Item 7

23rd November 2023

Glasgow Community Planning Partnership

Safe Glasgow Partnership

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Safe Glasgow Partnership Scrutiny Arrangements

Purpose of Report:

To review Glasgow's arrangements for the scrutiny of Police and Fire Services.

Recommendations:

The Safe Glasgow Partnership are asked to

1 Note the contents of the report
2 Discuss any possible improvements to the scrutiny process of the services

1 Introduction

1.1 At the meeting of Glasgow City Council in May 2023, there was a motion in relation to Police Scotland and Local Accountability, stating

'Council understands that other local authorities operate different local accountability models for both police and fire services, including for example through Local Scrutiny Boards or Committees. Council believes that the 10th anniversary of the establishment of national police and fire services is an appropriate moment to review Glasgow's own arrangements and therefore instructs officers to bring a paper after recess, providing comparisons between different local police and fire scrutiny arrangements across Scotland and their effectiveness, and suggesting potential opportunities to enhance the local accountability of these services in Glasgow.'

2 Background

2.1 In terms of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 47 (1) and Section 115 (41E) respectively, as part of the new arrangement for the governance of the two services, responsibility was given to Local Authorities to scrutinise the draft local plans for Police and Fire and Rescue. Local Authorities require to approve the above noted plans. The aim was to build on and strengthen the connection between the Police Services of Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the communities they served.

2.2 At its meeting on 27th September 2012, Glasgow City Council's Executive Committee approved a partnership approach to scrutiny of the services which resulted in the creation of the Safe Glasgow Group, now the Safe Glasgow Partnership (SGP) within the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (GCPP) structure. The main role of the SGP is as the designated body to scrutinise and review local Police and Fire and Rescue plans for the city which are required to encompass priority setting, community engagement and performance related measures.

2.3 As the SGP sits within the GCPP structure, it is a partnership meeting and all members should contribute equally to the scrutiny function of the group. The SGP comprises of 10 elected members and one member from the following partners, Wheatley Homes Glasgow, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Glasgow City Health & Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Glasgow Third Sector Interface Network and GCC Neighbourhoods Regeneration and Sustainability.

3 Safe Glasgow Partnership Meetings

3.1 The SGP meet quarterly, where there is a standing item on the agenda of updates from the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland and Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. These reports provide updates on

progress made in relation to the local priorities contained in their local plans, as well as any other relevant information.

3.2 As the SGP are scheduled to meet quarterly, sometimes there may not be enough time to go into detail on all relevant matters or perhaps a formal meeting is not the best way to present this information. This is why, during 2023, the SGP were invited to Govan Police station for an information session, hosted by the Divisional Commander, to give the members a fuller input into topics that they had expressed an interest in and were also given a tour of the custody suite, where those attending were taken through an individuals journey from arrival at the police station, until they left. A similar visit to SFRS training facility was also arranged for the members of the SGP, which featured presentations, live fire demonstrations and a walk through of a home fire safety visit.

3.3 An additional meeting of the SGP was also added to this year's calendar, as during the March 2023 meeting where the 3 year local policing plan was discussed, there were many questions raised that the Divisional Commander wanted to give a fuller response to, that would be challenging to accommodate in the 4 scheduled meetings. Therefore, a standalone meeting was scheduled for Police Scotland to report fully on these areas, which allowed members time to have any questions answered without time constraints.

3.4 Additional meetings and site visits have happened numerous times since the creation of the SGP. SFRS have also previously had a standalone meeting to discuss all aspects around Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS). Previous visits to Police Scotland have covered a tour of their contact and control centre and an opportunity to meet with specially trained and armed officers to discuss their selection process, training and procedures.

4 Governance

4.1 The Governance Framework of GCPP is considered for amendments at least once per calendar year. A full review of GCPP was carried out throughout 2018. During this review, the scope and remit of the SGP was considered.

4.2 The SGP terms of reference were then updated to include 'safety' oriented groups across Glasgow, where GCPP partners were prominent i.e.

- Community Justice Glasgow
- One Glasgow – Reducing Offending
- Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership (GVAWP)
- Hate Crime Working Group
- Youth Justice Strategy Group

4.3 Following a number of development sessions with members of the SGP in 2018, the 'Guide to Scrutiny in Partnership' (Appendix 1) was drafted to

- Clarify the role of elected members and partners in contributing to scrutiny;
- Provide all members of the SGP with the relevant training to ensure they have the appropriate skill required to undertake effective scrutiny;
- Assist members in developing and contributing to a scrutiny focussed work plan, ensuring there is a clear rationale for topic selection; and
- Ensure that all scrutiny work / topics align with or are complementary with the work of relevant external bodies, i.e. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS), Scottish Police Authority (SPA), The Board of SFRS etc.

