

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE – 12 JANUARY 2006 SAFER STREETS STRATHCLYDE POLICE REPORT

Report by Superintendent Elizabeth Weir
Sub Divisional Officer
East Ayrshire

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Local Committee Members of Crime Figures and Police activity within their area. Community Constables will continue to report to their respective Community Councils with more detailed information. This meeting will also provide an opportunity for members to provide feedback to Strathclyde Police on areas of concern and to have these concerns addressed.

2. CRIME TRENDS

- 2.1.1 The following crime statistics relate the area of East Ayrshire Beat 39, which covers Stewarton, Dunlop, Kilmaurs, Lugton, Fenwick and Waterside North.

They cover the period from 1 April 2005 to 30 November 2005.

	Crimes of Violence	House breaking to homes	House breaking to garages and sheds	House breaking to Commercial premises, Schools etc.	Vehicle crime	Drugs Possession and Supply
April 2004- Nov 2004	78	21	5	13	63	11
April 2005 – Nov 2005	72	24	5	6	38	27

- 2.1.2 Through high visibility policing and good work from various departments within the police there has been an overall reduction in the number of crimes of violence. Housebreakings have also shown a marginal decrease. Whilst vehicle related crime has shown a considerable decrease. Proactivity in tackling misuse of drugs has resulted in considerable success detecting drug related crimes.

- 2.1.3 The detection rate for group 1 – 7 crimes (all crimes and offences) in the Northern area is currently running at 63%, which is an extremely favourable detection rate.

2.1.4 The Ayrshire Division Control Strategy for 2005 – 2006 focus's on Violent Crime, Acquisitive Crime, Vandalism and Anti Social behaviour. Efforts over the year will impact positively on the above figures.

3. OVERVIEW ON ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

3.1.1 Disorder offences, defined by the Scottish Executive as Breach of the Peace, Urinating in Public, Drunk and Incapable and Consumption of Alcohol in a Public Place.

3.1.2 Disorder offences fell from 110 to 86 within the designated period. This decrease is largely due to an increased police presence within the Northern area.

3.1.3 Vandalism has dropped considerably from 131 to 104 within the designated period.

3.1.4 There are currently no Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in place within the Northern Area. Local officers work closely with partner agencies including the Housing Department, Neighbourhood Disputes Team, SACRO mediation service as well as Atrium Homes to address local concerns at the earliest opportunity by the most effective means.

4 CHANGES TO POLICE SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1.1 At present Strathclyde Police is undergoing a major change programme that will significantly improve our service to the public. The following is a brief outline some of the projects and provides updated information in relation to the timescale. To enhance the service within East Ayrshire additional Community Police officers will be appointed and a mobile police office will replace the closure of certain police offices that are no longer required given the impact of the abovementioned improvements.

4.1.2 Airwave Radio: Within Ayrshire the project will “go live” on or about 8th March 2006. This digital system provides enhanced coverage, clarity and security and is the foundation for further development within communications including telephony and mobile data. Every officer will be issued with a personal handset capable of contacting anyone on the extended police network in the UK. This will require increased security measures, which, cannot be done at the smaller offices.

4.1.3 Contact Centre: The new Contact Centres will take all calls for Ayrshire from March 2006. This will mean that wherever a caller is, whatever number they dial the call will be diverted to a contact centre and will be answered quickly and professionally by trained and competent staff who will be able to deal with the calls efficiently. This will put an end to the current frustrations when trying to call an individual police office and receiving the message “you are being held in a queue and will be answered shortly”. As this will increase the workload the structures need to be in place to deal with this but it will also provide a more accurate picture of the problems and issuing affecting the communities.

- 4.1.4 Area Control Room:** There is currently a police control room within East Ayrshire based at Kilmarnock. In March 2006 this will be replaced by an Area Control Room at Force Headquarters, Pitt Street, Glasgow. This will release staff locally for operational deployment and will provide a greater link to the Contact Centres.
- 4.1.5 Divisional Call Handling Unit:** This Unit has been operational at Ayr police office since September 2005 and takes calls from the public on police matters. This directly reduces the demand on busy officers and the public feedback from this Unit has been very positive.
- 4.1.6 Community Police Officers:** Community Police officers have been able to forge excellent local relationships with Councillors, Community Councils, Residents Associations and other. These officers deal with local issues in conjunction with other services and this is true partnership working in action. All Community officers work closely with the wardens, anti-social behaviour investigative teams and others to provide long-term solutions to problems.
- 4.1.7 Mobile Police Office:** A mobile police office has recently arrived in East Ayrshire. The Sub Divisional Officer, Superintendent Weir, has developed a schedule for the mobile office and parking places have been devised to meet the needs of the local communities.
- 4.1.8 Police Offices:** Inspection reports have been received and recommend closure of some of the smaller offices. Many of these offices are in a poor state of repair. By closing smaller offices substantial revenue savings can be achieved which will then be directed towards further service improvements. The following police offices will close on 1st February 2006:

Muirkirk
Newmilns
Darvel
New Cumnock
Mauchline

The provision of the mobile office will be in place by this time and there will be no detrimental effect.

- 4.1.9 Conclusions:** The changes and developments will lead to improvements in service delivery and provide East Ayrshire with a structure to face the challenges that lie ahead. Strathclyde Police is committed to tackling crime and criminals effectively in East Ayrshire and plays a leading role in making East Ayrshire safe. Updates will be provided to the local media to ensure they have accurate information and also the opportunity to report these changes.

5. LOCAL IMPACT

- 5.1.1** The foregoing changes will realise benefits of improved communications and safety for local officers and the communities they serve through much improved radio communications and more effective telephone handling.

- 5.1.2** At the new Contact Centres calls will be received by well trained and informed operators who will identify the most appropriate response to the callers needs. Directing calls to the Area control room for a priority response or to the Divisional Call Handling Unit or if appropriate making arrangements for the Community Officer to contact the caller at a mutually acceptable date and time.
- 5.1.3** The purpose of these changes is to improve the service to the public and will be driven specifically to achieve this therefore anyone who needs or wishes see a Police Officer in person will have that arranged for them.
- 5.1.4** The Divisional Call Handling Unit is already operational and initial feedback is very positive. Victims of minor crimes or offences can report these directly without the additional inconvenience of waiting for a Police Officer to attend at their address. Community Officers provide follow up enquiries and updates.
- 5.1.5** In The Northern Area the Community Officers will also benefit from the introduction of the Mobile Police Office. The schedule for the office includes regular visits to the smaller communities which do not have a Police Office and provides accommodation where members of the public can attend for advice, assistance or hand in found property. This vehicle will also be able to transport the Community Officers cycle for use on patrol in these communities.
- 5.1.6** Plans for a new build Police Office as part of the proposed Partnership centre are also being progressed, with a view to providing accommodation not only to satisfy current staff levels but also to be sufficient for the increased Police numbers anticipated in the future.
- 5.1.7** The foregoing change programme represents a giant leap for Strathclyde Police in terms of structure and service delivery. This will improve the service local officers are able to provide to their communities and ensure they have the support required to provide a modern effective Police service committed to tackling crime and making the Northern Area even safer.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.1** It is recommended that the Committee: -
- i) identify any local problems which may be addressed by local officers; and
 - ii) otherwise note the content of this report.

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

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