

**Item 5 (ii)**

**POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the  
POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE held  
in the Fire Authority Rooms, Fire and Rescue  
Service Headquarters, Nissan Way, Barmston  
Mere, Sunderland on MONDAY 23 FEBRUARY  
2015 at 10.30am

**Present:**

Councillor N. Forbes in the Chair

Councillors M. Forbes, Harrison and Perry.

**Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor Stockdale.

**Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Minutes**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Committee held on 10 November 2014 (circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**End of Quarter 3 (April – December) Performance Report 2014-2015**

The Chief Fire Officer submitted a report providing the Quarter 3 (April-December) performance of the Authority against the targets for 2014/15. Members were asked to consider and scrutinise the contents of the report, and provide comments.

Members were advised that the report had been structured to demonstrate the Authority's performance in relation to key performance indicators reflecting organisational priorities. The full suite of performance indicators was appended to the report.

Nina Wilson and John Pratt delivered a presentation to the committee. They began with a summary of Quarter 3 2014/15 by comparison with Quarter 3 2013/14 whereby there had been:-

- 25.5% fewer deliberate secondary fires
- 24% fewer deliberate fires
- 20% fewer all fire calls attended
- 4.9% fewer primary fires
- 10.8% fewer special services
- 6.8% fewer injuries from accidental dwelling fires

However there had also been:-

- 2% more accidental dwelling fires
- 20% more malicious false alarms attended
- 2.7% more non domestic automatic false alarms attended
- 2.4% more domestic automatic false alarms attended

The attention of members was then drawn to the following Quarter 3 2014/15 information:-

By the end of Quarter 3 2014/15 the service had attended 1179 primary fires which was reduction of 61 incidents from the same period last year. A 27% reduction had been seen over the last 5 years.

The service had attended 3054 deliberate fires, which was a substantial reduction of 985 incidents in the same period last year, and a 39% reduction over the last 5 years.

With regards to special services incidents, 1442 were attended, which was a reduction of 175 incidents when compared to the previous year. Road Traffic Collisions continued to be the main incident type, with 253 incidents accounting for 18% of special service incidents.

An increase had been seen in both domestic and non-domestic fires, by 2.4% and 2.7% respectively. 45% of domestic fires were cooking related, and 32% of non-domestic fires were due to system faults.

A detailed discussion then ensued in relation to deliberate fires. There had been a substantial reduction of 935 incidents when compared to the previous year and a 39% reduction over the last 5 years.

A reduction had also been seen in the number of deliberate secondary fires, and the service had attended 906 fewer incidents, a reduction of 25.5% when compared to the previous year and a reduction of 37.9% over the last 5 years. Targeted work was undertaken with partners and the benefits of this were being realised.

Whilst the number of accidental dwelling fires had slightly increased by 9 (2%), the number of injuries in these type of fires had reduced by 7%. Of the 41 injuries, 34%

occurred in persons over 65 and cooking was the main cause in 56% of the incidents.

Sadly there had been 3 fatalities. The first occurred in Gateshead in April 2014, the second in North Tyneside in November 2014, and the third in Sunderland in December 2014. All three were still being investigated. The Authority continued to take active steps to ensure the risk of death from accidental fires was reduced by targeting of prevention and education work, understanding current risks, and also targeting work with partners.

Councillor Harrison commented on the number of deliberate fires (3054) and asked how the Authority targeted the resources they currently had. The Chief Fire Officer responded by advising that this was achieved via the Response Review, whereby a balanced view was undertaken and the service now sends Targeted Response Vehicles to incidents, where applicable. This also maintained fast response times, for high risk incidents.

ACFO Brindle added that prevention work was key, especially in times of having to ration resources. Policies were therefore in place. So whilst response was important, prevention was also at the forefront of business activity especially during the current economic climate.

The Chairman agreed and commented that the activities carried out to date, had broadly been successful in reducing risk, therefore there was a clear link to investment in such approaches, and the reduction of incidents.

The Chairman queried the process for data being used to drive decisions and was advised that data was used to make strategic decisions. Over 30,000 home safety checks would be completed this year all of which were targeted on a risk basis through the use of data.

The committee acknowledged that plans needed to reflect community needs and were assured that development plans were in place and that these would continue to be analysed by the Authority to ensure that they were fit for purpose. Any areas for prevention were linked to data analysis, and risk analysed within each of the five areas.

Officers were thanked for their informative presentation.

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted and endorsed; and
- (ii) The publication of the End of Quarter Performance Report be published.

(Signed) N. FORBES  
Chairman

