

24. POLICE HEADQUARTER FUNCTIONS

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Chief Executive providing an update of the Police Service of Scotland plans for the location of headquarters functions of the Policing Division which would cover Mid, East and West Lothian and the Scottish Borders.

The report advised that the legislative arrangements for the operation of the new Scottish Police Service were set out in the Police & Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. The Act set out a variety of appointments, principles, priorities, strategies and plans through which policing was to be planned and delivered.

The Council Executive considered a report on the 18 December 2012 which outlined the proposal to create a unitary police division covering West Lothian, East Lothian, Mid Lothian and Scottish Borders which would commence on 1 April 2013. In agreeing to support the new arrangements for policing this was conditional on the Policing Division headquarters being in Livingston.

The report went on to advise that the Assistant Chief Constable Local Policing (East) had recently written to advise that following an independent assessment of the options for the location of headquarter functions, Dalkeith had been identified as the most appropriate for a number of reasons.

Discussions with the Assistant Chief Constable and the Chief Superintendent recognised that this decision would raise concerns locally over the perception of diminished partnership working and engagement between the police and senior personnel of the community planning partnership and a number of steps were taken to address these concerns.

It was also recognised that the new Lothian's and Scottish Borders division would not focus its entire infrastructure at the divisional headquarters and a number of functions associated with the back office support to policing would be distributed across the division. This would mean that the number of Officers operating from the Civic Centre would increase. The Detective Chief Inspector would continue to operate from Livingston and the Divisional Crime Intelligence Unit would also operate from the Civic Centre.

In conclusion the report advised that the new model of divisional policing would provide an enhanced capacity at divisional level, but this was based on a larger division. It was disappointing that it had not been considered appropriate for the divisional headquarters to be based in Livingston.

The report recommended that the Council Executive:

1. Note that the headquarters functions of the Policing Division which would cover Mid, East and West Lothian and the Scottish Borders would be based in Dalkeith.

2. Note that as a result of the deployment plan additional police resources would be located in West Lothian including the Divisional Crime Intelligence Unit.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.