as per the agenda circulated.

3. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

4. Minute of Previous Meeting

The Chair in reference to the Minute of Meeting of 18 November 2019 advised that, by way of a follow-up after the meeting, he had checked the current position relating to Jarnac Court. He confirmed it was occupied with an anticipated house in multiple occupation licence application for its proposed future use being lodged shortly. The application would deal with any health and safety matters at that time.

Andy Anderson clarified the figure quoted in respect of properties with working detectors and also advised reference to 224 fire safety visits was in respect of the quarter.

Thereafter, the Minute of Meeting of 18 November 2019 was unanimously approved and the Chair was authorised to sign it as a correct record.

5. Public Reports

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| 5.1 | Petitions Committee 10 December 2019 – Report by Executive Director Place | Councillor Munro and the Chair |
| Outline of report and summary of discussion | | |
| <p>The Chair summarised the terms of the report which narrated a decision by the Petitions Committee on 10 December 2019 to pass to the Board the concerns raised in the Petition for forwarding to Police Scotland. The Chair emphasised that the Board's remit did not extend to instructing the installation of signs or road markings but does include notification of any Midlothian policing matter.</p> <p>Councillor Parry advised of the perception of speeding issues in the small villages in the Ward she represented and enquired as to the process for raising the concerns with the Police. Chief Superintendent McKenzie advised Elected Members can raise concerns expressed to them with the Area Commander, Chief Inspector Clinkscales.</p> | | |
| <p>The Board noted the terms of the report and in doing so that the matter had now been notified to the Police.</p> | | |

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|--|--|---|
| 5.3.1 | Fire and Rescue Service – Scrutiny Report Quarter 3 2019 - 2020 | Scottish Fire and Rescue Service |
| Outline of report and summary of discussion | | |
| <p>Stephen Gourlay by way of an update advised of a few matters worthy of noting:-</p> <p>(i) negotiations regarding pay and conditions and the expanded role of a firefighter – a final offer had been communicated to all employees; the Fire Brigade union has recommended rejection of the offer which is now at a consultative ballot. He hoped matters could be finalised to allow transformation to proceed;</p> <p>(ii) Review of Local Plan – Board Members will have received an email regarding this and feedback would be appreciated;</p> | | |

(iii) new appointment – Watch Commander Ryan MacDonald has been appointed as an additional resource including covering Penicuik, community engagement and operational intelligence;

(iv) Newbridge Training Centre – the official opening, delayed due to the general election, had taken place in January. He advised should any Board Member wish to visit the facility he would be happy to make the arrangements if they got in touch.

The Chair enquired whether a failure to agree terms and conditions would lead to strike action and if so what contingency arrangements were in place. Mr Gourlay advised strike action was considered to be unlikely and if the offer was rejected, matters would progress to the usual pay negotiations in July. The Chair also advised he had attended the opening of the training centre and encouraged others if they get the opportunity to go along.

Group Commander Andy Anderson then spoke to the terms of the quarter 3 report. He highlighted an error on Page 8 whereby the figure for year to date reduction in all fire casualties should be 46% rather than 53%.

Thereafter, Councillor Smaill in noting the number of school projects ongoing in Midlothian and the 2 serious school fires in Fife and Scottish Borders, enquired whether there was anything additional the Council could do to protect its school estate. Mr Gourlay advised it was difficult to take measures against persons determined to target a building and that schools do attract anti-social behaviour. He emphasised buildings which are empty and will not be used again should be removed as soon as possible. He also advised that the fitting of sprinkler systems in new buildings in effect protects the building. However, he advised schools are not considered to be high risk properties. The Chair commented that lessons had been learned in Midlothian with unwanted buildings now being demolished as quickly as possible. Councillor Muirhead also commented how it was sometimes not possible to demolish a vacant building because of an expressed community interest in it.

The Chair commented that the figures for the Dalkeith and Midlothian East wards seemed quite high in comparison to the others particularly given these Wards do not have the highest populations. He also asked whether deprivation is a factor considered by the Service. Mr Gourlay advised that each referral to the Service is considered in terms of risk factors and there is evidence that deprivation is a factor. He confirmed the Service will continue to target people at highest risk in the community.

The Chair asked whether the Council use the community safety toolkit. Alison White advised staff will look at people who are vulnerable but this is not done by using the toolkit.

Decision

The Board noted the content of the report

| Report No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|---|---|------------------------|
| 5.2.3 | Police Scotland Midlothian Area Command Quarter 3 report 2019 - 2020 | Police Scotland |
| Outline of report and summary of discussion | | |
| Chief Superintendent McKenzie addressed the Board. He referred to matters of interest previously raised (a) the introduction of the contact assessment model would be live on 24 March 2020; (b) by the end of February officers would be using mobile devices; (c) Local Policing Plans are being generated and will be issued in draft prior to being presented to the Board; (d) Media comments – he | | |

referred to comments in the local media about violent crime being on the increase and advised that a comparison between Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 shows a decrease; (e) Licensed premises – 765 licensed premises checks had been carried out so far; (f) Solvency rate – with effect from today the figure was 82% being an increase to the figure in the report.

The Chair, with regard to the contact assessment model, noted the proposed demonstration had been cancelled but hoped it would be re-scheduled before the introduction date.

Chief Inspector Clinkscales then went through the Quarter 3 report.

Thereafter, the Chair commented that it was difficult to understand people who still get into a motor vehicle and do not use a seatbelt. He further emphasised the importance to Midlothian of proactive policing such as the bail checks undertaken.

Councillor Smaill commented the report was encouraging. He enquired if there was a reason why Midlothian was not badly affected by online fraud. In response Chief Inspector Clinkscales gave examples of proactive work undertaken by officers in relation to preventative measures such as visiting banks and highlighting to staff how potential fraudsters operate. In response Councillor Smaill noted the many bank closures may result in less engagement by staff with customers. Councillor Muirhead enquired as to the checks in place in banks to stop or delay payments being made to allow additional checks. Chief Inspector Clinkscales advised of account profiling but this can take up to 6 months from the opening of the account and that banks do pick up unusual account activity albeit this is done manually.

Decision

The Board noted the content of the report.

| Agenda No. | Report Title | Presented by: |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 5.3.2 | Scottish Police Authority – Joint Strategy for Policing – Consultation document – Verbal update | Head of Adult Social Care |
| Outline of report and summary of discussion | | |
| The Head of Adult Services drew attention to the deadline date of 2 March and invited Members who wished to contribute to the response to do so as soon as possible. She further advised she aimed to get a draft of the response to Board Members in advance of the deadline date. | | |
| The Board noted the advice provided by the Head of Adult Services | | |

The meeting terminated at 12.35 pm.