

5. TRANSFORMING YOUR COUNCIL – POLICE SCOTLAND FUNDING UPDATE

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the impact of the removal of funding for police officers as part of the budget setting in February 2018.

The report recalled that in setting the budget in February 2018 the council agreed to reduce the funding to Police Scotland by £658,000 through the removal of the contribution for funded officers, funded vehicles and the removal of an analyst posts. Officers were also instructed to undertake an assessment of the impact of removing funding and report back in 6 months and 12 months.

The Service Level Agreement in place at the time of the budget setting meeting between the council and Police Scotland provided for the continuation of the funded officer until 15 May 2018. On 16 May 2018 Police Scotland introduced a revised community policing model in West Lothian.

A summary of the changes were as follows:

- A new approach to delivering police activity in West Lothian, with the cessation of the Community Action Team, and the implementation of the Community Enquiry Team.
- The removal of the 21 funded officer posts, with the new model comprising of 24 constables.
- The removal of a full time School Link role.
- The implementation of four Locality Areas, aligned to Response Policing as follows:
 - Linlithgow, Broxburn, Uphall, Winchburgh, East Livingston and East Calder
 - Livingston North and Livingston South
 - Armadale, Blackridge and Bathgate
 - Whitburn, Blackburn, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley

There were 4 Community Officers per locality Area.

Table 1 within the report provided an overview of recorded crime and changes in the levels of recorded crime for the period July to September 2018 compared to the same period in 2017/18.

Appendix 1 to the report set out the full detail of performance for Quarter 2 for 2018/2019. The performance data showed an increase in recorded crime compared to Q2 of 2017/18. It also provided a comparison of West Lothian in context of the overall Division.

In conclusion the report performance for Q2 2018/19 had seen an increase in 8 of the 10 crime categories when compared to the same period in 2017/18 and at division level there was an increase in 60 of the 10 crime categories.

The report recommended that the panel note the update on the revised community policing model introduced by Police Scotland and reported performance data since the implementation of the council funding reduction to Police Scotland.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.