

Minute of Meeting



Police and Fire and Rescue Board

Date	Time	Venue
18 February 2019	11.04am	Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith

Present:

Councillor Curran (Chair)	Councillor McCall
Councillor Muirhead	Councillor Munro
Councillor Small	

In attendance:

Midlothian Council Verona MacDonald, Democratic Services Team Leader	Margaret Brewer, Service Manager, Criminal Justice
Police Scotland Chief Superintendent Lesley Clark	Chief Inspector Kenneth Simpson
Chief Inspector Arron Clinkscales	
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Stephen Gourlay, Area Manager	Dean Mack, Group Manager

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Order of Business

The Clerk advised that 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 Minute of Meeting of 19 November 2018 was unanimously approved and the Chair was authorised to sign it as a correct record of the meeting. The Chair advised that, by way of a follow-up, he had made contact with the relevant Head of Service within the Council regarding fire home safety visits.

Prior to consideration of the following reports the Chair on behalf of the Board took the opportunity to thank Chief Inspector Simpson for his commitment to the Board since its inception and for the quality of verbal and written reports presented by him. He wished him well with his career move which would see him leave Midlothian.

5. Public Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1.1	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Midlothian Local Performance Report – Quarter 3, 1 October to 31 December 2018	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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a new Chief Fire Officer for Scotland had been appointed and had been in post for approximately 4 weeks. He would take the Service forward in terms of transformation; (ii) 2 temporary Depute Chief Officers were also now in place; (iii) the training centre at Newbridge was progressing well and he expected Board Members to receive invites to the opening ceremony around May; (iv) a Scottish Government consultation on the way fireworks are licensed and sold was underway and he would pass on a note of the closing date to Members in due course. <p>Dean Mack then provided the Board with a summary of the Quarter 3 report. He advised that it was a good report with 5 of the 6 outcomes showing as green/on target. He noted that there had been a significant decrease of over 200 incidents during the course of the year and that the Service continued to work with partners to benefit communities. He then went through each of the outcomes. He advised that fire safety endorsement audits were slightly below the target but the Service expected to be on target by the end of the reporting year and fire safety visits were slightly above.</p> <p>Councillor Muirhead, with regard to house fires, enquired whether there was a pattern. Mr Mack advised that a couple related to gas fires and dishwashers. He suggested that people tend not to maintain household appliances and often leave them switched on when not in use. He explained that in today's disposable society the quality of these goods is not the same as once was but that the public are now more reliant on electric appliances. Mr Gourlay commented that the Service does now engage with manufacturers of electrical goods and that this has led to the withdrawal of some appliances from the market.</p>		

Councillor Smaill, with regard to the decrease in deliberate fires wondered if this was as a result of the work undertaken by the Service in schools. Mr Mack advised that this outcome was in effect “peaks and troughs” and whereas there was a great deal of contact with schools and he would like to say yes that he believed the figure would increase again in the near future.

Decision

The Board noted the terms of the Quarter 3 report.

Report No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2.1	Police Scotland Midlothian Scrutiny Report October to December 2018	Police Scotland

Outline of report and summary of discussion

Chief Superintendent Clark in response to the words by the Chair about Chief Inspector Simpson, paid her own personal tribute to the Chief Inspector. She then introduced Chief Inspector Arron Clinkstones who has taken over from Chief Inspector Simpson. She then provided an update on ongoing and relevant police matters:-

- (i) 2 new Superintendents were now in place in her team;
- (ii) she was pleased to note that the 100 day mental health challenge which was very Midlothian focused, saw officers working closely with the Council’s Joint Director, Health and Social Care who took the lead and;
- (iii) the out of office urgent care hub was continuing to be assessed across the Lothians to ensure the appropriate level of care is provided to individuals with mental health issues, particularly over weekends.

Prior to handing over to Chief Inspector Simpson she noted that the quarterly scrutiny report showed a significant increase in domestic incidents but that there was also an increase in detection which was positive.

Chief Inspector Simpson spoke to the terms of the quarterly scrutiny report. He advised that, on the whole, the report was positive but noted the increases in drugs cases and housebreaking.

The Chair noted that the Board were aware of the issues experienced by developers of new house sites whereby some houses were been targeted once new boilers and other electrical equipment was installed. Councillor Muirhead enquired as to whether the detection rate for domestic abuse cases was the same as the conviction rate. Chief Inspector Simpson advised that the conviction rate was outwith the control of the Police Service and therefore different from the detection rate but the increase in detection was due to evidence being available to the officers to enable them to charge and report matters to the Procurator Fiscal Service. Councillor Muirhead, in relation to housebreaking, enquired whether there was evidence that there had been a “spate” of these. The Chief Inspector advised that there was a real mixture and it was a continual challenge for the Police. Often houses were broken into to steal high cost vehicles and sometimes an individual would go on a spree to feed a habit. He said that the vehicle thefts were the most challenging for officers but that this was a problem across central Scotland.

Questions were then put by other Board Members and subsequently answered by

the Chief Inspector.

Decision

Thereafter, the Board noted the content of the report.
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Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2.2	Community Action Team Report – October to December 2018	Police Scotland
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
Chief Inspector Simpson spoke to the terms of the Report which summarised the activities of the Community Policing Team during the quarter and drew attention to the positive impact the Council funded teams were having within the communities they serve.		
Decision		
The Board noted the terms of the Report.		

Before the meeting concluded, Chief Inspector Simpson thanked the Chair for his kind words at the beginning of the meeting and said it had been a real privilege to work in Midlothian. He believed that the partnership working now in place was a real positive aspect for the area moving forward. He paid tribute to his staff. In response the Chair also thanked the staff for the hard work they do on behalf of Midlothian residents.

The meeting terminated at 11.55 am.