

# POLICE SCOTLAND



**CRATHES**

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
MEETING ON**

**Wednesday 3rd February 2016 at 7.30pm at the Crathes Hall**

## **1. LOCAL INTEREST INFORMATION**

### **RECORDED INCIDENTS/ CRIMES/OFFENCES:**

Crime remains generally low in the Portlethen beat area. Since the beginning of January there have been 62 incidents reported to Police Scotland in this area - and of these, 29 Crime Reports have been raised:

### **OTHER WORK:**

High visibility mobile patrols will continue to be carried out throughout the Kincardine and Mearns area, whenever possible, to reduce the likelihood of crimes and offences occurring.

## **ONGOING LOCAL / FORCE-WIDE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

### **PHIL GORMLEY SWORN IN AS NEW CHIEF CONSTABLE FOR POLICE SCOTLAND**

**The new head of Police Scotland has been formally sworn in during a ceremony at the Scottish Police College at Tulliallan Castle in Fife.**

Phil Gormley has taken over from Sir Stephen House, who stood down as Chief Constable at the end of November after three years in the job.

Mr Gormley was previously the deputy director of the National Crime Agency.

He has also served as the Chief Constable of Norfolk Police.

And he was responsible for the merger of Special Branch and the Anti-Terrorist Branch to form the Counter-Terrorism Command while working as a commander with the Metropolitan Police.

The new Chief Constable said: "It's an honour to have been selected to lead Police Scotland.

"I'm acutely aware of the significant responsibility and expectation that comes with role."

"This is one of the most demanding jobs in British policing and I feel immensely proud to have been chosen to lead the men and women of Police Scotland through the next stage of its journey."

He added: "There is no doubt we are in a challenging financial environment - despite the savings already made, it is my responsibility working with colleagues to deliver the best service possible with the available resources.

"This will require difficult decisions but I am determined that we will develop a service the public trust and have confidence in and which our officers and staff are proud to provide."

The Scottish Police Federation, which represents the vast majority of the force's officers, has warned Mr Gormley that he will be operating in a financial climate that has never been more difficult.



## **NORTH EAST DIVISION NOW OPERATIONAL**

**North East Division became operational at midnight on Friday 1 January 2016, replacing the former Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and Moray Divisions.**

The new division is being led by Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson, who was the former Divisional Commander for Aberdeenshire and Moray Division. Chief Superintendent Thomson is supported by the Senior Management Team who are:

- Superintendent Innes Walker, Operations;
- Superintendent George MacDonald, Support;
- Superintendent Kate Stephen, Partnerships and Events.

Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson said: "I would like to take this opportunity to welcome staff to the new North East Division and reassure them that it is business as usual and we will continue to put local policing at the heart of what we do.

"While we have created a single division in the north east of Scotland, our officers will remain in the same Local Policing Teams, in the same locations, serving the same communities.

"A review and restructure of other functions including Divisional CID and the support functions will take place across the division in the next few months and will be completed by 31 March 2016."

***\*A comprehensive Q&A section regarding the merging of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and Moray Divisions is included at the end of this report.***

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## **BLUE BADGE IMPROVEMENT SERVICE (BBIS) - DATABASE ACCESS**

**On 25 January the Service will be granted full access to the Blue Badge Improvement Service (BBIS) database which will allow our officers to quickly identify people who abuse the Blue Badge scheme.**

The agreement, with all 32 local authorities in Scotland, now means that officers can access real-time information on the Blue Badge Improvement Service database, allowing them to quickly identify people who are abusing the scheme.

The database was introduced as part of the Blue Badge Scheme and contains information on all blue badges issued in Scotland together with the terms or conditions placed upon the badge. By having access to the database, officers will be able to access information quickly if they believe that a Blue Badge is being misused.

The BBIS Database should be accessed via the PNC Operations Unit who will carry out the relevant checks on behalf of the officer. Notes will also be able to be sent to the relevant local authority with regards to the reason for the check and if action was

taken.



## **\*Q&A RE MERGING OF ABERDEEN CITY AND ABERDEENSHIRE AND MORAY DIVISIONS**

### **Why are you creating a single division in the north east?**

It has been decided to strengthen local policing in the north by creating a single division from the existing Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and Moray Divisions in order to increase consistency in the provision of the policing service provided to these communities.

There are already some resources which are shared between the two divisions and the creation of a single division will enable greater co-operation and better serve the local communities.

The merger will also offer benefits through the improved access to specialist regional and national resources; as well as reducing duplication of work in two areas which face similar geographic and economic issues, thereby strengthening the Divisional Commander's ability to deal with local issues appropriately.

### **Is this about saving money?**

Our main driver is the delivery of better targeted local policing, not savings. Where savings are made (such as the removal of any duplication of service provision in the north east) it is intended these will be reinvested into local policing within the north east. This ensures our policing service remains as sustainable and cost effective as we can make it.

