



Subject **PERFORMANCE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA APRIL 13- JANUARY 14**
Date: **21 FEBRUARY 2014**
Author: **LOCAL POLICE COMMANDER**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight matters in the Area Command such as emerging trends, threats and issues 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 protocol which informed reports to the Central Scotland Joint Police Board. An explanation of the coding is given within the table.
- 1.5 There will be contextual information provided on current performance. 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 11.7% in crime groups 1 to 4 compared to the 5 year average. However, there is a marginal rise of 0.8% from the figure at this time last year. A decrease in crimes of serious violence (-14) and of damage to property (-73) is offset by slight increases in crimes of indecency (5) and dishonesty (+118).
- 2.2 The 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 The table contains information produced by Police Scotland which is relevant to national priorities and also reflects the objectives in the Falkirk Local Policing Plan. The 35 indicators which relate directly to the local policing plan 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. Twenty-nine of the local plan indicators currently contain data which allow comparisons to be made. Of these, 18 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. Within this overall figure, there was a decrease of just over 2% (-257) in incidents of disorder from the previous year, and a reduction of 20% (-2497) on the 5 year average. There was a similar picture with vandalism which showed reductions of about 3% (-43) and 30% (-507) respectively.
- 2.6 In respect of **violent crime**, there was a slight rise (+4) in serious assaults but a significant reduction against the 5 year average (-22). Minor assaults also showed reductions against both comparators. Detection rates in both categories remaining at high levels. In the majority of assaults no weapon was used. The number of robberies (19) was down marginally on both the previous year (22) and the 5 year average (20). Most robberies involve the taking of items such as mobile phones and small sums of money and are carried out by way of threat of violence rather than acts of violence.
- 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 (134 to 156) which is in line with recent upward trends taking performance back towards the 5 year average (165).
- 2.8 **Crimes of dishonesty (group 3)** shows an increase of 4% overall against 2012/13 but remain below the 5 year average. One of the most significant rises is in Theft by Housebreaking, but this can be attributed to a large increase in crimes involving thefts and garages. Shoplifting also increased against both the previous year and the 5 year average. The detection rate for acquisitive crime is 48% which is the same as the 5 year average.
- 2.9 The number of **domestic abuse incidents** (1,523) shows a drop against the previous year (1,838) and continues the longer-term trend of reductions in the numbers of such incidents reported to police when compared to the 5 year average (1,572). 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 (221 to 215) and people killed or seriously injured (62 to 35) both show reductions and are also below the three year averages. 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 maps 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 in fact increased slightly from 160 during the reporting period last year to 165 in this year but show a reduction against the 5 year average (170). Crimes are recorded according to the date they are **reported** regardless of when they occurred, and 35 of the crimes reported since 1 April 2013 occurred before that date. Levels of offending by individuals who are strangers to the victim remain very low.
- 2.12 Another objective under the preceding priority is to respond to **hate crimes and offences**. On average, there have been about 20 such crimes each month, with the largest single characteristic of victims having been race (48%). The rates for detecting offenders remains high at almost 88% and reflects the importance placed on addressing this issue. Effort 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 for this reporting period is 84 which is an additional 37 complaints to those recorded in the last report for the end of August 2013. The monthly average has remained steady at 8. There were a total of 169 allegations contained within the 84 complaints, of which 159 were in relation to the actions of staff whilst on duty, 2 for off-duty incidents and 7 in respect of the quality of service delivered by the organisation. No significant trends in respect of individuals or particular locations are currently discernible. The results of the **service user survey** shown in section 49 of the table relate to Forth Valley Division as a whole, although it is anticipated that future figures will be broken down to local authority areas. There is generally a high level of satisfaction with the various elements of service delivery.

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.

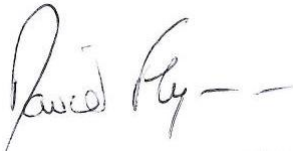
- 3.2 No significant new operational issues emerged during the last reporting period.
- 3.3 During the current reporting period, officers from a national unit worked with local officers on **Operation RAC** which targeted the crime of Theft by Housebreaking, but also extended into other crimes of dishonesty. These categories accounted for about half of all detections under the operation to date. There were also successes in charging individuals involved in violent or threatening behaviour, in misusing drugs and in the commission of other offences including vandalism. Officers also detected a significant number of road traffic offences including three disqualified drivers. The outcomes from this operation will be available for presentation at the meeting.

