

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING: 24th MARCH 2014

SUBJECT: IRMP REVIEW OF DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the findings of partner consultation on the options set out for changes to our diversionary activities with young people, and to seek Member approval of a future approach to this work in light of the responses.

2 BACKGROUND

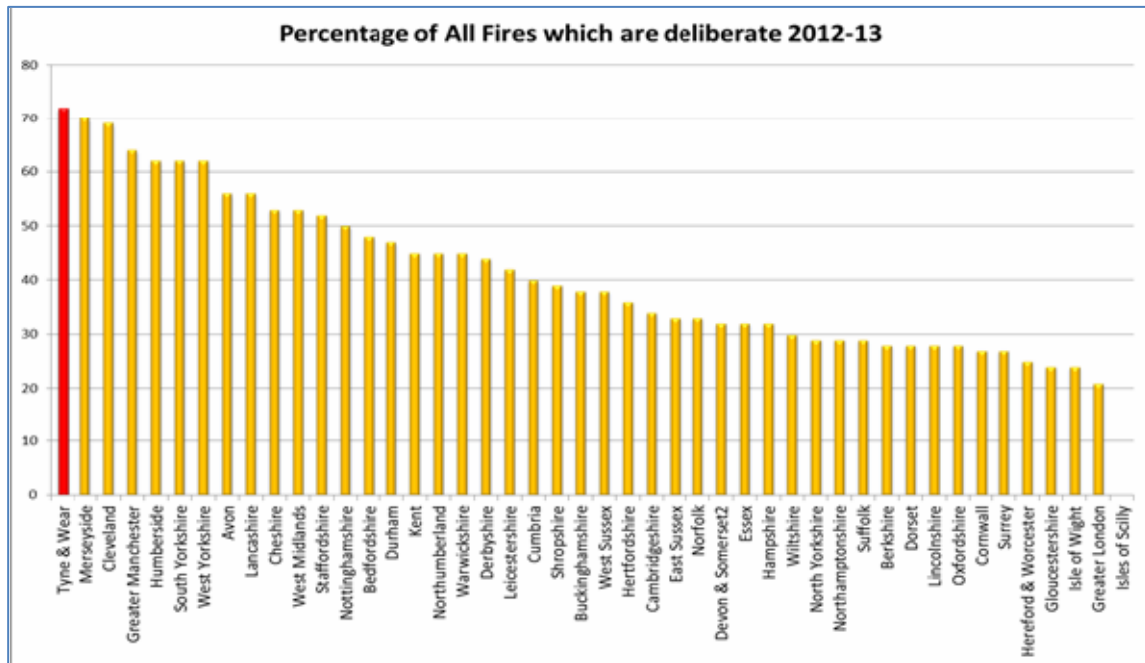
- 2.1 The Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process is the vehicle we use to make significant changes to the shape of the service, ensuring that services are planned, designed and delivered in a way that balances efficiency and community risk. This is a national process required of us under the Fire and Rescue National Framework.
- 2.2 Our response to the Sir Ken Knight review, approved by the Authority in June 2013, shows how we have used the IRMP process for more than 10 years to change the service, strengthen prevention, reduce costs, reduce incidents and manage the risk in our communities.
- 2.3 Since 2010, our IRMP actions have been developed against a background of significant reductions in the budget available to the Authority, as a result of cuts in Government spending. These cuts were applied disproportionately to Metropolitan FRAs, and have resulted in a significant reduction in Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority's (TWFRA's) spending power between 2010 and 2014.
- 2.4 These reductions are set to continue based on the latest Settlement Funding Assessment. It is expected that TWFRA will be required to identify a further £8.8m of spending reductions over the next three years, of which c£3m remain to be identified following agreement of reviews in January 2014.
- 2.5 In February 2011, the Authority made a clear commitment to managing these reductions in a way which minimises impact on the frontline service as far as possible. As a result, the 2011-13 reviews focused on back office activities, management structure and a number of specialist parts of the organisation. Reviews of the Operational Response model and our Diversionary activities were included in public consultation at this time, but it was made clear that these actions would only be taken if unavoidable.

- 2.6 In October 2012, the Authority agreed to add 5 new IRMP actions to the programme. Since it was now deemed unavoidable due to the extent of the reduction in funding, the Response and Diversionary reviews were included, and these reviews have been carried out during 2013.
- 2.7 The specific objectives of the Diversionary review were to:
- Review the nature, level and impact of diversionary activities with young people carried out by TWFRA
 - Conduct the review in collaboration with partners, in the wider context of how diversion fits with community priorities.
 - Produce options for TWFRA's future provision of these services- either a sustainable funding/delivery model for continuing services, or potential cessation of some/all diversionary activities
 - Respond appropriately to the risk
 - Improve value for money and assist in responding to cuts
- 2.8 In October 2013, Authority considered the findings of the review of Diversionary activities, and approved a period of consultation on the future of these activities. The detail of the consultation is covered later in this report.

3 CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

- 3.1 TWFRS currently delivers a range of diversionary activities with young people. These programmes have been put in place over a number of years in response to the national policy context, and most importantly, to local community risk (specifically of anti-social behaviour/ deliberate secondary fires).
- 3.2 The policy context is our statutory duty to prevent fires occurring. The relationship between this and diversionary work with young people was set out in the *Strategy for Children and Young People (Fire and Rescue Service) 2006*, which was very specific about FRS' role in preventative work with young people. This has been replaced by a much broader and more general exhortation to all those working with young people to work collectively and build services round the young person (*Positive for Youth, 2011*); FRAs are not mentioned in this although it seems likely that our role is seen as similar to that of the Police:
- "The Police Service does not only have an important role to play when young people are at crisis point, but also as part of multi-agency planning and early intervention".*
- 3.3 In terms of community risk, data gathered for the review indicates that despite very good reductions in recent years, Tyne and Wear experiences a higher proportion of deliberate to

all fires than any other part of the country; this is linked with general anti-social behaviour patterns in the area. The chart below is taken from the latest Fire Statistics Monitor (2013):



3.4 Appendix A is the consultation document and contains a broader selection of the data used in the review.

3.5 The key activities forming part of TWFRAs’ diversionary programme are fairly typical of those carried out by FRAs, which is not surprising given that TWFRS was in the vanguard of developing Diversionary activities and has served as a role model to others:

