

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 4

MEETING: 14 January 2018

**SUBJECT: MERITORIOUS CONDUCT – FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
AWARD AND CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS COMMENDATION**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK TO THE
AUTHORITY)**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the commencement of today's meeting, the Chairman of the Authority, Councillor Barry Curran, will present a Meritorious Conduct Award for brave and meritorious actions to Firefighter Darren Fenton in recognition of his actions in rescuing a casualty from the River Tyne on 15 December 2018 and Chief Fire Officer, Chris Lowther, will present a Chief Fire Officers Commendation to members of Blue Watch from Byker, Gateshead and Newcastle Central Community Fire Stations, for their actions at the same incident.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Bravery and Meritorious Conduct Awards Scheme provides for Members of the Authority to recognise individuals who perform commendable acts of bravery, gallantry or community actions.
- 2.2 Chief Fire Officer Commendations are presented by the Chief Fire Officer to members of the Service who have gone above and beyond in the line of duty.

3 BRAVE AND MERITORIOUS ACTIONS

- 3.1 On 15 December 2018 at 04:55hrs crews from Newcastle Central and Gateshead Community Fire Stations, led by Watch Manager Lee Denny, supported by the Fire Boat crew from Byker Community Fire Station, responded to reports of an adult male in the River Tyne having jumped from either the Redheugh or High Level Bridge.
- 3.2 At the time of the call the tide was low and on the turn, weather conditions were cold and dry with air temperature at +1 degree Celsius, with moderate southerly wind. Landside crews conducted search operations from the bankside while the fire boat searched from the water.

- 3.3 Firefighter Darren Fenton of Blue Watch Gateshead used a thermal scanner at the maximum zoom on the Newcastle side and found a faint heat source on the Gateshead side river bank. Firefighter Fenton alerted the fire boat crews who made their way to this area. Once they made contact they found a semi-responsive and profoundly hypothermic man with no obvious injuries. He was then transferred on the fire boat and handed over to North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) colleagues at the NE1 pontoon after which he was taken to hospital.
- 3.4 The professional actions of and use of the thermal scanner by Firefighter Fenton along with the swift actions of the members of Blue Watch undoubtedly brought the incident to a successful outcome and saved this man's life. They are a credit to the Authority. To remain calm and focussed during a difficult incident, in challenging conditions, was imperative to rescuing the casualty.
- 3.5 On behalf of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority all involved in the incident are thanked for their actions which brought the incident to a swift and successful end.

4 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management implications in respect of this report.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

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

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Authority is recommended to:
- a) Endorse the Meritorious Conduct Award and Chief Fire Officers Commendation; and
 - b) Congratulate and thank Firefighter Darren Fenton and members of Blue Watch at Byker, Gateshead and Newcastle Central Community Fire Stations for their actions.
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Brave and Meritorious Conduct Policy