4. UPDATES

- 4.1 This section of the report provides brief details of any matters within Falkirk Area Command which present a challenge for Forth Valley Division or which are of particular interest. Information on recent issues which emerged since the production of this report will be provided by way of a verbal report at the meeting. The subject of the update is shown **emboldened**.
- 4.2 Police Scotland has acted on the outcomes of the **review of public counter provision** at police offices. Each office has been categorised within one of 5 standard categories ranging from 24/7 opening to no reception provision. There are no significant changes to current provision within the Falkirk council area.
- 4.3 The **review of traffic warden provision** led to a decision by Police Scotland to withdraw that service from the police divisions where it still existed. There were disparate approaches to enforcement of parking offences across Scotland with a number of councils having adopted legislation allowing such offences to be decriminalised and thereby become their responsibility. Discussion is ongoing between Police Scotland and Falkirk Council about how a traffic warden service might be maintained pending any decisions about decriminalisation.
- 4.4 More recently, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) has approved proposals by Police Scotland to introduce a **single national Contact, Command and Control service** with greater resilience, capability and capacity to provide a high quality service to the public and make best use of police resources. This will mean a rationalisation of the number of sites across Scotland, with the remaining sites having their capacity extended and ICT systems significantly enhanced.

- 4.5 In the case of the Stirling site, which is a combined Service Centre (SC) and Area Control Room (ACR) facility, it is intended to transfer primary Control Room services to Bilston Glen near Edinburgh during December 2014 / January 2015, subject to formal consultation with staff.
- 4.6 In future calls originating from the Forth Valley area will be handled by the national Virtual Service Centre located at Bilston Glen, Glasgow and Motherwell. Experienced staff, with the support of modern integrated technologies, will be able to access background and local information to more effectively determine the needs of callers at first contact.
- 4.7 Local officers with local experience will continue to deliver local policing to the communities in the Falkirk council area.
- 4.8 Following a recent promotion process, **Alan Waddell** was successful in obtaining the rank of Superintendent and has moved to a role in Corporate Governance at Police Headquarters at Tulliallan. A new Area Commander for Falkirk will be appointed shortly.
- 4.9 Members of Falkirk Council expressed an interest in **Stop and Search** activities in the Falkirk Council area and Chief Superintendent Flynn attended a meeting of members on 20 January 2014 to provide a briefing about the local context. Papers providing data on frequency and types of search were later issued to all members.
- 4.10 The committee asked that the subject of the operational awareness briefing at the meeting on 13 March 2014 be on **Serious Organised Crime Groups**. A paper on this topic presented to a meeting of the Scottish Police Authority is attached as an appendix to provide some background information in advance of the presentation.
- 4.11 Members asked if information **benchmarking policing performance** in Falkirk against that for Stirling and Clackmannanshire could be provided. A draft version of a table covering a range of issues is attached for comment by members as to its suitability.
- 4.12 A paper outlining proposals for a **new policing model** for Forth Valley Division was recently circulated to all members. This is attached as an appendix and the principles will be outlined as part of the presentation on performance, with an opportunity for questions thereafter.
- 4.13 A copy of the **draft Local Policing Plan for 2014-17** is being circulated to all members of Falkirk Council with a request for any comments to be submitted. This will assist the preparation of the final version of the plan which will be brought to the Scrutiny Committee before submission to full council for approval.

- 4.14 Final updates for the 2012/12 period of the **Single Outcome Agreement** police performance indicators were recently provided to the Community Planning Partnership. All showed positive performance trends with the exception of the number of domestic abuse incidents which increased by 10%, although this should be viewed in the context of initiatives to encourage increased reporting of such incidents. Details of performance will be provided at the meeting as part of the performance presentation, and results against the indicators for the new SOA will be reported to future meetings.



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