- **Juvenile Firesetters Education Programme (JFEP).** This targeted programme works with young people who have displayed firesetting behaviour or an unusual interest in fire. It is based on referrals and offers 1:1 sessions focusing on the behaviour of fire, fire safety, the consequences of fire and responsible citizenship. JFEP is part of the wider work of Prevention and Education teams working in service delivery.
- **Young Firefighters Association (YFA).** Established in the early 1990s, this programme’s initial intention was to strengthen community infrastructure following civil unrest. It allows young people 11-17 to join a uniformed youth organisation and encourages them to develop self discipline, social consciousness, a sense of community awareness and belonging, and an understanding of the role of the FRS in society. 10 branches are in place, led by existing staff who are paid on a sessional basis

- **Phoenix Programme.** This programme works with young people either in the criminal justice system, or at risk of offending, and aims to prevent offending/reduce reoffending. It has a broad focus, ie the offending behaviour may not be concerned with fire, and the activities focus on self-awareness, social consciousness and self-discipline through fire related and non-fire related activities including a field trip. The basic Phoenix is a 4 day programme and a number of follow on programmes have been developed. This is a **commissioned activity** (commissioned by Community Safety Partnerships and/or Youth Offending Teams), primarily in Sunderland and Newcastle, although ad hoc programmes have been funded elsewhere (currently in North Tyneside). It is delivered by a dedicated team of 3 staff, with commissioners covering the staffing costs.
- **Prince's Trust Team programme.** Through local FE colleges, the Prince's Trust commissions providers to deliver its Team programme, with specific national aims to reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). TWFRS is currently **commissioned** to deliver programmes in 3 areas (it was 4 until 2013). The programme is generic but TWFRS includes fire and community safety elements. Princes Trust is delivered by a dedicated team of 8 staff, with the majority of staffing costs met by the commissioner.
- **SafetyWorks!** Safetyworks! is a dedicated facility providing a wide range of realistic, interactive community safety scenarios, to enable practical learning in a safe, controlled environment both fire related and wider. It was designed to provide a focal point for fire safety, community safety and crime prevention education in Tyne & Wear, and for most of its recent life has operated as a joint venture with Northumbria Police. Based in Newcastle, the service is delivered by a team of 5 staff plus representatives from partner organisations. It delivers to schools but also to a wide range of other community groups. Since 2012, this service has been entirely funded by TWFRA and any income which is generated from partners/participants tends to be one off.
- **Schools Education Programme (primary and secondary).** This programme, delivered as part of the wider role of Prevention and Education staff, works with schools to deliver fire safety messages at key times during a child's education. For primary schools, the sessions are universal for all children in Y1 and Y5. For secondary schools, sessions are targeted at students in the most vulnerable areas, with Y8 sessions delivered at Safetyworks!
- **Bonfire / Darker Nights Campaign.** This campaign aims to reduce fires, deaths and injuries around Bonfire Night, and combines hard hitting universal messages, with targeted sessions in schools, and work with partners on rubbish uplifts etc. The diversionary element is the direct work with young people. It is delivered as part of the core business of Prevention and Education staff.

4 SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

- 4.1 The review assessed the cost, targeting and impact of each of the diversionary activities. In terms of cost, resources devoted to diversionary activity are relatively modest, with costs of £405K net (£800K gross) in 2012-13. This represents around 9% of the Authority's total Community Safety spend, and 1.6% of total spend per 1,000 population.
- 4.2 Activities were found to be generally effective in terms of their stated outcomes (although specific areas for improvement were identified in particular activities). This was established through rigorously assessing evaluation (some of it independent) and uptake data, as well as structured interviews with partners. Appendix A includes a more detailed breakdown of costs and benefits.
- 4.3 A number of risks were identified to the financial sustainability of activities which are either commissioned (Phoenix and Princes Trust) or had formerly been co-funded (Safetyworks), to deliver programmes with objectives beyond fire safety. The issue of whether such activities should continue to be delivered was the key one for the consultation with partners.
- 4.4 In discussing the review in October 2013, the Authority determined that in the light of community risk and the demonstrable impact of Prevention work on incident levels in Tyne and Wear, diversionary activities should still form part of TWFRA's' approach to Prevention.
- 4.5 However, given the significant level of cuts being faced by the Authority, which are also leading to reductions in operational response, any future diversionary activities should be delivered in line with the following principles:
- a) Have clear success criteria and have been demonstrated to "work";
 - b) Be targeted at risk, with fire risk being the top priority;
 - c) (If they are not specifically targeted at fire risk) Deliver wider community safety outcomes such as reducing anti-social behaviour. The presumption in this case, however, is that we will deliver wider community safety outcomes only if we are directly commissioned to do so, or if we are in an agreed co funding arrangement where the costs and benefits to all are shared
- 4.6 In particular, Schools Education, Young Firefighters, Junior Firesetters and Bonfire/Darker/Lighter Nights campaigns were felt to meet principle (b) and should continue albeit with improvements.
- 4.7 Phoenix, Safetyworks and Princes Trust should be the focus of partner consultation, along with the general principles, to determine their future sustainability.

4.8 In particular, the consultation document indicated that:

Prince's Trust and Phoenix programmes

- *should be retained and developed so long as they are commissioned*
- *any cessation of funding of these should lead to cessation of the activity and/or particular programme*

SafetyWorks!

- *still delivering wide safety outcomes despite no longer being co funded*
- *preferred option is that it should be retained if significant co funding can be reinstated, so that TWFRS is not bearing all the cost and risk of what was a partnership venture*
- *as a fall back option, the centre will need to close since its funding is not sustainable in its current form*

5 CONSULTATION PROCESS

Methodology and Participation

- 5.1 After Fire Authority agreement, a consultation process was launched on 21st October 2013 with a closing date of 1st January 2014, a period of 10 weeks. The focus of the consultation on diversionary activities was on partners, since commissioning and/or co funding were the key topics under consultation. However it ran alongside the public consultation on our operational response, and the public and staff had the opportunity to feed in.
- 5.2 The process was planned around a consultation document and questionnaire, supported by briefing sessions for partners with the purpose of:
- explaining the proposals in more detail, including the evidence upon which the proposals were based
 - understanding and seeking to address any concerns people might have at the meetings
 - answering any questions people might have in order to inform their response
 - encouraging people to respond.
- 5.3 A session was also held for staff working in diversionary activities (several of whom had also been involved in the group developing the proposals).
- 5.4 The consultation document (Appendix A) was launched via an internal Chief Fire Officer's Bulletin and made available on the Authority's website and internal Intranet. Key partners were notified and their participation sought; this included notifying them that existing commissioners would be contacted directly to discuss the current and future position of Phoenix, Prince's Trust and Safetyworks! in terms of their value as part of ongoing

community safety programmes, and what TWFRS can do in partnership with them to ensure effective programmes are sustained.

