



Minutes

Community Safety Committee

Date: 12 July 2019

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor G Almas (in the chair), M Akhtar, T Austin (with the exception of agenda item nos. 8 and 9 Min nos. 8 – 9 refer), S Benton, R Grahame (as substitute for Councillor K Renshaw), L Holmes, R Hunt (with the exception of agenda item 9 Min no. 9 refers), D Jenkins, M Pervaiz, M Pollard and A Tait

In Attendance: None

Apologies: Councillor K Renshaw

1 Minutes of the last meeting

Councillor Jenkins sought further information relating to the formal external audit of Safeguarding in respect of Min. no. 40 (Safeguarding report 2018).

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 29 March 2019 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

2 Urgent items

None.

3 Admission of the public

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

4 Declarations of interest

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

5 Arson convictions 2018 – 19

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery which detailed those arson convictions which had been made during the 2018 – 19 period in which the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service Fire Investigation Team had provided expert witness statements.

Members were advised that the Fire Investigation Team was available 24/7 and were called automatically to serious fires, fire fatalities, locations of repeated fire incidence and / or where there were unusual circumstances involved.

The report detailed 17 cases which had been either brought before or which were due to be heard in the Crown Court and Members commented on the differing sentencing tariffs.

RESOLVED

- a) That consideration be given to the inclusion of the following information, where practical, in the next subsequent arson convictions annual report;
 - Delay between date of incident and court hearing
 - Specific extenuating circumstances, and
 - Number of arson incidents where no conviction was made, and
- b) That the report be noted.

6 Moorland Fires – Ilkley and Marsden Moor

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery submitted a report which presented more detailed information relating to the three moorland fires which had occurred over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend on the moors above Ilkley and Marsden.

It was reported that three arrests had been made in respect of the Ilkley fires and one individual had been charged in June with sentencing expected on 21 August.

The incidents had initiated cross-border assistance and tested the national resilience structure with enhanced logistical support provided from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Members were advised that, as with all large incidents, a post-incident review had been undertaken and consideration would be given to the outcome of the reviews. One of the issues highlighted by the moorland fires was the reliability of the communications networks in remote locations.

In response to a query about the availability of groundwater in these locations, Members were advised that local knowledge of the officers was vital in relation to the known water supplies overground and the variety of techniques which could be employed in the extraction of water.

A large West Yorkshire-wide press campaign was due to be launched in July (#bemooraware) which supported the public space protection orders which had been implemented by some of the West Yorkshire District Councils.

RESOLVED

- a) That Members' best wishes be sent to the firefighter from Merseyside who had been injured during the moorland fires;
- b) That all members of staff involved in the incidents be congratulated,
- c) That the outcome of the post-incident reviews be reported to Members as appropriate, and
- d) That the report be noted.

7 2018 – 19 performance management information – outcome targets – final report

Members received a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery submitted a report which advised of the detail of performance against outcome targets for West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and each District in 2018 – 19.

It was reported that the long-term trend continued downwards but that there had been a small increase in overall activity of 14.1% in 2018 – 19 over the 3-year average target which had been due, in the main, to secondary arson. Partnership work to counter this form of activity was continuing with both the West Yorkshire Police, and also the District Councils as some of the firesetting could be attributed to an increase in fly tipping.

Members were advised that false fire alarms accounted for 50% of the total activity and partnership working continued in this regard together with ongoing work by the fire protection team to support premises.

Members commented on the following specific issues;

- False alarms and charging policy
- Arson and anti-social behaviour work
- Cell fires at Wetherby Youth Offenders Institution
- Road traffic collisions and Fire Service representation on the Safer Roads Executive Board

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

8 Fire Safety – Government consultation

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Service Delivery which advised Members of the following Government consultations;

- Proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system (following the Hackitt review into the Grenfell Tower incident), and
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – to examine whether these remained fit for purpose

Members were advised that two of the main issues covered in the consultations were the reduction in the scope of the building safety regulatory system from buildings over 30 m down to 18 m in height and, in respect of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, the nomination and identification of the official duty holders / named persons as being those directly responsible for any particular building in the application of fire safety regulations. It was reported that the proposals for changes to the building safety regulatory system would not apply currently to Houses in Multiple Occupation and would, therefore, not impose additional burdens on the relevant landlords of such properties.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

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;

- Leeds Partnership event (with a view to increasing and improving the quality of referrals)
- Prince’s Trust team programme at Dewsbury (completion of the first Prince’s Trust programme) – it was reported that of the 13 young people who had participated in the 12-week programme, 4 had gone into employment, 3 were working as volunteers whilst seeking employment and 2 had secured places at college on Public Service courses

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That the young people who participated in the Prince’s Trust programme be congratulated on their dedication and commitment to the course.

Chair