

**MINUTES of MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD** held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith Tuesday 1 April 2014 at 10.30 am.

**Present:-**

**Midlothian Council:** Councillors Thompson (Chair), Wallace and de Vink.

**Police Scotland:** Gill Imery and Michelle Ritchie.

**Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:** John Dickie and Dean Mack.

**Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority:** Rob Strachan and Margaret Brewer.

**Midlothian Voluntary Action:** George Wilson.

**In Attendance:-**

**Women's Aid East and Midlothian:** Julie Watson.

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillor Baxter, Colonel P Bates and Paul Kingham (Mod Edinburgh Garrison), J Royan (Police Scotland), David Hume (Scottish Police Board) and Neil Pirie (SFRS Board).

**1 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2 Minutes**

The Minutes of Meeting of 18 February 2014 were submitted and approved.

With regards to paragraph 3, Kevin Anderson, Head of Customer and Housing Services advised that Revenues staff had been working with Colin Bruce at the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on the sharing of information on houses in single occupancy.

**3 Midlothian Local Police Plan 2013-2014 - Update**

There was submitted report from Chief Inspector, J Royan, Police Scotland, updating the Board on the ongoing work of Police Scotland within Midlothian.

The report advised that particular areas of note were:-

**Detection Rate: Group 1-5 Crimes:** detection rates remained strong in Midlothian across a wide spectrum of crimes, with current rates sitting 2.3% ahead of last year's figure at 48.7%;

**Reducing Antisocial Behaviour:** ASB had reduced across Midlothian by 7.4%, which equated to 454 less incidents. In addition there had been a 7% increase in detection rates for Hate Crimes, providing greater levels of confidence to members of minority and/or under-represented groups. These significant results had only been achieved through the strong ethos of co-operation and partnership working enjoyed within Midlothian;

**Reducing Violence:** Violent crime had reduced within Midlothian over the course of the year, with an improved detection rate of 88.1%. In addition, the policy of searching the right people, in the right places at the right time had brought a 4% increase in positive searches for offensive weapons; and

**Making our Roads Safer:** Midlothian had seen a 50% reduction in those people killed or seriously injured on its roads but had experienced a slight increase in those slightly injured. Unfortunately, there had been one child (under 16) killed on the roads and efforts continued through the Midlothian Road Safety Forum to tackle this. Funding had already been secured for the '2morrow's Driver' educational event in September 2014.

In addition, the report highlighted that the Midlothian Community Policing Team continued to make a significant contribution to the safety of communities; and also provided details of forthcoming initiatives – Easter Antisocial Behaviour Campaign; and Rural Crime Initiative.

### **Decision**

- (a) To note the report; and
- (b) To note the forthcoming Easter Antisocial Behaviour Campaign; and Rural Crime Initiative.

## **4 Midlothian Local Policing Plan 2014**

With reference to (i) paragraph 6 of the Minutes of 18 February 2014; and (ii) paragraph 10 of the Minutes of the Council of 25 March 2014, there was submitted the Midlothian Local Policing Plan 2014.

The Plan provided information on the respective priorities of Police Scotland in relation to Midlothian for 2014, viz:-

- Tackling Substance Misuse
- Protecting People
- Reducing Violence
- Making our Roads Safer
- Reducing Antisocial Behaviour
- Tackling Serious and Organised Crime
- Housebreaking

The Plan also identified the priorities for each individual electoral ward; and the processes followed in determining those priorities, which included consultations with the local communities and also the elected Members.

The Board, having heard from the Chief Superintendent Gill Imery, discussed the rationale behind changes in the community policing arrangements. It was acknowledged that the move to having only one Community Police Officer per electoral ward had given rise to concerns, however it was anticipated that changes in the wider policing arrangements would ultimately result in a more community focused service generally that would result in an enhanced rather than reduced service.

### **Decision**

After further discussion, the Board agreed to approve the Police Scotland Midlothian Local Policing Plan 2014.

## **5 Community Policing Team - Activity Summary**

There was submitted report by Police Scotland providing a summary of Community Policing activity during the period February to March 2014.

The report provided detailed information in respect of the number of drugs and alcohol searches (persons and property); the volume of street alcohol recovered; the numbers of weapon searches; the number of licensed premises visits; the number of bail curfew checks completed/offenders reported; the number of warrant checks/persons arrested; the number of arrests made (other than on warrant); the number of full Standard Prosecution Reports (SPRs) submitted (excluding Road Traffic Act (RTA) and Bail Offences); the number of Anti Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices issued (excluding RTA); the number of Road Traffic based full SPRs; the number of RTA Fixed Penalty Notices(FPNs) issued; the number of seizures under Section 165 of the RTA; the number of vehicle ASBO warnings issued; the number of breath tests undertaken; and the number of Scottish Intelligence Database( SID) submissions. In addition, one incident had been attended along with the Ambulance Service; there had been 7 Child Social Work Referrals (CCFs) and one adult social work referrals submitted; and the number of officer hours spent on non-core duties totalled 83. The report also provided detailed additional information on police activity and notable incidents during this period.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

## **6 Police Scotland – Performance Report**

There was submitted report from Police Scotland detailing their performance in Midlothian against set indicators during the period 1 April 2013 to 31 January 2014.

