



Safest People, Safest Places

Combined Fire Authority

15 September 2023

Government Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan

Report of the Director of Community Risk Management

Purpose of Report

1. This report is to update members on the involvement of County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) with the Government's anti-social behaviour (ASB) action plan.

Background

2. On 27 March 2023, the Prime Minister launched the ASB Action Plan introducing tough action to rid communities of ASB.
3. Durham Constabulary Force area was chosen as one of the 16 "trailblazers" to receive government funding totalling £50 million over two years. The Durham Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will receive funding of £4.4 million over the two years to deliver the initiative.
4. The funding is to be used for two distinct areas:
 - Hotspot 'policing' – increase the visibility of uniformed officers (police and partners) in communities;
 - Immediate Justice – new service where perpetrators of ASB will be made to repair the damage they inflict on victims and communities.

CDDFRS Involvement

5. Officers of CDDFRS are members of the Strategic Board and the delivery groups for hotspot policing and immediate justice.
6. Through this engagement deliberate fires are identified as a key element of ASB and CDDFRS is part of three successfully funded initiatives which are detailed below.

Targeted Deliberate Fire, Arson and ASB Reduction

7. Funding totalling £60,000 has been received for the introduction of proactive patrols to increase visibility, and engagement in identified hotspot areas during those times they are at a high risk of deliberate fires.
8. Proactive patrols will be with two CDDFRS personnel in a marked and visible vehicle. Activities will be recorded and include:
 - Environmental Visual Audits;
 - Fly tipping referrals;
 - Blue routes;
 - Empty Building Risk Assessments;
 - Seasonal Arson Campaigns (e.g., Bonfire);
 - Abandoned vehicle referrals.

Community Safety Responders

9. In partnership with Durham Constabulary and Durham and Darlington councils, eight Community Safety Responders (CSRs) are to be introduced to increase proactive patrols, visibility and engagement with the community in identified hotspot areas.
10. The eight CSRs will carry out the role of Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), support Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council's work related to community safety, housing and environmental issues and deliver CDDFRS community safety, arson and deliberate fire reduction work.
11. The CSRs will receive training and be given the powers from these agencies to allow them to tackle more anti-social activity than one organisation in isolation.
12. Due to the expectation that the successful applicants will not take up their posts until October due to the recruitment exercise and stringencies of vetting, £176,250 of funding will be awarded for 2023/24 and funding of £375,100 for 2024/25. In addition, £10,000 for the purchase of information technology (IT) equipment has been agreed.

Young Person Developing Resilience Courses

13. Funding of £26,820 per year has been awarded to support delivery of three Developing Resilience Courses for young persons. This funding is part of the Immediate Justice element of the plan.
14. The course is based on the Princes Trust Level 1 Award in Developing Resilience. The project is designed for a maximum of eight young people, over a ten-day 'Initial Award' course.
15. The award is aimed at supporting young people to develop resilience as part of their journey towards achieving positive outcomes. It has been developed with the aim of supporting young people to increase their personal resilience by exploring, experiencing, and developing different protective factors and learning how to apply healthy habits to their real lives to help them manage life's challenges.

16. CDDFRS has previously delivered two of these courses through funding from the PCC. The Service is the first FRS in the country to deliver this course and will be a case study by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to facilitate learning for other services.

Recommendations

17. Members are requested to:
 - a. **note** the contents of this report;
 - b. **receive** further reports as appropriate.

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