



## **COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**14 January 2015**

### **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – PERTH & KINROSS INTERIM ACTIVITY REPORT**

**Report by Group Manager R. Middlemiss, Perth & Kinross Area, Scottish Fire  
and Rescue Service**

#### **Abstract**

The report provides members with background information in relation to the activity of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) within the Perth & Kinross area. It is intended to give an overview of some of the key Community Safety Engagement and operational activity events to keep members informed whilst formal quarterly performance reporting across the local area will be presented at the next committee meeting.

#### **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide information for the Committee regarding the performance and key activities of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, against the priorities, performance indicators and targets detailed within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Perth & Kinross 2014 - 2017, to facilitate local scrutiny.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that members:

Note, scrutinise and question the contents of this report.

#### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **4 PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1 A performance management framework has been developed to facilitate the monitoring of performance against the agreed priorities and outcomes ensuring effective targeting of resources and the principles of Best Value are met.
- 4.2 The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Perth & Kinross 2014 – 2017 was approved by the Community Safety Committee on the 21st of May 2014.
- 4.3 The priorities and outcomes contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan reflect 'place' and the contribution of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to the Perth & Kinross Single Outcome Agreement / Community Plan 2013 – 2023 and Community Planning Partnership.

4.4 In summary the following priorities and targets are detailed within the plan:

- Priority 1 – Local Risk Management and Preparedness
- Priority 2 – Reduction of Accidental Dwelling Fires
- Priority 3 – Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities
- Priority 4 – Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
- Priority 5 – Reduction of Fires in Non Domestic Properties
- Priority 6 – Reduction in Casualties from Non Fire Emergencies
- Priority 7 – Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

## **5 SFRS ACTIVITY WITHIN PERTH AND KINROSS AREA**

5.1 SFRS activity over recent months has included key events such as our bonfire period which is typically the busiest time of year for deliberate fire related incidents, the annual Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) – Road Safety Events, the agreement of our Partnership Water Safety Improvement Plan and the completion of our annual series of visits to each Community Fire Station in Perth & Kinross by Convener D. Pover accompanied by various elected members.

### Operational Activity – Bonfire Period

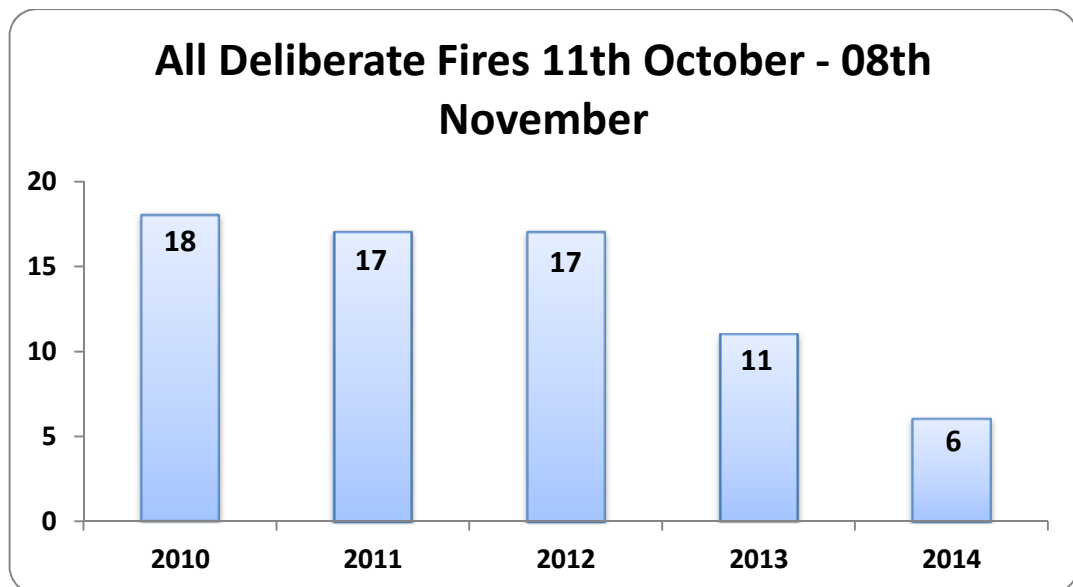
This bonfire period was the safest ever to date for our communities in Perth & Kinross. This was achieved through a series of partnership initiatives with Police Scotland, Perth & Kinross Council's - Safer Communities Team, Housing Officers and Environmental Services, who worked closely together prior to bonfire night to implement safety initiatives that had outstanding results including zero deliberate fires being recorded on 5<sup>th</sup> November. The only work for the local area firefighters was extinguishing the official organised bonfire at South Inch as Perth & Strathearn Roundtable provided another spectacular and safe display where attendance was encouraged and well promoted.

These planned prevention initiatives included school talks, safety campaigns using social media channels and local press, engagement with local communities to highlight the dangers of lighting unsupervised or poorly constructed bonfires and leaving flammable items lying around that increase the risk of deliberate fire setting.

A joint mobile patrol by a Firefighter and PKC Safer Communities Warden was also undertaken on Bonfire Night of known local hotspots where there was a historic risk of deliberate fire setting. This proactive collaborative working approach proved to be a great success resulting in a fun and safe bonfire night for the residents of Perth & Kinross.



Over the longer term we have also experienced a continued reduction in deliberate fire setting locally during the 4 week period in and around bonfire night with the lowest number of incidents on record for the Perth & Kinross area.



These outcomes are a result of a culmination of several years of working together with our local partners to deliver continual improvements in community safety during this period. Over the years we have delivered various initiatives including PKC previously organising double-decker buses to take people to and from organised bonfire and fireworks displays, youth diversionary activities including street sports facilitated by local firefighters in

areas where we had typically experienced high levels of anti-social behaviour, increased partnership patrols and rubbish uplifts; and engagement with our communities to ensure that bonfires are organised and under the direct supervision of nominated responsible adults.

Collectively we have seen a change in our local culture with a significant improvement in attitudes, particularly amongst young people who have acted with much more maturity, demonstrating positive and responsible behaviour for which they deserve great credit. This has been reflected in the fact that our Firefighters have not experienced any attacks on them during this period for several years now which is further testimony to our young people and the partnership team approach in Perth & Kinross.

Across the country there was evidence of communities joining Scotland's 'Fight Against Fire' Campaign with large numbers of people attending organised bonfire and fireworks displays. Despite this there was still a significant amount of activity with more than 1,100 emergency incidents including around 507 bonfires on 5<sup>th</sup> November. The north of Scotland saw 192 of these incidents including 92 bonfires. There were a small number of minor attacks on SFRS crews which included verbal abuse and missiles thrown at appliances, fortunately with no injuries or damage incurred. These included a single incident in the north, three in the west and two in the east service delivery area.

#### **Related SFRS Local Priorities:**

- Priority 1 – Local Risk Management and Preparedness
- Priority 3 – Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities
- Priority 4 – Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting

#### **Community Safety Engagement – Safe Drive Stay Alive**

Approximately 1,500 S5 secondary school pupils from across Perth & Kinross recently attended the multi-award winning and hard hitting road safety event Safe Drive Stay Alive.

Safe Drive Stay Alive was organised and delivered by representatives from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service along with partners from NHS Tayside, the Scottish Ambulance Service, Police Scotland, Perth & Kinross Council – Safer Communities Wardens and volunteers.



Three events took place at Bell's Sports Centre, Perth on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November which provided an important message to future drivers before they even begin to learn to drive or are passengers in a car with their friends.

Drivers aged between 17 and 25 years old are the most at risk on our roads and statistics show that this age group is more likely to be involved in a collision, particularly young men, than any other group.

SDSA has been held for several years and continues to play a key role in helping to reduce road traffic casualties on our roads. Many young people, who attended shows as school pupils, comment on the positive effect the show had on them. Several former attendees are now helping with the event as volunteers, which is a testament to the lasting effect of the road safety message delivered by SDSA to the young people of Perth & Kinross.

#### **Related SFRS Local Priorities:**

- Priority 6 – Reduction in Casualties from Non Fire Emergencies

#### **Community Safety Engagement – Partnership Water Safety Improvement Plan**

Perth & Kinross Water Safety Partnership have agreed on our local improvement plan to implement a series of recommendations to reduce the number of people fatally and seriously injured on our various water courses throughout the area.

The plan consists of five thematic areas that incorporate identified actions which have been allocated to various partners with agreed timescales for completion. The 5 phases of the plan are as follows:

- North Muirton, Perth – A series of identified improvements (signage and emergency throw lines) to be implemented on the River Tay adjacent to 'Woody Island' area: Completed June 2014

- River Tay Bridges at Perth and Pitlochry Dam – Highest number of incidents including suicide attempts also 'misadventure' (e.g. open water swimming in summer months, etc.): Scheduled to be completed 15<sup>th</sup> February 2015
- Popular Rural Locations – e.g. Hermitage, Bruar Falls, Soldiers Leap, Reekie Lynn - Glen Isla and Rumbling Bridge by Dunkeld. Signage giving safety advice to dog walkers: Scheduled to be completed 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015
- Outdoor Activities and Adventure Sports – Fishing / Canoeing including open water areas / Lochs and 'Rough Camping' sites: Scheduled to be completed 15<sup>th</sup> August 2015
- Other identified local risk areas – 'Stanley Beach', 'Giants Grave' by Buchanty, Cargill's Leap - Blairgowrie, etc.: Scheduled to be completed 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015

The next phase at Perth Bridges and Pitlochry Dam will incorporate improved water safety and Samaritans helpline signage. Committee members will receive periodic updates as the planned actions are progressed.



#### Related SFRS Local Priorities:

- Priority 6 – Reduction in Casualties from Non Fire Emergencies

#### Elected Members Engagement – Visits to Community Fire Stations

Community Safety Committee Convener, Cllr. Douglas Pover recently completed his annual series of visits to all 14 community fire stations in Perth & Kinross.



The visits were intended to build upon last year's series of visits to facilitate engagement with full-time, retained and volunteer crews to discuss the implementation of the new service and the impact this has had on the service delivery to our local communities.



He was accompanied by a number of local councilors including other scrutiny committee members. The visits included practical demonstrations of water rescue skills by Green Watch and Blue Watch from Perth Community Fire Station and attending the Spittal of Glenshee Hotel Fire in August to engage with the retained and volunteer crews at the incident.



Positive feedback was given indicating little or no impact on frontline service delivery since the introduction of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service with a very much 'business as usual' approach having been undertaken. There were also examples of the benefits of reform highlighted through an increased focus on local matters including further partnership initiatives to reduce the risk of fire and improve the safety of our communities, also through the sharing of resources and access to specialist skills thereby enabling us to resolve emergency incidents with increased efficiency and effectiveness.

#### **Related SFRS Local Priorities:**

- Priority 1 – Local Risk Management and Preparedness

## **6      EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1    Not applicable.

## **7      ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

7.1    There are no environmental issues arising as a consequence of this report.

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