

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority

Date: 28 September 2022

Subject: Service Delivery Update

Report by: Callum Faint – Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

Author: Paul Weston – Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

For: Information

Purpose

1. The purpose of the report is to update the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) members on key Service Delivery performance for the first quarter – 1 April – 30 June 2022.

Recommendation

2. The CFA is requested to note the update provided on the key service delivery matters for the first quarter (1 April – 30 June 2022), in particular:
 - a. The successful prosecution under the Fire Safety Order.
 - b. The increase in the number of fire safety audits being completed and support to local businesses.
 - c. The positive feedback received from the public when responding to emergency incidents.

Executive Summary

3. This report sets out the progress, or otherwise, that has been achieved in relation to Service Delivery for the first quarter of 2022/23. The subject matter areas covered in this report include:
 - Prevention;
 - Protection;
 - Response;
 - Performance;
 - Incidents of note.
4. The number of fire safety audits being completed remains on a continued upward trajectory in line with the risk-based inspection program.
5. The report also highlights the recent successful fire safety prosecution. The Service looks to work proactively with individuals and businesses to ensure they protect the safety of their staff and the public in relation to fire safety but will take legal action as a last resort to ensure public safety.

6. The report highlights an improved attendance time for life risk incidents, however several districts remain outside the target time of 10 minutes. This is related to the location of incidents and the increased travel distances in these areas.

Background

Prevention

7. The intent of the Home Safety Check (HSC) is to identify hazards and provide advice and guidance to the homeowner or tenant on how to reduce the hazard and lower the risk of a fire occurring.
8. The Service utilises a risk matrix to identify those who are at a greater risk of fire and this enables HSCs to be prioritised, ensuring that the most vulnerable members of the community are targeted.
9. This reporting period has seen the delivery of 3,437 HSCs, compared to 3,919 the previous year. Although below last years figures, this remains higher than the 3-yearly average baseline figure of 2,302.
10. Although the number of HSCs is lower than the previous year, there has been an increase in the number of alarms being installed. During the first quarter, a total of 1170 alarms have been fitted compared to 1054 the previous year. This includes 1097 smoke alarms, 52 carbon monoxide alarms and 21 smoke alarms for those hard of hearing. By ensuring that the Service targets those most vulnerable, it is able to support the aim of safer people, safer places.
11. The Service also analyses the success of the Home Safety Check visits. During the first quarter, 669 people responded, of which:
 - i. 100% felt safer after the visit, and;
 - ii. 95% would change their current habits following the visit.

Protection

12. The Fire Protection team is successfully working through the risk-based inspection program and has completed 244 fire safety audits during the first quarter, compared to 175 for the same period 2021/22.
13. In addition to the risk-based inspection program, the Fire Protection team have completed an additional 127 officer generated fire safety audits. This type of inspection arises through complaints or concerns from either operational crews or members of the public and are in addition to the planned risk-based inspection program.
14. As a result of the all the fire safety audits undertaken this quarter, 33 Action Plans, 16 enforcement and 2 prohibition notices have been issued to premises that require improvement. Fire Protection Officers will continue to work with the building owners to ensure compliance.

15. The Service continues to pro-actively engage with both business owners and the responsible person(s); having held a number of fire safety workshops to promote fire safety awareness and legislative responsibilities.
16. The Service has recently been successful in the prosecution of a premise in Leicester. Despite continued attempts to proactively engage with the responsible person, the service was left with no alternative other than to pursue a prosecution for breaches to the Fire Safety Order under Article 8 whereby *'the responsible person is required to take such general fire precautions as are necessary to ensure the safety of any employees or relevant persons who are not an employee'*
17. The individual was fined a total of £1,500.00 (full credit being given for the early guilty pleas which in turn was also reflected in the level of penalty) with a contribution to prosecution costs also being ordered in the sum of a further £1,500.00. The total amount of £3,000.00 being ordered to be paid within 6 months, together with a victim surcharge.

Response

18. The Service attended 2296 incidents in the first quarter of 2022/23 compared to 2033 for the same period last year. Of the 2296, 827 (36%) were non-fire incidents, 741 (32%) were fire false alarms and 728 (32%) were fire incidents.
19. Compared to the three-yearly benchmark, so far this year the Service has seen an increase of 10.5% in the number of incidents it has attended. It should be bore in mind that the benchmark figure is detrimentally affected by the National lockdown restrictions imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic which saw a reduction in the number of incidents attended.
20. During the first quarter of 2022/23 the Service has responded to 14 incidents involving fatalities, including 1 fire fatality, 1 water incident, 4 suicides and 8 special services.
21. Given the nature of these incidents, the Service continues to support crews exposed to fatalities through the Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM) and support from the Occupational Health department.

Performance

22. On-Call availability for the first quarter has fallen to 60% compared to 68% for the same period last year and is 5% lower than the 2021/22 overall availability. The Service is working hard to increase On Call firefighters and will see four recruitment campaigns for 2022/23.
23. Whole-time availability remains constant for the first quarter to 98% in comparison to the same period last year, and 0.3% higher than 2021/22 overall.
24. Turnout times for Whole-time appliances for this reporting period has reduced to 1 minute 23 seconds compared to 1 minute 32 seconds the previous year.

25. Turnout times for On-Call appliances have increased slightly to 6 minutes 29 seconds compared with the previous quarter and three yearly average at 6 minutes 15 seconds.
26. Attendance times to life critical incidents is currently 9 minutes 55 seconds which is below the Leicestershire target time of 10 minutes, however, there are a number of districts that are slightly above the target. Those districts outside the ten-minute target include:
- Blaby;
 - Charnwood;
 - Rutland;
 - Harborough;
 - Hinckley and Bosworth;
 - Melton;
 - Northwest Leicestershire.
27. Further analysis of the attendance times indicates that the rurality of certain areas within these districts requires a longer drive time, thus negatively impacting the response.
28. The Service received 103 public responses within the first quarter to the After the Incident Survey, of which:
- i. 98% of respondents were happy with how their call was initially dealt with;
 - ii. 99% of respondents said the Service arrived on time or quicker than expected;
 - iii. 88% of respondents felt they were kept very well informed during the incident with 12% feeling fairly well informed; and,
 - iv. 100% of people responding to the survey stated that they are 'satisfied or very satisfied' with the overall service they received from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.
29. Feedback comments include:
- "Arrived in a timely manner and acted professional throughout"*
- "Very polite reassuring staff members. Quick response and professional and polite".*
- "They went above and beyond. Couldn't have asked for a better crew to help us at a very scary time. Thankyou"*
- "Keeping a constant flow of information as the incident progressed".*
- "Very friendly staff and kept us calm. Talked us through what they were doing all the way through. Great people"*
- "They did amazing and kept myself and my partner informed on what was happening step by step, they were absolutely amazing and I couldn't thank*

them enough we were extremely lucky because the first engine to arrive was going to another call but was close to us, our chances of losing the house was due to the rail road crossing barriers not going down again thank you to everyone that attended you are amazing people”.

Incidents of Note

30. The following are incidents of note during April – June 2022:

April 2022

Building Fire, Loughborough – 5 appliances plus specials
Cause – Deliberate ignition

Barn Fire, Oakham – 4 appliances plus specials
Cause – Deliberate ignition

May 2022

Recycling Factory, Leicester – 4 appliances plus specials
Cause – Accidental ignition by lithium battery

House Fire, Hinckley – 5 appliances
Cause – Accidental ignition by smoking materials

June 2022

Storage Yard, