

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
DATE: 20TH SEPTEMBER 2023
REPORT OF: HEAD OF PREVENTION & PROTECTION
AUTHOR: JASON MCTIGUE

SUBJECT: 'ON THE STREETS' YOUTH WORK ANNUAL
REPORT 2022-23

Purpose of Report

1. This report presents the work that the 'On the Streets' (OTS) team has completed between April 2022 and March 2023.

Recommended: That

[1] the report be noted.

Background

2. Historically, Members have funded the OTS initiative through the Prevention Department budget and requested that an annual performance report be presented to the Performance and Overview Committee.
3. CFRS employ 4 Youth Work Staff who each work 9 hours per week (4.5 hours, per evening on a Monday and Tuesday). 1 of these staff members is employed as the OTS Coordinator and has an additional 2 hours, per week, to complete administrative tasks.
4. OTS provision is 'detached' youth work which is delivered in places where there are young people. Detached Youth Work is a method of engaging with young people within their own environment such as, on the streets or estates where they live, waste ground, open spaces, shopping areas, cafes etc., with a view to working with them within an area they are most comfortable. OTS youth work provides Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) with a mechanism for flexible and innovative youth engagement, enabling work with minority groups in targeted areas. It addresses the needs of young people who are unable or unprepared to use other existing youth provision, with the aim of working with at risk or vulnerable young people. OTS youth work operates on the principles of good youth work practice; these are based on inclusion, participation, equal opportunities, and celebration of diversity. Through informal education processes the work promotes positive fire and road safety advice and active citizenship.
5. The aim of the OTS programme is to mitigate anti-social behaviour and deliberate fire setting through engaging with young people in areas of

identified need and areas at highest risk from these behaviours. The OTS team, work to develop activities and facilitate positive links between young people and others in their community.

6. OTS projects and interventions are delivered in areas with high levels of arson, small deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour using information from the joint Business Intelligence Team, Police Notification Reports, Station Managers, Road Safety and Deliberate Fire Reduction Manager and other local stakeholders.
7. When an area is identified, an OTS team is deployed and works in the locality one evening a week for a period of six to eight weeks; this is then reviewed and extended if problems persist.
8. Due to the identified, intelligence-based need and staffing levels, one OTS team work predominantly across Cheshire East, Warrington, and Halton and one OTS team, work across Cheshire West and Chester. Since returning to activity, post pandemic, both OTS teams have supported each other across all areas, during periods of high demand.

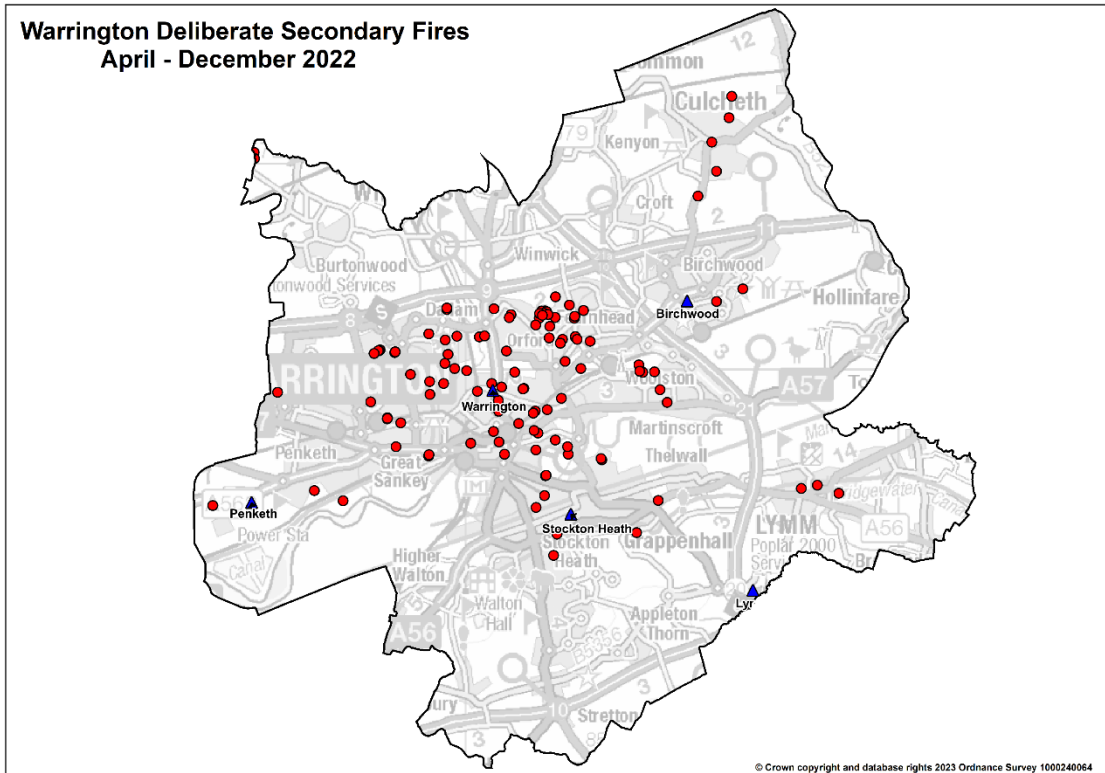
Information

9. The tables below indicate the number of young people engaged with and their age range over this reporting period, who have had engagement with the OTS team. From quarter two to the end of quarter three, the OTS team was reduced to one active team due to staffing issues, one staff member also resigned part way through quarter three. This is reflected in the number of young people engaged with and areas of provided intervention.
10. The Table below identifies the number and age of young people the OTS team have engaged with since April 2022 within Warrington.

Area Warrington	Total number of young people engaged with	Age range
Q1	195	13 to 17
Q2	Data unavailable due to Staff issues	
Q3	No intervention during Q3	
Q4	No intervention during Q4	

11. The main areas the OTS team have been operating in within Warrington are Orford Park, Chapel Ford, Dakota Park, Bewsey Park, Radley Common and Grasmere Avenue.

12. The map below shows the distribution of small deliberate fire incidents across Warrington unitary area since April 2022.

