

Minute of Meeting

Police, Fire and Rescue Board
Monday 21 August 2023
Item No: 4.1



Police and Fire and Rescue Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday 15 June 2023	13.00 pm	Virtual Meeting by MS Teams

Present:

Councillor McKenzie (Chair)
Councillor Alexander
Councillor Curran
Councillor McEwan

In Attendance:

Midlothian Council	Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place
	Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions (Acting)
Police Scotland	Chief Inspector James Robertson
	Community Inspector David Reilly
	Superintendent Andy Hall
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Hilary Sangster, Area Commander
	David Morrison, Prevention, Enforcement and Community Engagement Lead
	Mark Landels, Group Commander

Others Present:

Marie Sharp, Local Democracy Reporter

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair, Councillor McKenzie welcomed everyone to this virtual meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Board.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Smaill.

2. Order of Business

The order of business was as set out in the Agenda Pack previously circulated.

3. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were intimated at this stage of the proceedings.

4. Minute of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of Meeting held on 6 February 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

5. Public Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	SFRS Midlothian Scrutiny Performance Report Quarter 4 2022-23	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Chair welcomed David Morrison as the new Prevention, Enforcement and Community Engagement Lead.

SFRS updated that there was a positive progress on recruitment within the service, and recognition to Davy Gibson on long service and the development of partnerships and initiatives. SFRS went on to explain that there has been the deployment of bank hours which has enabled capacity to carry out more partnership working and intelligence gathering which is critical to operational delivery. Midlothian and East Lothian now have a wildfire tactical advisor.

The Board were updated that from 1 July the law will change on unwanted fire alarm signal response which is a significant change for partners and duty holders. The Board were asked to remind staff and an offer of support was given.

Mark Landels presented the Q4 performance report and provided information on the prevention, protection, and operational response activities within Midlothian for Quarter 4 of 2022-23 (1st January – 31st March 2023) including

information on the year-to-date figures. Mr Landel took the Board through the performance information presented in the report referring to the performance summary and how the priorities using the 6 key indicators were being met.

He thereafter responded along with colleagues to questions from Board Members. These included a discussion on how SFRS are managing the unintended consequences of non-attendance of alarms. SRS advised that this will be kept under observation and discussed at area and national level if there are concerns and is subject to regular review. SFRS have observed that engagement has shown that responsible persons not aware of their responsibilities. It was confirmed that if SFRS receive a call they will attend. The service continues to work under its Code of Practice and undertake fire safety audits.

Mr Oliver confirmed to the Board that the Council's Health & Safety Team and Fire Safety Officer have engaged with relevant affected Council services, and have developed a suite of supporting documentation, process flows etc for Midlothian Council as an employer and are ready for 1 July change.

A request for an update on the success of the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) sharing crewed and uncrewed stations was made. It was confirmed that this was working well, and feedback showed a positive response on sharing resources, facilities and buildings and closer working. This model also provides welfare for other blue lights services especially in rural areas when they are on the beat. Other benefits include being able to work out of key strategic stations to meet CAT 1 requests and reduce costs. Cross sharing skills and ideas and have seen positive outcomes. It's an ongoing priority of the service to co-locate for environmental and financial efficiencies, and there is a tri-service working group that continually looks at this. Councillor McEwan asked if Penicuik would continue and passed on that this is seen as a fruitful development and the community are appreciative of it.

Decision

The Board noted the content of the report

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2	Police Scotland Midlothian Quarter 4 Scrutiny Report 2022/23	Police Scotland (PS)
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Chief Inspector James Robertson, introduced the report and went on to provide an update on each separate category as detailed within the report, giving examples of the position in Midlothian -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missing Persons.• Domestic Abuse.• Hate Crime.		

- Sexual Crimes.
- Drugs Supply, Production and Cultivation.
- Crimes of Violence.
- Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Dishonesty.
- Housebreaking.
- Road Safety.
- Tackling Serious Organised Crime.
- Midlothian Community Action Team (MCAT).

He also highlighted that the end of the report is a duplication and apologised for the confusion.

Councillor Curran expressed his thanks to Arron Clinkscales who recently retired from Police Scotland. He acknowledge his service to the community and the positive difference that he made to policing in Midlothian.

