



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 11 FEBRUARY 2019 at 10.30 am

Present:

Councillor Forbes in the Chair.

Councillors Dodds, Harrison, Perry and Taylor.

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of the Strategic Finance Manager.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

9. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Committee held on 12 November 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Dodds apologised to the Committee for not submitting his apologies for absence.

Quarter Two Performance Report 2018/2019

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (Clerk to the Authority), the Strategic Finance Manager and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report to provide the Committee with information relating to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service's (TWFRS) performance for Quarter Three 2018/2019.

John Pratt and Tony Markwell drew the attention of Members to the following statistics within TWFRS:-

Deaths and Injuries

- There had been 5 fatalities within 2018/19 to date;
- There had been a 24% increase in injuries from accidental fires;
- 31% of victims who went to hospital were aged 60 or over. The main reason for this being smoke inhalation which may have exasperated previous medical conditions;
- There had been a 6% decrease in the number of injuries from all fires;
- In 75% of injuries from accidental fires, the room of origin was the kitchen;
- In 78% of injuries from accidental fires, the injuries appeared to be slight;
- In 61% of injuries from all fires, first aid was given at the scene or a precautionary check was recommended; and
- There were 114 fires in which there was 135 injuries recorded, 56% were either "Lone person or Single Parent"

Fire Attendances

- There had been a 1% reduction in accidental fires;
- There had been a 3% reduction in accidental kitchen fires which started in the cooker/oven;
- There had been a 11% reduction in deliberate secondary fires;
- There had been a 16% reduction in deliberate refuse fires;
- 57% of accidental dwelling fires required no fire fighter action or were extinguished by small means;
- 48% of primary fires were recorded as deliberate; and
- 42% of primary fires were 'Road Vehicle', an increase of 12%. ACFO Robson explained that the number of 'scooter fires' contributed to this increase.

Members of the committee discussed the cuts in funding local authorities were faced with and the impact that this had on refuse uplift programmes which in turn, had a negative impact on deliberate fires.

In response to a question from Councillor Taylor, the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that TWFRS did work closely with the Environment Agency.

False Alarms

- There had been a 2% increase to AFAs from a non domestic premises;
- 34% of AFAs to a non domestic premises were due to faulty alarms;

- There had been a 5% reduction in AFAs in a domestic premises;
- 46% of domestic AFAs were due to cooking or burnt toast;

Councillor Dodds suggested that an important message needed to be conveyed about the kitchen still being one of the most dangerous parts of the house to start a fire and commented that if smoke alarms had not been present, this figure would in fact be higher.

- 21% of non domestic AFAs were to an education premises;

ACFO Robson advised Members that as a result of 3 malicious false alarms to schools, staff from TWFRS had attended a School Assembly to deliver important messages and this had been well received. In addition to this, strong action had been taken against those pupils which had been involved.

- 20% non-domestic AFA calls were from premises type 'Hospitals and Medical Care'
- 39% of false alarms in domestic premises were to 'purpose built flat/masionette – multi occupancy';
- 33% of false alarms in domestic premises were to 'self-contained sheltered housing'. Members were advised that Prevention Teams do work closely with sheltered housing providers; and
- 464 non-domestic false alarms due to fault;

The Committee commented that the impact of faulty alarms systems was significant and that there was no excuse within non-domestic premises as occupiers should comply with British Standards. Members proposed that enforcement may need to be taken in future, with a view of charging those premises which were not compliant.

10. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted and endorsed; and
- (ii) Further reports be received as appropriate.

Deliberate Fire Reduction

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (Clerk to the Authority), the Strategic Finance Manager and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report to provide Members with an update on the actions and outcomes to date, from Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service's deliberate fire and anti-social behaviour (ASB) reduction work.

Members were advised that the Deliberate Fire Task and Finish Group, as well as anti-social behaviour collaboration work, had identified ways that Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue could work more effectively with key partners. This collaborative approach appeared to have reduced the impact that ASB and deliberate fires had had on the community, environment and partner resources.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue and partners agreed to deliver four multi-agency initiatives in quarter two and quarter three. Each initiative was delivered in

collaboration with Northumbria Police, local authorities, housing providers and Tyne and Wear volunteers.

ACFO Robson explained that one of the most successful initiatives was delivered in the Blakelaw area of Newcastle from 28 March – 25 May, where TWFRS recorded only 11 deliberate fires. This saw a decrease of 78% when comparing with quarter three of 2017. Of the 11 deliberate fires, five of these incidents were recorded within three days of each other and in the same location. This was subsequently passed over to the local authority and Police for intervention.

Members were then asked to note that during this period of action, the service ran two of the largest anti-social behavior and deliberate fire reduction campaigns. Positive changes to our Lighter Nights and Bonfire campaigns meant they became more targeted and focused on the groups most likely to be involved.

