

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY  
POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

**Item No 4**

**MEETING: 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

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**SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION REPORT UPDATE FOR THE RISK BASED  
ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM CALLS IN  
NON-RESIDENTIAL PREMISES**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Risk Based Attendance Policy which went live on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At the January 2015 Fire Authority meeting a revised policy for TWFRS's attendance to automatic fire alarms was approved with a go-live date of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. The revised policy changed the response to fire alarms from non-residential premises between 0800 – 1800 hours with an attendance being made when a backup call is received confirming a fire or physical sign of fire exists.

- 2.2 There were exemptions for the following premises types in the policy:

- Hospitals
- Education premises
- COMAH sites
- Specific High Risk premises (determined by local operational intelligence)
- Premises Protected by Approved/Accredited Fire Alarm Systems
- Exceptional Exemptions

**3. ACTIONS PRIOR TO GO-LIVE**

- 3.1 A detailed implementation plan was developed to ensure a smooth transition for both the community and our Service. This included internal and external communication with specific actions completed such as:

- 30,000 letters delivered to premises within Tyne and Wear
- Attendance at community/ business events
- All individual enquiries followed up by a dedicated officer
- Development of a best practice advice leaflet
- Direct engagement with stakeholders
- Press releases, radio and TV interviews and updates on social media

- CFO communications to staff
- Internal briefings for all watches

## **4 CURRENT PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1 Number of false alarm calls due to automatic fire alarms from non-domestic premises (LI22) between June and September have reduced by 372 when compared to the same period of the previous year, with a reduction of 346 between the hours of 0800 – 1800.
- 4.2 Education, hospitals and medical care and residential home premises type are the highest remaining offenders for this indicator.
- 4.3 From June to September, there were 336 fire alarm calls which received no mobilisation following the application of the policy's new call challenge procedure.
- 4.4 There has been no further call from any of these challenged calls to report a fire.
- 4.5 Calls from individual premises have been followed up to ensure the premises are fully aware of the new procedures for fire alarms and our expectations of their fire risk management.
- 4.6 The majority of current calls are from Alarm Receiving Centres, who know there will be no mobilisation but are obliged by contract to relay the call to the Control room.
- 4.7 Current performance indicates premises have improved the management of their fire alarm system outside of 0800 – 1800 hours times due to the introduction of the policy.
- 4.8 No complaints have been received following implementation of the new policy.

## **5 EXEMPTIONS**

- 5.1 There have been 22 exemptions granted, with the following detailed breakdown of type:
- 18 Exceptional exemptions
  - 3 Fire Alarm exemptions
  - 1 Operational High Risk exemption

## **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The cost of the mailshot and leaflet production was approximately £10,000 against a predicted expenditure of £15,000.

## **7 LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The relevant legislation in relation to response to automatic fire alarms is:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

## **8 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

## **9 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

## **10 RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 The Authority is recommended to:

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

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Fire Authority Paper Item 08 – Risk Based Attendance Policy For Automatic Fire Alarm Calls In Non Residential Premises, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

