



LEICESTERSHIRE

FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE

Issued on: Tuesday 7 November 2017

LFRS FIREFIGHTERS SUBJECT TO ATTACKS FROM PUBLIC

We are shocked to report that, amidst the weekend's festivities, our crews suffered attacks on two separate occasions whilst attending incidents.

On one occasion, crews were attending an out-of-control bonfire in Thurnby Lodge, Leicester, when crews were attacked by a large group of youths.

The second incident involved a trap-type scenario, where a motorbike was set on fire in Braunstone, Leicester. When crews arrived, they were attacked by youths who threw missiles and fireworks at the fire appliance.

Our firefighters are subject to these attacks every year. Whilst we have previously decided not to report these incidents, the Service, along with many other fire and rescue services around the UK, is making a stand. This is becoming a national issue, with other fire and rescue services reporting numerous attacks on their firefighters. The situation has prompted West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service to launch the national campaign #MoreThanAUniform, which calls for an end to mindless attacks on firefighters and other emergency personnel.

Assaults such as these not only put the lives of our firefighters at risk, but also the wider community. On both occasions, the attacks meant the firefighters were unable to do their job safely, which resulted in a delay in bringing the fires under control.

Chief Fire and Rescue Officer, Steve Lunn, said: "These cowardly offences prevent our crews from being able to do their job safely and efficiently. As emergency services, our only concern should be how we are going to do our job to the best of our ability."

"When our crews are subjected to these assaults, our ability to do our job is impacted, delaying our provision for other, potentially life-threatening, emergencies."

"If you have conducted one of these attacks in the past, or have thought about doing so in the future, we ask you to think about the consequences of your actions, the impact it has on our firefighters, and whether you'd

continue to carry out these attacks if it meant we wouldn't rescue you in the case of a future emergency."

We remind the public that any offence including criminal damage, arson or assault are all punishable by law, and we will continue to provide our full assistance to the police to ensure the individuals involved are prosecuted.

Please help to stop these attacks by reporting incidents to the police if you witness them happening. Help us to raise awareness of this issue by backing the campaign #MoreThanAUniform on Facebook and Twitter.

ENDS

Notes to editors: Interviews can be arranged with prior arrangement via Corporate Communications. Statistics can be made available on request.

About the Service

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service provides emergency response, prevention and protection services from 20 stations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Its headquarters is based in Birstall, Leicester.

The Service's prevention, education, enforcement and inspection programmes have resulted in significant reductions in the number of incidents. In the last ten years, fire related incidents have reduced by 46 percent.

During 2015/16, the Service attended 666 road traffic collisions, of which 174 were extrications freeing 208 people trapped inside their vehicles and completed 5086 home fire safety checks, fitting almost 4481 smoke alarms. Staff organised or supported almost 1431 events aimed at promoting fire and road safety and arson prevention, whilst also visiting 332 schools to deliver fire and road safety education to pupils.

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