The report highlighted that although there had been a slight increase in the number of crimes being reported, detection rates had also shown an increase. As had been reported previously a Domestic Crime investigation Unit had been established to address the reduction in detection rates in respect of crimes of domestic abuse. There had been a reduction in the level of Violent Crime and an increase in the number of positive “Stop and Searches” for both offensive weapons and also for drugs.

The Board, having heard from the Chief Superintendent Gill Imery, welcomed the success of recent initiatives and discussed the impact that increased reporting and higher detection rates had both on the Police and on partner organizations; it being felt that it would be useful if this could be reported on in more detail at a future meeting.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

## **7 Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Midlothian 2014 – 2017**

With reference to (i) paragraph 4 of the Minutes of 18 February 2014; and (ii) paragraph 10 of the Minutes of the Council of 25 March 2014, there was submitted the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Midlothian 2014–2017.

The Plan provided information on the respective priorities of Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) in relation to Midlothian for 2014, viz:-

- Reduction of Dwelling Fires
- Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties
- Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
- Reduction in Road Traffic Collisions
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

The Plan also provided detailed information on Strategic, local and operational assessments; the local risk profile; achieving the local outcomes; performance and accountability; local scrutiny and engagement; meeting emissions targets; and local plan priorities cross referenced to key national outcomes.

### **Decision**

The Board agreed to approve the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Midlothian 2014 – 2017.

## **8 Public Protection Service Redesign**

With reference to paragraph 19 of the Minutes of the Council of 25 March 2014, there was submitted report, dated 24 March 2014, by the Head of Adult and Community Care, advising of innovative new arrangements for Public Protection across East and Midlothian Local Authority areas.

The reports advised that the revised Public Protection structure would seek to address significant overlaps within different areas of public protection and take forward an integrated, “lifespan” approach to all aspects of public protection. This would provide opportunities for seamless working and would support operational staff in partner agencies to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable service users.

The new Public Protection Team would be co-located in an operational “hub” within Brunton Hall, with a staff presence from social work, police and health. Further work was in progress to streamline operational processes and strengthen links with operational staff and the revised Public Protection Team.

**Decision**

- (a) To note the Public Protection Service Redesign;
- (b) To support the new arrangements for Public Protection across East and Midlothian Local Authority Areas.

**9 Midlothian Community Safety Partnership Funding 2014-15**

There was submitted report, dated 21 March 2014, by the Head of Customer and Housing Services, provides a summary of the proposed procedure for distributing Community Safety Partnership Funding for 2014-15

The report explained that the Community Safety Fund was set yearly by the Council to offer financial support to community groups and agencies to support community safety related projects and initiatives. The Safer Communities Board's remit included ratifying funding proposals for these awards. The timing of the next Board meeting (19th August 2014) meant that waiting for the Board meeting to ratify which projects received funding would delay the funded projects. It was therefore proposed that the Board be asked to approve the list of funded projects via email prior to its next meeting. A report would then be presented to the August Safer Communities Board meeting providing evaluation information for the 2013/14 funded projects and a list of funded projects for 2014/15.

**Decision**

- (a) To note the content of the report; and
- (b) To agree the procedure for distributing funding for 2014-15.

(Action: Head of Customer and Housing Services)

**10 Re-offending Performance**

The Board received a Presentation from Rob Strachan, Chief Officer, Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority entitled 'Where are we on Re-offending across Lothian and Borders?', which explored –

- The main drivers of offending
- Types of offending
- Types of disposal and Sentence length
- Prolific and persistent offenders
- Reducing re-offending: Are all partners on board?
- Current and emerging challenges

The Chair, Councillor Thompson, thanked Rob for his presentation and invited questions/comments from Members.

Arising there from, the Board discussed ways in which the issues raised by prolific and persistent offenders could in particular be addressed, this included making an offending lifestyle uncomfortable, ensuring a more integrated approach to the provision of support when it was required, early intervention and other diversionary tactics.

**Decision**

- (a) To note the presentation; and
- (b) To note comments by Councillor de Vink in respect of the continued failure of the Labour Group to appoint representatives to the Board.

The meeting terminated at 12.23 pm.