

## Annual Review of Policing 2017/18: local scrutiny input

Name of Local Scrutiny Committee: Argyll and Bute Council Community Services Committee

1. 2017/18, how effective has Police Scotland's support for local scrutiny and engagement with your scrutiny committee been?

The arrangements for scrutiny of Police Scotland changed following the Local Government Elections in May 2017. The scrutiny function was previously carried out by our Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee, with the Chief Superintendent being a member of this Committee. The input from the Chief Superintendent at these meetings was very well received by Members of the Committee. Following the elections, the Council agreed that the Police scrutiny function would transfer to the Community Services Committee and to date attendance at the meetings by the Chief Superintendent or her representative has been consistent, providing good, well informed updates to the Committee and also taking on board comments which are made by Elected Members.

2. How well do you think your local police plan reflects community priorities?

The local police plan with the focus for Argyll and Bute being on "Keeping people safe" aligns with the priorities which are important to our local communities. Road safety is always a concern across the Argyll and Bute area as it has particular implications when there are incidents which can cause road closures for long periods of time. Communities across the area also highlight anti-social behaviour as a priority and both of these are picked up as local priorities in the police plan. The rural nature of large parts of the Council area mean that priorities that are important in more urban and city areas can differ, and this is reflected in the plan.

3. How effective do you think Police Scotland's reporting against local priorities been, in supporting your scrutiny?

The quarterly reports which we receive to the Community Services Committee are comprehensive and have been modified over time following comments from Elected Members. The report picks up on the local priorities and provides easy to digest information with graphical representation of statistics which is well received. There is also comparison with similar policing areas, Elected Members find this particularly useful.

4. What are the top three things about policing in your area which you think are working really well?

There have been a number of initiatives in terms of road traffic policing including the focussed activity around the trunk roads A82/A83/A85 and the particularly prominent crash locations, and this has been well received. This good work should continue.

The Rural Watch initiative has proved to be very successful in the area and the focus on increasing the number of people signing up to be part of the scheme has been particularly welcomed.

The low levels of crime in Argyll and Bute are a positive and allow for police resources to be directed towards prevention.

5. What are your top three priorities for improvement?

The attendance of local officers at Community Council meetings has been highlighted as an issue. It is understood that sometimes due to operational issues this isn't possible, but it would be helpful if a brief report could be provided by local officers in written format if attendance isn't going to be possible.

Ensuring that police numbers remain consistent and that all of our communities continue to receive an accessible police service and that there is capacity to deal with future demands on the service.

Increasing awareness of cyber-crime across our communities as with the introduction of more advanced technologies this will become an issue for more of our residents.

6. Are there any examples of good practice in your local area you want to highlight? Please provide details below.

The introduction of the Police Scotland Youth Volunteer Scheme in the Oban area has been a really positive initiative. The police officers who are based in schools has also been very well received.

The pilot of the Community and Mental Health Triage service for the Mid Argyll and Kintyre areas which will provide support to local officers when dealing with incidents which involve mental health.

7. What would you like to see the SPA to do more of, to help you in your role and to support better local outcomes?

### **About your local scrutiny arrangements**

8. How would you describe your local scrutiny arrangements for policing?

- Dedicated Policing or Police & Fire Scrutiny Committee or Sub Committee
- Scrutiny committee looking at wider range of services
- Community Safety Committee / Community Planning Sub Committee
- Full Council
- Political lead and strategic discussion at full council or committee, and local discussion at area / neighbourhood level
- Other – please describe

## Strategic Service Committee (Community Services)

9. How many elected members are regularly involved in your local scrutiny process?

There are 16 Elected Members on the Community Services Committee, across all political groupings of the Council.

10. Is there any additional information or feedback you would like to share?

It is important for our Elected Members and the communities which they represent to be kept updated on any planned changes to policing in the area. The rationalisation of the police estate has caused some concern in communities, and it is therefore important that information is shared with the Council in regard to any changes which may have impact on our area. Although the meetings of the Community Services Committee and the scrutiny element takes place then, there is also opportunity for information to be shared directly with the Council and Elected Members outwith these meetings.

### **This response -**

This response will inform the Annual Review of Policing, and local examples and comments will be included within the Review document.

### **Yes/ No**

We agree for our comments to be included within the Review document.