

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a city skyline with a prominent tower. The top-right quadrant depicts a stag's head with large antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a three-masted sailing ship on the water. The bottom-right quadrant features a grizzly bear standing on its hind legs. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. A banner at the bottom of the shield contains the motto "CITY OF VANCOUVER" in a stylized font.

Agenda Item

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Minute

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee (External) held in the Municipal Buildings, Falkirk on Thursday 14 September 2017 at 9.30 a.m.

Councillors:

David Balfour
Lorna Binnie
Jim Blackwood
David Grant
John McLuckie
Laura Murtagh
Depute Provost Ann Ritchie

Officers:

Fiona Campbell, Head of Policy, Technology and Improvement
Joe McElholm, Head of Social Work Adult Services
Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager
Suzanne Thomson, Programme Manager, Social Work Adult Services

Also Attending:

Constable Mervyn Almedia, Police Scotland
Chief Inspector Damian Armstrong, Police Scotland
Patricia Cassidy, Chief Officer, Falkirk Integration Joint Board
Sargent John McSporland
Superintendent Maggie Pettigrew

SE1. Appointment of Convener

In terms of Standing Order 50.1 the committee was required to appoint a convener from the largest Opposition group.

Councillor McLuckie nominated Councillor Blackwood.

Decision

The Committee agreed to appoint Councillor Blackwood as convener.

SE2. Apology

An apology was intimated on behalf of Councillor Malcolm Nicol.

SE3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

SE4. Minute

Decision

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee (External) held on 12 January 2017 was approved.

SE5. Police Scotland – Falkirk Area Performance

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided, as an appendix to the report, a briefing on the Falkirk Area Performance for the year April 2016 to March 2017 from the Chief Superintendent. Fiona Campbell provided an overview of the report. The committee then heard from Maggie Pettigrew who provided an overview of the submission.

The committee heard a short presentation on the introduction of new stop and search procedures which had been introduced following a national review.

The committee considered the format of the police performance information. It was the intention of Police Scotland to revise the format and content to make it more accessible, relevant and informative. This would be developed in consultation with the clerk with a new format presented to the committee for approval.

During her introduction Superintendent Pettigrew also noted that the Local Policing Plan for the area would be submitted to Council on 20 September for approval, in accordance with Standing Orders.

The committee discussed engagement behaviour, citing local examples. Damian Armstrong explained the local engagement mechanisms aimed at working with committees to tackle antisocial behaviour. In addition to local police officers, Police Scotland was able to draw upon officers from the National Violence Prevention Task Force to tackle antisocial behaviour.

In regard to parking enforcement members highlighted an increase in on road parking since Police Scotland withdrew its wardens. Members highlighted concerns around illegal parking around schools and in the town centre, which was having a detrimental impact on local businesses. Mr Armstrong conceded that the issue was the number of officers available and frequency in which parking could be enforced. He also cited ongoing work with local member and officers from Development Services. Drivers were prepared to park illegally and accept the subsequent parking ticket, with only 8% of tickets appealed. He then summarised initiatives to tackle speeding and gave an overview of the work of the Drug & Task Force and schools based officers on tackling drugs in schools.

The committee returned to antisocial behaviour, citing an issue of disruption caused by youths at Hallglen Sports Centre. Chief Inspector Armstrong summarised actions taken in response to calls from the centre which included officers in attendance and working with local groups. He noted that there was no community council in place and cited the value in working with community councils and local members in tackling antisocial behaviour. In response to a question on the Local Police Plan and local work plans, Chief Inspector Armstrong summarised the relationship between plans and other key strategic documents such as SOLD. Members requested an overview of local policing arrangements. It had been intended that this would be provided as part of the new members' induction programme following the local government elections. The Democratic Services Manager agreed that introductory briefing sessions would be arranged and that all Members would be invited.

The committee discussed public satisfaction and how this was measured. This was measured in two ways through members of the public who have had contact with the police and through more general surveys. In the case of the former satisfaction was high whereas more generally public satisfaction was lower. This suggested to members that the public is reluctant to call the police but those who do report satisfaction with the way in which they are dealt.

In regards to road traffic accidents members sought clarification on the mechanism for informing local members of an accident. Chief Inspector Armstrong accepted that there may be delays in informing members but explained that there was a need to investigate incidents beforehand and it was not possible to inform members of incidents and causes until the necessary investigations have been completed.

The committee again discussed parking issues, reiterating examples of non enforcement, Superintendent Pettigrew explained the force's partnership approach to addressing known and potential areas where illegal parking is prevalent and highlighted the multi service approach to this and other local issues. Members restated that the issue had become worse following Police Scotland's decision to withdraw its warden service.

In response to a question in regard to a reduction in drugs misuse detection rates and the impact of this on public confidence in reporting instances, Chief Inspector Armstrong explained the process by which information from the community is analysed and actions taken. He could not comment on a statement that the numbers of convictions reflected poorly on the judicial system. He also explained the process and place to support people with issues, citing Signpost as an example. Superintendent Pettigrew confirmed that if information from the community is reliable the police will act, in fact 8 warrants had been enforced over a recent 2 day period.

The committee sought clarification of Police Scotland's approach to policing marches. Members highlighted a lack of consistency nationally. Chief Inspector Armstrong confirmed the local position, which reflected the

national policy, which is that the police will be present for public order but not for traffic management. The latter would be dealt with through a Temporary Traffic Road Order. In regard to a specific question in regard to the Council's position the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the force's national response to a report by Dr Michael Rosie on marches had been awaited by the Council since late 2016.

The committee discussed domestic abuse reporting. The detection rate for this had decreased significantly. Superintendent Pettigrew explained that the context was important and reiterated this was a high priority area. Chief Inspector Armstrong explained factors which made detection difficult, such as lack of witnesses. Members observed that the factors would be the same at any given time and therefore this did not explain a drop in detection rate. Superintendent Pettigrew confirmed there had been no change in approach and that a factor may have been an increase in reported historic incidents.

The committee then sought clarification of Police Scotland's position in regard to CCTV. Chief Inspector Armstrong stated that the service involved peak time monitoring, but within this there was flexibility. The system which had been operated in partnership with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council required upgrading and approaches had been made nationally to the Scottish Government for funding. The cost of digital provision was £500k with funding partners being sought.

Decision

The committee noted the report and acknowledged progress by Police Scotland in meeting its priorities.

SE6. Falkirk Integration Joint Board: Annual Performance Report 2016-17

The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer, Falkirk Integration Joint Board which provided performance information in respect of services delivered by the Falkirk Integration Joint Board. Patricia Cassidy provided an overview of the report together with contextual background in the Integration Joint Board and the services provided.

Joe McElholm provided detailed information on the performance in regard to 23 national indicators. He also gave detail in regard to local indicators citing as an example two indicators which focussed on self management and on autonomy and decision making. In regard to the latter the Service's focus area was on supporting individuals not going into care homes and not in increasing the number of care homes available.

Members discussed the Integration Joint Board's delayed discharge policy. This was welcomed with members highlighting previous concerns in regard to bed blocking. Patricia Cassidy explained the composition of the Board and the need for consensus in decision making where this is not reached a

matter could be escalated to the Scottish Government but this was not beneficial and the Board sought consensus where possible.

Patricia Cassidy then responded to a question on the availability of GPs noting that a new national model was likely to be agreed shortly. A new model of service delivery had been tested in Forth Valley which centred on multi-disciplinary teams, including triage, which would reduce pressure on GPs.

The committee commented on the content of the Annual Report and drew comparisons with Local Government Benchmarking Framework information which had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 17 August 2017. The latter contained year on year contrast which allowed performance to be compared with previous years and against other local authorities. Members asked that the format of subsequent reports is reviewed to allow similar comparisons and trends analysis to be made.

The committee discussed cultural shifts in regard to carers. Patricia Cassidy cited 3 critical cultural shifts which impacted on the extent to which carers are relied upon – an increase in the over 85 population, the rise in the age of carers and the available work force. As a consequence there was a need to enable patients to self manage and be independent. Joe McElholm stressed the importance of reablement. The drive was not to save money but to be able to focus resources on those who need it. It wasn't possible to grow resources at the same rate as the growth in demand. He summarised the on-going work to support reablement.

He cited grass cutting as an example where resources need to be focussed on those who need the service. In changing the eligibility criteria for this he conceded that people who had previously received the service would lose out. However it was necessary to focus resources on those in society who need the service based on individual level of need.

The committee considered care homes for adults. There was 11 independently run care homes in the area. Bed capacity was 159 in 2016/17. Reviews of 4 adult care homes had resulted in grades of 5/6 (very good) for care support. Patricia Cassidy gave an overview of the support and care provided in care homes and explained that 1% of places were vacant. She cited a care village in Stirling which would be open in 2018 as an innovative model. Joe McElholm explained that £29m was spent on residential respite care. It would not be possible to make budget savings without looking at this and again emphasised the need to enable and encourage independence.

Decision

The committee noted the report and acknowledged progress by Integration Joint Board in meeting its priorities.

SE7. Following the Public Pound - New Reporting Arrangements

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services presenting a new reporting format together with a schedule for reporting the performance of Following the Public Pound organisations to the committee.

Fiona Campbell summarised the rationale for revising the reporting format and explained the new format. A reporting schedule was set out. Scrutiny of organisations funded or part funded by the Council by the committee would inform the Council's decision making in regard to the budget in February 2018.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the new reporting format for all organisations that fall under the Following the Public Pound arrangements; and**
- (2) agreed the proposed reporting schedule.**