



Subject: POLICE – FALKIRK AREA COMMAND PERFORMANCE
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Author: LOCAL COMMANDER, FORTH VALLEY DIVISION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight matters in the Area Command such as emerging trends and threats or particular successes and difficulties.
- 1.2 The Falkirk Policing Performance Scrutiny Report table contains the current information on performance against selected performance indicators. This covering report provides complementary information to that in the table to present a rounded picture of issues affecting policing in Falkirk Council area.
- 1.3 The format of this report generally follows that of the Local Policing Plan priorities (i.e. Violence/Disorder & ASB, Serious Crime, Domestic Abuse etc) as they appear on the Scrutiny Report table.
- 1.4 The colour coding on the table is intended to provide a visual representation of variations in performance. It is based on the following protocol which informed reports to the Central Scotland Joint Police Board.
- 1.5 The numbers in the third column show current year data and will be shown in **green font** if performance is **better** than or **the same** as **both** the previous year and the 3/5 year average; and in **red font** if performance is **less** than **either** the previous year **or** the 3/5 year average.
- 1.6 The numbers in the fourth column show **previous year data**; and in the seventh column show figures for the **3 or 5 year average** depending on the amount of data available. Each box in these columns will have a colour fill based on a comparison with current year figures -
 - **light green** if the current year figures are significantly better
 - **light red** if the current year figures are significantly less good ; and
 - **light orange** if there is a limited variation either way - these can be classified as anticipated fluctuations which routinely occur in the normal course of business. However, on occasion, even limited variations may be highlighted red or green if the indicator relates to a local priority of particular importance.

- 1.7 There will normally be contextual information provided on current performance which shows significant improvement or reduction against that achieved previously. For this meeting, contextual comment has only been applied to local policing plan objectives. For a small number of indicators only the Forth Valley Division figure is available at this time, and this is identified in the contextual comments.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 The long-term trend of reducing crime rates has continued in this quarter with a drop of 14% in crime groups 1 to 4 compared to the 5 year average. However, there is a rise of just below 2% from the figure at this time last year, although this is accounted for almost entirely by a sharp rise in thefts by shoplifting (+53). These crimes have, in the main, involved low-value items including food and alcohol.
- 2.2 The 53 performance indicators currently used in the table reflect the aspirations of Forth Valley Division to achieve continuous improvement in service delivery to the communities in this area.
- 2.3 They contain information produced by Police Scotland which is relevant to national priorities and also reflects the objectives in the Falkirk Local Policing Plan. The 32 local plan indicators are shown as **emboldened** in the table. The remaining indicators also provide valuable information on local performance as they fit comfortably under the six local priority headings.
- 2.4 Together, they help to provide information on trends in performance which is expanded by the contextual information and actions shown in the final column. Of the 30 local plan indicators for which data is available, 19 show positive performance whilst 11 show reduced levels. The scrutiny table provides detail of how significant the variations in performance were, and whether it varied in respect of the previous year or the 3/5 year average or both.
- 2.5 The long-term downward trend in crimes and offences involving **Anti-Social Behaviour, disorder and vandalism** has continued over the reporting period. The shorter-term figures from the previous year show smaller variations, with changes of less than 1% up or down. This is reflected, for example, in the number of incidents of disorder reported to the police (section 14 of table) that show a reduction of 20% on the 5 year average but a slight increase of 0.9% from the previous year.
- 2.6 In respect of **violent crime**, there were significant reductions in both serious and minor assaults with detection rates in both categories remaining at high levels. In the majority of assaults no weapon was used. The number of robberies rose by 1 from the previous year from 7 to 8, and by 2 against the 5 year average of 6.

