

**AGENDA ITEM:**

<b>REPORT TO:</b> Meeting of the	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY COMMUNITY SAFETY &amp; PROTECTION COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2013</b>
<b>REPORT NO.</b>	<b>CFO/120/13</b>
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	<b>DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>AM MYLES PLATT – DIRECTOR OF PREVENTION &amp; PROTECTION, EXTN; 4644</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>CAROLINE CRICHTON - COMMUNITY FIRE PREVENTION MANAGER, WM IAN MULLEN - ARSON REDUCTION COORDINATOR</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>BONFIRE PLAN 2013</b>

**APPENDIX A                      TITLE                      Equality Impact Assessment**

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Purpose of Report

1. To request that the Authority note the recommendations of this report relating to Bonfire planning 2013.

Recommendation

2. That the Authority note and approve the plan for Bonfire period 2013

Executive Summary

The 2013 Bonfire plan aims to limit the number of deliberate fires and instances of anti-social behaviour across Merseyside throughout the Halloween and Bonfire period.

The Authority has in previous years delivered highly successful Bonfire campaigns to reduce the impact of the seasonal rise in incidents of fire and ASB related activities. For 2013 the planning has been devolved to each District Community Fire Prevention team.

Central co-ordination of partners, resources and control is facilitated by the Arson Reduction Coordinator to ensure local plans contribute and compliment a pan Merseyside multi-agency approach.

It is recognised that current financial challenges will impact on some of the services our partners have contributed in the past and we will therefore endeavour to ensure contingencies and alternative resources are put in place to address any areas of risk.

### Introduction & Background

3. The Authority recognise that a significant increase in calls for service is received over the Halloween and Bonfire period which is directly linked to the sales of fireworks during this time. In order to limit the demand, calls for service and the number of ASB related incidents, plans have been formulated on a district and pan Merseyside level.
4. Bonfire 2013 has been divided into three phases,
  - a) Planning Phase
  - b) Implementation Phase
  - c) Post period data capture and debrief phase
5. **Planning Phase**- Planning has taken place with partner agencies since June 2013 at Service level and District level.
6. District monthly meetings have been held at Service Headquarters since June with the aim to ensure successful planning for the Halloween and Bonfire periods are being implemented.
7. Operation Banger - This is a Police led operation which co-ordinates Police and partner activity over the Halloween and Bonfire period. Monthly strategic meetings will take place with Merseyside Police at Police headquarters involving all Basic Command Unit Commanders and officers of the Authority.
8. School Presentations –To support service wide education and training, presentation packages have been jointly created and agreed by the Authority and Merseyside Police which are being presented to all Senior Schools and targeted Junior Schools across Merseyside. They are being delivered by MFRA Community Prevention staff, Merseyside Police, embedded School Police Officers and Operational Crews.
9. In order to ensure that all relevant information is available to staff the Portal on the Authorities intranet has been utilised as a central repository for all information appertaining to the Bonfire Period. A link box is available from the home page of the Portal to access all bonfire documentation.
10. Bonfire leaflets have been updated and will be distributed across the Service area. They provide safety advice on one face and on the rear it gives contact details for MFRA, Merseyside Police, Crime-stoppers and a single website link to diversionary

activities over the Halloween and Bonfire Period. This has been jointly funded by the Authority and Merseyside Police and a total of 50,000 leaflets have been produced and will be issued to all Districts across Merseyside.

11. Firework Retailer inspections will continue across Merseyside. Over 400 retailers apply for registrations or licences to sell fireworks each year. The on-going inspection programme has been undertaken by the Firework Incident Research Safety Team (FIRST). They have inspected all premises to ensure suitable and sufficient actions have been undertaken by the retailers to comply with safe storage and guidance given on the selling of fireworks.
12. Firework retailers can request specific advice regarding the storage, possession and sale of fireworks. This advice will be given by the FIRST team and Community Fire Protection Officers.
13. Street Intervention Teams have been working in key Liverpool areas on a daily basis to engage with the young people who may be present. The objective being to reduce and prevent Anti-Social Behaviour related incidents and promote safety issues in the run up to the Bonfire period.
14. **Implementation Phase** - Key Dates have been agreed with Merseyside Police so that Wed 30th October, Thursday 31st October, Sat 2nd November and Tue 5th November will have increased resources available to promote engagement and prevention activities. This will be co-ordinated through a dedicated operational support room.
15. Bonfire Briefings will be held at Service Headquarters on six dates over the Bonfire Period in order to monitor and review events. The briefings are open to internal departments and external partners involved with deliberate fire setting and Anti-Social Behaviour related issues. The briefings will take place every Monday and Friday at 11am from 18th October to 4th November 2013.
16. Districts have produced their own plans for local prevention and response to the Bonfire Period 2013. Each plan is tailored to local issues based on historical data from previous years and emerging issues. The dynamic plans will evolve based upon data received over the Bonfire period and captured during the Bonfire Briefings. Ownership of District plans falls with the District Management Team and are implemented by the District Prevention Managers.
17. The FIRST team consists of a Detective Constable from Merseyside Police, and a MFRA Technical Officer. In addition, the Incident Investigation Team (IIT) Officers are FIRST team response officers. IIT will respond to all firework incidents involving damage to property or injuries to persons.
18. During the permitted firework selling dates of 15th October and 10th November 2013 an onsite inspection plan will be carried out to verify that the fireworks are being stored and sold correctly. Any illegal firework sales will be dealt with by the FIRST team and appropriate action taken. This will range from the provision of advice to seizure, enforcement and prosecution.