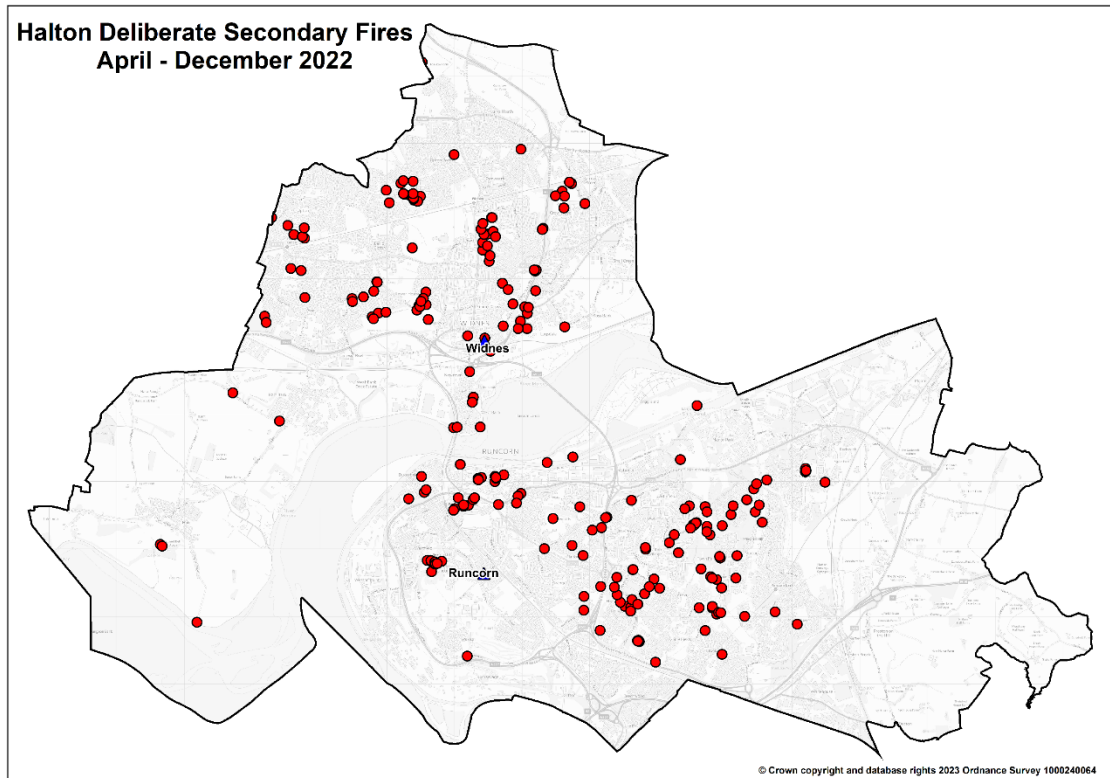


13. The Table below identifies the number and age of young people the OTS team have engaged with since April 2022 within Halton.

Area Halton	Total number of young people engaged with	Age range
Q1	222 (154 male 68 female)	13 to 17
Q2	184 (108 male 76 female)	13 to 17
Q3	35 (27 male 8 female)	13 to 17
Q4	No intervention during Q4	

14. The main areas the OTS team have been operating in are Widnes – Upton Rocks, Upton Community Centre, Victoria Park, West Bank, Crowood Park, Dundalk Road. Runcorn – Runcorn Hill Park, Town Hall Play Area, Festival Way Road, Town Hall Park, Town Park, Halton Lea, Runcorn Ski Centre, Weston Point and Old Castlefields.

15. The map below shows the distribution of small deliberate fire incidents across Halton unitary area since April 2022.

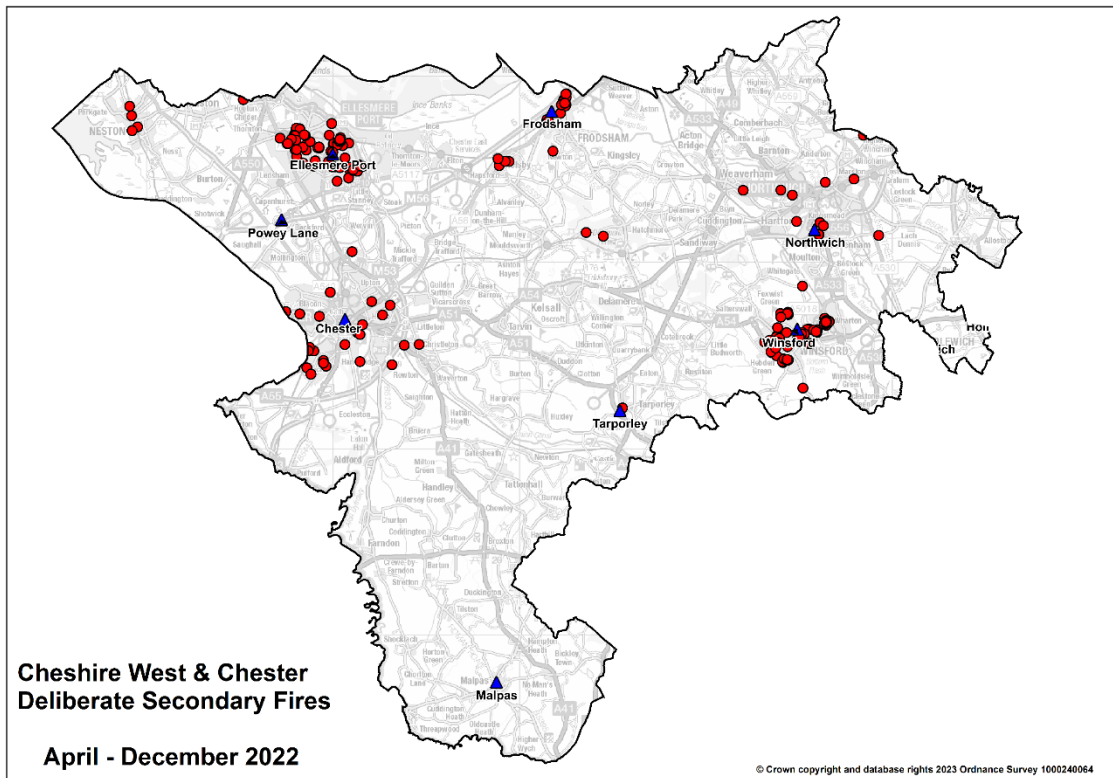


16. The Table below identifies the number and age of young people the OTS team have engaged with since April 2022 within Chester West & Chester.

Area CWAC	Total number of young people engaged with	Age range
Q1	480 (293 male 187 female)	13 to 17
Q2	92 (51 male 41 female)	13 to 17
Q3	No intervention during Q3	
Q4	66 (46 male 20 female)	13 to 17

17. The main areas the OTS team have been operating in are Brio Leisure Centre, Wharton/Muga, Town Park, The Grange, Glebe, Green Park, The Grange, ASDA Multi storey Car Park, Barons Quay, Northwich Town Centre, Whitby Park, Westminster, Parklands, Bunbury Green.

18. The map below shows the distribution of small deliberate fire incidents across Cheshire West & Chester unitary area since April 2022.

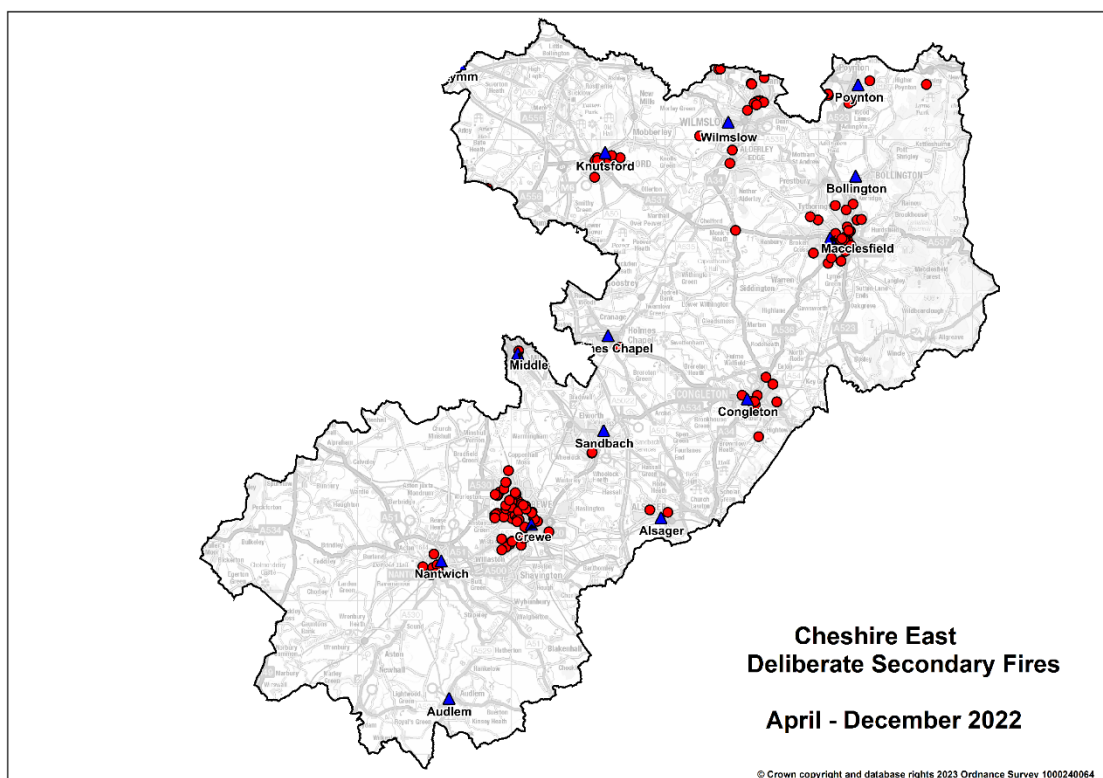


19. The Table below identifies the number and age of young people the OTS team have engaged with since April 2022 within Chester East.

Area CE	Total number of young people engaged with	Age range
Q1	35	13 to 14
Q2	Data unavailable due to Staff issues	
Q3	20 (9 male 11 female)	13 to 17
Q4	57 (26 male 31 female)	13 to 17

20. Intervention has been low throughout Cheshire East due to lack of referrals, and available intelligence. However, since quarter three the OTS team have begun to have a presence in and around Electricity Street, Flag Lane, Crewe Town Center and George V Park, the team are currently establishing links with key partners to provide collaborative diversionary intervention work.

21. The map below shows the distribution of small deliberate fire incidents across Cheshire East unitary area since April 2022.



22. Over the 2022/2023 reporting period contact was recorded with 1,389 young people. This figure will likely include contact with the same person on more than one occasion. It is difficult to say definitively, the exact age range of the young people we worked with as we do not capture this data, however it is estimated that the age range of recorded contact is with 13- to 17-year-olds.
23. Contact broken down into unitary areas:
- CWAC engaged 638 times, 46% of the overall total.
 - Halton engaged 441 times, 32% of the overall total.
 - Warrington engaged 195 times, 14% of the overall total.
 - Cheshire East engaged 112 times, 8% of the overall total.
24. Whilst there is best practice evident of the OTS team working with other agencies, including police and youth services, this initiative is currently underused. OTS staff are mainly offering a reactive service to the many PNR's or referrals they receive, which leaves them little time to support proactive initiatives.
25. Meeting and planning sessions with local Watch Managers and crews have been highly productive in directing targeted provision. This intervention supports the wider business intelligence data, along with supporting the objectives for the Road Safety and Deliberate Fire Reduction team. Staff

work alongside key advocates in reducing anti-social behavior and deliberate fires.

26. During periods of inclement weather, the OTS team often do not meet many young people out on the streets, during this time the team focus on updating their skills and knowledge and seeking local intelligence from key stakeholders.

Financial Implications

27. The budget for the OTS project was approved within the Prevention budget and the work is currently being delivered well within this budget. The OTS initiative is being reviewed as part of the Service Improvement Prevention Department review, which may result in changes to the budget.

Legal Implications

28. There are no legal implications associated with the submission of this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

29. The OTS programme is inclusive, with young people from all backgrounds and abilities able to access the programme. All children and young people can engage in this intervention regardless of gender, marital status, gender realignment, disability, race, colour, ethnic group, national origins, nationality, religious belief, or sexual orientation.

Environmental Implications

30. As a fire and rescue service we have a pivotal role to play with regards to the environment. The OTS programme supports the Service's Environmental Policy and targets.

Next Steps

31. For the 2023/2024 reporting period, the OTS programme will utilise the internal partnerships with Business Intelligence and the Road Safety and Deliberate Fire Reduction Manager to provide directed target provision to the areas of most need. In-line with the Prevention Departmental Review, OTS staff will be consulted with, and recommendations and suggestions will be submitted in shaping the outlook and framework of the OTS programme. The outcomes of this review will factor into the recruitment process for any upcoming vacancies.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE