

MEETING: 19 DECEMBER 2011

SUBJECT: FIREWORKS AND BONFIRE INCIDENTS 1ST- 6TH NOVEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members on the incident activity levels, intervention programmes and incidences of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the Authority area over the Bonfire period covering 1st to the 6th November 2011.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The bonfire period is traditionally the busiest time of the year for the Fire and Rescue Service and this year was no exception. As in the past, measures were taken to ensure that the Service had the capability and resources to deal with the increase in calls to bonfires whilst also maintaining the operational capacity to respond effectively to life threatening incidents.

2.2 In addition to this operational planning activity, a community safety campaign was also undertaken during the weeks immediately prior to the 5th November. The campaign was developed in conjunction with local partners and incorporated educational activities, publicity and media messages, bonfire uplift schemes and operational management arrangements.

2.3 The key objectives of the campaign were to:

- Raise awareness of the dangers and consequences of bonfires and the misuse of fireworks.
- Encourage people to attend an organised display.
- Reinforce the message of the effects of antisocial behaviour and reinforce that attacks against emergency workers are not tolerated.

3 PRACTICAL INITIATIVES

3.1 To influence young people in the target age group (11-14 year olds), Prevention and Education (P&E) staff developed a risk based programme to target secondary schools within Tyne and Wear, to deliver firework and bonfire safety messages.

3.2 Following on from the success of the 2010 bonfire campaign DVD "The Journey of Connor Rowntree", which has been requested by Fire Services both nationally and internationally, a new educational bonfire campaign DVD was produced for the 2011 campaign.

- 3.3 The 2011 bonfire campaign DVD was produced with assistance from the burns unit within Newcastle RVI and told the stories of 4 local young people who had suffered burn injuries. Approximately 25,000 young people across Tyne and Wear received this input and initial feedback on the DVD from young people and from education professionals has been extremely positive.
- 3.4 A Service-wide poster and leaflet campaign was carried out and a public relations (PR) campaign was established. The PR campaign involved producing a range of press releases, organising media interviews and liaising with reporters from various media agencies who rode fire appliances on 4th November.
- 3.5 During the main bonfire period the Service's PR campaign resulted in 23 articles appearing in print and on the web, 10 radio and one TV interview. The Service also delivered a proactive social media campaign which included:-
- A dedicated bonfire campaign website which received 8,972 visitors, with 37,641 page views.
 - A face book page on which TWFRS broadcast safety messages over the bonfire period and which received a total of 49,515 non unique views
 - The campaign DVD was viewed on 2,825 occasions on You Tube.
 - 111 bonfire-related messages 'tweeted' on the TWFRS Twitter site. These were 're-tweeted' 174 times.
- 3.6 Local area meetings were established within each district to deliver the objectives of the campaign. These were attended by representatives from Northumbria Police and Local Authorities to ensure effective delivery within communities.
- 3.7 Local Authority bonfire uplift schemes were in operation throughout the bonfire period. These involved the removal of fuel such as refuse, furniture, and wheelie bins.
- 3.8 Furthermore the Authority registered 140 retailers for the storage and sale of fireworks and issued 22 licences. All premises were scheduled for inspection by Protection and Technical or Operational Response crews.

4 INCIDENT STATISTICS

- 4.1 For the period 1st to 6th November the following data has been validated, (see Appendix A):
- A 18.5% reduction in the total number of calls received by Service control (from 1141 in 2010 to 930 in 2011)
 - A 16% reduction in the total number of incidents attended (from 716 in 2010 to 599 in 2011)
 - A 18% reduction in the number of deliberate ASB secondary fires (from 370 in 2010 to 303 in 2011)
 - A total of 13 firework/bonfire related injuries seen in A&E departments in 2011, compared to 10 in 2010

5 ATTACKS ON FIREFIGHTERS

5.1 In 2010, attacks on fire fighters increased over the bonfire period from 7 attacks in 2009 to 12 in 2010. This year the number of attacks has reduced down to 3 which is the lowest number of attacks on firefighters recorded over the past 5 years. There were no reported injuries to fire fighters over the period.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 A partnership approach to the bonfire period has again proven to be extremely successful in reducing the risk to the community.

