

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - 8 October 2024

Subject: Preparations for Bonfire Night

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

A summary of partnership operations to address seasonal increases in anti-social behaviour associated with Bonfire Night.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- To consider and comment on the information in the report
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Wards Affected:

All Wards

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	None.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	The work of the Community Safety Partnership is detailed in the Community Safety Strategy for which there is a detailed Equality Impact Assessment that was brought to the Committee in Sept 2022

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	This report will highlight how the work to achieve community safety contributes towards this outcome by ensuring neighbourhoods are safe and therefore a destination of choice for people to live, visit and work.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Manchester Community Safety Strategy 2022-2025

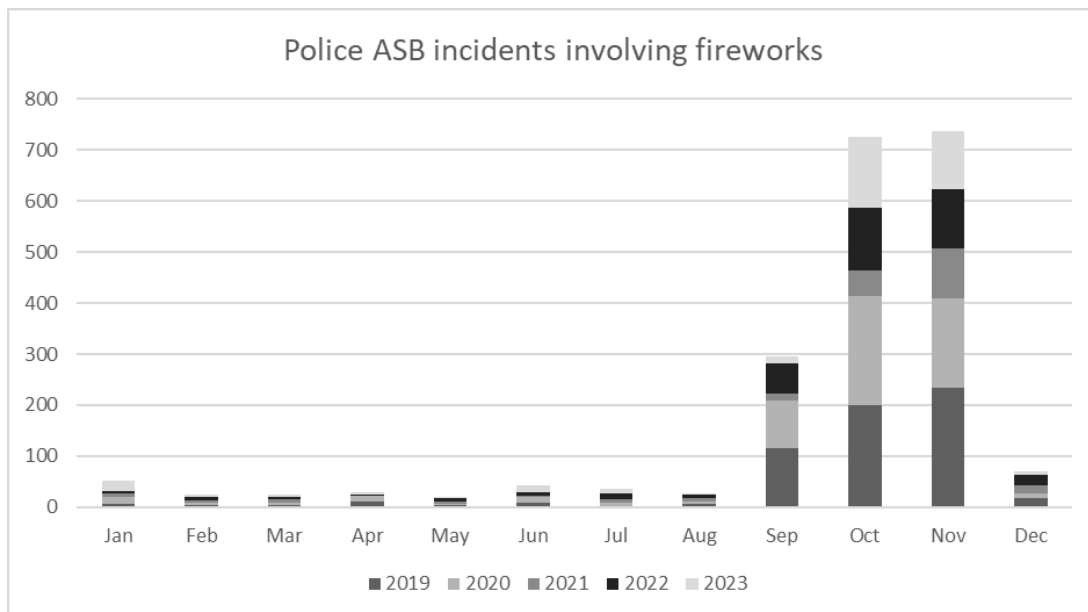
1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Communities and Equalities Committee requested a report into partnership operations to address seasonal increases in anti-social behaviour associated with Bonfire Night.

2.0 Background

2.1 Seasonal increases in antisocial behaviour related to fireworks and bonfires are experienced every year from September to November.

Police ASB incidents involving fireworks, City of Manchester, 2019 to 2023



2.2 The chart above demonstrates the monthly increases seen in September, October and November. Except for 2021, the number of incidents reported in the months Sept - November have reduced year on year down to 266 in 2023 from a high in 2019 of 539. Although it must be acknowledged that it is known that incidents of ASB go unreported.

2.3 In response to the anticipated ASB a multi-agency operation is put in place, working to address sale of fireworks, hotspots of ASB and prevention of fires in the run up to Bonfire Night.

3.0 Greater Manchester Bonfire and Halloween Campaign

3.1 Each year the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue (GMFRS) service leads the annual campaign aimed at preventing, tackling, and protecting against anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and other harm during the Bonfire and Halloween period. The Bonfire and Halloween campaign 2024 formally launches on 15th October (the start of the official selling period for fireworks).

Partners involved in the delivery of the campaign include Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS), Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and local councils.

3.2 GMFRS provides information and resources to support the delivery of the campaign. The resources include safety advice, a social media pack, information about the consequences of causing anti-social behaviour and education resources for school classrooms or assemblies for delivery by both fire officers and teachers. This information can be found at <https://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/your-safety/campaigns/bangoutoforder>

3.3 Each year GMFRS shares with each Local Authority area data to inform partnership operations to meet the aims of the campaign. The data includes GMFRS and GMP data. The incident categories included for GMFRS are deliberate primary and secondary fires, attacks on firefighters, malicious calls attended, bonfire related and firework related incidents. The GMP ASB codes are hoax calls to emergency services, environmental damage/littering, and fireworks.

4.0 Manchester activities

4.1 GMFRS, GMP data and local officer knowledge helps to identify repeat locations in Manchester to enable partners to prioritise activity in these areas. Any locations of concern may be shared with the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team (ASBAT) for consideration within the plans. ASBAT also engages with members to inform the activity. With reference to the agreed Greater Manchester approach multi-agency operations have been developed in accordance with the three campaign phases. These operations in Manchester involve a wide range of partners including GMFRS, GMP, Council Teams, Housing Providers and Youth Providers. In summary the plan involves;

4.2 Phase 1: 1 September to 14 October 2024: Prevention and Risk Reduction

During Phase 1 the focus is on prevention and risk reduction. Agencies such as Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS), Trading Standards, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) work collaboratively to minimise the illegal and irresponsible sale of fireworks during September and October.

The following activity will take place in Manchester during this period;

- Trading Standards will write to every business licensed to sell fireworks advising them of their obligations in relation to age restricted sales and safety of the fireworks they sell.
- Trading Standards will inspect licensed premises and taking any appropriate action. Any premises of concern can be shared with the Trading Standards Team.
- ASB and Community Safety Teams working with GMP to respond to any early reports of firework related nuisance.

4.3 Phase 2: 15 October 2024 – 10 November 2024: Prevention, risk reduction, enforcement, and reassurance activity

Phase 2 involves prevention, risk reduction, enforcement, and reassurance activity where GMFRS, (GMP) and local authority community safety / ASB teams deal with the consequences of fire related ASB and provide a reassurance to communities during the days between Halloween and bonfire night.

In Manchester during this period, we will;

- Promote key campaign messages at every opportunity including face to face engagement with residents residing in repeat locations, social media, and distribution of campaign materials.
- Deliver educational initiatives and inputs to primary and secondary schools.
- Engage with perpetrators identified in 2023 to prevent repeat behaviour.
- Engage with youth providers to promote key messages and involve children in positive activities during the campaign period.
- Work with partners to identify and remove illegal or dangerous bonfires.
- Investigate any allegations of the sale of unsafe or banned fireworks.
- Work with our partners to carry out inspections and test purchases with young volunteers where intelligence is received of shops selling to children or in areas where there are reports of youths with fireworks.
- Raise awareness with partners regarding identified organised events at licensed or other premises
- Continue community engagement delivering key messages, safety advice and information about how to report concerns.
- Protect victims and take enforcement action against those responsible for crime, nuisance, and anti-social behaviour.
- Deliver bespoke interventions with children and young people involved in ASB during the campaign period.

4.4 Phase 3: 11 November to 30 November 2024: Prevention, risk reduction and evaluation

Prevention, risk reduction and evaluation where agencies work to safely store and destroy illegal fireworks.

In Manchester during this phase, we will;

- Safely destroy any illegal fireworks.
- Contribute to the GMFRS evaluation and consider successes and lessons learnt to inform planning for 2025.

4.5 GMP have operational plans in place in the run up to Bonfire night and will have additional resources in place to cover the City of Manchester.

5.0 Parks Community Activities

- 5.1 In 2022 Manchester City Council took the decision in consultation with key agencies and local partners to not reinstate the traditional bonfire and firework events that had not taken place in parks since 2019. As an alternative the Council engaged with community partners to develop a programme of Autumn and Winter events in the wards which had previously held those events. The alternative approach has been a success with over 30 additional free and community focused events taking place in the target wards over the last two years.
- 5.2 The same approach has been adopted to develop the Autumn and Winter Programme for 2024. The programme will launch in October with the half term holiday events kickstarting this years activity. The programme will be actively promoted through the Council's Loads to Do campaign.

6.0 Recommendations

The committee are recommended:

- To consider and comment on the information in the report