

Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5 July 2018



Arson and Deliberate Secondary Fires in East Durham

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with supporting information in advance of a presentation to Members on the partnership response following scrutiny activity to addressing an increase in arson and deliberate secondary fires in East Durham.

Background

2. At its meeting on 26th June 2017, Members of the Council's Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to hold a focussed session on arson and deliberate secondary fires within its work programme.
3. A working group session has held in October 2017 with members of the Committee and elected members from areas with higher rates of arson within the east Durham area. The aim of the session was to gather evidence from police, fire and council representatives to gain an understanding of this issue, its impact on communities and police, fire and council services, the response by partner agencies and identify any areas for further development.
4. The Committee is the council's designated crime and disorder committee and therefore has the power to review and scrutinise decisions made and other actions taken in connection with the discharge by responsible bodies of their crime and disorder functions i.e. the organisations represented on the Safe Durham Partnership. Within this context, following the meeting in October, a response from Cllr Boyes was sent to the Chair of the Safe Durham Partnership Board and the Cabinet Portfolio lead for Adult and Health Services.
5. The Committee's response was presented to the Safe Durham Partnership Board in January 2018 and whilst acknowledging positive partnership work included the following areas for further consideration:
 - i Safe Durham Partnership to monitor performance relating to 'Deliberate Primary Fires and deliberate secondary fires
 - ii Include Countywide arson and deliberate fires within the performance reports presented to the committee on a quarterly basis.

- iii Ensure a focus is placed on education with young people to highlight the dangers of fire including promotion of the Young Fire Fighters' Association at Peterlee Fire Station
 - iv Consider restorative approaches for low level offending alongside enforcement and prosecution for more serious offending
 - v Promote the Crimestoppers number and proactive public engagement to provide for community confidence and reassurance
 - vi Ensure that the focus of the review of the Time Limited Plan is to achieve a sustainable approach
 - vii Local Members to be consulted on the development of a Fire Reduction Plan to capture the needs of the community
6. Phil Innis, Station Manager, County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service will be in attendance at the Committee's meeting to provide a presentation to Members on partnership activity in relation to the above areas and planned developments that aim to reduce arson and deliberate fires within the east Durham area.

Recommendations

7. Members of the committee are asked to note information within this report and presentation and comment accordingly.

Background Papers

None

Contact: Tom Gorman, Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager
Tel: 03000 268 027

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – Information contained in this report and presentation relates to objectives within the Safe Durham Partnership Plan

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None