### **Is this not merely a return to Grampian Police?**

No. Grampian Police, as one of the eight legacy Forces, had its own Chief Constable and Executive. It had its own corporate departments for HR, finance and a number of other business functions a standalone organisations needs to operate. The creation of Police Scotland allowed the creation of national functions, removing the duplication that existed across the eight legacy forces and realising significant financial and efficiency savings.

There are still some overheads associated with being a division and by bringing the two current North East policing divisions together, we will be able to remove any duplication in overhead ensuring we are directing more resources towards frontline policing.

### **How do these proposals affect the local authority scrutiny role in policing?**

They don't. They may change who attends the meetings but we remain absolutely committed to agreeing a meaningful Local Policing Plan for each of the three local authority areas in the north east, based upon consultation with the communities and elected representatives in each of those areas. These local plans will continue to drive priorities and objectives at a local authority level, and we will report progress against those objectives. In addition, we will continue to regularly report to whatever local authority committee is arranged to monitor and provide feedback on policing of that local authority area. We are confident that the creation of the North East Division will enhance the focus on local policing priorities.

### **Who will be the new Divisional Commander?**

Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson is the nominated Divisional Commander.

### **What will the new division be called and where will the headquarters be located?**

The new division will be known as North East Division, the Divisional Headquarters will be located at Queen Street, Aberdeen.

### **Why has Queen Street been chosen as the headquarters?**

The decision to retain the Queen Street building has been taken following feedback from the partners we have consulted with.

### **What will happen to the existing Divisional Headquarters in Inverurie?**

This will be considered as part of our review of our existing estate and any future decisions will be taken following consultation with partners and local communities and subject to final approval by the Scottish Police Authority.

### **Will there be a change to Police Officer numbers?**

There are no plans to change the number of officers in the North East Local Policing Division. Where we are able to remove duplicated functions, officers released from those functions will be re-deployed into alternative roles in North East Division, taking into account the needs of the organisation.

### **Will there be a change to police staff numbers?**

Police Staff have undergone, or are undergoing, a review of structure, posts and responsibilities. At this time, we do not believe it is necessary to change what has been agreed. If it becomes necessary to review this, a full programme of consultation with staff potentially affected by any changes, and engagement with internal stakeholders, will take place. It remains the case that there are no compulsory redundancies from Police Scotland.

### **What will the Divisional Priorities be?**

The Divisional Priorities for the two existing divisions for 2015/16 are very similar and they will be merged and become the priorities for the single division for the remainder of the financial year. The Divisional Priorities for 2016/17 will be developed from the Local Policing Plan and following consultation with the communities and elected representatives in each of the three areas.

The priorities for 2015/16 are: Acquisitive Crime; Antisocial Behaviour, National Security; Public Protection; Road Safety and Road Crime; Serious and Organised Crime, and Violent Crime.

### **How will the single division strengthen local policing?**

We will have more flexibility in managing resources making sure that the right people are in the right place at the right time. There has been a great deal of flexibility between Divisional Commanders in the two existing divisions since the creation of Police Scotland and this has proven to be extremely beneficial in making sure that support is given in cases where extra resources are required. It makes sense that these resources are now all under the command of one Divisional Commander who can more easily make decisions about where the resources are needed on any given day and during any enquiry or incident.

### **Will this mean that resources are removed from my local area?**

No, this will have no effect on local policing across the North East. We will largely have the same officers and staff working in the same areas doing the same thing that they were last year and this will continue for the foreseeable future.

On occasion there may be a requirement to share resources amongst the communities of Aberdeen,

Aberdeenshire and Moray in order to respond to the demands of each area however, this is likely to be for major incidents or events. On a daily basis, officers will remain within their respective divisions, providing a service to their local communities.

There is no intention to change the existing structure of our Community Policing Teams, which will continue to be commanded by Inspectors who are already well known with established relationships within our communities.

**There is also concern about the Area Control Room and Service Centre in Aberdeen closing - is this just a scaling down of Policing in the North East?**

No, this is about doing what we feel is the right thing for local policing in the North East. This will allow us to better deploy and devote resources to the places where they're needed on a daily basis making sure we do all we can to keep our communities safe.

**Aberdeen City Council have stated they are against the creation of the single division and are considering a judicial review - how do you respond to this?**

We have been consulting on and examining the possibility of creating a single division since January 2015, and we feel it is in the interests of the north east that the two divisions are brought together under one Commander. There have been a number of resource intense, high profile incidents and cases in the north east over the last couple of years and we have seen officers from both divisions coming together in one common aim to deal with these incidents making sure our communities in the north east remain some of the safest in the country.

