

**To: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board**

**On: 18 March 2024**

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**Report by: Director of Finance & Resources**

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**Heading: AUDIT, RISK & SCRUTINY REQUEST FOR REVIEW IN RELATION TO POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF POLICE STATIONS WITHIN RENFREWSHIRE**

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**1. Summary**

1.1 Councillor James MacLaren has submitted a request for a review to be carried out by the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board in relation to the possible closure of local police stations within Renfrewshire. He is concerned that closure of police stations may pose a risk to residents and has requested that a report be submitted to the next Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board.

2.1 A copy of Councillor MacLaren's request is attached as an appendix to this report.

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**2. Recommendation**

2.1 That the Board give consideration to carrying out this review regarding the closure of police stations within Renfrewshire and to choose one of the following four options:-

- (i) that the matter be considered immediately;
  - (ii) that the matter be considered as part of a future review;
  - (iii) that the matter be referred to officers for investigation;
  - (iv) that the matter be not considered.
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### 3. **Background**

- 3.1 At the Police, Fire and Rescue Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 16 January the Divisional Commander for Renfrewshire and Inverclyde provided a verbal update relative to the Police Scotland Estate within Renfrewshire. He advised that the Scottish Police Authority had commenced a public consultation on their website which would end on 31 July 2024 after which responses would be collated/analysed and decisions formed.
- 3.2 The consultation advised that there were 29 buildings proposed for closure/disposal across the Police Scotland Estate. Only two of these properties were within the Renfrewshire Council area; Paisley and Ferguslie Park. The Ferguslie Park Station has no front counter usage and currently the Community Policing and Alcohol and Violence Reduction Unit are located there. The Divisional Commander advised at the meeting that Police Scotland were seeking to move towards more police stations being co-located with partners where possible, to ensure services were delivered in the most efficient and effective way.
- 3.2 It was anticipated that the outcome from the consultation/engagement exercise would be realised approximately 24 months from the date of closure of the consultation.
- 3.3 The Divisional Commander provided assurances that there would be no reduction in response officers, CID or support staff.
- 3.4 Councillor MacLaren is seeking the review into the closure of Police Stations within Renfrewshire Police Scotland as he would like a base retained within Paisley.
- 3.5 The Council's Scheme of Delegations dictates that members of the Board have 4 options:
- The Board may agree:-
- (i) that the matter be considered immediately;
  - (ii) that the matter be considered as part of a future review;
  - (iii) that the matter be referred to officers for investigation;
  - (iv) that the matter be not considered.

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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** - not relevant to report recommendations
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – not relevant to report recommendations
3. **Community/Council Planning** – not relevant to report recommendations
4. **Legal** – not relevant to report recommendations

5. **Property/Assets** – not relevant to report recommendations
  6. **Information Technology** – not relevant to report recommendations
  7. **Equality & Human Rights** – not relevant to report recommendations
  8. **Health & Safety** – not relevant to report recommendations
  9. **Procurement** – not relevant to report recommendations
  10. **Risk** – as per the subject matter of this report
  11. **Privacy Impact** – not relevant to report recommendations
  12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not relevant to report recommendations
  13. **Climate Risk** – not relevant to report recommendations
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### **List of Background Papers**

- (a) Background Paper - none
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## **AUDIT, RISK & SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL PROGRAMME**

I would like to have the undernoted issue considered by the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board:

### **Issue:**

The possible closure of our local police stations and feel that this may pose a risk to residents of Renfrewshire.

### **Why the review should be undertaken:**

....Not everyone has access to a computer in order to make an online report and for some including the elderly and visitors to the town, visiting the local police station may be the only way they see as making a report or getting advice. It is also important that a police presence is felt by residents so they feel a sense of security. This may be lost if there is no police station in the town. If the police station is moved to Glasgow then it will take longer for a police response to get here if there is an incident. If there are no cells locally for locking someone up and they have to be taken to cells in Glasgow then that would probably take away 2 officers from other duties perhaps for an hour or more while they take the person to Glasgow to be locked up plus the paperwork that is involved. Then there is the issue of knowing the area. Policemen based in Glasgow are unlikely to know the area as well as policemen who are based here. Plus, the policemen in Glasgow are likely to end up being sent all over the west of Scotland and not just to Paisley, so the policemen attending an incident here may not know the area particularly well.

### **Expected outcome of the review**

Police Scotland retain a base here in Paisley

Councillor .....James W.H. MacLaren.....

Date .....27/2/24.....