



Minutes

Community Safety Committee

Date: 20 July 2018

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor D O'Donovan (in the Chair), G Almas, P Harrand, J Hughes, J Lennox, M Pervaiz, M Pollard, A Tait and A Wenham

In Attendance: None

Apologies: Councillor R Hunt

1 Chair's announcements

Moorland wild fires – update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided an update with regard to the recent wild fire situation on Saddleworth Moor, Winter Hill and, more recently and locally, at Cullingworth. Members were advised that, though difficult to manage and protracted, both large fires were dealt with appropriately and professionally. West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service had since received formal thanks and compliments for the out of county support it gave over 7 to 8 days as part of the national resource contribution in Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

Fatal fire, Fartown, Huddersfield – conviction

Members were advised of the recent conviction of a private landlord to a 12 month custodial sentence following a fatal house fire in 2016. It was believed that this was the first conviction of its kind since the new regulations had come into force relating to the provision of smoke detectors in rented property.

A brief update was also given on an associated issue relating to the distribution of smoke alarms which had been considered at the April 2016 meeting of this Committee. It was reported that the Districts Councils had recently confirmed that these had all been distributed.

Members expressed their concern at the frequency of testing of smoke alarms in private rented premises - only statutorily required at the start of each tenancy.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 April 2018 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3 Urgent items

None.

4 Admission of the public

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

5 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

6 Grenfell Tower Fire - update

Members received a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery which provided an update on a number of issues linked to the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017, the subsequent publication of the Dame Judith Hackett report and the opening of the public inquiry.

It was reported that progress with any recommended changes to the regulatory system would be monitored and reported to Members. The following measures had already been taken in West Yorkshire;

- Process established to identify, manage the risk and work with those premises where cladding of the type involved at Grenfell was fitted
- Notification process established where similar type of fire doors are fitted and liaison ongoing with persons responsible for those premises in respect of ongoing fire protection measures
- Decision not to currently rescind the “stay put” advice, supported by the Local Government Association and National Fire Chiefs Council, until such time as any changes are developed nationally whilst noting that the advice can be varied dynamically where a particular incident so demands
- Joint housing associations meetings with concerned tenants

Members commented on the following specific issues;

- the “stay put” advice and difficulties with implementing a dynamic approach
- the nature of the guidance given to the private sector with regard to the removal of similar cladding
- Government funded sprinkler systems

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That further reports be submitted to Members at appropriate junctures.

7 2017 – 18 performance management outcome targets – final report

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery which advised of the detail of performance against outcome targets for West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and each District in 2017 – 18.

It was reported that there had been a small increase in overall activity of 4.2% over the 3-year average target and Members were advised that arson figures had increased in line with regional and national trends. Partnership work was continuing with regard to the arson reduction strategy to address the issues around deliberate fire setting, some of which could be attributed to an increase in fly tipping recorded by local authorities.

Members were pleased to note that the number of dwelling fires was at the lowest recorded level across the Brigade and were informed of the cross-partnership work that was being done on a regular basis with regard to arson reduction and other intervention work.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

8 Arson convictions 2017 - 18

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery submitted a report which provided information on arson convictions during 2017 – 18 where the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service had submitted expert witness statements.

It was noted that two officers had been awarded commendations by Mr Justice Stephen Morris and West Yorkshire Police in respect of the fatal house fire at Stanley, Wakefield in October 2016. The perpetrators had been convicted to long prison terms for manslaughter.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That this Committee offers its thanks to the Brigade's Fire Investigation officers for their contribution to successful arson convictions.

9 Service Delivery “Spotlight on” case studies

Members considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery which provided examples of the following areas of work which were being undertaken to meet the needs of the communities of West Yorkshire in the delivery of prevention, protection and response activity;

- Firefighter Safety Team – establishment of dedicated team to improve sharing of learning from operational incidents
- Thriving Kirklees initiative – safety in the home scheme in conjunction with the Thriving Kirklees team for the provision of fire safety advice and equipment to eligible families with children under 2 years of age

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

10 WYFiremap tool – presentation

Members received a presentation on the WYFiremap tool which effectively mapped incidents across West Yorkshire for comparative, predictive and response activities.

Chair