



## The Company of Cutlers' Police and Fire Service Awards 2017-18

On 25 July 2018, the Company held its traditional awards ceremony to recognise exceptional service in the South Yorkshire Police and the south Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Chief Constable, Steve Watson, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer Martin Blunden and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer Alex Johnson were at the ceremony to see their officers honoured.

In addition to the individual winners 12 Police officers from the Doncaster Tasking Team attended to receive their Award as well 13 Fire Officers from the Business Safety team.

The Master opened the ceremony by welcoming all to the Cutlers' Hall and by saying that he had found all the nominations to be very high standard and that we are all extremely grateful for the efforts of the Police and Fire services in Sheffield. Citations for winners were as follows:

### FIRE AND RESCUE

#### GROUP WINNER

Business Safety Team. As part of the response to the Grenfell Tower disaster, staff within the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Business Safety Team did much to ensure that a similar disaster did not happen in our Region.

They delivered Fire Safety Audits at 43 Local Authority and 44 privately owned high rise residential buildings. Focusing on those buildings which had failed the cladding test. They Engaged with Local Authorities to provide fire safety advice to residents and local communities, coordinated the SYFS response to the Nation Fire Chiefs Council twice each day and worked with hospital trusts to ensure that NHS stock fitted with cladding is safe for patients.

They also provided training to all operational crews focusing on high rise buildings, supported them to identify and prioritise information gathering on risk in High Rise Buildings to help in an emergency and supported Local Authorities on sprinkler installation

All this was in addition to their usual daily tasks and requirements and involved hard work, commitment and professionalism. After such an exceptional job the team were considered thoroughly deserving winners of this year's Cutlers' Company Fire and Rescue Group Award.

#### INDIVIDUAL WINNER

Station Manager Chris Mee. Chris has worked for SYFR for 19 years most recently at the Cudworth Tankersley and Barnsley Fire Station. On promotion to Station Manager, he took on the role of the Health and Safety manager. Community safety work has been so successful that there are now very few serious fires. As a result real fire experience is much rarer than in the past. This is a major challenge for most Fire and Rescue Services.

Knowing Barnsley well, Chris approached the Local council to take advantage of a regeneration scheme. They were knocking down houses prior to a rebuild and after much consultation and discussion he negotiated a 6 week demolition window where the properties could be set on fire to provide a realistic dwelling fire incident.

Mobilisation of the appliances and crews replicated the actions required for a real incident and the crews had to deal with a real fire in a controlled environment.

This proved to be a great success and also improved relationships with the local communities where the training took place as they were invited to come and watch. Many exercises were in school holidays and provided a valuable platform for Fire Safety Education. Realistic Fire Training satisfied a number of requirements including improved Firefighter safety, improved public safety, providing training for inexperienced crews, and exercising commanders in decision making. In addition, operational equipment and procedures were tested. Over 150 members of staff attended this realistic training and this is now being considered across the UK. There are plans to run further realistic fire training this year. This success has been driven by Chris Mee who is the worthy winner of this year's Cutlers' Company Fire and Rescue Individual Award.

## POLICE

### INDIVIDUAL WINNER

PCSO Stephen Hart. Stephen has been a Sheffield City Centre PCSO for 12 years working in the Neighbourhood teams out of Yorkshire House and more recently Snig Hill. He is responsible for general community issues. Over the last 18 months, he has taken on a dedicated role to engage with Sheffield's homeless and rough sleeping community. Many are vulnerable and have complex needs including alcohol and substance dependency. In this role PCSO Hart has shown self-confidence, motivation, commitment and exceptional communications skills. He starts his foot patrol at 06h00 every morning responding to incidents of rough sleepers as well as engaging street cleaners and businesses to identify any new sleeping sites. Once a week he undertakes a joint patrol with external agencies to assist the most vulnerable and guide them to the services they require. He also attends the homeless and vulnerability meeting to brief agencies and to ensure he is up to date on the resources available to help.

In addition to this sterling work with the vulnerable he also remains vigilant to keep the people of Sheffield safe. Over the past year he has identified and detained more than 70 wanted persons in the City Centre. One such was the arrest of a male wanted in connection with an armed robbery in South Wales. This so impressed the force there that they sent a letter of thanks describing him as exceptional.

PCSO Stephen Hart is a thoroughly deserving winner of this year's Cutlers' Company individual Police Award.

### POLICE GROUP WINNER

Doncaster Tasking Team. In Mexborough, there is an organized crime group called the PSB (Pitsmoor Shotta Boyz). They supply controlled Class A and Class B drugs. They are also heavily involved in armed criminality and violence. They have an organized structure and use threats of violence to coerce young males into involvement in their drug dealing activity. The group have been involved in the supply of thousands of pounds worth of illegal drugs, committed serious assaults and was responsible for the shooting of an individual. Worse they destroyed the working community in the area and their confidence in the Police Service.

In response Operation Stone was developed to pursue those associated with the PSB, protect victims, prevent future generations from becoming involved in organised crime and prepare a neighbourhood structure for the transition to normality. To achieve this, the Doncaster Tasking Teams have executed over 30 warrants targeting PSB, made 30 arrests and recovered more than £10,000 in cash along with significant quantities of Class A drugs and weapons. They proactively engaged this group over a 6 month period and managed to disrupt, disperse and prevent this type of criminality.

The team developed strong working relationships with a number of partner agencies culminating in a week of partnership work tackling this group. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in ASB and crime. This improvement has been noticed by the Community and the public confidence has

increased. There were successful prosecutions of Organized Crime Group Members. 80 weapons have been removed from the streets and cohesive partnerships between the police and local community have been revitalised.

On the back of the success of this operation, PCC funding has been gained to provide diversionary activities for those who might otherwise be attracted to such groups.

The operation continues but the exceptional work done by the Doncaster Tasking Team makes them worthy winners of this year's Cutlers' Company Group Police Award.

## CONCLUDING SPEECHES.

Both the Chief Constable, Mr Stephen Watson and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Mr Martin Blundell both then spoke to thank the Master Cutler and the Company for recognising the exceptional work done by those present and to congratulate the winners.

The Chief Constable commented that the awards were at opposite ends of the policing spectrum; the protection of the vulnerable on the one hand and dealing with outright criminality on the other. The winners were exemplars but the Force is involved in much such valuable activity and its standing both nationally and regionally is improving constantly.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer followed a similar theme saying that the success in preventing fires was by the activity of the Business Safety Team is to be applauded and was great work but at the other end of the spectrum, there is a need to train people for the very dangerous environment of a real fire and Chris Mee's contribution was equally valuable.

The Master thanked both and reiterated how much we value their organizations.