

Community Safety Committee – 20 March 2013**FIRE SAFETY REPORT****Report by Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) and Head of Service****ABSTRACT**

This report outlines the proposal to work more closely with the Tayside Fire and Rescue Service in the prevention of fire deaths and management of fire risk for older people, particularly those at risk due to frailty and confusion and other vulnerable people in the community

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- 1.1 Agree the proposal to extend the Community Care assessment to include referral to Tayside Fire and Rescue Service for fire safety assessment with the individual's consent.
- 1.2 Agree the proposal to refer for fire safety assessment at times of critical intervention due to deterioration in functioning with or without consent in line with duty of care.

2. BACKGROUND

Analysis of fire events and fire deaths across Perth and Kinross by Tayside Fire and Rescue Service shows that while the number of fire deaths has been low, they have predominantly taken place in the homes of older vulnerable people. Non fatal fire events are also linked with clusters of common factors and occur predominantly where older people are living alone.

In April 2011 – March 2012 there were 110 house fires in Perth and Kinross resulting in 28 injuries and 1 death. Common factors in fire deaths across Tayside were smoking, confusion, reduced mobility, hearing impairment, use of alcohol, living alone, and hoarding.

Following the event it is often found that the older person is known to Health, Housing, Police and Social Care but not to the Fire and Rescue Service. A fire risk assessment carried out by the Fire Service may lead to entry of an individual on the Fire Services Vulnerable Person's Register. Should a fire event take place, information systems will immediately alert the service to the vulnerability of the person, resulting in a priority and informed response, for example, in relation to the person's difficulties in exiting the building.

3. PROPOSALS

It is proposed that fire risk assessment will be promoted with people being assessed for social care support at initial screening for Reablement, when assessments and reviews are carried out and when any significant deterioration in functioning physically or cognitively, takes place. People referred to the Access Team will be offered a Fire Risk Assessment as part of the holistic assessment of risk in relation to their need for support. With their consent, their details will be passed to the fire Safety Officer who will arrange to visit to carry out the assessment and add to the fire services vulnerable Persons Register as required. Similarly, Locality and Adult Wellbeing Teams will offer this opportunity when assisting families with self directed support planning.

In situations where people do not have the capacity to consent, referral will be made in the absence of that consent because Data Protection Act 1998 allows the sharing of information for the purposes of protecting vital interests.

4. CONSULTATION

Tayside Fire and Rescue Service, who view this, as an opportunity to increase their knowledge of vulnerable people in the community and further address issues of fire safety.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This additional task would be carried out within existing resources. Discussions are already underway with local Fire Safety Officers about the transfer of referral information to enable them to carry out the more in-depth fire risk assessment, for which they are being funded centrally to carry out.

6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012

The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy
- (iii) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- None

8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

9. CONCLUSION

This is a simple addition to the assessment process and will serve to improve safety for the more vulnerable members of communities, especially older people. It will also strengthen the partnership working with the Tayside Fire and Rescue Service promoting safer communities.

David Burke
Executive Director (Housing and Community Care)

John Gilruth
Head of Service

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

Contact Officer: Kathleen Frew, Ext 76733 kfrew@pkc.gov.uk
Address of Service: Pullar House, Kinnoull Street, PERTH, PH1 5GD
Date: 11 March 2013

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only, a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting *(Report Author)*



Council Text Phone Number 01738 442573