6.2 2011 has seen a reduction in the number of calls received, the overall number of incidents attended and more specifically the number of ASB secondary fires.

6.3 The number of bonfire and refuse uplifts undoubtedly prevented many more incidents and further reduced the risk to members of the community and fire fighters alike.

6.4 The North East Strategic Health Authority reported a total of 13 fireworks/bonfire related injuries over the bonfire period, against a total of 10 in 2010. This is a slight rise year on year. The number of injuries on bonfire night itself also shows a rise when compared to 2010, however when viewed in the context of the past 5 years the trend in injuries is almost static.

6.5 The reduction in the number of attacks on operational firefighters to the lowest over the past 5 years is to be welcomed. The reporting process is well established and the number of attacks will continue to be monitored.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this specific report.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members are recommended to:

- a) Note the content of the report.
- b) Receive further reports as necessary.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The under mentioned background papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

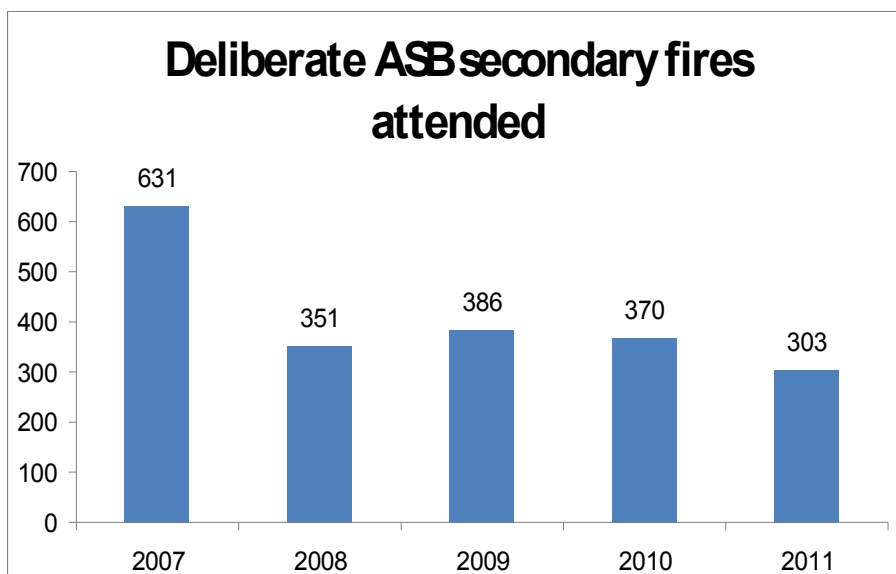
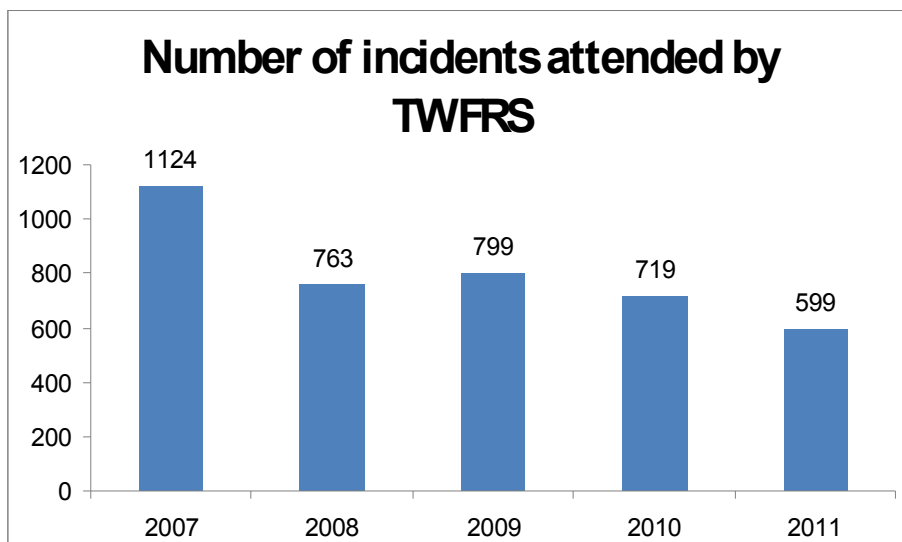
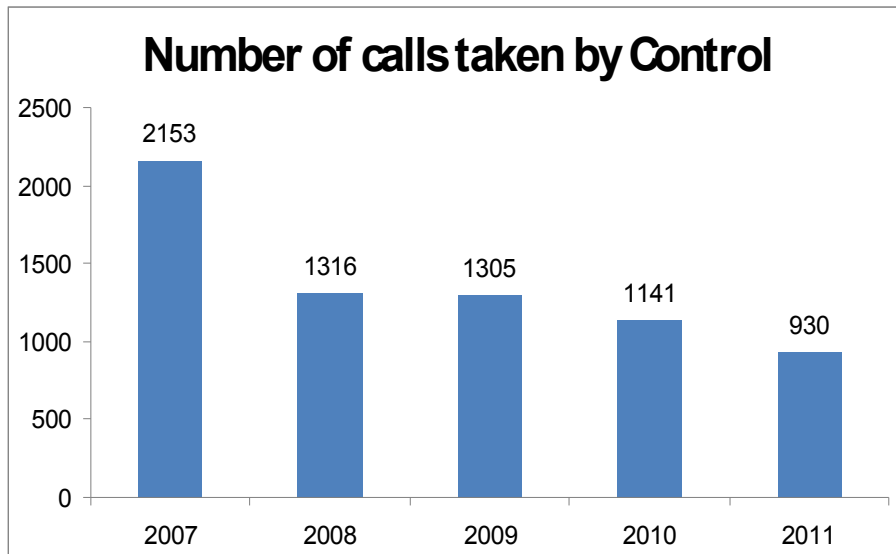
“Bonfire and Fireworks Campaign” report, 2010, TWFRS