As a result, the Lighter Nights period experienced the following;

- 35% reduction in the number of deliberate fires
- 36% reduction in the number of deliberate secondary fires
- 21% reduction in the number of deliberate primary fires
- 29% reduction in the number of attacks on firefighters.

The Bonfire campaign also experienced the following;

- 9.6% decrease in the number of fire calls received
- 18.6% decrease in the number of incidents attended
- 26.8% decrease in the number of deliberate secondary fires
- 27.3% decrease in the number of attacks on our fire crews.

Following implementation of a number of key changes and agreed actions, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue established future actions for further improvements to prevention work:

- Prevention and Education to deliver youth education and deliberate fire setting reduction training with Operational Watches in 2019, to support deliberate fire reduction
- Future focus for TWFRS was to identify the highest areas of activity within each of the three Service Delivery areas, selecting one area per quarter to devise and deliver a multi-agency initiative focused on specific local issues
- Funding opportunities identified to provide diversionary activity for youth's involved in deliberate fire setting. This included the partnership between Prevention and Education and the Sunderland Community Hub - Boxing Club. It also included funding available from the Newcastle foundation

- Governance arrangements being developed to tackle offenders of anti-social behaviour by inviting them to attend the Sunderland Community Hub at Sunderland Central Fire Station
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service were currently considering how they continue to resource this level of activity in the future.
- A final multi agency symposium event would be organised in April 2019, to support an evaluation of the work carried out over the last year and to help identify the actions and events that resulted in the best outcomes.

Councillor Dodds welcomed the report and commented that Elected Members could also provide support given the wide range of partners that they worked with.

ACFO Robson welcomed this approach and commented upon the benefits that this may have, particularly in relation to links with anti-social behaviour workers.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, expressed his thanks for the positive work which had been undertaken.

11. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted and endorsed; and
- (ii) Further reports be received as appropriate.

Proposal to Expand the Risk Based Attendance Policy to Include Education Premises

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (Clerk to the Authority), the Strategic Finance Manager and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report which proposed to remove the exemption for education premises from the RBAP; during the periods you would expect them to be occupied, namely Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays and school holidays.

ACFO Robson reminded Members that at January 2016 Fire Authority, approval was granted to extend the BRAP by targeting educational premises where, due to poor management and/or an inadequate fire alarm system, confidence in the alarm had reduced.

It was therefore proposed to remove the exemption for education premises from the RBAP; during periods you would expect them to be occupied, namely Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays and school holidays.

The key benefit of this proposed policy change was an anticipated reduction of up to 250 mobilisations annually to UwFS that would increase appliance availability to respond to life risk incidents.

All education premises would be able to apply for exemption via the established exemptions process.

ACFO Robson advised Members that in 2017/2018 during the proposed times of 0800-1759 hours from mobilisations to 'fire alarms' activating there were four fires in education premises. Of these four fires, the maximum fore damage was up to five meters. Firefighting action was as follows; no action on three occasions and on the remaining incident the fuel supply was disconnected. Education premises would always receive a full PDA response when confirming a fire or signs of a fire via the 999/112 system.

Councillor Dodds questioned whether there was scope to apply this policy to other sites with exemptions and was advised that works was constantly ongoing with hospitals to reduce trends.

Major hospitals had installed upgraded alarm systems which had caused problems with false alarms. ACFO Robson agreed to provide Members with the findings of the research feedback.

Councillor Harrison commented upon the number of academies and community schools within the area which were open at times outside of normal school hours for example evenings and weekends and questioned the implications of the policy in relation to these sites.

ACFO Robson explained that whilst schools did run before and after school clubs, the majority of the school was left empty. This would however be monitored and times checked to ensure they were appropriate. An update would be given in due course.

The Chairman welcomed the policy and commented that as three appliances were mobilised to schools this increased appliance capacity to respond to life risk incidents.

12. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted and endorsed, with a recommendation that the proposal be considered by the Fire Authority;
- (ii) Further reports be received as appropriate.

Business Intelligence

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (Clerk to the Authority), the Strategic Finance Manager and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report to provide the Policy and Performance Committee with information relating to the development of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) organisational performance management infrastructure.

Tony Markwell (Area Manager – Strategy and Performance) advised Members that initial operational and corporate performance dashboards had been developed which

would enable the Service to identify opportunities, support decision-making, and more effectively implement strategy.

An initial limited trial and evaluation commenced in December 2018 and concluded in February 2019.

Subject to successful evaluation outcomes, development and implementation would continue across all business areas. This would enable the Service Performance Action Group to more effectively report on performance to PPC.

The Committee then received a demonstration of TWFRS BI development.

Members commented that this was an extremely powerful and efficient process for analysing statistics which allowed data to be 'drilled down' in an informative way.

13. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted and endorsed; and
- (ii) Further reports be received as appropriate.

(Signed) N FORBES
Chair

