

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Services Committee

Thursday, 1 September 2022

Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX

PRESENT

Councillor James Allan, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor Donald Gatt

APOLOGIES

Councillor Peter Bloomfield, Councillor Shona Morrison

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Superintendent Kate Stephens, Chief Inspector Simon Reid, both Police Scotland, Mr Chay Ewing, Area Commander, Local Senior Officer and Mr Andy Buchan, Group Commander, both Fire and Rescue Services Scotland, Head of Economic Growth and Development and Mrs Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Committee, both Moray Council.

1 Chair

Councillor Colyer, being Depute Chair of the Committee, chaired the meeting as Councillor Bloomfield had submitted his apologies.

2 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillor's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of member's interests in respect in respect of any item on the agenda.

3 Resolution

The meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business appearing at the relevant paragraphs of this minute as specified below, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraphs of part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Paragraph No. of Minute	Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A

9.	14 – Information relating to any action taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
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4 Minute of Meeting dated 17 February 2022

The Minute of the meeting of the Police and Fire and Rescue Services Committee was submitted and approved.

5 Written Questions

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

6 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Moray Performance Report 1 April 2022 - September 2022

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 18 February 2022, a report by the Local Senior Officer (LSO), Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray informed the Committee of the performance undertaken by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) locally and in respect of the Moray Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2021-24.

LSO Ewing advised that all performance indicators in terms of accidental dwelling fires; accidental dwelling fire casualties and fatalities special service; deliberate fires; non-domestic fires; and unwanted fire alarm signals, were below the 3 year average.

During discussion surrounding home fire safety visits, it was queried whether there was any indication as to whether residents in Moray were complying with the recent change in legislation regarding the installation of smoke alarms in their homes.

In response, LSO Ewing advised that the Fire Service could only carry out a home fire safety check if invited to do so by a resident however if a high risk individual required to have interlinked smoke alarm devices installed, the Fire Service could assist however for a regular home fire safety check, a stand alone smoke detector unit would be fitted. LSO Ewing further offered a thematic report on home fire safety visits at a future meeting of this Committee, if this was felt to be helpful. This was agreed.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note:

- (i) performance outlined in the report applicable to annual performance for 1 April 2022 to 1 September 2022; and
- (ii) that consideration would be given to providing a thematic report on Home Fire Safety Visits to a future meeting of the Committee.

7 Police Performance

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 19 November 2020, a report by the Divisional Police Commander, North East Division, Police Scotland, informed the Committee of the performance of Police in respect of the Local Policing Plan 2020-23 and other key indicators.

During her introduction, Chief Superintendent Stephen advised that Emma Bond had replaced John Hawkins as Assistant Chief Constable and that the Local Police Plan was currently being refreshed with a view to providing a new plan for 2023-2026. Chief Superintendent Stephen went on to provide an overview of police performance in terms of staffing; complaints; anti-social behaviour, violence and disorder; acquisitive crime; road safety and road crime; protecting people at risk of harm; serious organised crime; and counter terrorism and domestic extremism.

During discussion surrounding the recent increase in anti-social behaviour in the Elgin and Keith areas, it was stated that local Ward Members are being contacted frequently by residents who are concerned about the behaviour of these children and in some cases, concerned for their safety and it was queried what action the Police are taking in this regard, in particular, how parents are being informed.

In response, Chief Superintendent Stephen advised that this was a challenge for the Police at this time and is a direct result of children receiving free bus passes which enables travel throughout Moray.

Chief Inspector Reid further advised that in late June, the Police started to receive a large number of calls complaining of anti-social behaviour, primarily in the Elgin area and usually on a Friday and Saturday evening. Whilst the benefits of free bus travel for young people were recognised, it was noted that previous anti-social behaviour experienced in Keith, Buckie and Forres was being displaced to Elgin and linked to large groups of young people wishing to gather outside in open space. Following reports from Elgin Business Improvement District (BID), Elected Members and residents asking for a more visible police presence in the area, the community policing team were supported to engage with the young people with a view to preventing any anti-social behaviour. Community focused officers engaged with young people in schools to promote good behaviour however this was hampered by schools closing for the summer holidays. With regard to some serious incidents that have occurred, Chief Inspector Reid advised that these had been dealt with accordingly and reported to the Young Justice Management Unit and, if required, the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal however Chief Inspector Reid advised that assistance from partners within education, social work, other third sector agencies and parents was vital to address the issue going forward. This was noted.

During further discussion surrounding the New Driver Scheme, it was queried whether the scheme was the same that had been used in the past.

In response, Chief Inspector Reid advised that the New Driver Scheme had been developed further and had been very effective and agreed to provide further information in this regard to the Committee following the meeting. This was noted.

In relation to the recent increase in antisocial behaviour, it was queried whether there was any correlation to the recent change in age of criminal responsibility.

In response, Chief Superintendent Stephen advised that enquiries would be made as to whether there is evidence to suggest that the increase in anti-social

behaviour coincides with the recent change in age of criminal responsibility. This was noted.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note performance outlined in the reports; and
- (ii) that the Local Commander will continue to report to the Committee quarterly on performance measures against service objectives as articulated in the 2020-23 Local Policing Plan;
- (iii) the actions taken by the Police in relation to the recent increase in anti-social behaviour in Moray;
- (iv) to note that the Committee will be provided with further information in relation to the newly developed New Driver Scheme;
- (v) to note that enquiries would be made as to whether there is evidence to suggest that the spike in anti-social behaviour coincides with the recent change in age of criminal responsibility.

8 Question Time

Councillor Coull sought an update in relation to the recent Scottish Fire and Rescue Service recruitment drive.

In response LSO Ewing advised that recruitment in Moray continued to improve steadily and further explained the PREP initiative where early contact is made with potential candidates who are then supported through the recruitment process.

9 Police Scotland Operational Update [Para 14]

Chief Superintendent Stephen and Chief Inspector Reid answered questions raised in relation to operational matters within Police Scotland.