5.5 The consultation was promoted in a variety of ways including:

- News article on website / intranet
- Social Media posts (Facebook and Twitter and YouTube videos)
- Emails to partners / other stakeholders
- Meetings with partners
- Presentations to Local Strategic Partnerships and/or Community Safety Partnerships

5.6 The Diversionary consultation document was downloaded 109 times during the consultation period.

5.7 1867 people saw the 3 Facebook posts which specifically covered the Diversionary review. 454 people viewed the YouTube videos which were prepared covering each of the three services under consultation. Copies of the videos were also made available to partners via the consultation meetings.

5.8 This review received less media coverage than the Response review which ran concurrently; however the Evening Chronicle ran a specific feature on Diversionary activities on 25th October 2013.

Stakeholders and partners

5.9 42 stakeholders and partners were contacted by letter or email about the proposals, as well as 313 schools. Presentations were given by an ACO, and discussions held with the following during the consultation period; some of these were follow-on sessions from initial presentations.

- Safe Newcastle Board
- Gateshead Community Safety Board
- South Tyneside Community Safety Partnership
- North Tyneside Partnership Executive
- Safer Sunderland Partnership
- Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
- Assistant Chief Executive, and YOT lead, Newcastle Council
- Community Health commissioner, Newcastle Council
- YOT managers meeting
- Community Safety Partnership managers informal meeting
- Northumbria Probation Trust (January 2014)
- Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative

- Safetyworks partners' informal user group

5.10 8 partners/partnerships provided written responses to the consultation. All of these had read the consultation document and taken part in a briefing on the proposals. These responses are included in the analysis of feedback.

6 FINDINGS

Questionnaire responses

- 6.1 This section details the main themes of the partner consultation feedback. To ensure the analysis of the IRMP consultation feedback was carried out as objectively as possible, a standard qualitative analysis methodology was followed. This has allowed all comments to be grouped into broad themes, and a weighting given to the themes based on the number of respondents who made the same or a similar comment.
- 6.2 The approach captures all comments made by a respondent, sometimes covering more than one theme in a single response. For this reason the responses often total more than the number of respondents for a particular question, and the themes cannot be regarded as an exact science. They do however give an overview of the views expressed.
- 6.3 11 surveys were returned via the website and 4 via the Intranet. Of those who responded:

	Website (11 respondents)	Intranet (4 respondents)
Had read the consultation document	5 (46%)	3 (75%)
Had attended a public or staff meeting	2 (18%)	2 (50%)

- 6.4 The general themes in response to each of the survey questions are listed below the relevant question, and appear in order of weighting of Internet responses. Running this consultation concurrently with the Response consultation meant that some individuals chose to make comments about the latter as part of this consultation.

6.5 Q1. Do you have any comments on the financial position facing the Fire and Rescue Authority?

Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<p><i>Disagreement with the financial situation</i> 2 respondents expressed disagreement with the financial position/sympathy with the Authority's position</p>	<p><i>Disagreement with the financial situation</i> 3 respondents expressed disagreement with the financial situation, including frustration with Government over the cuts imposed and the financial situation which is not of our making.</p>
<p><i>Concern about the impact on community safety</i> 2 respondents expressed concern about the impact of cuts on community safety</p>	<p><i>Concern about the impact on community safety</i> 2 respondents expressed concern about TWFRS's ability to give the same level of care to the community in future</p>
<p><i>Opposition to the reduction of frontline services (operational response)</i> 2 respondents disagreed with proposals to reduce our operational response</p>	<p><i>Concern about loss of jobs</i> 1 respondent expressed concern about the impact on staff who are real people who would be affected by this</p>
<p><i>Agreement that cuts can be made</i> One respondent felt that cuts need to be made to make the service more efficient</p>	<p><i>Suggestion</i> 1 respondent felt that we should use our skills to diversify what we offer</p>
<p><i>Suggestions</i> One respondent felt that cuts should be made elsewhere in the budget rather than to essential services</p>	

6.6 **Q2. Would you be prepared to pay more Council Tax if this made is possible to retain the current level of Fire and Rescue service in Tyne and Wear?**

6.7 This included a Yes/No question and a space for comments. In relation to the Yes/No question:

- 3 (27%) of the Internet and 4 (100%) of the Intranet respondents said they would be prepared to pay more Council Tax to retain the current service
- 5 (46%) of the Internet respondents said they would not be prepared to pay more.

Comment Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<p><i>Willing to pay more Council Tax</i> 3 respondents were willing to pay more Council Tax</p>	<p><i>Willing to pay more Council Tax</i> 2 respondents made comments about being willing to pay more Council Tax</p>
<p><i>Increasing Council tax may impact on public safety</i> 2 respondents felt that increasing council tax could have an impact on the public, one feeling that this could lead to an increase in crime/fires</p>	
<p><i>Pay enough or were unable to pay more</i> 1 respondent was not willing to pay more Council tax as individuals feel the pinch in times of austerity</p>	
<p><i>Suggestion</i> 1 respondent did not comment on Council Tax under this question but suggested the service should consider its proprieties, suggesting that YFA is similar to services provided by other youth groups</p>	

6.8 Q3. Do you have any comments on our approach to understanding risk, or on the conclusions we draw about risk in setting out our proposals?

Comment Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<p>Support for diversionary activities/concern about community safety</p> <p>3 respondents felt that diversionary activities have a direct impact on lowering the risk of fire</p>	<p>Support for diversionary activities/concern about community safety</p> <p>1 respondent felt that spending on prevention has an impact on reducing fires</p>
<p>Challenged the Authority's approach to understanding risk</p> <p>1 respondent felt that the Authority's approach was based on cost reduction not risk.</p>	<p>Risk approach is sound</p> <p>1 respondent commented that the approach to risk in the proposal had been sound</p>
<p>Disagree with cutting operational resources</p> <p>1 respondent said that no adjustment should be made to the operational response and the service should focus on response to incidents</p>	

6.9 **Q4. Do you think TWFRS should be undertaking diversionary activities with young people?**

Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<p><i>TWFRS should be providing diversionary activities</i> 5 respondents felt that TWFRS should be providing diversionary activities</p>	<p><i>TWFRS should be providing diversionary activities</i> 3 respondents felt that TWFRS should be providing diversionary activities</p>
<p><i>Diversionary activities are secondary to response services and should not be done if response services are reducing</i> 4 respondents made comments along this theme.</p>	
<p><i>TWFRS should not be providing diversionary activities</i> 1 respondent said TWFRS should not be providing these activities because it is crossing into other bodies' core duties</p>	<p><i>TWFRS should not be providing diversionary activities</i> 1 respondent said TWFRS should not be providing these activities</p>

