
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COUNCIL

CUSTOMER SERVICES

21 JANUARY 2016

REVIEW OF SCOTTISH STRATEGIC POLICE PRIORITIES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scottish Government has issued a discussion paper on Scottish Strategic Police Priorities and is seeking views from stakeholders, including councils, by 12 February 2016.

This paper sets out a summary of the proposals and presents a draft response for the Council to consider in its submission.

It is recommended that Council agree the draft response as set out in this paper and submits it to the Scottish Government by the 12 February 2016 deadline.

A REVIEW OF SCOTTISH STRATEGIC POLICE PRIORITIES

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Scottish Government has issued a discussion paper on the review of Scottish Strategic Police Priorities and is seeking views from stakeholders, including councils. The closing date for submission of views on these priorities is 12 February 2016.
- 2.2 This paper sets out a draft response for Council to consider in response to the Scottish Government paper.

3.RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Council considers this report and approves it as its response to the consultation.

4.DETAIL

- 4.1 A new approach to policing was implemented in 2013 through the implementation of the Police and Fire (Reform) Act 2012, which created a single police force for Scotland – Police Scotland. High level details of the service are set out in the attached report.
- 4.2 At that time, four strategic police priorities were established to capture a clear link between operational policing and the Scottish Government's National Outcomes. These were:
1. Make communities safer and reduce harm by tackling and investigating crime and demonstrating pioneering approaches to prevention and collaboration at a national level
 2. Strengthen Scotland's reputation as a successful and safe country by demonstrating excellence in effectively planning for and responding to major events and threats
 3. Provide an efficient service focused on protecting frontline services, delivering the benefits of police reform and promoting continuous

improvement

4. Make communities stronger and improve wellbeing by increasing public confidence and reducing fear of crime, making the new Police Service of Scotland an exemplar of visible, ethical and responsive policing.

4.3 The Police Service is now seeking to revise these four strategic priorities in the context of the developments since the creation of the single police service. The paper requests that stakeholders, including councils, give their views on revised priorities. The questions being asked by the Scottish Government in the discussion paper are:

- What is important for you about policing in your community?
- What sort of police service do you want to have?
- What is your ambition for policing in the future?

4.4 Context

4.4.1 Argyll and Bute Council has a longstanding and excellent working relationship with the police service locally, where collaboration through the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) has been a key priority since the inception of Community Planning. The rotating chair of the CPP has been held by the local Police commander on several occasions now and this benefits the highly effective approach to joint working and outcome based planning that underpins delivery of the Argyll and Bute Single Outcome Agreement.

4.4.2 The Council also has excellent relationships with the Police in strategic areas such as CONTEST (the Government's counter terrorism strategy) and Serious and Organised Crime initiatives, where joint management, multi-agency and cross council approaches are in place, with the Council closely involved in leading partnership activities with the Police. We have developed excellent resilience planning and response to a series of emergency situations and continue to work jointly and closely with the Police on these.

4.4.3 The council welcomes both the local Police Commander and the SPA (Strategic Police Authority) to its quarterly Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee meetings, where reports are presented to members on both strategic and operational activities. Proposals for local policing are presented here and scrutiny on police performance in the area is carried out. This mechanism provides an excellent opportunity for elected members to scrutinise local policing activity, identify and highlight areas for priority and assess resourcing. It also provides a vehicle for the consideration of future planning at a local and strategic level.

4.5 Recommendations for future strategic priorities

4.5.1 Within the context set out above and given the particularly dispersed and complex geographic nature of Argyll and Bute, a clear priority for Argyll and Bute

overall is to maintain and build on the existing good practice and good working relationship that is in place, both at a strategic and a local level. The council would wish to see no change that alters the framework that this currently takes place within.

- 4.5.2 In response to the specific questions set out in the consultation document, the following is proposed:

What is important for you about policing in your community?

In order to develop on the good relationship and pattern of policing that will meet the needs of the communities in Argyll and Bute, as highlighted above, the Council would wish to see the Scottish Government ensure that prioritisation of objectives, resources allocation and operational discretion is devolved to divisional commander level. This allows for particular circumstances to be addressed and resourced. For example the ongoing issue with Road Traffic Collisions on vital arterial routes in Argyll and Bute, which has an impact on both people's safety and the economy, is being tackled through collaboration and specific resourcing, which is facilitated by the local Commander's ability to prioritise.

What sort of police service do you want to have?

The current local and community based resources are particularly important in Argyll and Bute, therefore the council would wish to see a focus on increasing community based resources that strengthen local partnership working and community cohesion. Partnership working is essential and must be at the core of the strategic policing objectives.

What is your ambition for policing in the future?

The council would like to see the police in future enhance and develop specialist response mechanisms to tackle terrorism and serious and organised crime. As a national and international issue, this is an area that the council would wish to see Police Scotland appropriately resourced to prioritise.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The ongoing working relationship between the Council and the police both locally and strategically is very good and operating well within the context of the current strategic policing priorities. Continuation on a strategy which enables a locally based approach to continue is a high priority for Argyll and Bute Council, as it underpins partnership working, enables effective scrutiny and supports elected member engagement with the Police Service across a challenging, remote, rural and island area.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy None
- 6.2 Financial None
- 6.3 Legal None
- 6.4 HR None
- 6.5 Equalities None
- 6.6 Risk None
- 6.7 Customer Service None

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Appendix 1 – Consultation Documents A Review of Our Scottish Strategic Police Priorities