

Status of Report: *Public*

Meeting: **Combined Fire Authority Meeting**

Date: **23 September 2020**

Subject: **Service Delivery - Update**

Report by: **Callum Faint – Chief Fire and Rescue Officer**

Author: **Matthew Cane – Area Manager Response**

For: **Information Only**

Purpose

1. The purpose of the report is to update the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) on the key service delivery matters since the CFA meeting on 12 February 2020.

Recommendation

2. The CFA is requested to note:
 - a) The update provided on the key service delivery matters for the financial year 2019/20;
 - b) The update provided on the key service delivery matters for the period between 12 February 2020 to September 2020;
 - c) The work undertaken by the Service during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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 February 2020. The subject matter areas that are covered in this report include:
 - Response activities for the financial year 2019/20
 - Response activities from 1 April 2020
 - Effects of Covid-19
 - Incidents of note

Response activities 2019/20

4. Overall for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 incidents remained broadly unchanged. LFRS responded to 8,540 incidents, 24 less than for 2018/19.
5. During this period there were four fire fatalities, which is four less than the previous year.

Response activities 1 April 2020 – September 2020

6. For the period 1 April 2020 to 31 August 2020 LFRS attended a total of 3,214 incidents. This compares to 3,631 for the same period last year, an 11% decrease.

Effects of Covid-19

7. On 23 March 2020 the UK government ordered a lockdown in England, ordering all public to stay at home. During the lockdown period LFRS continued to respond to all emergency incidents. Further detail is given below:

Response

8. During the lockdown, appliance availability increased. On-call staff furloughed from their full-time jobs have been employed to undertake additional duties and assist with maintaining appliance availability.
9. On-call appliance availability is currently at 82.73%. This compares to an availability of 64.55% in 2019/20.
10. Wholetime appliance availability has been maintained at over 99%. Matching last year's availability of 99%.

Protection

11. At the beginning of the lockdown LFRS worked to identify ways to continue to supply communities with safety advice. Oakham, Melton and Eastern stations trialled delivery of safety information via phone, socially distanced advice and leaflet drops. Learning from this trial has now been shared across the organisation, to enable protection and prevention activities to continue. During the trial:
 - i. 163 socially distanced visits were completed with a success rate of 39% (63).
 - ii. 400 leaflets were delivered asking households to contact us to arrange a telephone call for advice. None were returned.
 - iii. 134 telephone consultations were carried out with a success rate of 40% (53).
12. A number of the individuals contacted had not communicated with anyone outside of their lockdown for several months. LFRS staff were able to discuss fire safety, health and wellbeing and make referrals to partner agencies including food delivery and medical care.

Additional activities

13. LFRS has responded to a number of requests from partners to supply additional duties outside of “normal” working. This has included:
 - i. Delivery of essential items to vulnerable persons e.g. food, prescription medication = 377 deliveries completed.
 - ii. Face fitting for masks to be used by front line NHS and clinical staff = 282 face fit tests completed.
 - iii. Delivery of PPE and other medical supplies to NHS care facilities = 35
 - iv. Driving of ambulances, not on blue lights, transporting patients to outpatient appointments or to receive urgent care = 200 incidences.
 - v. The assembly of face shields for the NHS and care work frontline staff = 5,250.
 - vi. Packing/re-packing of food supplies for vulnerable people = 280.
 - vii. Covid-19 compliance inspections within Leicester City for Leicestershire County Council and the Health and Safety Executive = 40.
14. LFRS has completed Covid-19 risk assessments of all Fire and Rescue Stations and has also been an active member of the Local Resilience Forum Covid-19 Strategic Coordination Group and Tactical Group, at initially daily and, more recently, weekly meetings.

Incidents of note

15. LFRS have responded to the following incidents:
 - i. Storm Dennis February 2020; numerous floodings and vehicles stuck in flood water across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
 - ii. Mira vehicle research facility, Hinckley, May 2020; building involved in fire. 10 appliances plus 2 aerial ladder platforms, command vehicle, water carrier. Cause accidental.
 - iii. Farm, Skeffington, July 2020. Building struck by lightning, involved in fire. 6 appliances, Incident Support Unit, water carrier.
 - iv. Person Involved in fire, August 2020. Charnwood. Now subject to Police and coroner investigations.
 - v. Uppingham School, August 2020. Building involved in fire. 6 appliances with assistance from Northants FRS. Accidental.

Report Implications/Impact

16. Legal (including crime and disorder)

None identified within this report.

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

None identified within this report.

18. 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 Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM).

Homeworking during the Covid-19 pandemic may create the risk of some staff becoming isolated and this could affect their mental health. Covid “wellbeing passports” have been introduced to identify individuals at risk.

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

Covid-19 has led to the introduction of home working for many staff working in support staff roles.

20. Environmental

None identified within this report.

21. Impact upon Our Plan Objective

Covid-19 has had an impact on the Service’s ability to interact with the community. This impact has reduced our ability to carry out inspections of businesses (due to closures, furlough and social distancing), community education (schools closed) and to enter people’s homes for fire safety. New and innovative ways to overcome these challenges are being explored but there has been an impact because of it. The full impact is not yet known as the pandemic continues and local and national lockdown measures continue to change.

Background Papers

None.

Officers to Contact

Callum Faint
Chief Fire Officer
Callum.faint@leics-fire.gov.uk
07800 709922

Matthew Cane
Area Manager
Matthew.cane@Leics-fire.gov.uk
07800 709815