

Minutes of the Performance Committee meeting held at CDDFRS HQ on Friday 30 June 2023 at 1000 hours.

Present: Cllr J Blakey in the Chair

Durham County Council: Cllr R Manchester, C Marshall and S Quinn

Darlington Borough Council: Cllr G Lee

Officers: Director of Community Risk Management K Carruthers, Group Manager J Parry

Part A

1. Apologies

No apologies received.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting that was held on 9 March 2023 were agreed as a true record and the action was noted as complete.

3. Performance Report Quarter 4 2022/2023

K Carruthers introduced the report which provided Members with a summary of the organisational performance at the end of the fourth quarter of the 2022/23 financial year. The indicators were discussed in turn.

Cllr S Quinn thanked staff for their continuous hard work to support vulnerable members of our communities, and for the excellent preventative initiatives that have been put in place.

Cllr S Quinn asked if the Service are planning to issue comms to the public regarding fire hazards from discarded BBQs and accumulations of waste over the summer months. K Carruthers noted that awareness of the risks will be raised through social media posts and the website.

The Committee **noted** the report.

4. Change in Response to Automatic Fire Alarms

K Carruthers introduced a report informing the meeting of an updated approach from 1 November 2023 to the Service's attendance policy to calls for assistance from Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) in non-residential premises.

The report highlighted that over the last three years, 98.5% of all mobilisations to AFA calls were false alarms with only 0.2% requiring the use of a portable extinguisher, hose reel or greater to extinguish the fire.

The new approach extends the hours to 08:00 and 18:00 hours, seven days of the week with several exemptions for premises listed in the report. It is estimated that the introduction of the new approach will reduce mobilisations by between 250 to 300 per year, saving 1,200 hours (50 days) of lost productivity per year.

Cllr C Marshall queried the proposed start date of 1 November as it is very close to one of the busiest times of the year for the service, and that the change may create a perception there is a capacity issue.

Cllr R Manchester queried that if a member of the public reported a fire alarm sounding, would this be responded to. K Carruthers explained that Control would ask pertinent questions to determine if an appliance is required.

Cllr R Manchester asked if industrial sites containing hazardous and toxic materials are included on the exemptions list. K Carruthers noted that COMAH sites, both top and lower tier sites were on the exemptions list.

ACTION: K Carruthers to consider change of implementation date for the revised attendance policy.

The Committee **discussed** and **noted** the report.

5. Presentation on Target Setting for 2023/2024

The Committee received a presentation on the 2023/24 Target Setting Methodology covering incidents, home fire safety visits and deliberate fire reduction activities within the Service from Group Manager Emergency Response J Parry.

Cllr C Marshall asked if the deliberate fire reduction activities target aligns with those set by the Police and Durham County Council and if there is any further resource they can provide to support the fire service. J Parry explained that a lot of partnership working takes place through the Multi Agency Problem Solving Group, Darlington Community Safety Partnership, Safe Durham Partnership, Organised Crime Group, Arson Suppression Group and other partnership meetings. There is a real joint focus with a degree of ownership from all partners.

Cllr G Lee noted that deliberate fires are difficult to control and asked if there is an acceptance that the work done in hotspot areas isn't working. J Parry advised that the service continues to consider different way of working in response to the increase in deliberate fires.

Cllr J Blakey thanked the service for their work on arson and anti-social behaviour.

6. Letters of Appreciation

The Committee considered letters of appreciation received by the Service for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023. In total 8 letters had been received for the reporting period.

The Committee **noted** the report.

7. Any other Business

Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

8. Exclusion to the Public

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

9. Presentation on Response to Non-Domestic Fires

The Committee received a presentation from Group Manager Emergency Response J Parry on non-domestic fires attended within 9 minutes, predominantly focusing on analysis of incidents that have failed to meet the response standards.

10. Formal Complaints

Four formal complaints had been received by the Service for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023. No complaints had been forwarded to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Committee **noted** the report.