- 2.7 A focused effort against the **misuse of drugs** has seen a rise from last year in the number of persons charged with the supply, production or cultivation of illegal substances (40 to 47) which is in line with recent upward trends taking performance back towards the 5 year average (52).
- 2.8 **Crimes of dishonesty (group 3)** show an increase of about 3.5% overall against 2012/13 but remain below the 5 year average. The most significant rises are in Fraud and Theft by Shoplifting, although both Theft by Housebreaking and Motor Vehicle Crimes have reduced against both the previous year and the 5 year average. The detection rate for acquisitive crime is 46% which shows a slight improvement on previous performance.
- 2.9 The number of **domestic abuse incidents** (432) shows a drop against the previous year (515) and continues the longer-term trend of reductions in the numbers of such incidents reported to police. This issue has been given particular emphasis within Forth Valley Division and measures including intervention, enforcement and target profiling have been applied successfully.
- 2.10 **Road Policing and Road Crime** is being addressed within the new structure of a local Forth Valley Divisional Road Policing Unit supplemented by the national Trunks Road Policing Group which covers activity on key main routes. The number of road collisions (76 to 64) and people killed or seriously injured (20 to 8) both show reductions. Focused efforts on addressing the potential causes of collision such as speeding and use of mobile phones while driving have led to increased detections under these categories. More detail on collisions is shown in the attached table, and locations and severity of injuries are highlighted on the map provided.
- 2.11 One of the objectives under the priority of **Protecting the Public** is to reduce the levels of **crimes of indecency**. These have decreased from 46 during the reporting period last year to 42 in this year and show an even greater reduction against the 5 year average (55.8). Crimes are recorded according to the date they are **reported** regardless of when they occurred, and detections are recorded when the perpetrator is charged, which may be some months later. This means that the number of detections in any given period may vary from the number of crimes reported in that period. This can lead to detection rates of more than 100% where the number of detections exceeds the number of reports. This is seen in the Scrutiny Table (section 43) in respect of the rape detection rate (120%). Levels of offending by individuals who are strangers to the victim remain low.
- 2.12 Another objective under the preceding priority is to respond to **hate crimes and offences**, and the rates for detecting offenders remains high at almost 81%. This reflects the importance placed on addressing this issue, and work in detecting offenders is complemented by the provision of assistance, advice and guidance to victims.

- 2.13 **Community Confidence and Engagement** remains at the heart of local policing, and the **number of complaints about the police** and the nature of such complaints can be a measure of how well this is being achieved. The number has reduced for this reporting period (44 to 35) and no significant trends in respect of individuals or particular locations are currently discernible. In addition, the service user survey currently employed shows satisfaction levels of 84% in respect of overall police performance.

3. RISKS AND THREATS

- 3.1 Some of the risks and threats which continue to present are:

- Metal theft
- Skimming devices in Automated Teller Machines
- Bogus collection/theft of "charity" clothing
- Child neglect (including the level of care and hygiene in the home)
- Local impact of serious organised crime groups
- Changes/trends in drugs supply

By their nature, these remain longer-term threats and Forth Valley Division continues to focus on intervention and enforcement to address them.

- 3.2 Issues which emerged in the previous reporting period were bullying and sexual exploitation on social media networks; threats of overdose/death from polydrug use; and fraud with particular emphasis on internet fraud.
- 3.3 The misuse of social media networks remains a concern which is being addressed at all levels within Police Scotland, but there has been no significant growth in offences locally.
- 3.4 There were no drugs deaths in June, although five were reported in May, with 4 of those involving individuals with a history of heroin abuse. Forensic results are awaited in some cases to ascertain the nature of drugs taken and whether there was a mix of drugs/substances sometimes referred to as "polydrug".
- 3.5 There has been a rise of almost 50% in Fraud cases compared to the 5 year average. This is a national issue, with police and partner agencies working together with internet providers/retailers to develop prevention strategies where the internet is being used to commit offences.
- 3.6 There were no significant new issues emerging during the current reporting period.

4. RECENT OPERATIONAL UPDATES

- 4.1 This section of the report provides brief details of any operational matters within Falkirk Area Command which presented a challenge for Forth Valley Division or which were of particular interest. Information on recent incidents which occurred since the production of this report will be provided by way of a verbal report at the meeting.
- 4.2 A series of thefts and housebreakings occurred in the Braes area during this reporting period in which vehicle keys were stolen. The thieves then returned some time afterwards and stole the vehicle itself using the true key. Pro-active patrols were put in place to combat this and the crimes quickly reduced. Further enquiry led to significant arrests and the closure of this issue.

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LOCAL COMMANDER, FORTH VALLEY DIVISION

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Contact Name: Jim Cattnach (01324) 678863