



AGENDA ITEM: 13

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

21st June 2010

HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKS

Report by Richard Fairhead, Senior Fire Safety Manager

Purpose of Report

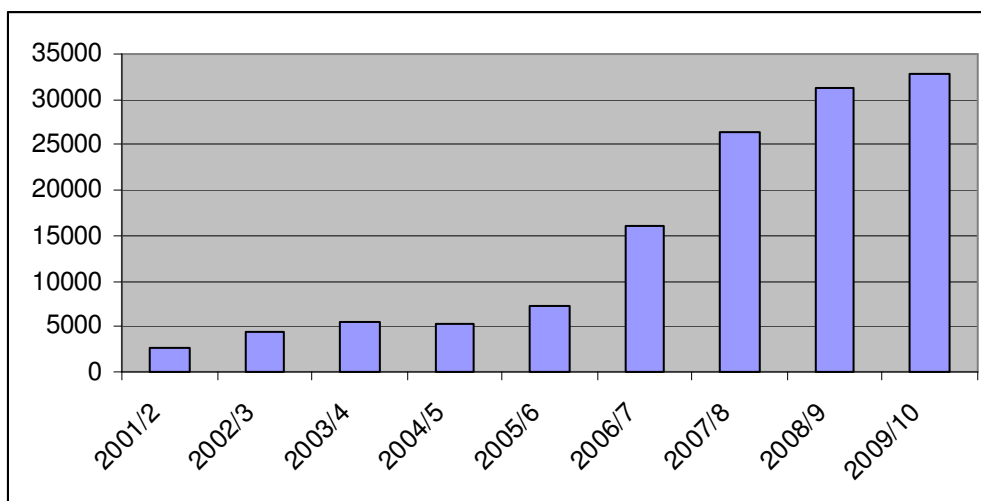
- 1 To inform Fire Authority Members of the total number of home fire safety checks (HFSCs) carried out by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service in the financial year 2009/2010 and key improvements to the Service.

Background

- 2 The North Wales Fire Authority annual target for HFSCs is 30,000. This target was introduced following the publication of The Chief Fire Officer's Task Group Report (CFOTG) into Accidental Dwelling Fire Deaths in 2007. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service began completing and recording HFSCs in 2001/2002 and at the time of the publication of the CFOTG were performing approximately 7,500 HFSCs annually. This figure has increased significantly following the publication of the CFOTG report.

Information

- 3 North Wales Fire and Rescue Service carried out 32,802 HFSCs in 2009/2010. This maintains the increase in the numbers of checks delivered year on year since the re-focus of all Service personnel in 2007.



4 The breakdown of HFSCs per county areas is as follows:

	2008/2009	2009/2010
Conwy	6084	6368
Denbighshire	4692	4977
Flintshire	4761	4998
Gwynedd	6041	6325
Wrexham	4317	4532
Ynys Môn	5286	5602

Each county has shown an increase on last year's figure achieved.

- 5 Additional funds were made available to the Senior Fire Safety Manager to pay RDS firefighters to carry out additional HFSCs; these funds were from the RDS pay budget due to a reduction of fire calls (£25,000) and from WAG (£30,000). This total of £55,000 provided the funding to carry out an additional 5,500 HFSCs. Without this financial injection the Service would not have reached the Fire and Rescue Authority target.
- 6 The Service does not expect additional funding to be available in the financial year 2010/2011 from WAG and cannot predict if the RDS budget will allow additional funds therefore the Service will need to become more efficient in the delivery of HFSCs.
- 7 North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has had to re-allocate its resources to deliver the number of HFSCs required to meet the

Authority target and in order to do this the Service has re-evaluated the effectiveness of the events attended by the Service. This evaluation will mean that there will be some events where NWFRS has had a long standing traditional attendance which will no longer be attended. Several of these types of events generate a low numbers of referrals for HFSCs, the majority of which are not the quality referrals we now aim to deliver.

- 8 Due to re-allocation of the ALP posts, 5 additional front line HFSC practitioners were employed by the Service in September 2009. This has allowed the daily targets for Wholetime and Day Crewed Watches to be reduced which allows more time for firefighters to concentrate on core skills training. This increase in the number of practitioners has seen an increase of 52% in the number of HFSCs carried out by the practitioners (from 5358 in 2008/9 to 8168 in 2009/10).

Recommendation

- 9 That Members note:
 - (i) the achievement of the Service in exceeding the Fire Authority target for home fire safety checks and the increase in the numbers of completed checks;
 - (ii) that additional funding is not expected to be available this year;
 - (iii) the increase in HFSCs being delivered by front-line practitioners, funded from re-allocating the ALP posts has allowed whole time and day crewed watches targets to be reduced;
 - (iv) the Service is evaluating all activities and events to ensure attendance is only made to events where quality referrals can be gathered.