
Briefing Note: ISLAY AND JURA YOUNG FIREFIGHTERS

This briefing relates to activities which fall under SOA Outcome 6

The briefing is for discussion.

Summary

In 2014 the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service were asked if they could support a young fire fighter unit on Islay by the local Health and Wellbeing Network.

SFRS have identified that on occasions they have various vacancies in retain and volunteer units on the island which can take some time to fill. With the long term benefit to the service clearly evident from such a youth organisation, SFRS actively engaged with the community of Islay & Jura, to start the young firefighters, and sustain the operational service to the community for years to come. Personnel were allocated the task and assembled a steering group to assist with the process. The group consisted of SFRS, A&B Council Community Development Officer, TSi, Islay & Jura Youth Action, and Police Scotland.

The main task was for local volunteers to assist with running the unit. One requirement was for local serving fire fighters who would be able to deliver the training. This was achieved with additional support from members of the community (female) and Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service providing additional learning opportunities.

A recruitment process was then put in place to attract interest in the unit. This was achieved by providing a poster and 'Notification of Interest' forms in the local high school and community.

The young people who returned a form were invited for an interview. The interview was based on a get to know you session and what being a 'Young Fire Fighter' would mean to them.

An induction evening was then arranged where the new 'Young Fire Fighters' were invited to Bowmore Community Fire Station for a familiarisation of the station and fitting of fire kit.

Islay & Jura Young Fire Fighters began on the 14th March 2016 with eight (8) young fire fighters.

Additional tasks have been undertaken by the steering group in the background to assist with making the unit a reality. One of these was to submit funding applications to the local 'Health and Wellbeing Network' and 'Substance Misuse Forum' to assist with set-up costs and future requirements. These were both successful and raised £1327.34 and £1500.00 respectively.

SFRS Local Senior Officer for Argyll & Bute, Area Manager James Hymas has allocated £1000.00 to the unit.

For further information please contact: Group Manager Stuart McLean