

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Title of policy/report/project:	Bonfire Period Campaign 2018
Department:	Community Risk Management (Community Safety)
Date:	26/09/2018
1: What is the aim or purpose of the policy/report/project <i>This should identify "the legitimate aim" of the policy/report/project (there may be more than one)</i>	
In summary, the aims of the Bonfire Period campaign are as follows: • Limit the demand on Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service during the Halloween and Bonfire period related to the sales of fireworks and increased Anti-Social Behaviour during the period. • Work with Merseyside Police and other partner agencies across Merseyside to provide community engagement activities. • Work with partner agencies to prevent incidents from occurring through bonfire removal, providing advice to local communities and businesses and provision of planned firework events. Background and Introduction Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service recognise that a significant increase in calls to the Service is received over the Halloween and Bonfire period. This is directly linked to the sales of fireworks and increased anti-social behaviour over the period. In order to limit the demand, an extensive plan over the period has been formulated to reduce the calls for service, numbers of fires and instances of anti social behaviour which adversely affect the communities of Merseyside. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service are working with a number of external partners across Merseyside to deliver numerous initiatives. These initiatives include: • Daily e-briefings to partners from Arson Officers from 19th Oct to 7th Nov 2018 which will review the previous 24 hours of incident activity, and in doing so allow the notification of potential emerging hotspots to be located with relevant information disseminated. • Bonfire clearance, which involves the removal of combustible material that could be used for bonfires. • Operation Banger will take place on Tuesday 30th October (Mischief Night), Wednesday 31st October (Halloween) and Monday 5th November (Bonfire Night)	

- MFRS will also operation a further 4 key nights (Friday 2nd November, Saturday 3rd November, Sunday 4th November and Tuesday 6th November) due to the potential high demand on MFRS resources.
- The Operational Support Room (OSR) will be operated on all key dates during the bonfire period. It will be staffed by the Arson Team Manager and a Station Manager and will monitor Arson Team staff and support Fire Control where necessary.
- A bonfire damping down activity (sweep) will take place on 6th November, as historically MF&RS calls for service to bonfire incidents continues the day after bonfire night;
- PATS (Potential Arson Target Scheme) which involves inspecting and securing empty properties to reduce the risk of arson;
- Community Engagement and Education, which involves the circulation of leaflets and fire safety advice, provision of skips, delivery of safety advice, engagement initiatives to prevent arson and anti-social behaviour incidents. Schools Bonfire Safety DVD to be delivered across the region through collaboration with partners.
- Media activities, which involves working with local press and radio to spread the fire safety message and information about planned activities. Social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc) to be used to spread safety messages.
- Firework legislation, which involves the Community Fire Protection teams enforcing (Explosives Regulations 2014) and receiving and processing applications for the storage and supply of consumer fireworks.
- Trojan fire appliance, which can be deployed to hotspots of fire related anti-social behaviour and criminal activity. This year, the Trojan Fire Appliance will be deployed proactively on Friday 2nd November and Saturday 3rd November 2018 supported by Merseyside Police.
- A senior officer (GM) will be deployed to a Tactical Co-ordinating Group (Silver Command) which will be convened at the JCC on the 3 key Operation Banger nights in order to act as MF&RS liaison and update Police on MF&RS issues concerning ASB, Arson and any other relevant information. The GM in TCG will liaise with the OSR.
- Operational Fire Crews will partake in Community Risk Management Routes which involves them providing a high visibility presence, with specific emphasis on areas that are known to be hotspot locations.

[More information about this can be found in the Arson pages on the Portal](#)

2: Who will be affected by the policy/report/project?

This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about the policy /report/project and its outcomes (There may be more than one)

This Bonfire Campaign is concerned with making local communities and businesses safer during the Halloween and Bonfire period. The implementation of this campaign will impact on a number of groups. These groups include those who are likely to be involved in Anti-Social Behaviour incidents during the Bonfire period. Typically, these are likely to be young males, aged between 10 and 19 living in socio-economically deprived localities.

In addition to this, the campaign will also impact on those groups who are most likely to be affected by the anti-social behaviour incidents. This may include:

- Others living within the localities of the incidents;
- Those with an increased perception of fear during this period, for example the elderly;
- Those who may become a victim of hate crime related to their disability, sexual orientation, race, religious beliefs/faith or gender identity.

