

THE MORAY COUNCIL

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE POLICE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

THURSDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2015

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

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

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors J Divers and C Tuke.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Superintendent Mark McLaren, Chief Inspector Willie Findlay, Chief Inspector Andrew Todd all of Police Scotland (Aberdeenshire and Moray Division), Mr David Rout, Local Senior Officer, Station Manager Anna Rodgers, Station Manager Graham Laird all of Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (Aberdeenshire and Moray Division), the Head of Development Services and Mrs Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBER'S INTERESTS

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 or any declarations of Members' interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

2. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, 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 paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

<u>Paragraph No. of Minute</u>	<u>Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A</u>
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3. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

4. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES UNWANTED FIRE ALARMS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Committee noted an interesting presentation by Station Manager Graham Laird, Aberdeenshire and Moray, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in relation to the SFRS Unwanted Fire Alarms (UFAS) Policy and Procedure.

During discussion in relation to the 453 false alarms recorded in Moray in 2013-14, a query was raised as to how many of the premises that had triggered the false alarms would have fallen into the following categories; stage 2: 5 or more UFAS incidents within 3 months, stage 3: 10 or more UFAS incidents within 6 months and stage 4: 20 or more UFAS incidents within 9 months, prior to the UFAS Policy being implemented in December 2014.

In response Station Manager Laird advised that several premises within the Moray area would have fallen into the category of stages 2 and 3, however, due to close working with the businesses who would have triggered stages 2 and 3, none would have progressed to stage 4. Mr Rout, Local Senior Officer, SFRS further advised that, if the Committee were so minded, a further report could be brought back to Committee in 6 months providing statistical information regarding unwanted fire alarms since the UFAS Policy was implemented. This was agreed.

The Committee joined the Chair in thanking Station Manager Graham Laird, SFRS for his interesting presentation and thereafter agreed:

- (i) to note the presentation; and
- (ii) that a further report would be brought back to Committee in 6 months providing statistical information regarding unwanted fire alarms since the Unwanted Fire Alarms Policy was implemented.

5. OPERATIONAL UPDATE (VERBAL) - FIRE

The Committee agreed to note an informative verbal update on operational matters from Mr David Rout, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services and the responses to the relevant questions thereafter.

6. STRENGTHENING LOCAL POLICING

There was submitted a report by Chief Superintendent Mark McLaren, Divisional Police Commander, Aberdeenshire and Moray Division, Police Scotland informing the Committee of emerging thinking by the Local Police Commander to strengthen local policing, which may lead to restructuring of Aberdeen City Division and Aberdeenshire and Moray Division into a more cohesive policing division in the North East.

During Chief Superintendent McLaren's introduction, he stressed that any changes to staff structure would be at senior officer level and that there were no current

intentions to change any of the existing Local Area Commands or the Community Policing Teams.

During discussion, concern was raised that, should the merge take place, resources for Moray would be drawn to Aberdeenshire as it was a busier location. In response, Chief Superintendent McLaren assured the Committee that, at the moment, there was no likelihood of that happening and that the changes would be at senior officer level. He further advised that the Committee, having the function of monitoring the delivery of police services, could ensure that service delivery was not affected.

During further discussion Councillor Ross stated that he had concerns in relation to capacity and loss of experience at senior level as, since Police Scotland was formed, the Grampian area had lost a number of officers at senior level and that this further proposal would result in yet a further reduction at senior officer level.

In response, Chief Superintendent McLaren advised that, with the current structure, there were some inefficiencies and duplication of tasks at senior officer level and that the proposed new structure would streamline the service, making it more efficient.

Councillor Ross stated that, in his opinion, this proposal was being made as a result of timing in relation to the imminent retiral of Chief Superintendent McLaren in June 2015 and moved that the the feed back from Committee should reflect that the Committee did not have sufficient information and guarantees to support the proposal at this time. This was seconded by Councillor Leadbitter.

Councillor McDonald stated that, in his opinion, this was an operational matter and that there was sufficient information within the report to support the proposal to merge the 2 current police divisions into one North East division and moved as an amendment to support the proposal as detailed within the report. This was seconded by Councillor Shepherd.

On a division there voted:

For the motion (2):	Councillors Ross and Leadbitter.
For the amendment (5):	Councillors McDonald, Shepherd, Alexander McGillivray and McConachie.
Abstentions (0):	Nil.

Therefore the amendment became the finding of the meeting.

The Head of Development Services sought the agreement of the Committee to write to the Chief Superintendent expressing the views of the Committee on the proposed restructuring of Aberdeenshire and Moray Division into a more cohesive policing Division in the North East. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to support the contents of the report which informed the Committee of emerging thinking by the Local Police Commander to strengthen local policing which may lead to a restructuring of Aberdeenshire and Moray Division into a more cohesive policing Division in the North East; and

- (ii) that the Head of Development Services would write to the Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland expressing the views of the Committee in relation to the proposed restructuring of Aberdeenshire and Moray Division into a more cohesive policing Division in the North East.

7. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PERFORMANCE

There was submitted a report by the Local Senior Officer, Aberdeenshire and Moray, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service informing the Committee of the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service locally in respect of the Moray Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2014-17.

Following consideration the Committee joined the Chair in commending the good work of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and thereafter agreed to note the performance outlined in the report applicable to quarterly performance for 1 October 2014 to 31 December 2014 as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

8. STATISTICAL BULLETIN, FIRE AND RESCUE STATISTICS 2013-14

There was submitted a report by the Local Senior Officer, Aberdeenshire and Moray, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service informing the Committee of the recently published Scottish Government Statistical Bulletin, Fire and Rescue Service Statistics Scotland 2013-14, which highlighted areas of performance applicable to Moray.

During discussion, Mr David Rout, Local Senior Officer advised that this was an annual report and sought guidance from the Committee as to how they would like this report presented in future.

In response, it was suggested that having sight of the complete Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Statistical Bulletin as an appendix to the report would be beneficial and that the actual report to the Committee should contain detailed analysis to enable benchmarking. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the performance information outlined in the report applicable to the Moray area; and
- (ii) that future reports on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Statistical Bulletin would contain detailed analysis to enable benchmarking in addition to the full statistical bulletin as an appendix to the report.

9. POLICE PERFORMANCE

There was submitted a report by the Chief Superintendent, Divisional Police Commander, Aberdeenshire and Moray Division, Police Scotland informing the Committee of performance of the Police in respect of the Local Policing Plan 2014-17 and other key indicators.

During discussion in relation to domestic abuse crimes, clarification was sought as to whether statistics detailing the number of domestic abuse crimes resulting in conviction were available.

In response, Chief Superintendent McLaren advised that he was unsure if this information was available however suggested that, should the Committee be so minded, statistics surrounding repeat offenders in relation to domestic abuse could be provided to Committee. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee joined the Chair in commending Police Scotland for their continued good work and agreed:

- (i) to note performance as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) to note that the Local Commander will continue to report to the Committee quarterly on performance measures against service objectives as articulated in the 2014-17 Local Policing Plan; and
- (iii) that statistics surrounding repeat offenders in relation to domestic abuse will be provided to Committee.

10. ELECTED MEMBER ENGAGEMENT – SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES/POLICE SCOTLAND – LOCAL ENGAGEMENT EVENT – VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee noted an invitation to an Elected Member Engagement Event from Mr David Rout, Local Senior Officer, Aberdeenshire and Moray, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in conjunction with Chief Superintendent Mark McLaren, Police Scotland.

Following consideration the Committee agreed that Mr Rout, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, in conjunction with Mr McLaren, Police Scotland, would organise an Elected Member Engagement Event at Elgin Fire Station which would include an elected member update and the opportunity to engage with officers in the front line.

11. QUESTION TIME

Councillor Alexander sought clarification as to whether there was a performance indicator for the procurator fiscals office and asked if Chief Superintendent McLaren found the delay in the procurator fiscal making a decision as to whether or not to bring a case forward problematic.

In response Chief Superintendent McLaren advised that there were challenges across the criminal justice system and that there was a programme entitled Summary Justice Reform which has been in operation since 2006 where an aspiration was to decrease the overall time from victims being dealt with to offenders going through courts. Mr McLaren further advised that there are performance statistics relating to the courts service available online and agreed to forward the link to Members of the Committee.

Councillor Alexander stated that he was concerned that in some cases it takes more than a year to bring a case forward and welcomed the opportunity to view the statistics.

12. OPERATIONAL VERBAL UPDATE – SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES AND POLICE SCOTLAND [PARA 14]

The Committee agreed to note an informative oral update on operational matters from Mr David Rout, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services and Chief Superintendent Mark McLaren, Divisional Police Commander, Aberdeenshire and Moray Division, Police Scotland and the responses to the relevant questions thereafter.