

## **Advice from Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service**

The Council has received the following advice from Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service regarding a change in their policy on responding to "Automatic Fire Alarms".

Tenants of Council-owned Commercial Property need to familiarise themselves with the advice from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Services and take all necessary steps to ensure they are complied with.

*"You will have been made aware of amendments to Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service's policy on responding to 'Automatic Fire Alarms' and our requirements to reduce "Unwanted Fire Signals" in March 2011. This policy supported our aim of reducing "Unwanted Fire Signals" as attendance at false alarms adversely affects our service to the public by diverting resources to false alarms in commercial premises.*

*"From 25 October 2011, we will be implementing the following additional change to further support this aim. A fire appliance will no longer automatically attend when an Automatic Fire Alarm is received during the hours of 0900-1700, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).*

*"The purpose of an Automatic Fire Alarm is to alert the occupants of premises to a problem or potential problem connected with a fire incident within the building, and to give early warning for any relevant persons to escape to a place of safety. During the above mentioned times, a fire appliance will only be dispatched by the 999 Fire Control should they receive a 'back up' call via 999 confirming a fire or suspicion of fire at commercial premises.*

*"It is the 'Responsible Person's' duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to conduct a Fire Risk Assessment. As a part of this assessment, a suitable and sufficient response must be made in the event of a Fire Alarm activation in your premises. The Order and the relevant guide issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government will indicate what will constitute a suitable and sufficient response, but such a response may include the development and implementation of an Emergency Fire Action Plan to enable safe and effective investigation of Fire Alarm activation at your premises. It is the 'Responsible Person's' duty to ensure that any relevant persons in the premises or in the vicinity of the premises are safe in the event of an activation and suitable provision to achieve this is made."*