Comments about why TWFRS *should* provide these services:

Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes that reduce ASB and unemployment ultimately benefit the FRS/community/save money (3) • FRS staff are a unique role model • Activities create a critical link for young people to FRS • FRS has an obligation to do diversionary work with young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRS staff's skills can benefit the community as a whole (2) • The fire service has a positive relationship with young people • Saves money in the long run • Staff doing this work are caring and dedicated

Comments about why TWFRS *should not* provide these services:

Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response services should not be sacrificed at the cost of keeping diversionary services (2) • Operational crews already do/can do diversionary work with appliances (2) • Can be kept as a secondary service after response, if it can be afforded • We are a FRS not a rehabilitation or social service 	<p>Would rather money was used for response to keep the community safe and to protect firefighter jobs (1)</p>

6.10 Q5. Do you agree with the principles we have set out in section 8.4 for whether specific Diversionary activities (in particular Phoenix, Prince's Trust and Safetyworks!) should continue?

Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<p>Agree with the principles 5 respondents expressed agreement with the principles</p>	<p>Agree with the principles 3 respondents expressed agreement with the principles</p>
<p>Discontinue diversionary activities 2 respondents said that diversionary activities should cease before any reduction of fire cover (one commented that they could be reinstated if things get better)</p>	
<p>Comments about specific activities 2 respondents made comments about Safetyworks- one that it is a good asset but should close if partnership funding does not recommence; and one that it is ineffective and wasteful.</p>	<p>Comments about specific activities 1 respondent commented that Phoenix should be sustainable for 3 years with a more structured look at the course put on, and that partners gaining benefit from Safetyworks should contribute to its upkeep</p>

6.11 **Q6. What are your views on our proposals about the future of Safetyworks? Phoenix? and Prince's Trust? based on the evidence we have shown about their impact and the risks facing them.**

6.12 A number of responses to this question were general rather than specific to the services mentioned. Some respondents did talk about particular activities.

Themes	
Internet	Intranet
<p>Seek to continue these activities with external funding</p> <p>3 respondents felt that all 3 activities should continue <i>with financial input from partners</i>. Of these, one emphasised that if external funding is not available for these activities they should be closed and front line services saved; and one emphasised how these services help to deliver the organisation's vision.</p>	<p>These services make a contribution to community safety</p> <p>3 respondents commented that these activities contribute to community safety. One commented that community safety does not just include fires; one that if these services cease, young people will miss out on some life changing interventions which are low cost; and one that they are valuable community services and must only be scrapped if it means scrapping appliances instead</p>
	<p>Seek to continue these activities with external funding</p> <p>1 respondent felt attracting funding for this is vital</p>
<p>Comments about specific services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 respondent had only used Safetyworks of the three and feels it is one of the best educational tools in the area • 1 respondent felt Safetyworks should cease because it is not cost effective • 1 respondent felt the Young Firefighters' Association should cease because it has a relatively high unit cost, no clear measure of success and may be doing other services' core business 	<p>Comments about specific services</p> <p>1 respondent felt that fire service funds should not be used to keep Safetyworks open as it has a wide agenda eg road safety and shoplifting; this should not be maintained when the operational response is reducing.</p>
<p>Cease these activities</p> <p>1 respondent felt the investment in these activities is not worth the improvement</p>	<p>Cease these activities</p> <p>1 respondent felt the activities should cease if keeping them means scrapping appliances</p>

6.13 **Q7. (Existing commissioners, including commissioners of Princes Trust and Phoenix, but also wider commissioners of Community Safety outcomes).**

We will be contacting you directly to discuss:

- the current and future position of Phoenix, Prince's Trust and Safetyworks! in terms of their value as part of ongoing community safety programmes
- what TWFRS can do in partnership with you to ensure effective programmes are sustained.

Themes

See comments received from partners and stakeholders (section 6.17 onwards)

6.14 **Q8. (Schools)**

- a) Do you currently use Safetyworks!**
- b) If so, do you see Safetyworks! as a useful part of your students' education?**
- c) If so, what costs do you incur as a result (eg Safetyworks! charges, transport)?**
- d) Would you use Safetyworks! if it included a further (reasonable) level of cost recovery in how it charges?**

6.15 4 respondents answered the questions for schools. Of these, 3 used Safetyworks and one did not. This is a very limited response from schools, however the comments are given below for those using the centre.

Comments

Do you see Safetyworks! as a useful part of your students' education?

- Two commented that the service was very useful as part of students' education
- One uses the centre as part of the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship (PHSCE) curriculum when looking at personal safety and risk taking- 50 Year 8 students attended in the past year
- One said the centre is a fabulous resource and has a massive impact on students because people can consider issues in a real context. Feedback is always overwhelmingly positive and out of school visits in general are an important part of students' development

What costs do you incur as a result?

One respondent indicated that they incurred transport costs but this had been subsidised by Safetyworks providing transport for some students

Would you use Safetyworks! if it included a further (reasonable) level of cost recovery in how it charges?

- 3 respondents indicated that they would continue to use with a reasonable level of cost recovery
- One said that charging for the service should be compulsory so that non users do not have to pay for Safetyworks through council tax

Response from the Fire Brigades Union

6.16 The Fire Brigades Union has provided a detailed response to the proposals, and formally opposes all options based on potential impact on firefighter and community safety, whilst regretting the financial position which has been imposed upon the Fire Authority. It is not considered appropriate to attempt to summarise these concerns, which are available in full in Appendix B. However, the Introduction is included below.

Introduction

The Fire Brigades Union in Tyne and Wear have always recognised and appreciated the value of a genuine and well-designed risk management plan. However, as in previous years, any plan that is based upon a premise of Treasury based financial restrictions, and particularly on this occasion, massive reductions in funding levels, cannot be viewed as a genuine attempt to assess and manage the risks within Tyne and Wear.

With this in mind the FBU are aware of the impact that these spending reductions in terms of diversionary activities within Tyne and Wear, and we hope that this would be shared with the Fire Authority. We would urge the Fire Authority members as well as the senior Management team to continue to lobby and campaign central Government at every

opportunity to try to reverse these politically driven cuts to our service and to secure additional funding.

The FBU fully support TWFRS vision of “creating the safest community” and we note with interest that a priority of TWFRS is to work with partners to promote community safety, social responsibility and inclusion. However we note with concern that TWFRS has the burden in terms of funding to the tune of £800,000. The FBU would fully expect that senior Managers and the Fire Authority would seek to ensure that all partners share the burden in terms of finance.

We are extremely concerned that if the proposals from the IRMP review into Operational Response are accepted and agreed by the Fire Authority, that this will have a detrimental effect on diversionary activities within TWFRS. This is due to the fact that a large portion of community safety activities are done by operational crews on stations, this with the proposed reduction in Firefighters by 131 and appliances by 6 (8 during night time periods) will reflect in the number of properties and members of the public visited.

Studies have shown that early intervention in terms of community safety have proved an effective tool for a reduction in anti social behaviour incidents and is instrumental in reducing community risk, and is fundamental in reducing the financial burden to the authority. We believe that any reduction in both funding for diversionary activities and a reduction in Firefighter numbers will have a detrimental affect on TWFRS in terms of future financial burdens.

Written responses from partners

- 6.17 The responses of partners are summarised below and appended in full in Appendix B.

Safe Newcastle Partnership Board

- 6.18 The Board notes that TWFRS can demonstrate that investment in prevention reduces risk and over time reduces cost, and that interventions including diversionary work (including Safetyworks, Junior Firesetters, Phoenix, Young Firefighters, Princes Trust and the schools education programme, are part of this.
- 6.19 The Board’s response indicates that it understands the importance of prevention and educational programmes for sustainable impact on community safety issues. Until the impact of the Government’s Spending Review 2010 Safe Newcastle provided periodic monetary contribution to TWFRS to deliver activities in Newcastle.
- 6.20 However, with further savings being directed to Local Authorities and the removal of Home Office and other Grants to Community Safety Partnerships, Safe Newcastle has been forced to review and restrict its support to those areas that are absolutely necessary, either where there is a statutory responsibility or contractual arrangements already in place.

- 6.21 Although Safe Newcastle are not able to contribute financially at this stage, it is proposed to support the continuation of diversionary and preventative activity wherever possible through advice, guidance and links to other agencies.
- 6.22 Safe Newcastle would advocate that the most appropriate funding source for Safetyworks would be the PCC, not least since Community Safety funding which might have otherwise supported this initiative is now transferred to the PCC. There may also be opportunities at the margin to increase income from schools.

Gateshead Council

- 6.23 The Council notes that the type of financial pressures that Tyne and Wear Fire Service are facing have been replicated throughout all other partner agencies involved in tackling crime and community safety, and that it is disappointing that TWFRS has to cut the number of diversionary activities it offers to young people to prevent them from becoming involved in fire-setting and other risky behaviour – particularly as early intervention approaches are shown to be effective. However, they understand the need for TWFRS to adopt a different model in order to be able to effectively continue to deliver efficient services in the current financial climate.
- 6.24 The Council feels that a risk/intelligence based approach has been taken to the review, and agrees with the principles for future working. It notes that it is positive to see that a range of flexible options have been considered by TWFRS that could be utilised to partners agencies if they should wish to commission or co-fund diversionary activities *that involve fire-setting* (our italics) behaviour in the future.
- 6.25 Although there is no statutory duty for TWFRS to undertake these types of diversionary activities, Gateshead Council feels that it is important for TWFRS to continue to adopt a range of preventative activities with young people.
- 6.26 In terms of Safetyworks, Phoenix and Prince's Trust, the Council recognises there is no statutory duty for TWFRS to undertake these activities, but feels that they remain an integral part of the process *in reducing fire-related incidents* (our italics). In the past, Gateshead has not commissioned TWFRS to deliver any of these services on a long-term sustained basis – and have only recently commissioned SafetyWorks! to address an ad-hoc issue (that arose as a result of serious fire). Although the Council recognises the valuable impact that diversionary activities have, we would not contribute funding to these programmes, unless it was on a need/ad-hoc basis. There is also a need for TWFRS to consider/recognise in-kind funding that can be provided by partner agencies – and how this resource could be used to contribute to these activities.

South Tyneside Community Safety Partnership Board

- 6.27 The Board refers to discussions when the review was presented, and notes that it acknowledged the risks associated with agencies and authorities retreating into core business at times of resource pressure. In the light of this, opportunities for collaboration should be considered and embraced wherever possible. The document sets out the F & R Service position very well.
- 6.28 The Board notes that the consultation paper demonstrates the wider contributions Fire and Rescue Authority make to the prevention and reduction of reoffending. The strategic common objectives and principles set out in the consultation document cross reference with those of other CSP organisations (eg Police, Probation, Public Health etc.) and 'arrangements' such as Troubled Families in reducing harm, promoting community safety and social responsibility, resources following risks, partnership working and targeted, efficient and effective services.
- 6.29 The Board states that Safetyworks, Phoenix and Princes Trust projects appear particularly valuable as specific initiatives to reduce reoffending, and notes that they have had very positive feedback in South Tyneside regarding the Phoenix Project (such was the potential recognised, that in a previous action plan there was an action to pilot this project to work with older people, although it didn't succeed due to the LA funding cuts). It seems possible that with some adjustments these projects could provide SMART interventions for a wide range of 'troubled' and 'vulnerable' individuals or families including those who have offended or are at risk of doing so.
- 6.30 The Board comments that it would be regrettable if the resources such as Safetyworks, accessible to residents across Tyne and Wear, were lost because they couldn't be adjusted to meet the range of needs and issues presenting across the area. The strategic needs assessments each LA completes and by the PCC priorities should inform any service redesign to ensure that the projects are responsive to key needs and objectives. The response indicates that partners could work more effectively in terms of the schools programme and the Phoenix course.

Safer Sunderland Partnership

- 6.31 The Partnership notes the key issue for all partnerships, which is sustaining diversionary work when all budgets are being cut, with many public sector partners cutting back and focusing on the statutory work. CSPs no longer have budgets to support preventative work and have mainstreamed much of "what works" over the years.
- 6.32 The SSP has no available resources but indicated that it would support TWFR in any discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner around future crime prevention/intervention programmes that have a clear impact on the PCC's plans. The Chair

of the SSP has undertaken to raise the issues in TWFRA's consultation with the PCC when she meets all 6 CSP chairs as part of the wider agenda on future commissioning.

