

Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	25 March 2020
Location	Tele-conference
Title of Paper	Policing Performance October-December 2019
Presented By	Martyn Evans Policing Performance Committee Chair
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide the Board with a summary of key issues arising from the Q3 report scrutinised at the SPA Policing Performance Committee held on 27 February 2020.

Q3 POLICE PERFORMANCE

The Committee welcomed the progress reported in Q3 and the overall performance of Police Scotland against a very wide range of measures and indices. Members noted that the performance reporting was improving and thanked the staff in PS and the SPA for their hard work on the developing the reporting format.

The Committee discussed the reported crime trends with a focus on areas of positive trends and areas requiring examination. Positive trends for example are the fall in housebreaking and a projected decrease in reported robberies for the year. A real challenge for Police Scotland are fraud reports which are up significantly and showing sustained growth over the last six years. There is also a concern that crimes associated with bladed and offensive weapons are up across each category and up in total on last year.

The trend analysis by SPA complemented the evidence of good progress Police Scotland reported in the areas of human trafficking, domestic violence under the new legislation, hate crime and sexual crime. The members recognised the considerable effort of Police Scotland responses to the recent floods and planning for coronavirus.

The Committee are concerned that in the reporting of the seven main crime groups, six were showing an overall falling trend in the rate of detections as a percentage of reported crimes. Members noted that detection rates were a key factor contributing to public confidence in policing. There was discussion on the effect on detection rates as a consequence of pro-activity prioritisation decisions taken within Police Scotland. Police Scotland agreed to prepare a more detailed report on detection rates and trends for the next Committee.

Members noted that the Q3 performance report did not clearly link the wide range of pro-active activities and public campaigns reported by Police Scotland with the statistics presented on drug supply and probed as to how future reports could paint a more rounded picture of the drug availability and the access to drugs, by considering other sources of data, such as that from Forensic Services and health partners.

Members welcomed the considerable progress made in Police Scotland with the recording of crimes with a cyber element and that this work was helping to develop a better understanding of the extent and nature of both cyber enabled and cyber dependent crimes.

Members noted that the number of stop and searches had risen substantially and the rate of positive searches had fallen. The high rate of

compliance with the Code of Practice (88% +) was reported and discussed. Members discussed with Police Scotland the relationship between the drugs and weapons found and the need for proportionality and necessity of searches. The Committee considered a separate report on stop and search oversight.

The Committee commended Police Scotland on the innovative partnership work with NHS Lothian colleagues to address the issue of vulnerable people being reported missing from Edinburgh hospitals as an effective example of preventative work and demand reduction.

The Committee commended Police Scotland on winning the Public Sector Racial Equality award for raising awareness of hate crime against workers in the night time economy.

The Committee observed that Police Scotland appear from the evidence available to be performing well in many areas compared to other police services across the UK. Confidence in this observation would be enhanced significantly with clear and effective benchmarking against validated data from comparable policing systems in the UK and Europe. The SPA and Police Scotland will convene a high-level seminar with UK colleagues from academia, police services and oversight bodies to explore the issues of inter-service benchmarking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to discuss the content of this report.