

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**CABINET**  
**(POLICE & FIRE)**

**Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 15 June 2023.**

**Present:**

Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor Gordon Wallace(\*)

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

**Attending:**

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Murray Husband, Head of Digital and Community Safety; Stephen Bell, Community Safety Manager; John Burke, Committee Services Officer; and Liona Allison, Assistant Committee Services Officer.

**Also Attending:**

Superintendent Alan Gray; Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie, (Area Commander); Michele Grant, Communities Inspector, Police Scotland; Area Commander David McCarrey; and Group Commander Alan Coughtrie, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

**Apology:**

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)

(\*) indicates remote attendance.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**486.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 4 - 2022-23**

**487.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the fourth quarter of 2022-23. The report also provided statistical information in relation to various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period together with comparative statistics for the corresponding period in 2021-22.

Introducing the report, Superintendent Gray announced that he was looking forward to working with new Chief Constable, Joe Farrell. In a statement, the Chief Constable had

acknowledged sexism and racism which existed within Police Scotland and committed himself to combating that. This was welcomed by the members of Cabinet.

Superintendent Gray also referred to the Policing Together initiative led by Assistant Chief Constable David Duncan and praised ongoing partnership work taking place within East Renfrewshire, particularly the Water Safety Group.

Superintendent Gray highlighted budget challenges within Police Scotland, but believed that with continued collaboration and partnership working, the service would rise to meet the challenge.

Chief Inspector Gallie then reported on the performance of the police against the five local policing priorities contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2020-23.

On referring to the report, he recognised the significant impact acquisitive crime and in particular theft by housebreaking, had on communities, and advised that for acquisitive crime, the number of homes broken into (including attempts) had increased by 36 from the previous year. Despite this, the year to date total of 129 was 21% lower than the 5 year average and 43% lower than the 2019/2020 figure. He explained that tackling acquisitive crime had been a priority with significant resources both locally and nationally dedicated to enhance prevention and bring offenders to justice. It was noted that this was not just an East Renfrewshire issue and the police were working with partners across the UK to share information, intelligence and best practise.

In respect of crimes of dishonesty, it was reported that crimes of this type had slowed in growth, with a 3% increase for the year and remained in line with the 5 year average. Significant arrests had been made of organised criminals targeting East Renfrewshire's retailers, with a 2% decrease in fraud over the year. Theft by shoplifting continued to climb with 75 more offences than last quarter. It was believed that the cost of living crisis was having an effect on these figures.

In relation to public protection, it was noted that there had been 74 Non-Sexual Crimes of Violence recorded, with 3 attempted murders, both of which had successfully been detected.

Commenting on violent crime, Chief Inspector Gallie reported that serious assaults had reduced by 10% compared to the previous year, and 23% compared to the 5 year average. This was partially because of successful stop and search operations carried out as a result of improving police intelligence. 2 robberies of assaults with intent to rob had been recorded since the last period, taking the total for the year to 10, 9 of which had been successfully detected, and Police Scotland continued to work with colleagues in specialist departments to support victims and identify perpetrators.

In terms of antisocial behaviour and disorder, the continuing downward trend in calls was noted with a decrease of 14% on this year compared to the previous year. There had been 33 fire-raising this year which was currently below the 5 year average. It was also noted that alcohol consumption in public places had also decreased by 16% over the year.

In relation to drug dealing and use it was noted that during the year there had been 143 recorded drug crimes, which was down 8% on the 5 year average. The public health approach to policing supported and protected young people and families by tackling the crime and arresting those who dealt drugs in East Renfrewshire communities.

Chief Inspector Gallie concluded by giving some examples of the work being done in East Renfrewshire by officers of Police Scotland on all of the areas of focus covered, which were highlighted within the report.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which Chief Inspector Gallie responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the crime statistics recorded in the report. These included the leaflet campaigns in relation to break-ins that had been carried out in the area, the approach to detecting those concealing bladed weapons and the shoplifting figures.

The Cabinet noted the report.

### **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2022-23**

**488.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the third quarter of 2022-23 against the key priorities in their local plan.

Introducing the report Group Commander Coughtrie referred to the new Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) policy. From 1 July, SFRS would only attend in response to a fire alarm activation where fire had been verified by a 999 call or by multiple fire system activations in the same location. It was highlighted that SFRS had made 28,000 automatic attendances as a result of fire alarm systems activating, and 98% of these were false alarms.

It was pointed out that sleeping dwellings, such as hotels, were exempt from this change and SFRS would attend such premises as normal.

Group Commander Coughtrie explained that it was for the Dutyholder of a premises to ensure that it was safe from fire and they should ensure that staff were trained to perform the necessary checks and verify if an alarm required SFRS attendance. A virtual event had been held, a recording of which was available on the SFRS YouTube channel.

Group Commander Coughtrie expressed that partnership working across East Renfrewshire had always been positive and he expected this would continue as the new policy rolled out, with SFRS being available to offer any clarity or assistance they could in terms of moving to the new policy.

Group Commander Coughtrie then reported on the performance of SFRS on performance over quarter 4.

Group Commander Coughtrie prefaced his remarks on the report by commenting on some of the engagement activity that had taken place and equipment supplied during the quarter. This included 27 community activities by the community action team and 73 by operational crews. 301 home fires safety visits were carried out, 112 in premises identified as high risk with 119 smoke detectors being fitted.

In relation to accidental dwelling fires a 44% decrease on the year on year figure was reported and a 15 reduction against the 3 year figure. It was noted that detection was present in 100% of premises and activated in 100%. Details of some of the ongoing community work that took place was provided, with the high engagement rates in East Renfrewshire being noted.

Group Commander Coughtrie reported that the figures in relation to unintentional injury and harm saw an increase in the year-on-year average and a decrease against 3 year average figures. However it was clarified that 50% of activity related to assisting other organisations gain access to property.

Deliberate fire setting also showed a positive 29% decrease on the year and year indicator, with no increase on the 3 year average. The Community Action Team and Operational Crews continued to carry out engagement activity to mitigate the risk of this type of activity.

Non-domestic fire safety showed no increase from the previous year but with a 13% reduction on the 3 year average. Details of the incidents were provided.

Group Commander Coughtrie concluded by providing information in relation to UFAS. The year on year increase was disappointing, however there had been a slight decrease in the 3 year average. It was noted that the majority were in educational facilities with the main causes being accidental, system faults and cooking. The impact of poor maintenance was also highlighted.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which officers McCarrey and Coughtrie responded to a number of questions and comments on a range of issues recorded in the report. Mainly, the discussion focused on the change of the UFAS policy as officers and members sought clarity on the guidance to be issued, particularly in relation to educational establishments, in regard to the policy.

Thereafter the Cabinet agreed to note the report.

CHAIR