- 6.33 The SSP notes that prevention "works" and indicates a desire to continue working with TWFRS on partnership diversionary work, and the People Directorate at the Council has also asked to be involved in future planning, with named contacts given.
- 6.34 Regarding Phoenix, the SSP describes the "the excellent reductions in offending and costs to the wider economy" of the Phoenix service which shows "clear evidence of success". However the Partnership leaves the Sunderland YOT team to comment on Phoenix, despite recognising the positive impact, since the YOT team is currently undergoing its own efficiency exercises.
- 6.35 Regarding Safetyworks, the SSP undertakes to continue to offer ad hoc support in engaging schools. It also makes some suggestions that it feels TWFRA could use to sustain activities including use of volunteers or redeployed staff; approaching the landlord and utilities companies to seek reductions in bills based on their social responsibility; delivering as a trading company; increasing charges; charging a small fee to partners using the facilities to deliver their agendas.

Sunderland Youth Offending Service

- 6.36 Building on the above a brief response was received on behalf of the Sunderland YOS, following discussion among staff and managers.
- 6.37 The team comments that in its view Phoenix should continue, since it is well utilised by Sunderland YOS staff and partners. In order to save some money and fit more of a fire preventative criteria - *there could be more of a focus in it about fire setting instead of wider anti-social behaviour (our italics)* and there could be a move to reduce the number of programmes that happen per year -with more specific targeting.
- 6.38 The Princes Trust programme has been utilised by a few of the YOS young people; the team's view is that it is a positive experience but is not suitable for some of the YOS's clients, so the team are unable to comment extensively on this. The response also does not comment on Safetyworks since it is not used by the team.

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Northumbria

- 6.39 The PCC notes that the financial situation faced by TWFRA is similar to that faced by the Police and PCC, and this necessitates prioritisation. The PCC considers the approach taken to risk in the diversionary review to be logical and considered.

- 6.40 Based on current experience and supporting evidence from other responsible authorities, the PCC believes that TWfRA should be undertaking diversionary activities with young people. The PCC agrees with the principles set out in the consultation document, therefore diversionary activity in the broadest sense (should be done) only when commissioned and otherwise where fire prevention is the priority.
- 6.41 In terms of Safetyworks!, Phoenix and Prince's Trust, the PCC believes the review's conclusions that these should be delivered only if co-funded or commissioned, is correct. The response references discussions as part of the consultation on how PCC commissioned services could progress in 2014-15 and beyond, which is part of a much broader conversation currently ongoing including writing to CSP Chairs. The PCC hopes that following consultation with the 6 CSPs a consensus can be reached on what works and all are prepared to commit to cross border working in support of the Police and Crime Plan.
- 6.42 The PCC notes that in terms of Phoenix and Safetyworks the respective responsible authorities have not contributed to the programmes or (in the case of Sunderland and Gateshead) have pledged reduced amounts. If there was a broader offer of financial support from the 6 CSPs then the PCC would view that commitment as an indicator of consensus support for cross boundary work. Joint or specific commissioning could then be considered. At present the indicators are that this is not the case.

Princes Trust

- 6.43 The Programme Manager for Prince's Trust in the North responded to the consultation on the Trust's behalf.
- 6.44 The Trust noted that TWfRA has been delivering the Team programme in partnership with the Prince's Trust for many years and is regarded as a high quality delivery partner; they very much want TWfRA to continue to deliver Team, as it is a unique programme which reaches young people that otherwise may not have a chance of succeeding. The objectives of Team are acknowledged to be around engaging unemployed young people from different backgrounds, including offending backgrounds; the ethos therefore is seen to fit with that of diversionary activity.
- 6.45 The Trust comments on TWfRA's very professional, thorough and robust approach to running the Team programme which gets the very best out of young people- Team is the most intensive and longest of all the Trust's programmes and it takes tremendous skill and commitment on the part of the delivery partner, to maintain the high standards that the Fire Service have reached.
- 6.46 Regarding funding, the Trust notes that it is not a direct funder but that the Team programme attracts funding via Further Education. The Trust issues a Delivery Agreement

which is in effect a license to run the programme – this is renewed every three years and would definitely continue as long as funding is available. The Trust appreciates that funding is increasingly difficult to secure and the Trust will naturally support any bids or applications that the Fire & Rescue Service makes to Colleges or other sources of funding.

Other partner communications

- 6.47 A number of specific organisations have engaged in discussion with TWFRAs following on from the consultation meetings with partnerships. These discussions are summarised below; they are not direct consultation responses but are material to the discussion about future financial sustainability.

Northumbria Probation Trust

- 6.48 Northumbria Probation Trust became engaged in the consultation via discussion at South Tyneside CSP and subsequently entered into discussion with TWFRS linked to potential future use of Safetyworks to deliver activities for higher volume/lower risk offenders. Following visits to the centre by senior staff, the Trust has written to TWFRS recognising the potential of Safetyworks in meeting its future agenda, and that of some of its other partners.
- 6.49 The Trust is undergoing significant change and will cease to exist as an entity on 31st May 2014, to be replaced by a public sector, national probation service (NPS) and a local Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) which will remain in public ownership until it is sold through a competitive process, probably in 2015. Staff from the existing Trust are transferring into one or other of these bodies.
- 6.50 Despite this very significant change, preventative activities still need to be delivered and the potential for Safetyworks has been recognised by the Trust. A number of pilot sessions have been agreed during the coming months for women offenders. The Trust will also explore the possibility of using the centre to engage groups of hostel residents in preparing for independent living (two hostels being within 1 mile of Safetyworks).
- 6.51 Whilst the Trust and its successors will not be grant aiding bodies, they will be commissioning activities and understand the need for sustainable commissioning from TWFRAs' point of view.

Road Safety Teams across Northumbria (collective)

- 6.52 Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative (NSRI) was established in 2007 as an evolution of the Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership following changes to the programme and the partnership encompassing a broader remit for road safety. The partnership provides some funding for road safety initiatives, and covers the Northumbria police area.

- 6.53 Following a discussion with Safetyworks! users as part of the consultation process, it was recognised that Road Safety teams across the Northumbria area use and value Safetyworks as a resource, as it allows road safety officers to work with clients in a realistic learning environment. The impact of this in understanding and remembering road safety messages is recognised by the teams, who understand the need for co funding of Safetyworks if it is to become sustainable going forward.

Newcastle Council public health team

- 6.54 Following consultation in Newcastle and ongoing work at Safetyworks on health outcomes, the public health team sought further discussion about public health in its widest sense, and the need to involve a wider range of partners in delivering this in the city.
- 6.55 In particular, there is felt to be potential for Safetyworks to assist in delivering the specific Public Health indicators and outcomes set out within the Department for Health's 'Improving outcomes and supporting transparency' technical paper of November 2013.
- 6.56 The team requested, and has been supplied with information on how this might be taken forward, and there is potential for further dialogue on this in the future.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Agreement with the principles

- 7.1 This consultation has been about the principles of our continued diversionary activities and partners' willingness/ability to keep commissioning or co-funding these in the light of wider financial constraints. The principles that we are proposing to adopt (4.5) met with agreement from the majority of respondents.
- 7.2 The issue therefore becomes one of whether the activities under discussion- Safetyworks, Phoenix and Prince's Trust- are sustainable if those principles are adopted. This is dependent upon partners viewing them as delivering partnership objectives to a degree which sustains commissioning or co funding.

Partners agree that prevention is cheaper than cure, but less is being spent on it

- 7.3 Throughout the discussions with partners, it has been universally acknowledged that early intervention/prevention is in principle "cheaper than cure". Stopping incidents from happening, or stopping young people becoming involved in the criminal justice system, saves money in the long run. Joint working on this is seen as the right way to go, to make the best use of everyone's scarce resources.

- 7.4 However, the principle of early intervention/prevention is challenged by the reality of severe and disproportionate cuts being faced not only by TWFR, but by other public sector partners. This is illustrated by a quotation from a 2012 study for the Big Lottery Fund:

“Despite enthusiasm for the concept of prevention in government, preventative services are generally being reduced with public sector cuts”.

Prevention versus response in the FRS

- 7.5 Although the number of respondents to the staff and Internet questionnaire was small, it should be noted that the responses tended to split between those who feel that investment in prevention (and diversionary work in particular) should continue because it improves community safety; and those who feel that diversionary activity should not be funded whilst operational response is being cut, because operational response improves community safety more.

Commissioning issues in Community Safety

- 7.6 The overall reductions in funding for preventative community safety work have been accompanied by changes in how community safety commissioning is done. This is due to the move of some funding streams from Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs, based in Council areas), to the new role of the Police and Crime Commissioner (operating across Northumbria) from 2013-14.
- 7.7 During the consultation process it has been clear that there are differing agendas at play including the PCC’s desire for efficient pan-Northumbria commissioning, and CSPs’ desire to reflect local priorities and needs in what is commissioned.
- 7.8 At the time of writing the commissioning process for community safety activities in 2014-15 is not clear, and discussions with partners on TWFR activities have been carried out against this background. This is explicitly reflected in the feedback from the PCC, Safer Sunderland Partnership, Safe Newcastle Partnership and South Tyneside CSP.
- 7.9 This makes it difficult to arrive at a definitive view from the Community Safety world as to the place of TWFR activities in youth diversion at the current time. Partners do accept and acknowledge that TWFR has no statutory duty to deliver diversionary activities, and is nevertheless currently investing £400K of mainstream funding in these activities in addition to commissioned activity.
- 7.10 Partners (whether PCC or CSPs) *have* indicated a willingness to include TWFR activities in wider discussions of the future of commissioning community safety preventative work for 2014-15 and beyond; it is clear from responses that these activities are valued. Collective discussions at the Northumbria level are currently being sought, as is indicated in many of

the consultation responses from partners. The timescales for this are not yet clear but will certainly be outwith the timescales for most organisations' budget setting processes.

- 7.11 It is suggested that TWFRA should seek to engage in these discussions before making any final decisions about the future of Safetyworks! and Phoenix (Prince's Trust meets a different agenda and dialogue on this needs to be with the Trust and FE colleges).

Other partners

- 7.12 As noted in 6.47 onwards, a number of individual partners have indicated a willingness (or at least the potential) to enter into commissioning/co funding arrangements with TWFRS in relation to Safetyworks! The Probation Trust, Public Health in Newcastle and the collective group of Road Safety Teams are in this category.
- 7.13 The very positive response of the Prince's Trust indicates that it will continue to support TWFRS as a deliverer of the Team programme subject to funding through FE colleges. There is nothing to indicate that this will not continue although funding has reduced from 4 to 3 programmes during 2013-14.

Potential funding in place 2014-15

- 7.14 Based on dialogue with partners within the consultation process and as part of routine relationships, it is estimated that the following proportions of current delivery costs *may* be covered by commissioning, co funding or income arrangements in 2014-15:
- Princes Trust 100% (based on 3 programmes, a reduction of 1)
 - Phoenix 41%
 - Safetyworks 16% to date
- 7.15 These figures should be treated with extreme caution since they are subject to the caveats about future commissioning arrangements set out above.

Focusing on Fire versus wider focus

- 7.16 A number of views were expressed on this. One council's response is very clear that although it values TWFRA's diversionary activities, it will not engage in funding them other than on an ad hoc basis. Moreover this response indicates that TWFRA's diversionary activities should focus on reducing fire related incidents; it could be inferred from this that activities delivering a wider agenda should not form part of TWFRA's work.
- 7.17 Although expressing commitment to Phoenix (further expanded in the response of the CSP), a local YOT also indicates that money could be saved by reducing programmes and "there could be more of a focus in it about fire setting instead of wider anti-social behaviour".

- 7.18 A CSP expresses a positive view of the efficacy of Phoenix in reducing reoffending, which was, and currently is, the purpose of the programme. It is doubtful whether Phoenix would be sustainable (or attractive to participants) if it only focused on firesetting.
- 7.19 Another CSP's view of Phoenix seems to be at the opposite end of the spectrum, in terms of widening rather than narrowing the focus to potentially deliver interventions with troubled or vulnerable families. If partners wish to consider commissioning interventions of this kind, then the Phoenix programme could be tailored to meet wider needs through dialogue with commissioners.

Delivery models

- 7.20 A number of partners made observations about the delivery model for diversionary activities including use of volunteers, charitable status and a greater degree of cost recovery from users (those schools which did respond to the consultation indicated that a greater degree of cost recovery would be acceptable).
- 7.21 All these possibilities were identified through the review process and can be followed up in redesigning services. However this does not negate the need for partnership agreement (or otherwise) as to TWFRA's continued delivery of diversionary activities which deliver broad partner agendas.

