

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority

Date: 12 December 2018

Subject: Service Delivery Update

Report by: Rick Taylor (Chief Fire and Rescue Officer)

Author: Andrew Brodie (Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer)

For: Information

1. Purpose

This report updates the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) on the key service delivery matters since the last CFA meeting on 27 September 2018.

2. Recommendations

The CFA is asked to note the contents of this report.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 The CFA has previously received an Operations Update, however it included other aspects of service delivery and repeated project updates that are found in other reports. This report has been restructured around the three functions within the Service Delivery Directorate:–

- Prevention
- Protection
- Response

and the repetition has been removed.

3.2 Performance in service delivery has improved. On-call availability has increased and attendance time targets have been met. Wholetime mobilisation times have reduced but remain above the two-minute target.

3.3 Better ways to target fire safety inspections have been found and plans are being made to implement them.

3.4 Innovative ways to educate people about safety issues and to support them are being introduced.

4. Background

Prevention

4.1 Virtual Reality

In November we hosted a national Virtual Reality conference. More than 30 fire and rescue services and 60 people attended. The conference set out to establish the preferred model for the future of Virtual Reality in terms of funding, governance and production of films. The CFA will be updated on progress and developments once known.

4.2 Falls Clinic

A Falls Clinic has been established at Melton Fire and Rescue Station. Older people are provided with a 24 week course of exercises, referred by the NHS, GPs and following hospital discharge. This improves their strength and balance to prevent falls and the subsequent impact on public services. The clinic is led by Occupational Therapists and supported by our own staff. It provides an opportunity for safety messages to be shared and all attendees receive a Home Fire Safety Check.

Protection

4.3 Successful Prosecution

A successful prosecution was taken against a managing agent who failed to properly provide or maintain fire precautions at a property he rented out.

This required significant effort from the Fire Protection team, working in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council legal services and a barrister. The managing agent initially challenged the allegations against him. However, the case that was built against him was so strong that in court he pled guilty to all the charges. The judge initially sanctioned the defendant with an 8 month suspended custodial sentence, costs, 240 hours' community service and a ten-week curfew.

A 'Slip Notice' was subsequently served, requiring the guilty party to return to court. This is an unusual move by the judge, made because further information about the guilty party's financial circumstances came to light after the sanction was placed. The judge asked that we supply the court with investigation findings into the financial details. These are being provided to us by Leicestershire Police. The case is scheduled to return to court on 17th December 2018.

4.4 Increase in Local Authority Referrals

Local Authority Building Control have a responsibility to inform fire and rescue services if they find possible fire safety breaches. A letter was sent reminding the Local Authorities across LLR, resulting in an increase in referrals and concerns.

This helps target our work. Inspections following referrals and concerns are more likely to result in enforcement than those on our risk based programme.

Response

4.5 Hinckley Road Explosion, Court Case

A court case has started following the Hinckley Road explosion. Three defendants are charged with murder. A number of our staff are presenting evidence, including those in incident command positions and the lead Fire Investigator.

4.6 Performance

Response managers have focussed their efforts on improving performance following a decline. This has had a positive effect in all areas with work continuing to maintain this trend. The indicators below are those that have previously shown red on performance reports.

i. Time taken to answer emergency calls

83% of emergency calls are answered within the target of seven seconds. The average time to answer is 5.5 seconds.

ii. Station based mobilising times

Mobilising times have improved for Wholetime and On-call fire engines. Wholetime has reduced from 2.43 minutes to 2.33 minutes and On-call from 7.46 minutes to 7.14 minutes. These times remain above target, so managers are tasked with making further improvements.

iii. Attendance Times

Performance had slipped below the target of reaching life critical incidents in 10 minutes on 95% of occasions. This has improved and the target is now being achieved. Most failures are in rural areas with longer travel distances. Each occasion is investigated to identify whether improvements can be made.

iv. On-Call Appliance Availability

On-Call appliance availability is 55%, an improvement of 6% from July. Successful recruitment campaigns resulted in 33 new recruits who will be 'safe to ride' between December 2018 and June 2019. This will bring further improvements though is set against normal attrition rates.

Tactical Response Vehicle's (TRV) will be deployed in future at low availability stations with dramatic improvements in availability predicted. This is because fewer firefighters are needed to crew a TRV compared to standard fire engines.

4.7 Activity Levels

The figures below cover the period 1 September and 31 October 2018. The comparisons are for the same period in 2017.

Overall

1,352 incidents were attended, 82 (6.5%) more than the same period last year. There have been more small outdoor fires, requests to gain entry and assist

other agencies, and false alarms. There has also been an increase in fatal casualties at incidents during these two months, mainly due to medical reasons, suicides and road traffic collisions.

Six or more pumps

There were three incidents where six or more pumps were deployed. This matches performance for the same period last year. The 2018 incidents were: a deliberate fire involving a disused former warehouse in Frog Island, an accidental fire involving an electricity sub-station in Hinckley and a fire following a helicopter crash outside the King Power Stadium.

Fatal casualties

There were ten fatal casualties at incidents attended, compared to eight in the same period in 2017. None of the 2018 casualties were due to fire. Five casualties were discovered after entry was gained to properties on behalf of another agency (normally for a medical reason), three were from road traffic collisions and two were from suicides.

By the 27 November there were eight further fatalities. These include one person in a house fire in Oadby (further detail below), two road traffic collisions each resulting in two deaths and another with one death, a medical incident with the casualty in cardiac arrest and a casualty trapped between two fences.

Over the border

Our pumps were mobilised 34 times into neighbouring FRSs compared to 64 times the previous year. Conversely, pumps from neighbouring FRSs were mobilised 123 times for incidents in LLR compared to 101 times for the same period last year.

4.8 Incidents of note since the last CFA meeting

i. King Power Helicopter Crash

The helicopter crash at the King Power stadium had a significant impact on the service. Six fire engines were sent immediately along with specialist vehicles and a cadre of officers. The first crews arrived quickly from Central fire and rescue station and deployed two foam jets to quickly tackle the fire and make efforts to save life. A strategic manager mobilised to police headquarters as Gold Commander for LFRS, working alongside the leads for other agencies. The first Strategic Coordination Group took place approximately 75 minutes after the crash and these meetings continued for several days.

Fire Control staff dealt simultaneously with an automatic alarm at a High Rise building and a fire in a commercial deep fat fryer, both incidents in the city. They redeployed resources effectively and brought in temporary cover from neighbouring fire and rescue services to maintain a suitable level of response.

Firefighters, appliances and equipment remained on scene until the following Friday. Technical Rescue teams built shoring structures to assist the Air Accident Investigation Branch and the Disaster Victim Identification team. We used our vehicle recovery transporter to assist in moving the public tribunes to

their new location.

Leicestershire police provided crews with received Trauma Risk Management (TRiM). This is a facilitated discussion that allows people to discuss their thoughts and feelings following traumatic incidents. Further to this Amica, our new counselling service provider, ran a confidential drop in clinic for any member of staff who needed additional welfare support. Plans to introduce TRiM to our service were already underway and learning will be taken from this incident to tailor how it's used internally.

ii. Fatal Fire, Oadby

On 1 November an 87-year-old woman died in a property fire on Glen Road in Oadby. Fire crews from Wigston arrived first and rescued her from the ground floor. Despite giving CPR they were unable to save her life. Fire crews and community educators carried out a Post Incident Response in the local area.

iii. Kitchen Fire, Linford Road

Eastern fire and rescue station responded to a kitchen fire in the early hours of 18 October. One occupant suffered from mobility problems and the other was hard of hearing. Earlier in the year the crew had carried out a Home Fire Safety Visit at the house, including fitting smoke detectors. They recognised the danger of the hard of hearing occupant and community educators fitted a specialist alarm with strobe lights and a vibrating pad under the pillow. These alarms alerted the couple to the fire and they were both able to leave the property safely and call 999. The early alert allowed crews to minimise the damage caused and the residents were able to reoccupy the building on the same day. The crews carried out a further Home Fire Safety check immediately after the incident and returned in daylight to check the alarms and specialist equipment.

5. Report Implications/Impact

5.1 Legal (including crime and disorder)

None identified.

5.2 Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)

There are no direct financial implications from this report.

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

None arising from this report.

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

Response crews face traumatic incidents on a regular basis. Measures are in place to provide welfare support and work is underway to enhance it.

5.5 Environmental

None identified.

5.6 Impact upon Our Plan Objectives

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

6. Background Papers

None.

7. Appendices

None.

8. Officers to Contact

Andrew Brodie. Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
andrew.brodie@LFRS.org
0116 229 2054

Rick Taylor, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
rick.taylor@LFRS.org
0116 287 2241