

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
DATE: 10TH JULY 2024
REPORT OF: HEAD OF SERVICE DELIVERY
AUTHOR: GM DAVID RUTTER

SUBJECT: UNITARY PERFORMANCE GROUPS
ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with an update on the initiatives supported and funded by the Unitary Performance Groups (UPGs) during 2023/24.

Recommended: That

[1] the report be noted;

Background

2. Through the unitary performance group (UPG) meetings, positive joint working between Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service staff and publicly elected councillors at a unitary level, ensures scrutiny of performance and identification and supporting of initiatives to address local issues. Elected members play a crucial role in bridging the gap between the community and the Service, ensuring that councillors bring a community perspective to the unitary performance group, ensuring that the diverse needs and concerns of the local population are represented and addressed. Clearly demonstrated by the information presented in Appendix 1, working closely with fire officers on community initiatives, the input from elected members leads to more tailored and effective services, as councillors can leverage their understanding of the community to guide such initiatives.
3. Taking the bids to Fire Authority members for approval also allows for transparent and democratically accountable financial decision-making, and strong governance which is central to providing excellent service to communities. It also ensures that the funded initiatives are aligned with the community's needs, governed effectively, and held accountable to the public they serve, and would not be achievable without the input from Cheshire Fire Authority Members.

Information

4. Appendix 1 to the report contains details of some of the initiatives supported and funded by the UPGs across Cheshire.

Financial Implications

5. A total of £16,471.64 was spent from UPG budgets against an available budget of £40,000 (£10,000 per unitary), giving an underspend of £23,528.36 for the 2023/24 financial year. An additional £15,748.14 was drawn from the central pot, for initiatives that benefited the whole of Cheshire.
6. It should be noted that from 2024/25, station open days will be funded from the central UPG pot and will therefore not affect local UPG budgets.

Legal Implications

7. There are no known legal implications.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. The funding bids outlined within Appendix 1 are aimed at engaging a range of audiences and ensuring that the access to safety messaging and protective equipment is as inclusive as possible. This approach seeks to educate young people in reducing harm and understanding risk and enables those most vulnerable to the risk of fire and other emergencies to be supported.
9. From the information presented in Appendix 1, it should also be noted that many of these initiatives are aimed at promoting Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service as an employer of choice to underrepresented demographics of our community.

Environmental Implications

10. There are no known environmental implications.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE