



Subject **PERFORMANCE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA APRIL13- MARCH 14**
Date: **19 MAY 2014**
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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 data provided in the table and report is for information purposes to allow Board Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities. It should be noted that the timing of this meeting of the Committee is in advance of the completion of the year end procedures and reconciliation processes that are undertaken every year in association with the publication of official statistics. Given this timing there may be minor amendments between the information in this report and the final 2013/14 statistics – for example due to delayed reporting or recording of crimes, road crashes or incidents. **It would not therefore be accurate or appropriate to refer to, quote or use the data in this report as either end of year or official statistics.** Also, because of the reconciliation process, **figures are not yet available for 3/5 year averages** for most indicators, although comment will be provided on general long-term trends based on existing verified data and projections of anticipated performance.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.

- 1.6 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 crime groups 1 to 4. There is also a marginal drop of 0.5% (-29) from the figure at this time last year. A decrease in crimes of serious violence (-7) and of damage to property (-57) is accompanied by slight decrease in crimes of indecency (-7). However these are offset by an increase in crimes of dishonesty (+42).
- 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. There was a decrease of just over 3.1% (-361) in incidents of disorder from the previous year, and a similar picture with vandalism which showed reductions of about 3.2% (-48).
- 2.6 In respect of **violent crime**, there was a slight rise (+3) in serious assaults which goes against the longer term trend seen to date of steady reductions in this type of crime. In contrast there was a drop in the number of attempted murders from 17 to 10. Minor assaults also showed a slight reduction from last year which reflects the consistent drop over the past few years. Detection rates in all of these categories remain at high levels. In the majority of assaults no weapon was used. The number of robberies from April 2013 to March 2014 (25) remained static on the previous years figure and in line with preceding years. 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 (153 to 199) which is in line with recent upward trends taking performance back towards the levels seen in previous years.
- 2.8 **Crimes of dishonesty (group 3)** shows an increase of 1.2% overall against 2012/13 but remain below levels seen in most of the preceding 5 years. One of the most significant rises is in Theft by Housebreaking, but this can be attributed to a large increase in crimes involving thefts from sheds and garages rather than break-ins to houses. Shoplifting also increased slightly (+17) against the previous year and remains in line with figures seen in previous years. The detection rate for acquisitive crime remains within an anticipated band of between 45 to 50 %.
- 2.9 The number of **domestic abuse incidents** (1,798) shows a drop against the previous year (2,150) 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 injury road collisions (263 to 257) and people killed or seriously injured (66 to 46) 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 decreased slightly from 229 during the reporting period last year to 222 in this year which shows a level of consistency with long term average figures. Crimes are recorded according to the date they are **reported** regardless of when they occurred, and 53 (24%) 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 over 85% 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 103 which is an additional 19 complaints to

those recorded in the last report for the end of January 2014. The monthly average has remained steady at about 8. There were a total of 195 allegations contained within the 103 complaints, of which 182 were in relation to the actions of staff whilst on duty, 2 for off-duty incidents and 11 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 – although this has seen a drop locally
- Skimming devices in Automated Teller Machines
- Bogus collection/theft of "charity" clothing –although sporadic
- Child neglect (including the level of care and hygiene in the home)
- Local impact of serious organised crime groups viz Operation Sandman
- Changes/trends in drugs supply – particularly increase in "recreational" use

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 of dishonesties 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.

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 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.

- 4.3 Following Alan Waddell's recent promotion and transfer, T/Chief Inspector **Mandy Paterson** has been appointed as Area Commander for Falkirk.
- 4.4 A paper outlining proposals for a **new policing model** for Forth Valley Division was previously circulated to all members. Chief Superintendent will provide a presentation on the new model which was introduced on 12 May 2014.
- 4.5 A copy of the **draft Local Policing Plan for 2014-17** was circulated to all members of Falkirk Council with a request for any comments to be submitted. The final version of the plan will now go to full council for approval at the June meeting.
- 4.6 There is currently a national campaign being run along with Trading Standards Departments – **Beat Doorstep Crime**; whilst locally a number of licensing operations have been carried out which have, for example, led to the detection of unlicensed taxi drivers and associated road traffic offences.
- 4.7 Following on from work with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, standard **abbreviated prosecution reports** have been introduced for a number of minor offences. This means a reduction in officer time spent completing reports and an increased opportunity for additional patrol.
- 4.8 A pilot programme will be run during the Commonwealth Games providing **Youth Volunteers** to undertake tasks in support of Police Scotland. This form of engagement may be rolled out further following assessment of the pilot.

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