Adopting the principles

- 7.22 If the Authority agrees the delivery principles, it will agree that Safetyworks!, Phoenix and Princes Trust (and any future activities that meet wider community needs than those directly associate with the FRS agenda) should continue only if co funded or commissioned.
- 7.23 Following consultation and further dialogue with partners, the current position is that:
- All these activities could be considered as part of future commissioning discussions via PCC/CSP. This may or may not result in some or all of them being commissioned
 - Although there is support for particular programmes in particular areas, there is not universal buy in to any of the specific activities from all Council areas- each has a different view of what could/should be funded; Gateshead will only fund on an ad hoc basis, and North Tyneside did not respond to the consultation
 - Some funding for **Phoenix** and **Safetyworks** is likely to be in place for 2014-15 although this is not all finally agreed so a degree of vulnerability exists
 - There is nothing to suggest funding of **Princes Trust** will cease for 2014-15, although adopting the principles will mean reducing resources in line with the reduction in commissioned programmes (from 4 to 3 in 2013-14)

- 7.24 The timescales for commissioning would indicate that the Authority could agree the principles and seek a further paper once any commissioning processes are in place and the appetite for TWFRS activities is confirmed through this.
- 7.25 Alternatively, if the Authority is of the view that partner appetite for commissioning these activities is not sufficiently in place, there is the option of ceasing activities for which commissioning or co funding arrangements are not available.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This report is directly connected with the Fire Authority's medium term financial strategy, since IRMP reviews are about balancing the available resources with the known and foreseeable risks. As a result of government cuts it is expected that TWFRS will be required to identify a further £8.8m of spending reductions over the next three years, of which c£3m remain to be identified following agreement of reviews in January 2014.
- 8.2 The position the Authority has consulted upon is that Phoenix and Prince's Trust should continue only if commissioned, and Safetyworks! should continue only if co- funded. The running costs of these activities are indicated below:

Overview of Current costs - 2013/14 Budgets						
	Staff £	Mgt £	Running Costs £	Total £	Income £	Net Cost £
Phoenix	112,788	7,695	34,490	154,973	-123,268	31,705
Princes Trust (4 programmes)	214,207	25,569	47,314	287,090	-240,000	47,090
Safetyworks	118,906	6,979	55,936	181,821	-31,159	150,662
Totals	445,901	40,243	137,740	623,884	-394,427	229,457 (189,214 exc mgt)

- 8.3 The budget for these activities is in place within the overall budget agreed by Authority in February 2014; this budget can be amended in year based on decisions made by the Authority.
- 8.4 *Ceasing* all of the above activities would result in a net saving to the Authority of £189,214 excluding management. Further reductions could be made in management costs as a result, however this would need to be done as part of a management review since the management time associated with these activities is a proportion of wider roles.

- 8.5 The majority of this saving would come from closing Safetyworks! with the associated staffing reductions and removal of running costs.
- 8.6 Savings would be also made by reducing the establishment in terms of posts currently devoted to Phoenix and Prince's Trust; however this saving would be offset by lost income, and so would be relatively modest.
- 8.7 Closing Safetyworks! would incur an initial capital cost associated with handing back the building to its owner in its original form.
- 8.8 *Continuing* the activities is the preferred option from the Authority's discussion in October 2013; however this is based upon the availability of sustainable partner funding going forward, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

9 HR IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 A number of posts in the organisation are entirely or significantly focused upon delivering diversionary activities; the cost of those associated with Phoenix and Prince's Trust is currently covered by income. The current establishment includes 8 dedicated Prince's Trust posts, 3 Phoenix posts and 5 Safetyworks! posts.
- 9.2 In addition to this:
- Schools Education, Junior Firesetters and work on ASB reduction campaigns are delivered by District based prevention and education staff as part of their wider role which also includes home fire safety
 - Young Firefighters is staffed by 20 TWFRS staff who are paid a sessional fee
 - the Headquarters based Prevention and Education team gives oversight to Bonfire and other campaigns, and manages the Princes Trust, Safetyworks! and Young Firefighters staff
- 9.3 Should the Authority decide, based on partner engagement, to cease any of the diversionary activities, this would result in the need to reduce staffing accordingly. This could affect dedicated posts and also posts engaged in managing them.
- 9.4 Changes to the volume of diversionary work would therefore necessitate a review of the staffing structure, including the management structure, which would be brought to a future Authority and would be subject to normal HR processes in terms of consultation and implementation.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Community risk has been fully considered in reviewing our diversionary activities, and discussion of this formed a significant proportion of the review report discussed by Authority in October 2013 and included in the consultation document (Appendix A).
- 10.2 A number of the key risks on the corporate risk register are also relevant to this report, in particular:
- 10/03 Risk that a spending decision of one of our partners has a detrimental impact on the delivery of some of our services, eg Safetyworks, Phoenix, Prince's Trust
 - 11/02 Risk that further budget cuts will mean that we have to make decisions that will affect the delivery of front line services from 2013/14.
 - 11/01 Risk that we do not realise the savings proposed in our IRMP resulting in reduced financial resilience and potential impact on service delivery.
- 10.3 Clearly we have not been able to mitigate risk 11/02, since our budget has been cut to the extent where the frontline service (including our Prevention activity) is affected, despite the Authority's efforts to lobby for smaller and more proportionate reductions in our budget. This is an ongoing risk since it appears likely that Government will continue to cut public sector funding in the future.
- 10.4 The risks associated with not realising savings (11/01), and the impact of this on a balanced budget, remain in place.
- 10.5 In terms of addressing risk 10/03, the consultation process has attempted to flush out the level of commitment of partners to Phoenix, Prince's Trust and Safetyworks! as part of the wider partnership landscape of activities to prevent anti-social behaviour, as well as delivering wider agendas relating to wellbeing and employability of young people. It has been made very clear in presentations that these activities cannot continue unless co-funding or commissioning is in place.
- 10.6 Unfortunately, given the uncertain financial climate, the risk of a spending decision affecting our ability to deliver these services still remains. Adoption of the principles for providing diversionary activities which have a remit beyond our own gives a clearer path for ceasing such services should they no longer be deemed part of the partnership "menu".
- 10.7 However, if it is necessary to remove these services based on partner decisions, the contribution of the FRS to diversionary work will be significantly curtailed. The corporate risk would therefore need to change to one relating to our capacity to deliver diversionary work, and potential impact of this upon incident levels. This is part of a wider community risk since other agencies are also less able to invest in such activities.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the feedback from consultation on the diversionary review
- 2) Note the current position on partner funding as set out in 7.15, subject to caveats expressed in the report
- 3) Agree that diversionary work should continue, but based on the principles set out in 4.5
- 4) Require the Chief Fire Officer to prepare a further report on the financial sustainability of Safetyworks, Phoenix and Princes Trust following engagement in community safety commissioning processes during 2014