

REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 15 FEBRUARY 2018

CONSULTATION ON THE POLICE SCOTLAND ANNUAL PLAN 2018-19 ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL RESPONSE

1 Recommendations:

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Approve the attached Aberdeenshire Council response on the consultation on the Police Scotland Annual Plan 2018-19.**

2 Discussion

- 2.1 The Police & Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 requires Police Scotland to produce an annual plan outlining the arrangements for the policing of Scotland. This plan is laid before the Scottish Parliament prior to the 1st April each year, and is also published online for the public to view.
- 2.2 A cross-service consultation has led to the attached draft response to provide feedback on the activities of Police Scotland. Elected Members were notified separately of the consultation and invited to submit their own responses if they so wished. The attached paper would represent the Council's overall formal response.
- 2.3 The plan's proposed operational priorities were shaped by engagement via a 'Your View Counts' survey*, as well as analysis of the risks and emerging threats likely to impact on Scotland's communities.

The Police's proposed priorities for 2018/19 are:

- Violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour
- Serious organised crime
- Counter terrorism and domestic extremism
- Protecting people at risk of harm
- Road safety and road crime
- Acquisitive crime

The consultation questions relate to each priority in turn.

- 2.4 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3. Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section D of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to a Council response to an external consultation on a policy matter falling within the delegation of the committee.

4. Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the report is to inform Communities Committee on consultation views and there will be no differential impact, because of the report, on people with protected characteristics.
- 4.2 There are no specific staffing or financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 A Town Centre First Impact Assessment is not required because the report is to inform Communities Committee on consultation views.
- 4.3 No Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate or Directorate Level.

Ritchie Johnson
Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Helen Christie, Team Manager – Policy & Performance Team
29 January 2018



From mountain to sea

Consultation on the Police Scotland Annual Plan 2018-19

Aberdeenshire Council response – January 2018

The Police & Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 requires Police Scotland to produce an annual plan outlining the arrangements for the policing of Scotland. This plan is laid before the Scottish Parliament prior to the 1st April each year, and is also published online for the public to view.

Police Scotland opened a consultation on their proposed Annual Plan 2018-19 on 18 January 2018, which closes on 21 February 2018. It is available here:

<https://consult.scotland.police.uk/consultation/annual-police-plan/>

Aberdeenshire Council is submitting this officer-led response to provide feedback on the activities of this key partner. Elected Members were notified separately of the consultation and invited to submit their own responses if they so wished.

A survey was sent to relevant teams within the council, which received nine responses from the following sections of the council: Transport, Economic Development, Housing, Area Managers and Education.

The plan's proposed operational priorities were shaped by engagement via a 'Your View Counts' survey*, as well as analysis of the risks and emerging threats likely to impact on Scotland's communities.

The Police's proposed priorities for 2018/19 are:

- Violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour
- Serious organised crime
- Counter terrorism and domestic extremism
- Protecting people at risk of harm
- Road safety and road crime
- Acquisitive crime

The consultation questions relate to each priority in turn. A brief outline of the activities that are planned to deliver each priority is accessible here:

https://consult.scotland.police.uk/consultation/annual-police-plan/supporting_documents/Annual%20Policing%20Plan%20%20Printable%20Question%20Set.doc

1. How much do you agree with this statement?: "The approach to dealing with the threat of 'violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour' meets my expectation"

On average, respondents chose to "Agree" with the statement.

No comments were received.

2. How much do you agree with this statement?: "The approach to dealing with the threat from 'serious organised crime' meets my expectation"

On average, respondents chose to "Agree" with this statement.

However, comments indicated a lack of certainty that initiatives to deal with serious organised crime are seen on the street. The Housing response noted that a number of tenants report being afraid of criminal activity in their blocks, which frequently results in families and individuals having to be moved. It was also suggested that the Police could work more closely on cases related to fraud and cybercrime.

3. How much do you agree with this statement?: "The approach to dealing with the threat from 'terrorism and domestic extremism' meets my expectation"

On average, respondents chose to "Strongly Agree" with this statement.

No comments were received.

4. How much do you agree with this statement?: "The approach to dealing with the threat relating to 'protecting people at risk of harm' meets my expectation".

On average, respondents chose to "Agree" with this statement.

It was stressed that partnership working is important. Cooperation is currently good, and undertaken on a variety of issues.

5. How much do you agree with this statement?: "The approach to dealing with the threat of 'injury on our roads and road crime' meets my expectation"

On average, respondents chose to be "Neutral" regarding this statement.

As we move towards the end of the national (2020) road casualty reduction targets, effective partnership working in road safety grows increasingly important. The 2016 Mid-term Review of Scotland's Road Safety Framework - quoted in the plan, makes repeated reference to partners and working in partnership to achieve positive

outcomes. While previous iterations of Police Scotland's Annual Plan have referred to the benefits of collaborative working in road casualty reduction, unfortunately, the 2018/19 Annual Plan makes no mention of this approach. 'Modify driver behaviour', 'through engagement and proportionate enforcement of legislation', appears as the primary police road casualty reduction approach. While appreciating that the statutory responsibility for road safety lies with local authorities, it is hoped that the omission of partnership working is solely due to available document space, rather than a statement of strategic intent. Given the experience, skills, authority and gravitas which Police Scotland possess in relation to road safety, other partners consider them as a key partner in providing some strands of road safety education and encouragement - even to a limited extent.

Partners do not expect a return to the pre-2013 Scottish road safety environment, but a recognition of some potential police involvement in education and encouragement would be welcomed.

Only three years now remain of the national casualty reduction period. While the plan recognises the existence of the Mid-term Review's 'Priority Focus Areas' (PFA) as part of the annually produced Road Safety and Road Crime Calendar of Activity, it might have been expected to see them attracting greater reference in the document, given the national significance placed upon them. The PFAs identify key road user groups, whose level of vulnerability can vary across Scotland, for reasons including geography, vehicle type, route type and usage, as well as socio-economic factors. While road safety is a national issue, some casualty issues can be more geographically based, requiring a bespoke and a more localised approach. It is of interest that the Violent Crime, Disorder, ASB priority, elsewhere in the plan, refers to making use of partnerships and the National Intelligence Model (NIM), however, it is unclear how the road safety priority issues are identified and/or prioritised. By way of example, the Safety Camera Unit are very much evidence-led in their road casualty reduction activities and it may be worthwhile to consider the inclusion of an additional activity such as: "Prioritise road casualty reduction activity around the national Priority Focus Areas, using intelligence and road casualty data to positively influence road user behaviour and casualty levels".

6. How much do you agree with this statement?: "The approach to dealing with the threat of 'acquisitive crime' meets my expectation"

On average, respondents chose to "Agree" with this statement.

To meet this priority, it is essential that there is involvement with trading standards and adult protection teams within local authorities.

7. Are there any other priorities that you'd expect to see included in Police Scotland's Annual Police Plan?

Respondent acknowledged the challenges in meeting the existing commitments, when faced with reduced budgets. However, it was noted that community policing and education are good prevention tools which are not explicitly mentioned in the plan. Both would be a positive addition to the plan.