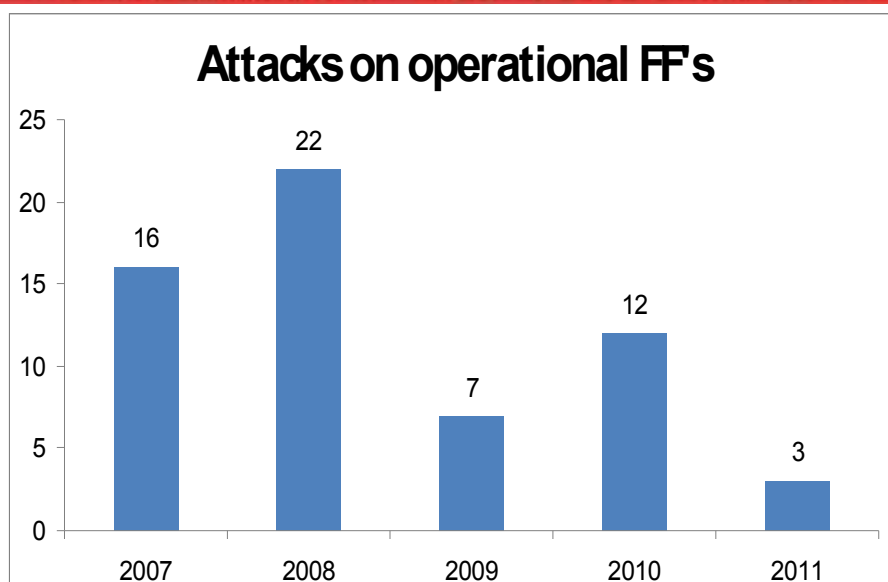
“Bonfire and Fireworks Campaign” report, 2009, TWFRS

“Fireworks and Bonfires Ruin Lives in a Flash” reports of 2008 and 2007, TWFRS

“Get Wise” campaign report 2006, Northumbria Police

INCIDENT STATISTICS 1st – 6th NOVEMBER





Bonfire/firework related injuries in A&E departments 5th November

Organisation/hospital	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	5	10	8	5	3	0	5
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust:	36	37	1	0	0	0	0
Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust:	Unavail	2	Unavail	1	3	0	3
South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust:	3	1	1	1	1	0	0
City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust:	Not recorded			1	4	3	1
TOTAL	44	50	10	8	11	3	9

