

LOCAL POLICE & FIRE SCRUTINY PANEL – 21 SEPTEMBER 2023

Local Police & Fire Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 21 September 2023 at 3pm

Present: Provost McKenzie, Councillors Brennan, Cassidy (for McGuire), Clocherty, Crowther, Daisley, Law, Moran, Quinn, Reynolds and Wilson.

Chair: Councillor Wilson presided.

In attendance:

Tony McEwan	Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources (for Corporate Director, Education, Communities & Organisational Development)
Hugh Scott	Service Manager Community Learning & Development, Community Safety & Resilience and Sport
Martin McNab	Public Protection Manager
Anne Sinclair	Legal Services Manager (for Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services)
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer
Colin MacDonald	Senior Committee Officer
Siobhan MacMaster	Solicitor, Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services

In attendance also:

Laura Waddell	Chief Superintendent, Local Police Commander Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Division, Police Scotland
Damian Kane	Chief Inspector, Area Commander, Inverclyde, Police Scotland
Gary Sergeant	Detective Inspector, Renfrewshire & Inverclyde, Police Scotland
Derek Middleton	Intelligence Support Analysis and Performance, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde, Police Scotland
David McCarrey	Area Commander, Service Delivery, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde
Rod Anderson	Group Commander, Prevention & Protection, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde

The meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillors Brennan and Quinn attending remotely.

Prior to the commencement of business, the Convener welcomed the representatives from Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue Services to the meeting.

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Panel.

467 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

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An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor McGuire, with Councillor Cassidy substituting.

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No declarations of interest were intimated.

468 Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Performance Report 468

There was submitted a report on the performance and activities of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service during the reporting period 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023. During discussion on this item reference was made to the increase in deliberate fire setting particularly in relation to refuse and grassland fires being the main contributors. Group Commander Anderson advised that the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Community Action Team are working with partners across Inverclyde taking a targeted approach to reducing deliberate fire settings. Area Commander McCarrey provided assurance that there are plans in place should there be a major incident following concerns raised by Members in relation to deliberate fire settings throughout Inverclyde and the recent fire at the derelict school at Robert Street, Port Glasgow.

Decided: that the information contained in the report be noted.

469 Police Scotland Performance Report 469

Prior to the discussion on this item Chief Superintendent Waddell provided Members with a further update on the national picture in relation to the reduction in police officer numbers and the challenges of the service. She further advised that a report had been submitted to Scottish Government by Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority regarding the impact if Police Scotland are continually underinvested. Members were advised that the link to the paper would be circulated. Thereafter, Chief Superintendent Waddell answered a number of questions from Members.

There was submitted a report on the performance and activities of Police Scotland during the reporting period 1 April 2023 to 31 July 2023. During discussion of this item Chief Inspector Kane made reference to missing person reports in Inverclyde during the reporting period. It was noted that 84 missing person reports were recorded, an increase of 20% on the same reporting period in 2022. Chief Inspector Kane informed Members that missing persons reports have been particularly significant amongst people under the age of 19. It was noted that repeat missing person reports continue to be an issue of concern, particularly in relation to Looked After and Accommodated Children. He further advised that Police Scotland colleagues are working with partner agencies in order to address this issue. Chief Inspector Kane advised Members that road casualties have increased in the reporting period with more people seriously or slightly injured on Inverclyde's roads. It was noted that the Road Policing unit has contributed to a rise of 19.8% in the recording of road traffic offences which include speeding, mobile phone, licence and insurance offences. Chief Inspector Kane reported that six suspected drug deaths occurred in Inverclyde in the reporting period. He informed Members that 108 officers deployed in Inverclyde have completed Naloxone training. It was noted that intelligence led policing resulted in 14 drug supply detection cases during the reporting period and that organised criminals in Renfrewshire & Inverclyde were deprived of £808,553 in cash and assets through use of the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Decided:

- (1) that the information contained in the report be noted; and
- (2) that it be agreed that the Convener write to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice expressing the Panel's concerns in relation to the proposed budget cuts.

470 Chief Superintendent Laura Waddell 470

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The Convener conveyed his appreciation and thanks on behalf of the Panel to Chief Superintendent Waddell on her last Panel Meeting. The Convener wished Superintendent well for the future.

471 Firework Control Zones**471**

There was submitted a report by the Director Environment & Regeneration providing information on the considerations and relevant timescales when developing firework control zones as contained in the guidance as detailed in appendix 1 of the report.

Decided: that the Committee notes the proposals and development of Firework Control Zones.

472 Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel Update Report**472**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development providing an update on current and emerging issues relating to Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue Services.

Decided:

(1) that the updates on the following matters be noted (a) the Police Chief Constable's Retirement, (b) Strategic Partnership Agreement for policing, (c) 'Don't Feed Hate' Campaign, (d) His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) Annual Report 2022-23, (e) SFRS – Strategic Service Review Programme and (f) SFRS – Unwanted False Alarms.