4.4 Last year, the Scottish Police Authority and COSLA worked in partnership with local government representatives to develop new framework for Elected Members to support their scrutiny of local police planning. Glasgow participated in the development of this framework, and whilst Glasgow had already developed its own 'Guide to Scrutiny', members and those from other local authorities may find this document useful in carrying out their responsibilities.

4.5 The GCPP are reviewing the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and in turn are reviewing the Governance of Community Planning to ensure it is fit for purpose and allow for tracking of progress and ensures the communities of Glasgow are able to take part in the design and delivery of services which meet the agreed priorities.

5 Mapping Local Scrutiny Arrangements in Scotland

5.1 University of Edinburgh and Scottish Institute for Policing Research

5.1.1 From October 2015 to March 2016, the University of Edinburgh, supported by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR), undertook a small-scale project to examine the development and working of local police scrutiny arrangements following the creation of Police Scotland from April 2013.

5.1.2 Stage one of the project was to map out the different arrangements throughout Scotland. Three different sites were then selected for in-depth study that formed the basis of the second stage of the project.

5.1.3 The recommendations from this report were:

- **Formal routes of 'escalation'** – between the Local Scrutiny Committee (LSC) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA), and within Police Scotland – need to be clarified and set out.

- **Dissemination of 'good practice'** reports needs to be reviewed and **opportunities for learning and networking** across different LSCs given consideration and supported. Learning and networking opportunities could, but needn't be, national, and Police Regions might be an appropriate level.

- LSCs should review their membership to ensure that **necessary links** between Community Planning Partnerships, Community Safety and Community Councils (and other relevant local committees or partnerships) are there. In many cases we anticipate they already will be.

- Consideration should be given as to what **additional training** could be given to LSC members around the more technical aspects of their work (giving feedback on priorities and local statistics, and in approving police plans). The SPA might be well placed to provide some of this technical support. Additional relevant resources exist within Universities and might be accessed through academic-practitioner collaborations such as the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) or the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research (SCCJR).

5.2 The Scottish Police Authority

5.2.1 The SPA submitted a report to the Policing Performance Committee in August 2020, providing an overview of Local Authority Scrutiny Arrangements for Policing.

5.2.2 This report shows the different types of scrutiny arrangements for all 32 Local Authorities throughout Scotland, which are

- Dedicated police and fire committees;
- Committees with a broader 'Safety' remit; and
- Community Planning Committees.

5.2.3 As there was a local government election in 2022, after the SPA report was produced, some of the information contained in the report has now changed.

5.2.4 The SPA report does not go into any detail of the effectiveness of any of these committees as it is up to each local authority to choose the scrutiny arrangements that best suit their own local needs and requirements.

5.2.5 On 17th April 2023, COSLA, Police Scotland and the SPA signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement that sets out a commitment to strengthen existing collaboration on a range of agreed strategic priorities, as well as promote and support partnership working. The four priority areas which the organisations will focus on over the current term 2022-2027 are:

- local scrutiny and accountability
- prevention and early intervention
- health and wellbeing
- resource and investment

5.2.6 A Partnership Delivery Plan will be developed to drive forward progress on these priorities and we will keep the membership of the SGP updated as more information on this becomes available to us.

6 COSLA Local Scrutiny Convenors Forum

6.1 The COSLA Police Scrutiny Conveners Forum was established by COSLA in 2016 with the purpose of enhancing the ability of elected members to have a meaningful role in the governance and scrutiny of policing in Scotland, and provide a mechanism for elected members to provide input into national policy issues and broader policing matters that have an impact on local communities.

6.2 The Forum is made up of Local Authority scrutiny conveners, supported by their relevant senior officers, SPA Board and Executive Team, senior officers from Police Scotland as well as officials from the Scottish Government.

6.3 The Forum meets twice a year and the Chair of the Safe Glasgow Partnership reports back any relevant information from this meeting.

6.4 The purpose of the Forum is to

- Gather the collective views of member councils on national policy issues relating to policing
- Enable Local Scrutiny Conveners for Policing to influence and scrutinise national policy decisions which have an impact at local level
- Contribute to a formalised relationship between Local Scrutiny Committees and with the Scottish Police Authority
- Act as a conduit for the dissemination of any relevant information from COSLA, the SPA or Police Scotland
- Encourage the sharing of good practice in scrutiny at local level, with the support of the Improvement Service.

7 Recommendations

The Safe Glasgow Partnership are asked to

1 Note the contents of the report
2 Discuss any possible improvements to the scrutiny process of the services