In addition, the Bonfire Campaign will also affect partner organisations that MF&RS work with during the period.

3. Monitoring

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.

What monitoring data have you considered?

Trend analysis of historic Bonfire period incidents

What did it show?

An analysis of historical bonfire data was completed to gain an understanding of whether there were any trends in the incidents that occurred. The Business Intelligence team within Strategic Planning provided 5 years of historic data from 2012 until 2016. The data provided the following findings:

- There has been a significant decrease in the number of deliberate secondary fires occurring during the bonfire period. Between the period of 2006 - 2016, there has been an overall reduction of incidents by approximately 63.5%.

Analysis of historic Bonfire period incidents with areas of socio-economic deprivation	• An analysis of deliberate secondary fires by district shows that the greatest number of incidents were within the Liverpool district, followed by the Wirral district, Knowsley district, Sefton district and St Helens district respectively; • There has been a reduction in the number of incidents related to fireworks by 65% between 2015 and 2016, with 7 firework related incidents attended. The bonfire campaign has been running for approximately 13 years, with the bonfire briefings and partnership working increasing in scale since 2006. The reducing number of incidents is likely to be associated with the increased levels of partnership working and communication of information and intelligence. An analysis of historic bonfire incidents was completed to understand the link between the deliberate secondary fires occurring within this period and areas of socio-economic deprivation. The analysis of deliberate secondary fires during previous bonfire periods indicated that the more deprived areas of Merseyside saw a greater proportion of incidents than more affluent areas. During the 2016 bonfire period, 25.4% of all deliberate secondary fires occurred in the top 10% of the most deprived areas within Merseyside. In addition to this, 48.5% of incidents occurred within the top 20% of the most deprived areas. This compares with only 1% of incidents occurring in the 10% least deprived areas within Merseyside.
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4: Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc

What research have you considered?

Previous Bonfire
campaign reports and
analysis

What did it show?

The bonfire campaign has been ongoing at MFRS for over 10 years, with the bonfire briefings and partnership working increasing in scale since 2006. As a result of this, the 2016 bonfire period witnessed 579 incidents.

The large reductions within "04 03 Intentional Burning/Bonfire" and "04 05 Refuse Fire" incidents types largely contributed to the overall reduction of deliberate secondary fires. A trend analysis illustrated that the pattern of incidents between 2011 and 2016 was very similar, with a peak on the 5th of November.

The 6th November Service wide sweep to extinguish smouldering fires, has resulted in a drop of incidents, for example on the same day during 2011 – 104 incidents took place, whilst 83 took place during 2016.

The majority of deliberate secondary fires occur in the late afternoon to late evening hours, between 16:00hrs and 22:59hrs. It is also important to point out that between 02:00hrs and 10:59hrs there is a consistent lack of deliberate secondary fires, with incident numbers after this time increasing exponentially.

While incidents over the past 3 years have been increasing, from a low during 2013 (213 incidents) to 579 during 2016. They are still nowhere near the levels seen 10 years ago, when 1587 took place during 2006.

The research compiled from the previous bonfire periods indicate that the implementation of the strategy could have positive impacts financially, environmentally and also socially to the communities of Merseyside.

5. Consultation

*Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above)
Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation*

What Consultation have you undertaken?

Previous Bonfire Plan learning outcomes

Meetings with MFRS colleagues from the 5 Merseyside Districts

Planning meetings with partner organisations

What did it say?

This identified that a reduced number of persons who were from ethnic minority backgrounds were specifically targeted through firework incidents. This was reduction from the previous year when 9 separate incidents occurred whereby deliberate damage to property occurred through misuse of fireworks in the run up period to bonfire night.

