

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 14 June 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
SUBJECT: Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Annual Bonfire Season Report 2010
WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To present a report by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service on the Annual Bonfire Season Report 2010.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

(1) The Board note the contents of the report, paying particular attention to the Recommendations on page 38.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Annual Bonfire Season Report covers the period from 18th October to 8th November 2010 when activity is increased across the UK for the Service.

3.2 The report covers:

- Recording of Bonfire Incidents
- Pre-Planning and Partnership Activity
- Bonfire Removal Schemes
- Educational Events and Activities
- Diversionary Events
- Response
- Fire and Rescue Control
- Media
- Incident Data and Performance

3.3 During 2010, the service total of Small Deliberate Fires (SDFs) was 258, compared to 193 during 2009. This is an increase of 50% for both Halton and Warrington. The report makes comparisons with the same period of time during 2009, but notes that factors such as different weather conditions and Bonfire Night falling on a Friday in 2010 should be taken into account.

There were no recorded attacks on operational staff during 2010, which is a decrease of five attacks on the previous year.

3.4 The report concludes that there are five towns across Cheshire that historically display the highest levels of activity involving SDFs at all times of year, not just the

bonfire season. These are Warrington, Widnes, Runcorn, Ellesmere Port and Winsford.

Bonfire Removal Schemes continue to remain an effective means of reducing the numbers of SDFs. A visual presence of teams actively removing material will discourage the “rebuilding” of bonfires.

3.5 The report recognises the hard work and enthusiasm of departments within the service and of partners. Without the combined efforts of all involved it is likely that the number of SDFs would have been far greater.

3.6 The report details 12 recommendations, including:

- Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to lead, support and advise organisations holding organised bonfire and firework displays.
- Any successful prosecutions relating to the building of bonfires are published to reinforce the message that bonfires on public land are illegal.
- Removal of large items, normally charged for by LAs, is provided as a free service during the preceding month.
- Data is gathered from Primary Care Trusts next year regarding the number of injuries involving fire and fireworks. This data should be a useful indicator to support the service recommendations that organised events are the safest way to celebrate.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

This work is fundamental to the overall long-term safety of people living in Halton.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Annual monitoring of the bonfire season ensures that priority areas for improvement are closely observed. Measures are then put in place to improve standards where necessary.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None identified.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.