

THE MORAY COUNCIL**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE POLICE AND FIRE
AND RESCUE SERVICES COMMITTEE****THURSDAY 25 APRIL 2013****COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN****PRESENT**

Councillors D. Ross (Chair), G. Alexander, J. Divers, G. Leadbitter, M. McConachie, G. McDonald, E. McGillivray, R. Shepherd (Depute Chair) and C. Tuke

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Superintendant Mark McLaren, Divisional Police Commander, Chief Inspector Willie Findlay, Local Area Commander, Superintendant Mark Cooper, Superintendant Andrew Todd and Ms D MacLennan, Business Manager, all of Aberdeenshire and Moray Division, Police Scotland, Kevin Lackie, Group Manager and David Rout, Local Senior Officer, Aberdeenshire and Moray, all of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Head of Development Services, Andy Jamieson, Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator and Mrs Moira Patrick, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct there were no declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the Agenda, nor any declarations of Members Interest in respect of any item on the Agenda.

2. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Meeting agreed, in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, that the public and media representatives be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the Items of Business appearing at the relevant paragraphs of this Minute as specified below so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Para No. of Minute Para No. of Schedule 7A

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3. WELCOME

Prior to discussion of the business on the Agenda the Chairman took the opportunity to welcome everyone to this the first meeting of the new Police and Fire and Rescue Services Committee and outlined the Committee's role in terms of governance and scrutiny in accordance with the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. He further commended all those involved in the smooth transition to the new single Police and Fire Services to date.

4. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The meeting noted that no written questions had been submitted.

5. FIRE AND RESCUE FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTLAND 2013

There was submitted a report by David Rout, Local Senior Officer for Aberdeenshire and Moray informing the Committee of the finalised Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013 agreed by the Scottish Ministers.

Mr Rout advised the Committee that contained within the Framework is a direction for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to produce a three year strategic plan which will be issued for consultation in May 2013 and thereafter will be published after the public spending review in October 2013. From that new templates for local fire and rescue plans will be in force for a three year cycle. He further advised that the current Moray Local Fire and Rescue Plan align to the national priorities contained within the framework document.

During discussion clarification was sought in regard to the timescales detailed at paragraph 32 of the Framework in particular as to how often the Framework will be reviewed and it was noted that the Framework will be replaced from 1 April 2014 by the three year Strategic Plan which will in turn be reviewed annually.

Following further discussion clarification was sought as to how local services will be protected and improved despite financial cuts and in response Mr Rout advised that as stated in the report this would be addressed through the removal of backroom systems where there was duplication such as that for payroll where there were currently thirteen different systems across Scotland.

Thereafter, the Committee noted the finalised Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013 as agreed by the Scottish Ministers on 13 March 2013.

6. LOCAL SENIOR OFFICER RESOURCES – ABERDEENSHIRE AND MORAY, SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

There was submitted a report by David Rout, Local Senior Officer for Aberdeenshire and Moray informing the Committee of the proposed structure and resources allocated to Aberdeenshire and Moray Local Senior Officer (LSO).

Mr Rout confirmed to the Committee the resource allocation to Aberdeenshire and Moray, in particular the resources allocated to the prevention and protection element and advised that there was a significant increase in resources from the legacy of the Grampian Fire and Rescue Services with nominated District Managers allocated to individual wards and a separate organisational chart with detailed names will be issued to the Committee following a transfer and matching process which is currently being undertaken which is due to be completed by the end of the year.

During discussion clarification was sought regarding how this Committee will be involved in any discussions regarding any changes to the allocation of resources and in response Mr Rout advised that he would hope that any future changes would be consulted upon.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to note the proposed structure and resource allocation to Aberdeenshire and Moray LSO.

7. OFFICER AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services inviting the Committee to consider officers and representatives they would wish to have in attendance at Committee meetings so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

The Committee noted the issue of whether Union representatives should attend has been a matter of ongoing debate and that Officers from both the Police and Fire and Rescue Services were available to address the Committee on this issue.

Superintendent McLaren advised the Committee that he had personally spoken to the two Police Federation representatives and to the Secretary of the former Grampian Joint Police Board who had all stated that they did not see a role within this committee as they saw it as a conflict of interest in terms of their aims as a staff association representing the needs of their Members which was a potential conflict against the needs of the wider community.

Mr Rout advised that Service Delivery North, the area in which he worked had held their first Senior Management Team the previous week and confirmed that they would be meeting with the Fire Brigade's Union representatives and national representatives next month at a meeting in Dundee where they will confirm their operating structures as they are currently undergoing a restructure on how they are going to be regionalised and embedding themselves into the Fire and Rescue Service. He further advised that the in consultation with the Strategic Leadership Team members, they would be content for the Trade Union to have an observer role only.

Prior to opening the discussion on the issue of Trade Union representation, the Chairman asked the Committee to consider the officer representation and it was agreed that those officers currently present represent sufficient officer representation.

Thereafter the Chairman stated that in terms of Trade Union representation, from his experience on the former joint Police Board, members of the Trade Union attended as observers and sat as any member of the public would at meetings and observed the proceedings and he was content with that continuing and asked the Committee if they were content for representatives of the Trade Unions to continue to attend as observers only.

Following discussion, during which it was noted that the Committee could if required invite the Trade Union representatives to address the Committee on specific issues, Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor McConachie moved to defer consideration of Trade Union representation at this Committee until contact has been made with the Trade Unions and their views made known to this Committee.

Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor McGillivray, moved as an amendment that in light of the recommendations from both the Chief Officers from the Police and Fire Services that the Trade Unions be invited to attend meetings of this Committee as observers only and may in the future be invited to speak on specific issues that the Committee has an interest in.

On a division there voted:

For the Motion (4)	Councillors McDonald, McConachie, Leadbitter and Divers
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For the Amendment (5)	Councillors Ross, McGillivray, Alexander, Tuke and Shepherd
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Abstentions (0)

Accordingly the Amendment became the finding of the meeting and it was agreed that the Trade Unions be invited to attend meetings of this Committee as observers only and may in the future be invited to speak on specific issues that the Committee has an interest in.

Thereafter following further discussion, during which Members expressed an interest in hearing from the Trade Unions representing the uniformed staff in regard to their role in the new Single Services, the Committee agreed that a representative from each of the Trade Unions representing the Police and Fire Services respectively be invited to attend the next meeting of this Committee to give a presentation on their role in the respective new single services only and thereafter, should the Committee be minded at a future meeting, invite a Trade Union representative from those representing the civil staff to give a presentation to this Committee.

8. LOCAL SENIOR OFFICER RESOURCES – ABERDEENSHIRE AND MORAY DIVISION, POLICE SCOTLAND

There was submitted a report by Chief Superintendent McLaren, the Divisional Commander, Aberdeenshire and Moray Division, Police Scotland informing the Committee of the senior management team structure within the Aberdeenshire and Moray Division of Police Scotland.

During discussion clarification was sought in regard to the structure in relation to the Divisional Business Unit post 1 April 2013. In response Chief Superintendent McLaren advised that clarity was still waited as to what this Unit would look like and was still being worked on by the Elgin Business Manager but was essentially business as usual until that clarity emerges and that no timescale was currently available.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to note the senior management team structure within the Aberdeenshire and Moray Division of Police Scotland.

9. QUESTION TIME

The Chairman advised the Committee that as had been the practice of the former Grampian Joint Police Board, under the confidential section of the agenda, the Committee would be given the opportunity to discuss operational issues which both Services wish to share with Members.

Councillor Tuke sought an update on an incident relating to the Moray Endurance Event.

In response Chief Inspector Findlay referred to the press coverage in relation to the policing of this event and what had happened to some of the motor cyclists at this event and to the Motorcycle Club inviting its members to write to various people including him and elected members to express their views. A complaint against the police was raised in light of those letters and he had subsequently heard from the Motorcycle Club. Enquiries were ongoing into the matters being raised and the policing tactics employed during the event and once concluded he will respond in full to those who have written to him and will also meet with the organisers of the event to discuss issues related to them.

He further stated that the press coverage had been slightly misleading in regard to why the motorcyclists were stopped and how they had been dealt with and advised that some of the offences they had been charged with related to no licence and no insurance. He advised that the motorcyclists were fully aware of the legal requirements in terms of road use and had signed declarations to that effect prior to the event.

He advised that he would be happy to copy the Members into his response on any final outcomes that he can share with them.

The Chairman sought clarification on how often this event takes place and whether or not there had been any changes in terms of police tactics for this event.

In response Chief Inspector Findlay advised that this event takes place every two years and has been ongoing since 2006 and there has been no changes to the police tactics and that there had been contact with the event organisers where it was made clear to them that those responsibilities for using the road exist. He did not have any figures relating to the number of people charged in previous events but use of the road was made clear to the organisers and to the road users and competitors.

Councillor Tuke asked for further information in regard to an issue that had been raised at a meeting of his local Community Council in respect of the use of police radio channels by the community wardens. He further stated that he was aware that the RAF Police were able to use these channels and asked whether the issue relating to the wardens could be looked at.

In response Chief Inspector Findlay advised that the airwave network that the police service subscribes to is tied to a strict national licensing regime in respect to the use of the network and unfortunately the community wardens are not part of that licensing regime. He further advised that the police are measured very closely in how they maintain the security of that network and is not possible at this time to allow community wardens to use those radios, however the RAF are part of that process and are allowed to use the network.

The Chairman asked whether there had been any communication issues for the Community Wardens since they had reverted to the use of mobile telephones?

In response Mr Jamieson advised that whilst there had been some initial concern regarding the removal of the police radios some twelve months had passed and no issues had been reported in regard to lack of communication.

Councillor McGillivray asked if there were any reasons why police officers could not ride bicycles on duty?

In response Chief Superintendent McLaren advised that whilst there was no reason why police officers should not ride bicycles the issue was the ongoing training and movement of staff and ongoing health and safety issues that were not immediately apparent but that with the arrival of better weather he would expect to see bicycles on the road again.

Superintendent Cooper advised that his personal view was that police officers on bicycles are likely to be less engaging in terms of their contact with the public than officers in cars. Officers in cars are more identifiable and would be more confident with the ability to interact with the public if there are officers out on patrol as well as a balance on mobile patrol. He further stated that there was a place for bicycles in terms of patrolling in his view in relation to a crime scene occurring in a particular area where they have the ability to listen as well as travel at a speed that is greater than walking or running.

10. ASSET DISTRIBUTION – GRAMPIAN POLICE – ABERDEENSHIRE/MORAY DIVISION [Para 1]

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing the Committee with a position statement for each of the territorial policing Divisions as at 5 March 2013 and summary budget information which includes, for completeness, the central service budgets.

Following consideration, the Committee noted the position statement and agreed to monitor the development of local policing under the new arrangement.