

SE24. POLICE SCOTLAND – FALKIRK AREA COMMAND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services providing as an appendix the local police performance report by the Local Commander.

Local Commanders are required, in terms of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, to report performance of local policing as measured against the Local Policing Plan and to provide information about complaints against the police or in regard to policing.

The committee received a presentation by Detective Superintendent David Gordon, Detective Chief Inspector Wilson Gill and Detective Chief Inspector Laura McLuckie providing information on the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) – Forth Valley Division. The presentation covered the aims of the department; the service structure; CID operations, and the public protection unit.

The committee thanked the officers for their presentation and commented on the positive work which had been undertaken by CID locally.

Chief Superintendent John Hawkins then provided the committee with an overview of the Falkirk Policing Performance Scrutiny Report for 1 April to 30 September 2015.

The committee discussed the role of ward based officers and commented that they had made positive contributions including regular attendance of community councils. Members also discussed the role of schools based police officers. Mandy Paterson stated that a new model for ward officers had been introduced. Officers who were well known in local areas had been selected and where there were officers who were less well known meet and greet sessions had been put on. Police Scotland was keen that there would be consistent representation at community events and that people would get to know all levels of management in communities. John Hawkins advised that the changes to the model had been brought in as officers desired more clarity on their role and time dedicated for community work.

Members discussed counter terrorism and asked if this area was overseen nationally. John Hawkins stated that counter terrorism was an area where the benefit of a national service delivered locally was seen as there was national command but with local officers involved in delivery. Further, he highlighted the CONTEST strategy and that additional information could be provided to members if desired.

The committee discussed the enforcement of parking restrictions at schools. Mandy Paterson advised that the issue had been raised on multiple occasions but that there were not sufficient resources to attend all schools during peak times. She stated that where officers had issued warnings drivers had taken notice of these and that when officers were present restrictions would be enforced. However, she stated that enforcement was not the long term answer and that a change of culture was required to modify behaviours. The police were looking to work with Falkirk Community Trust and Children's Services to encourage more people to walk to school.

Members asked if the use of mobile speed indicator signs could be increased as they were felt to be an effective tool in combating speeding. Mandy Paterson stated that it would be looked at and that such signs had previously been used in Bainsford.

The committee asked if any of the reported deaths relating to drug use were due to the use of legal highs. Mandy Paterson advised that there were no confirmed instances but that one of the deaths may have been related to the use of legal highs. She advised that in most cases deaths relating to drug use were the result of a lifestyle of abuse and that multiple substances were involved. She commented that there was a belief that there was an increased number of hospital admissions relating to the use of legal highs and that in other Council areas there had been a rise of violence associated with legal highs. Fiona Campbell stated that the Falkirk Drug & Alcohol Partnership would provide further information on legal highs to members in the future.

Decision

The committee noted the report.