

**27<sup>th</sup> October 2015**



**Reducing the number of  
Secondary deliberate fires**

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**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members of the Committee with information in advance of a presentation by Group Manager Colin Davis from County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service on the partnership approach to reducing the number of secondary deliberate fires during targeted periods such as Bonfire Night.

**Background**

2. At its meeting in June 2015, the Committee agreed its work programme to include a presentation on the partnership approach to reducing the number of secondary deliberate fires during targeted periods such as Bonfire Night. Information within this presentation is linked to the Safe Durham Partnership Plan objective 'Reduce anti-social behaviour – including low level crime and secondary Fires'.
3. Secondary fires "are the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or five or more appliances attend. This also includes fires in single derelict buildings<sup>1</sup>". During 2014/15, fire services in England attended around 154,700 fires. Of this total, 78,653 were classed as secondary fires of which 51,100 were deliberate secondary fires<sup>2</sup>. During this period, County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service attended 2,843 fire incidents to which 1,973 were classed as secondary fires of 1,154 were deliberate secondary fires<sup>3</sup>.
4. Within this context, secondary fires have a significant impact upon resources and service provision. This demand can be seasonal and the risk of deliberate secondary fires is increased in the period leading up to bonfire night on the 5<sup>th</sup> November.
5. To reduce this risk, partnership work is essential and includes police and neighbourhood wardens carrying out extra patrols and arranging for any illegal bonfires to be removed. Partner agencies also undertake visits to schools around the county to talk about firework safety and leaflets on fireworks and the law have been delivered to thousands of homes. The

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities & Local Government, Fire Statistics Monitor: England April 2014 to March 2015

<sup>2</sup> Information obtained from Department for Communities & Local Government, Fire Statistics Monitor: England April 2014 to March 2015

<sup>3</sup> Information obtained from Department for Communities & Local Government, Fire Statistics Monitor: England April 2014 to March 2015

Council's Trading Standards officers visit retailers to remind them of their legal responsibilities when selling fireworks and the Police's #respectmystreet anti-social behaviour campaign is also promoted. Information on fire safety and organised bonfire and firework displays is also published on the Fire Service's website.

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/links-information-bonfire-night>

6. Work undertaken by partner agencies in 2014 resulted in 55 bonfires being removed by the Council and the fire service attending 60 bonfires (80 in 2013) and 105 (161 in 2013) deliberate secondary fires.
7. Group Manager Colin Davis, County Durham Fire and Rescue Service will be in attendance to provide Members with an overview of activity undertaken in 2014 and to raise awareness to the partnership approach for this year's campaign.

### **Recommendation**

8. Members of the Committee are asked to note information contained within the report and presentation and comment accordingly.

### **Background Papers**

None

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance – None**

**Staffing – None**

**Risk - None**

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None**

**Accommodation - None**

**Crime and Disorder** –The report and presentation includes information on reducing re-offending within the Altogether Safer element of the Council and Safe Durham Partnership Plans.

**Human Rights – None**

**Consultation – None**

**Procurement – None**

**Disability Issues – None**

**Legal Implications – None**