

## REVIEW OF THE UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS POLICY



### REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**For Information**

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the changes to our internal Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) Policy, attached as Appendix 1.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Members note the changes to the policy, attached as Appendix 1.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The first iteration of the UwFS policy was introduced in October 2017 and has been monitored closely.
- 3.2 Despite some initial success, the number of this type of call has steadily increased over recent years following changes in legislation, meaning more businesses are now covered by Automatic Fire Detection Systems.
- 3.3 UwFS incurs significant costs to the Brigade of over £225,000 and a loss in productivity of around 10 days per year.

#### 4. PURPOSE

- 4.1 The purpose of the policy and procedure is to support Cleveland Fire Authority's UwFS policy and to:
- Reduce the number of false alarm activations generated by fire detection and alarm systems which results in unnecessary demand on our resources.
  - Deliver significant reductions in appliance movements and reduce the disruption to our community and operational crews undertaking other core tasks such as training and community safety activities.
  - Reduce the risk to the public and operational staff through unnecessary movement of emergency responses.
  - Ensure Responsible Persons manage their fire safety systems appropriately
  - Maximise appliance availability through reducing resources committed to non-fire related incidents.

**5. EVALUATION**

- 5.1 The number of UwFS will be monitored over the next year with a full evaluation of the new process taking place one year from implementation.

**6. REVIEW**

- 6.1 The review contained a recommendation and several key actions set out below:
- Non-Response to AFAs for non-domestic premises unless supported by a confirmation call from the site or 'double knock' activation.
  - Conduct stakeholder engagement to ensure clear communication and understanding of the revised policy.
  - Carry out a review of and update key documents including the UwFS strategy and policy.
  - Inform parties through Letters, Press, Radio, Social Media etc.
  - Implement mandatory call challenge fields in the new control system to eliminate previous discrepancies encountered and standardise recording.
- 6.2 At the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Policy Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2025, the papers were presented and discussed, with the outcome being that ELT approved the recommendation and key actions in entirety.

**7. NEXT STEPS**

- 7.1 There will be a period of communication and engagement with our local businesses that may be affected by the changes, this will be for three months.
- 7.2 All relevant staff will be informed of the decision and our internal department procedure notes as well as information held within the Brigade Control Room will be updated to reflect the changes.

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