

S52. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – FALKIRK & WEST LOTHIAN COMMAND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services presenting two reports by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (1) the quarter 3 performance report for the Falkirk Council area, and (2) the fire safety enforcement audit process and auditing of licensed premises.

Gary Laing, Local Senior Officer provided a detailed summary of each report and questions were answered by Mr Laing and Joe Andrews, Group Manager.

(1) Quarter 3 performance report – Falkirk area

Details were provided of the quarter 3 outcomes in relation to accidental dwelling fires, non domestic property fires, deliberate secondary fires, road traffic collisions and unwanted fire signals. Additional information was also provided on special service incidents (which included road traffic collisions), violence to crews, incidents involving alcohol or drugs and smoking related activities. Mr Laing also outlined the work being carried out in terms of preventative activities such as premises audits, community engagement talks and visits and the work of the home safety visit programme.

The committee discussed the causes of accidental dwelling fires and the measures which are put in place following on from a fire fatality.

The committee also discussed the incidence of deliberate fire raising, and the public perception in terms of fires.

In response to a question asked in relation to the retained duty service, Mr Laing advised that it was recognised and accepted that the retained duty system is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. He advised that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is proactive in managing staff and work was ongoing to look at ways to improve and secure the retained duty service. He also advised that there was a commitment to maintain the retained duty system, and that any changes that affect the Falkirk area will be brought to the Scrutiny committee.

A question was also asked on what measures are in place to refer incidents which occur as a result of fuel poverty or homelessness. Mr Laing advised that if such information came to light this would be referred to the appropriate agency, but also noted that current statistics did not show a high number of incidents which were as a result of fuel poverty or homelessness.

Decision

The committee noted the report.

(2) Fire safety enforcement audit process and auditing of licensed premises

This report had been produced following a specific enquiry from the Scrutiny Committee in relation to the inspection of licensed premises. Details were provided around the fire safety enforcement methodology and the reasoning for non-routine auditing of 'licensed' premises.

Decision

The committee noted the report.

The committee then heard a presentation from Joe Andrews which related to the Wester Shieldhill Road. The presentation was as a result of a request from the committee for this road to be considered for gritting during icy weather as due to the nature of the steep gradient on the road there was a perception that there had been a high number of road traffic collisions. Mr Andrews provided a detailed breakdown of the numbers of vehicles that use that road and related this to the reported number of road traffic collisions. From the data provided and due to the category of the road, there was no requirement or need for the road to be considered for gritting during bad weather.

The committee thanked Mr Andrews for his presentation.