19. Fire Service Direct will be the recipient of any reports of bonfire debris placed on the streets or storage of bonfire materials in void properties. This information will then be passed to the relevant District Arson Reduction Team for action as per the District plan.
20. The Operational Support Room (OSR) will be established on the key nights (30th, 31st Oct, 2nd Nov and 5th Nov) situated at MACC in the training room. This will be active from 4pm until midnight and staffed by the Prevention team.
21. The OSR will monitor and record the activity of all Prevention staff not riding fire appliances that are deployed across Merseyside, to include Community Prevention Advocates, Street Intervention Teams and Fire Support Network staff.
22. The OSR will also act as a link between Prevention staff and the Station Manager who will be located in Police Force Silver Command room. This facility compliments MACC operations, allowing MACC staff to concentrate on the increase in emergency calls for service via the 999 system.
23. Diversionary activity is being organised at a District level. This includes Local Authority firework displays, community event bonfires, cage soccer events, climbing wall activities, youth/community centre activity, and numerous smaller public events which are supported by Fire Support Network.
24. Radio City will be hosting a key distraction event on 30th October in order to attract listeners and keep them indoors at historical peak times of ASB activity. This is being part funded by Merseyside Police however it is not being promoted as being connected to any Emergency Service or uniformed organisation.
25. Corporate Communications have been meeting with Police partners to ensure that key messages are rolled out across the County over the period. A campaign of media press releases will promote the key messages at key times over the period.
26. Police Silver Liaison will be maintained on the key nights of 30th, 31st Oct and 5th Nov. Police will be establishing a Silver Command Room and a Station Manager will be present to act as MFRA Liaison. They will establish communications links with the OSR.
27. Trojan will be made available at SHQ should it be required to deploy. Deployment will be facilitated in co-operation with Merseyside Police on a dynamic intelligence led basis. Two Police Officers will ride the vehicle along with an MFRA OIC and driver. It will be deployed to known hotspot areas for a specific duration and will be further supported by a Police carrier with two staff.
28. Due to the historical increases in demand for response by the Incident Investigation Team (IIT), additional staffing has been provided on key dates who will be utilised for firework incidents (FIRST) or fire investigations.
29. Due to an increase in deliberate car fires over the Bonfire period in 2012 additional considerations will be given to areas of hotspot activity and working with crime prevention officers from Merseyside Police in order to reduce instances of vehicle crime.

30. A post Bonfire sweep will take place on the morning of Wednesday 6th November 2013. This will involve operational crews patrolling their station areas in order to extinguish smouldering bonfires in known fire locations. Appliances will remain available for redeployment by MACC. This will facilitate Local Authority cleansing teams to remove bonfire remains before the youths return home from school.
31. **Debrief Phase** - The final figures for the bonfire recording period of 19th October to 7th November inclusive will be published on the morning of 8th November 2013.
32. A full debrief has been arranged for 15th November 2013 to be held from 10am until 12.00pm at Service Headquarters. This is a multi-agency debrief that will report on the outcomes of the Bonfire activity and capture learning points for next year's event.
33. Local multi-agency debriefs will take place following the bonfire period in each District.

#### Equality & Diversity Implications

34. An equality impact assessment form has been completed and is attached as Appendix A.

#### Staff Implications

35. Staff will be required to support Trojan if required. This will be an OIC and a driver. In order to maintain the OSR the following staff will be required from 4pm until midnight on the four key nights. This will be the OSR manager (Watch Manager), a Control Operator and an admin support officer. Additional cover for the Incident Investigation Team has been agreed with the team members to ensure suitable cover is provided during the anticipated periods of peak activity.

#### Legal Implications

36. School presentations have been viewed by the Legal team to verify that the content is acceptable. Recommendations to include a warning screen and to show content to responsible persons for youth groups prior to presenting to schools have been implemented within the package
37. Training in respect of surveillance activity requirements under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, is being provided for key staff prior to the bonfire period.

#### Financial Implications & Value for Money

38. All additional costs for delivering the bonfire plan will be met from existing budget and supported by external partners.

## Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

39. In considering the Risk Management Implications for staff in the field during key nights, a decision was made to operate the Operational Support Room. This will allow for a robust monitoring management of staff across Merseyside who are not riding fire appliances.

## Contribution to Our Mission – To Achieve; Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters”

40. The delivery of the Bonfire plan aims to limit the number of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents and deliberate fires across Merseyside and reduce the risk of attacks on firefighters through education and engagement.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A

### **\*Glossary of Terms**

DMT -	District Management Team
DPM -	District Prevention Managers
KIM -	Knowledge and Information Management
FIRST -	Firework Incident Research & Safety Team
IIT -	Incident Investigation Team
MACC -	Mobilising and Communications Centre
MFRA -	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
OSR -	Operational Support Room
SHQ -	Service Headquarters
MFRS -	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service