

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority Meeting

Date: 19 June 2019

Subject: Service Delivery Update

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For: Information Only

Purpose

1. The purpose of the report is to update Combined Fire Authority (CFA) on the key service delivery matters since the previous CFA meeting on 19 June 2019.

Recommendation

2. The CFA is requested to note the update provided on the key service delivery matters since 19 June 2019, particularly the positive increase in On-Call availability following the introduction of Tactical Response Vehicles (TRV's).

Executive Summary

3. This report sets out the progress; or otherwise, that has been achieved in relation to service delivery and provides an overview of the current operational position since the CFA meeting in June 2019. The subject matter areas that are covered in this report include:
 - Prevention
 - Protection
 - Response
 - Performance
 - Incidents of note

Background

Prevention

4. The Service is currently collaborating with the County Council's Social Services in identifying those vulnerable people who are leaving hospital with a care package. This data sharing allows the Service to prioritise these individuals for a Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC).
5. The Service is also collaborating with Coventry University which will see two Occupational Therapists join the Service's Community Safety team on work placement throughout the academic year. Each placement will be for a 12-week period during which time they will assist with the Home Safety Check process, including Safe and Well checks; particularly around observation of behaviours.

Protection

6. There are currently two fire safety prosecutions under way for breaches to the Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order. These prosecutions are being progressed through the County Council's Legal Services and further updates will be provided to the CFA as the cases progress.
7. Following the success of 'Maximising Capacity' within Fire Prevention, the programme is being expanded to include Fire Protection. This will involve two days training for every operational firefighter in Fire Protection starting from November 2019 through to March 2020. This will provide firefighters with the skills to recognise and tackle simple fire safety issues, to deliver advice to business owners, and in addition, to be in a better position to produce site specific risk information plans.
8. The Service is also collaborating with Local Authority Environmental Health teams and a variety of Private Sector Housing providers to upskill and training them in hazard spotting. This training will enable these partners to recognise fire safety issues when carrying out their own inspections and forward any identified fire safety concerns to Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS). It is envisaged that this innovative collaborative approach will minimise disruption to local businesses whilst at the same time ensure compliance with legislation.

Response

9. The blended approach to recruitment that commenced in January 2019 has now seen a phased increase in the workforce with all staff becoming operationally available from July 2019. A further recruitment campaign opened on 2 September 2019 that will look to recruit a further 18 firefighters between January and April 2020.

Performance

10. Emergency Call Handling

Emergency calls are dealt with by our control centre which is housed within Southern Fire Station. Between April and August 2019 fire control dealt with 5,611 emergency calls. There have been improvements made over the last 3 years with emergency calls now answered, on average, within 4.29 seconds.

11. Mobilising times

The mobilising time for whole-time appliances between April – August 2019 is now averaging 1 minute 38 seconds, this is an improvement from the 2018-19 average of 2 minutes 12 seconds. Likewise, the On-Call mobilising times have seen improvements from 6 minutes 51 seconds in 2018-19 to 6 minutes 8 seconds for April – August 2019. These improvements are linked to the re-introduction of status messaging whereby crews are utilising technology and data transfer rather than the previous way of voice messages. This means fire engines can update their status immediately by the push of a button, rather than having to wait for a

free slot on the radio (all officers and fire engines use one channel, so it can be quite busy) to update control.

12. Attendance Times

Between April and August 2019, we met our attendance standards on 94.5% of occasions, which is 0.5% below our target of 95%. The district which is currently not meeting the target and affecting the overall figure is Rutland. On further analysis, it appears that all the failures are related to 5 incidents at HMP Stocken, which due to its location is outside of the 10-minute travel distance of Oakham Station. It is worthy of note however, that these premises have excellent fire protection measures, including misting systems which prevent fire escalation and limit damage. The District Manager is currently liaising with the Prison Governors to discuss the increase in the number of incidents

13. Appliance Availability

Whole-time appliance availability for April – August 2019 was 98.45% and this is reflective of previous years. The Service has seen significant improvements in On-Call appliance availability increasing from 56.7% in 2018-19 to 62.62% in April – August 2019.

Further improvements are anticipated for 2019-20 through the introduction of the initiatives identified within the 'On-Call' project, such as the introduction of self-rostering and the introduction of two Tactical Response Vehicles at Billesdon and Uppingham stations. This provides greater flexibility and autonomy to station staff, reducing some barriers allowing them to use their availability to best effect, increasing availability.

Incidents of note since the June 2019 CFA meeting

14. Since the last report there has been two fire related fatalities within the Service, these include:

1 June 2019

House Fire
Newtown Burgoland
North West Leicestershire
1 male casualty aged 68
Fire caused by gas explosion due to faulty cooker.

23 August 2019

Vehicle Fire
Loughborough
Charnwood
1 male casualty aged 57
Fire currently under investigation.

15. As was reported to the CFA at its meeting in June 2019, LFRS is receiving an increased number of requests to gain entry to premises on behalf of other agencies. This is resulting in crews having to deal with an increased number of fatalities.
16. On-going monitoring of the crews' mental health after dealing with this type of incident is being undertaken by Occupational Health, supported by a number of managers from across the service and will be complemented with the introduction of Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM). TRiM is a trauma-focused peer support system designed to help people who have experienced a traumatic, or potentially traumatic, event.
17. TRiM originated in the UK Armed Forces and the model is based on 'watchful waiting', that means keeping a watchful eye on individuals who have been exposed to a traumatic event, whether that person has been directly involved or involved from afar.

Report Implications/Impact

18. Legal (including crime and disorder)

None identified at this time.

19. Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)

There are potential financial implications relating to the two fire safety prosecutions but the service will look to recover costs through the judicial system.

20. Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of service delivery)

There is a potential risk of a rise in sickness levels linked to mental health issues relating to increased exposure to fatalities. This is currently being managed through Occupational Health along with the counselling service Amica. This potential risk will be reduced further by the introduction of TRiM.

21. Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

There are no other staff issues noted other than those highlighted in paragraph 20.

22. Environmental

None identified at this time.

23. Impact upon Our Plan Objective

This report sets out relevant developments and performance achieved by the Service Delivery Directorate in pursuance of the objectives set out in Our Plan.

Officers to Contact

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