

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority

Date: 16 June 2021

Subject: Service Delivery Update

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For: Information

Purpose

1. The purpose of the report is to update the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) on key Service Delivery performance for the previous year, April 2020 to March 2021.

Recommendation

2. The CFA is requested to note the update provided on the key service delivery matters for the period April 2020 – March 2021, particularly
 - a) The positive increase in performance for 2020/21 in Prevention and Protection;
 - b) The significant increase in On-Call appliance availability;
 - c) The professional approach taken by the Service in supporting the response to 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 previous year April 2020 – March 2021 inclusive. An update on performance from March – June 2021 will be presented to the CFA at its meeting on 28 July 2021. The subject matter areas that are covered in this report include:
 - Prevention;
 - Protection;
 - Response;
 - Performance;
 - Covid-19 Update;
 - Incidents of note.
4. The report highlights a positive increase in the number of domestic Home Safety Checks and Fire Safety Audits undertaken within commercial premises despite the pressures and restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic. Also detailed, is the significant decrease in the number of incidents for 2020 – 2021, which is believed to be related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Background

Prevention

5. The Covid-19 pandemic had an initial impact on the Service within the first quarter of 2020/21 whilst it adapted and found new innovative ways of working. These changes included the adoption of telephone safety checks, whereby the Service worked with partner agencies and telephoned those members of the community most vulnerable to discuss fire safety, health and wellbeing along with providing guidance on Covid-19 safety measures.
6. Between April 2020 and March 2021, a total of 8,879 successful safety checks were completed, this is compared to 6,976 the previous year.
7. With the national and local restrictions in place for the majority of the year, the Service has sought different ways to engage with communities. Examples of this include:
 - a. Virtual Open Day at Loughborough Station streamed live on Facebook, including demonstrations and a session to allow the community to ask a variety of questions including areas such as recruitment and fire safety. This proved extremely successful with over 22,500 engagements.
 - b. Christmas Shoebox appeal within Melton and Rutland, which targeted those vulnerable members of the community who may have felt isolated during the festive period. Fire crews delivered the gifts donated by local businesses and the community whilst utilising the opportunity to offer fire safety advice and encourage a home safety self-referral.
 - c. The Service has had to adapt the delivery of the annual school's programme. This now involves students receiving online presentations with interactive sessions. Initial feedback from students and teachers is evidencing the success of this initiative.

Protection

8. Again, due to national and local lockdowns, the first quarter of 2020/21 saw difficulties in completing Fire Safety Audits (FSAs) of commercial premises. However, Fire Safety Inspectors completed 703 FSAs of which 600 were within the risk-based inspection program for 2020/21. This is a significant improvement from the previous year, where 381 premises were audited.
9. In addition to the Fire Safety Audits, following the Grenfell fire, a National building risk review required the inspection of 109 High-rise premises; gathering information on evacuation strategies, external wall systems and fire-fighting systems. This review has resulted in a number of Fire Safety concerns being raised which is being addressed by working with the property owners.

Response

10. The Service attended 7,614 incidents in April 2020 to March 2021, of which, 2,906 (38%) were non-fire incidents, 2,758 (36%) were fire false alarms and 1,950 (26%) were fire incidents. This is 789 fewer incidents than the 3-yearly average of 8,403. The effects of Covid-19 have had a considerable impact on the number and types of incidents that the Service has attended in the last this year.
11. Between April 2020 and March 2021 inclusive, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue attended 79 fatalities at a variety of incidents, including:
 - a) Six Fire related;
 - b) 10 Road Traffic Collisions;
 - c) 57 Special Services.
12. There were six fatalities in fires April 2020 to March 2021. This is four less than the 3-year average of 10. Of the six fatalities in fires, four occurred in fires in Charnwood District and 2 within Leicester City.
13. There have been 73 fatal casualties in non-fire incidents April 2020 to March 2021. This is 12 more than the 3-year average of 61.
14. Wellbeing support is now embedded within the Service to monitor crews' mental health and wellbeing after dealing with these types of incidents through the Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM) training and support from the Occupational Health department.
15. To ensure crews are prepared for the variety of incidents the Service attend; both Whole-time and On-Call staff have participated in a large number of exercises over the year. These scenarios ensure that staff are able to maintain their competence along with feeding in any learning to the operational learning board to allow the development of the whole workforce. Exercises include:
 - National Urban Search and Rescue at the Fire Service College;
 - Service exercises for high-rise and basement fires;
 - Over the boarder exercises with neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services;
 - Multi-agency exercises;
 - District Exercises testing the risk plans.

Performance

16. On-Call availability for 2020/21 has seen a 10% increase from 66.8% to 76.9%. This increase is in part due to staff being furloughed from their primary employment and staff working from home, however, this also presents an opportunity to target those individuals in On-Call areas who have changed their working practices to work from home on a permanent basis. Whole-time availability is consistent at 99.1%, above the previous year's average of 98.1%.
17. Turnout times for Whole-time appliances remain consistent with the previous year at 1 minute 36 seconds, this is a marked improvement from 2018 where

the time taken for a Whole-time appliance to mobilise was 2 minutes 43 seconds.

18. Turnout times for On-Call appliances again remain consistent at 5 minutes 46 seconds. Likewise, in 2018, the time for an On-Call appliance to mobilise was 7.14 minutes.
19. Attendance times to life critical incidents was slightly above the 10-minute attendance time at 10 minutes 17 seconds. Attendance at incidents in Rutland and Harborough District are having a negative impact in this area due to the rurality and travel distance in these areas.
20. 237 public responses have been received to the After the Incident Survey April 2020 to March 2021. 99% of people responding to the survey stated that they were 'satisfied or very satisfied' with the overall service they received from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. 1% of people responding stated they were neither 'satisfied' nor 'dissatisfied' with the overall service.

Covid-19 Response

21. As acknowledged within Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection report, the Service responded excellently in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Additional work included:
 - Secondment of staff to support partners within East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS);
 - Construction and distribution of Face Shields;
 - Delivery of prescription medicine to vulnerable members of the community;
 - Logistical support to the local resilience forum for personal protective equipment;
 - Administration and management of accommodation for key workers;
 - Inspections of commercial and retail premises to ensure Covid compliance on behalf of City and District Councils;
 - Personal protective face-fit testing of partners within the care home environment.

Incidents of Note

22. The following are incidents of note occurred during April 2020 – March 2021:

May 2020

Large Quantity of Vehicles on fire at Higham on the Hill
 10 Appliances plus specials
 Cause – Accidental – fault within lithium ion batteries

November 2020

Number of static caravans involved in fire at Hoton
 8 Appliances plus specials
 Cause – Believed to be deliberate ignition

December 2020

Building Fire in Leicester City
 8 Appliances plus specials
 Cause – Accidental due to electrical fault

December 2020

Building Fire in Leicester City
 10 Appliances plus specials
 Cause – Accidental due electrical fault

February 2021

Thatch Roof Fire in Harborough District
 6 Appliances plus specials
 Cause – Accidental by fire within chimney.

Report Implications/Impact23. Legal (including crime and disorder)

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

There are no direct financial implications from this report.

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

There are no risks arising from this report.

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

There are no staff, service users or stakeholder implications arising from this report.

27. Environmental

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

28. 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.

Officers to Contact

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