ARSON REDUCTION STRATEGY 2020-24

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

For Information

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Elected Members of the Authority's Arson Reduction Strategy attached as attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to note the Arson Reduction Strategy 2020-24 attached as Appendix 1.

3. ARSON REDUCTION STRATEGY 2020-24

3.1 This Arson Reduction Strategy supports the delivery of our overarching Community Safety Strategy; aiming to create safer, more enjoyable neighbourhoods for people to live, work and play in.

3.2 This Strategy mainly contributes to the strategic theme of Safer Neighbourhoods through outcomes (as detailed in the Community Safety Strategy) SN1, SN2 and SN3;

- SN1; Reduced the loss of life and severity of injuries associated with deliberate fires
- SN2; Reduced the numbers of deliberate fires
- SN3; Reduced the commercial, economic, environmental and social impact of deliberate fires.

It also supports the strategic themes of Safer Homes and Safer Buildings through reduction of deliberate fires, and their consequences, within peoples home and business environments.

3.3 In 2018-19, Arson had a direct calculable cost to the economy of Cleveland of a minimum of **£17.9m**.

3.4 In terms of response, the **3,656** deliberate fires attended during 2018-19 accounted for **84.9%** of CFBs demand. The national average for FRSs is 50.5%.

3.5 Arson presents itself throughout the 'ladder of crime', from Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) all the way up to, and including Serious & Organised Crime. As an FRS we have no powers that can be used to reduce arson. We recognise that the most effective way to have a sustainable approach to reducing arson and its impact on people and local communities is through Collaboration and Partnership working.

3.6 We have assessed our local issues and presented this along with the draft strategy to our 4 Local Safer Partnership's (CDRPs).

3.7 The Strategy has been equality impact assessed (EIA). The findings of the EIA conclude that the introduction of the Arson Reduction Strategy does not have a detrimental impact on any group, including those with one or more protected characteristics. Conversely, the Arson Reduction Strategy is considered to have a positive impact on community cohesion and relationships.

4. IMPLEMENTING THE ARSON REDUCTION STRATEGY 2020-24

4.1 An action plan underpins the introduction of this strategy.

4.2 We will be seeking Partnership Agreements with our 4 Safer Partnerships (CDRPs) to develop and drive localised plans.

4.3 We will support the Partnerships and Communities to take proportionate interventions; including use of partner powers under the ASB Crime & Policing Act 2014, and provision of resources and enabling tools that will enhance community empowerment, the development of community pride and the reduction of arson.

4.4 We are finalising an arson reduction conference to take place in March 2020 which will culminate in the official launch of this strategy.

Guest speakers will include:

- Dame Vera Baird QC, Victims Commissioner, to relate moving forward after the 'ASB - Living a Nightmare' report
- Rebecca Bryant OBE; CEO of Resolve ASB, to give insight into how ASB can lead to Fire Setting and the importance of tackling ASB at an early stage
- Katie Sambrooks from Kent University to give an insight into fire setting tendencies and the behaviours of an arsonist
- Daryl Thomlinson from Cleveland Police, to give an understanding of the links to Serious & Organised Crime
- Marc Stephenson from Stockton Borough Council to give an insight into the hidden costs to Local Authorities
- Nigel Burnell from Cleveland Police, to provide an insight into the benefits of an Integrated Community Safety Team

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