Justice Committee

Fire and rescue service reform

Written submission from West Lothian Council

1. What impact there has been at a local level of the single fire service

There has been no change in the level of commitment and partnership working throughout West Lothian. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) continue to be a lead partner in keeping people safe.

The Community Safety Partnership continually monitor fire data for West Lothian and as a result of recent trend statistics, Community Safety Partners have set up an action group to look at the deliberate fires taking place within West Lothian in an effort to prevent / reduce further instances from occurring. Through analytical reporting, forward planning and early intervention work is being organised for the coming months.

In addition, there is ongoing monitoring and initial discussions with partners taking place around the issue of dwelling fires.

Partnership working, sharing of information, evidence gathering and an increased number of referrals being received ensures that the service being delivered at a local level from the SFRS is being maintained at a high standard to meet the needs of the local community in keeping them safe.

2. The consultation process for local fire plans

Regarding the new local fire plan, SFRS consulted with the following partners:

- Community Planning Board (CPP) on 3rd February 2014
- Panel (PDSP) held on 25th February 2014
- 1:1 meeting with the Chief Executive and Executive Chair of the PDSP
- Email to all of the Community Planning Partnership Forums
- Email to all Community Councils
- Station officers meeting members of the public (minimum 100 consultations concluded)
- WLC Facebook
- SFRS website
- Twitter

West Lothian Council held a Special Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to discuss the SFRS local fire plan for West Lothian on Wednesday 5th February 2014. The three recommendations of the PDSP were:

1. Enhanced alignment to the priorities of the West Lothian Single Outcome Agreement
2. Inclusion of specific and measurable improvement targets for West Lothian
3. Inclusion of a summary of resources available to deliver the Plan
3. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service’s strategic plan

The Strategic Plan 2013-2016 was developed after agreement by the SFRS Board and a consultation period with key stakeholders. The consultation period finished at the end of August 2013.

As part of the consultation process, Local Senior Officers engaged with key stakeholders within their area of responsibility. As a Community Planning Partner and key stakeholder, West Lothian Council participated in the consultation process. These principles of partnership, prevention, people and performance remain an evident focus in the service provision delivered by the SFRS.

The values listed remain to be appropriate and have been consistently demonstrated throughout the year: Safety, Dignity, Excellence, Diversity, Fairness, Integrity, Respect and Equality.

The SFRS strategic Plan states that by strengthening their relationships and partnership working, they will add value to our communities. To date, this has proven to be a true reflection on delivery across West Lothian. It is also fair to say that any new trend patterns arising are being monitored and being met with swift action in order to address any potential for further fires within the communities and reduce the risk to property and lives.

4. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service’s proposals on its estate, including the proposals that there be three control rooms in Scotland and one fire college; and any other issues arising from fire reform

The proposal to change to 3 control rooms in Scotland and 1 fire college has now been approved by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board and the Services for the Community PDSP of WLC, and will not have a direct impact on the communities of West Lothian.

5. Any other issues arising from the reform

There are no other issues identified, arising from the reform.

West Lothian Council
4 March 2014