The Board proceeded to discuss points from the report, including the number of domestic abuse crimes reported (635) and the creation of the domestic PAC team to enable Police Officers to focus on top end level. PS stated that convictions are not often realised in domestic violence crimes.

The Board asked about the anti-social behaviour at Tesco Hardengreen and whether the Young Scot free bus travel is contributing to this. PS responded that this is difficult to answer. PS advised that there has been really good support/engagement from the business and staff around the Hardengreen area and Lothian Buses and over the last few weekends they have seen a vast improvement, and there are advance plans in place for the summer holidays.

There was a discussion on speeding. It was raised that there is public anxiety regarding the reduction on speed limits through signage but lack of enforcement, and it was asked whether more cameras were being erected installed. PS explained the current protocol for speeding include enforcement and the criteria that is required to be met, specifically where there is greatest risk and action would result in casualty reduction. There is limited resource to deploy and is allocated through this criterion and using data on RTCs.

Mr Oliver talked about the behavioural change that is required from drivers and feedback from the Council's speed policy consultation. He stated that Road Safety and speeding are interlined but different. The MCAT SLA includes this area of concern, and he reiterated that this is not only a police matter, and there are there engineering solutions to be considered, and the Council works in partnership with PS. Where there are areas of concern then this would be discussed and proposed actions reviewed in line with a safety audit. Past concerns have been responded to by doing spot checks and if that requires

further intervention then discuss with PS to escalate if required. Evidence base and intelligence informed.

The Board was advised that Amanda Johnston has replaced Michelle Lindsay. The Board thanked Michelle Lindsay for her successful engagement with partners and the community and her long service of 11 years.

PS provided information on Operation Jewel which is ongoing during the summer months balanced against PS presence at local community events. There was also a discussion on the reports of knives recovered with PS confirming that there is no significant increase across Midlothian in the carrying of weapons. The Board queried the reported epidemic of fentanyl use and whether PS can proactively manage illegal drugs such as this. PS advised that they work with MELDAP and there are no recent fentanyl related incidents, and they will continue to monitor. They also advised that SFRS class fentanyl as a HAZMAT issue due to the significance of it.

Decision

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Protective Services	Chief Officer Place
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Chief Officer Place, Derek Oliver addressed the Board on those Protective Services functions Environmental Health and Trading Standards, Licensing and Emergency Planning, which overlapped activities carried out by the Police, and Fire and Rescue Services, highlighting the work which had been undertaken during the course of Quarter 4.</p> <p>The Board asked if there is any public promotion regarding actions against vape selling. Mr Oliver confirmed that a press release was issued and surveillance locations are communicated.</p> <p>The Board asked how often food and license premises are inspected and who monitors them. Mr Oliver advised that this varies under the licensing policy and food safety policy. Trading Standards and Food Health and Safety monitor, assess and enforce on a risk-based approach and work with PS for licensing to meet ensure licence holders meet licensing objects.</p> <p>The Board discussed the increase of Public Entertainment Licences and whether the engagement with the Safety Advisory Group has increased. Mr Oliver confirmed it had and was positive and reiterated the SAG was there to facilitate and support events to be delivered successfully.</p> <p>There was a discussion on the use of the mobile CCTV and the Board queried whether these were fully utilised by the Council as well as the police. Mr Oliver</p>		

confirmed the process for deployment and examples of use include ASB and environmental crime, responding to public safety concerns e.g. large scale event and that there is also a power tower available that is more remote. 99% are used overtly and covert is subject to RIPSA. PS agreed this is invaluable and gave a recent example of use to disprove an allegation which was key in this circumstance.

Councillor Smaill submitted a question to be discussed in his absence regarding a serious accident that took place on the A68 and whether there is to be any signage realignment/road safety works? The Board queried the location of the incident. The Board were advised of Midlothian road safety governance and that this would be taken through the divisional group attended by partners (highways agencies) who discuss immediate issues, trends and agreed course of action.

Decision

The Board noted the Report.

6. Private Reports

No private items for discussion

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on Monday 21 August 2023 at 13.00pm

The meeting terminated at 14.37 pm.