

# CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2017  
**REPORT OF:** HEAD OF PREVENTION  
**AUTHOR:** VICKY WREST

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**SUBJECT:** ANNUAL REPORT – ‘ON THE STREETS’ YOUTH WORK 2016-17

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## **Purpose of Report**

1. This report presents the work that the ‘On the Streets’ (OTS) team has been involved in over the last twelve months.

## **Recommended:**

- [1] that Members note the content of this report and seek clarification on any matters presented.

## **Background**

2. Historically, Members have continued to fund this initiative and requested that an annual performance report be presented to the Performance and Overview Committee.
3. The aim of the OTS programme is to meet and engage with young people on the streets in areas of ‘embedded youth nuisance’. A team of youth workers employed by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) work to develop activities and facilitate positive links between young people and others in their community.
4. OTS projects are delivered in areas with high levels of arson, small deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour using information from the Service’s Business Intelligence Team, Station Managers and other local stakeholders.
5. When an area is identified, an OTS team is deployed and works in the locality one evening a week for a period of six months.
6. Due to the identified need and ongoing issues the OTS team has worked predominantly across Warrington and Halton (more so than other areas as this report reflects). Although this last year has seen the OTS team become well established in other areas across the Service Area.

## Information

7. The OTS team is working across all four unitary areas and as a result of this community engagement has increased. The table below indicates the number of young people engaged with and their age range.

Area	Total number of young people engaged with	Age range
Warrington	50 - 55	9 - 18
Halton	36 - 40	8 - 15
Cheshire East	25 - 30	11 - 19
Cheshire West and Chester	50 - 60	4 - 17

### 8. Halton

The OTS team is currently working across Runcorn and Widnes. The team has made connections with local agencies who will inform them of other areas of concern.

Areas the OTS team has covered within Runcorn are:

- Halton Lodge
- Runcorn Hill
- The Old Town
- Castle fields
- Palace fields
- Grange way

Areas the team have covered within Widnes are:

- Hough Green (Becher's)
- Upton Rocks

The Station Manager provides the OTS team with details of incident hot-spots and they then check the incident log for relevant updates. During hot and dry periods the team spend time around Runcorn Hill as this tends to be a particular hot-spot for grass fires.

The team has been working with the local police, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and local Council targeting areas of anti-social behaviour.

### 9. Warrington

The team is currently working in four different geographical areas:

- Orford Skate Park
- Sankey Valley Park

- Sainsbury's (Chapelford)
- Radley Common

Progress is steady and the team's presence in each area is becoming more accepted by young people and residents. The team respond to areas where there have been small deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour.

The team has been working in and around Orford Skate Park since mid-2016. Recently, a Boxing Club has been opened and runs from within Chapelford Primary to divert the young people from engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Warrington Borough Council's Youth Service is keen to establish a multi-agency youth support team and would like the team to work with them.

Residents have been reporting small fires via 101, but these incidents were not being passed on to the team. The team requested support from the police and asked that they provide them with this information

There have been a number of small deliberate fires and a spate of hoax calls being made in and around the Radley Common area. Work is currently ongoing in this area.

#### 10. Cheshire West and Chester

The OTS team has been working in the Ellesmere Port area for almost a year. One team member particularly has gone above and beyond to establish some strong connections within the area which has resulted in great work and successful engagement.

The team is now well established within the community. Team members attend a community centre drop-in service to liaise with local PCSOs and answer any enquiries from local residents. The team found attending local skate parks in Parkgate and Ellesmere Port has helped them to engage with young people.

The team now regularly liaise with local PCSOs and the police in order to gather intelligence and make sure they are targeting the right areas. They link in with the local fire stations and Station Manager to see how they can assist and check the incident log regularly to see what areas need targeting.

The OTS team has continued to engage with the young people in Winsford. Liaising with the local Station Manager over the last twelve months and discussing incidents has allowed them to target this work better. The main areas targeted are Bradbury Road Park and the MUGA (sports facility) on Esk Road, both of which are situated on the Wharton Estate where there have been a number of incidents in the past. They typically engage with around 25 young people a night.

The team feel the work in Winsford will have lasting impact as the young people will now openly engage with them about issues in their local community. It is apparent from the interactions they are having on a weekly basis that the young people respect the role they play in making their communities safer, and in turn are less likely to engage negatively with the fire and rescue service.

#### 11. Cheshire East

In recent months the OTS team has been working with young people in and around the Crewe area.

The team liaise with firefighters and the Station Manager at Crewe fire station on a weekly basis and follow up on any information received. However, there have been no major issues of late.

The team is now building good relationships with the young people around the skate park next to the gym on King George V playing fields. They have also visited Valley Park on several occasions where after some initial wariness the young people are happy to talk.

The team has worked in the St. Barnabas ward in Crewe; including but not limited to the parks located at the Derby Docks, Broad Street and James Atkinson Way. The young people at these locations are happy to engage and take advice regarding how they can engage with the fire and rescue service via the Cadets, Prince's Trust and with the local Youth Service via the HUB on Market Street. They also visit the Cloughton Avenue area of the town on a regular basis after information was passed to them from firefighters who on turning up to attend a garage fire were met with a large group of young people. They will continue to work in this area to develop new relationships and update the local fire crews on any progress/outcomes.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The budget for the OTS project was approved by Members and the OTS is currently working well within budget.

### **Legal Implications**

13. There are no known legal implications associated with the submission of this paper.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

14. The OTS programme is totally inclusive. Young people from all backgrounds and abilities can 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**

15. 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.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE**