

# **Fire chief praises the work of Ormiston based charity Fostering Compassion**

**A fire chief has praised an East Lothian charity for helping his crews save animals lives with emergency resuscitation kits.**

Station commander Elliot Whitson took time out of presenting a report to East Lothian Council's police, fire and community safety scrutiny committee, to highlight the work of Ormiston based Fostering Compassion.

The fire chief said the charity, which works to help vulnerable children through experiences with animals, had given crews across Scotland 28 Smokey Paws kits to carry with them.

The kits, which were inspired by vet student Meghan Ambrozevich-Blair, who was tragically killed in a car crash near her Dunbar home in 2016, provide emergency help for animals caught up in a fire.

Meghan was a dedicated animal welfare supporter who helped the charity launch its campaign to provide the resuscitation kitsto fire crews and introduced charity founder Lesley Winton, BEM, to her dad Kevin who was a firefighter in Dunbar.

She was working to get workshops set up to produce the kits and educate children on fire safety when she was died and they remain her legacy.

Mr Whitson told the meeting: "Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is a humanitarian service and we would always seek to assist an animal in distress. On too many occasions (we have seen) the huge impact the loss of a beloved pet can have.

"This approach has led to a long-standing partnership with Fostering Compassion which provides resuscitation kits to the fire service which have now been rolled out nationally.

"I just want to share this great piece of work with those in attendance today."

The charity recently handed a set of kits to Skye Station Commander Karla Henderson so crews on the island will also be equipped for animal rescue.

Karla said: "These kits will enable firefighters to administer oxygen to animals involved in incidents where they may have suffered smoke inhalation or injury. Ultimately, the use of these kits can increase an animal's chances of survival."

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter