

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO: Meeting of the	MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY COMMUNITY SAFETY & PROTECTION COMMITTEE
DATE:	11th July 2013
REPORT NO.	CFO/085/13
REPORTING OFFICER:	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PHIL GARRIGAN
CONTACT OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER MYLES PLATT
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	KEVIN JOHNSON, Fire Service Direct, LINDA MITCHELL, Fire support Network, SIMON MANSFIELD, Energy and Environmental Manager
SUBJECT:	WINTER WARM EMERGENCY HEATING INITIATIVE

THERE ARE NO APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the Winter Warm Emergency Heating Project and delivery method for 2013-14.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the contents of the report.

Introduction & Background

3. The Winter Warm Emergency Heating Project is a public, private and voluntary partnership that was introduced in December 2011 working collaboratively to address the fire, health and socio-economic risks facing vulnerable adults in Merseyside during the winter months.
4. The risk of accidental dwelling fires increases during the winter months as vulnerable members of the community often use unsafe heating methods to combat the cold due to the absence of other safe sustainable options.
5. The Winter Warm Emergency Heating Project ensures that any persons identified as high risk are assessed for the following: (i) Carbon Monoxide leaks; (ii) inspection and replacement of unsafe heating methods; (iii) ensure working smoke alarms are fitted. Remedial interventions are made available, where appropriate, such as oil filled portable heaters and winter warm packs (thermal blankets, hat, gloves and scarf). This provision has been delivered by Fire Support Network (FSN).

6. FSN also deliver a pilot initiative which offers gas safe measures to low income families in Liverpool and Wirral who have been identified by Health Professionals as potentially high risk. The initiative can provide boiler servicing, gas disconnections for unsafe heating methods and gas isolation switches for vulnerable community members at risk of fire from careless cooking and use of heating. This relies on external funding.
7. The Winter Warm Emergency Heating Project delivered by FSN supports and contributes to the IRMP 2012-15 action point 12/13 – 3- 02 Winter Survival.
8. The funding and resources available to FSN to deliver this initiative finished on 30th April 2013. It should be noted however that Local Authorities in Merseyside have been successful in bids submitted to the Department of Health (DoH) and Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), which allows the implementation of more sustainable solutions such as central heating installation and boiler replacement and repair.
9. FSN have consulted with MFRA District Management Teams and advised that, despite exhausting all potential funding streams on behalf of MFRA it will not be in a position to continue to deliver Emergency Heating interventions from April 2013. FSN will continue to pursue funding opportunities on behalf of MFRA in 2013-14.
10. FSN have been working with Local Authority energy teams and housing standards to support their local priorities in respect of the issues of fuel poverty and warm housing.
11. From 1st May 2013, FSN are continuing to educate communities in respect of the dangers of using unsafe heating methods; however it will not be able to deliver short term interventions and will therefore make the appropriate referrals to Local Authorities for extra support and longer term solutions to fuel poverty and heating issues.
12. In response to the lack of external support MFRA have procured a number of oil filled radiators from the community fire prevention budgets and will deliver the Winter Warm Emergency Heating Initiative for the winter of 2013-14 via District Community Fire Prevention Teams. The radiators will be utilised as a short term emergency intervention prior to full referral to the relevant Local Authority.
13. District Prevention Managers will advise the relevant partners in their areas of the referral pathway for the Winter Warm Emergency Heating Initiative, which will be managed and recorded centrally using Fire Service Direct.
14. MFRA interventions will be limited to vulnerable community members using unsafe heating methods who are in immediate danger from fire. All other fuel and heating issues will be referred immediately to the relevant Local Authority contact(s) that will be able to implement interventions through secured central Government funding aimed at a more sustainable solution for the individual(s) involved.

Equality & Diversity Implications

15. An Equality Impact Assessment was submitted with CFO/004/12 and is still current.

Staff Implications

16. The initiative will be delivered by MFRA Community Fire Prevention staff.
17. Training has been delivered to District Supervisory Advocates which will be extended to operational crews for inclusion, observation and appropriate referrals during routine HFSC,

Legal Implications

18. Legal issues were previously considered in relation to MFRA staff removing unsafe heating methods and it was agreed that individuals are requested to sign an agreement to the removal of the unsafe heating method, however if they wish to retain it, they are advised to have it inspected by a qualified electrician prior to it being used again.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

19. Dimplex donated oil filled portable heaters for the pilot initiative in Liverpool and further oil filled radiators have been purchased at a total cost of £10,000 from the Community Fire Prevention budgets.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

20. MFRA would need to consider retaining any unsafe heating equipment removed for a period in the event that the equipment is not the individual's private property.
21. Transport, storage and disposal of waste is covered by Environmental Permitting Regulations and Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act. Compliance is being arranged through MFRA Environmental Team.
22. All unsafe heating methods, with the individual's permission, will be removed to fully negate the risk of fire. The heaters will be retained in the WEEE Store at Service Headquarters (SHQ) prior to being transferred to by a registered Waste Carrier/WEEE Recycler in accordance with the WEEE, Hazardous Waste and Duty of Care Regulations. This process will be managed by the MFRA Environmental Manager.
23. The Winter Warm Emergency Heating Initiative will have a positive impact on both the environment, through replacing potentially unsafe heating methods with energy efficient heaters, disposed of in an environmentally friendly way.

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

24. The proposals are aimed at reducing accidental dwelling fires deaths and injuries in Merseyside caused by the use of unsafe heating methods by vulnerable members of the community over 65 years old and in doing so reduce injuries and excess winter deaths.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

25. N/A

***Glossary of Terms**

Please list any acronyms used within this Report and appendices, including their meaning.

FSN	-	Fire Support Network
IRMP	-	Integrated Risk Management Plan
DoH	-	Department of Health
DECC	-	Department of Energy and Climate Change
MFRS	-	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
MFRA	-	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority
CFO	-	Chief Fire Officer
WEEE	-	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Recycling
HFSC	-	Home Fire Safety Check
SHQ	-	Service Headquarters