Meetings with MFRS colleagues based in each district have been held monthly. As a result of this, each district will develop their own district plans for this bonfire campaign. These plans outline the partner organisations MFRS will be working with on each district to address particular issues that may be experienced during the bonfire period. Bespoke plans to meet the needs of different equality groups will be designed and assessed with a view to informing future Bonfire periods regarding historically vulnerable people and groups

A number of meetings (Multi-agency Operation Banger) will be held with partner organisation with regards to the bonfire campaign. As a result of this, a number of initiatives are to be agreed to ensure the safety of Merseyside residents during this period. These initiatives include:

- Circulation of bonfire leaflets with contact details for MFRS, Merseyside Police and Crimestoppers and a link to all activities that are being offered during the Halloween and Bonfire period;
- Fire Service Direct will be the recipient of any reports of bonfire debris and void properties. This information will be passed to the Arson Team for action;
- Diversionary activities have been organised at a district level, which include organised firework displays, community bonfires, cage soccer events, climbing wall activities, and numerous smaller public events supported by the Fire Support Network;

Operation Banger	All of the initiatives agreed between partner organisations at these meetings will help ensure the communities of Merseyside are safe, and reduce the number of anti-social behaviour and arson incidents “Operation Banger” is an operation led by Merseyside Police which coordinates Police activity during the Halloween and Bonfire period. The planning phase for Operation Banger has included monthly strategic meetings to agree the strategy that will be used to target those who may be involved in anti-social behaviour and Arson activities and ensure the communities are safe. Meeting commenced in June 2016. MF&RS Prevention attend all Banger strategic meetings.
Firework Retailers	Provisional planning indicates that firework retailer inspections will be undertaken by Protection staff who will receive relevant guidance and training. Inspections will be undertaken over the bonfire retail selling period of 15 October to 10th November 2017. This will be managed on a risk based approach for the retailers.
Incident Investigation Team (IIT)	Firework incidents will be dealt with by the IIT who are trained in firework incidents. They will respond to each incident that has caused injury to a person or damage to property. They will liaise with staff on stations for the collection of fireworks.
Firework Storage	Each operational Fire station is an approved location for the public to hand in unused or unwanted fireworks. Each station has received a dedicated metal external storage lockup suitable for the temporary storage of fireworks handed into each station. On receipt of fireworks handed into the station they are placed in the storage box and IIT are notified.
Equality and Diversity Considerations	In order to develop E&D strategies the E&D Manager will have greater input during the 2016 planning stages of the campaign. This will allow greater considerations and strategies to be implemented.
Environmental Considerations	Bonfire removal strategies, skips and flytipping all impact on environmental issues or concerns. Close working with the environmental officer will allow for suitable planning to be considered to reduce/ mitigate the environmental concerns raised during previous campaigns.

7. Decisions

If the policy/report/project will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how it will change or why it is to continue in the same way.

If no changes are proposed, the policy/report/project needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.

It is recognised that MFRS and its partner organisations are currently facing financial challenges; however the implementation of the 2016 Bonfire Campaign has the potential to reduce the number of incidents related to anti-social behaviour.

The bonfire campaign has a strong focus on preventative initiatives, such as bonfire clearing, school presentations and diversionary activities, which not only prevent incidents from occurring, but also increase the perception of safety amongst residents.

It is anticipated that a number of protected groups will experience a positive impact through the implementation of the bonfire campaign. In particular, those groups who are most likely to be involved in anti-social behaviour and arson initiatives will be provided access to other diversionary initiatives. These groups are typically young males living in socio-economically deprived locations.

The implementation of the bonfire campaign activities will also have a positive impact on residents living close to hotspot localities for anti-social behaviour and arson initiatives. In addition to this, those protected groups who may be at risk from hate crime may also feel safer because of the regulation of firework sales, clearance of combustible materials and provision of diversionary activities for those likely to be involved in anti-social behaviour incidents.

By the time of the campaign in Oct 2017 MFRS staff will have received training on hate crime awareness and all fire stations are designated safe havens. They will also be able to act as a reporting point for hate crime if a member of the public wishes to report an incident or crime.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.

- *Vulnerable persons intelligence gathering and response plan*
- *2017-Promulgation of EIA pre-publication to different equality/minority groups for thoughts and suggestions*
 - *Disability groups*
 - *Faith/Cultural*
 - *Age*
 - *Sexuality and Gender identification*

9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off

The completed EIA form must be signed off by the Diversity Manager before it is submitted to Strategic Management Group or Authority.

Signed off by:

Wendy Kenyon

Date:

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by

For any advice, support or guidance about completing this form please contact the Wendy Kenyon on 4422

The completed form along with the related policy/report/project document should be emailed to the Diversity Team at: DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk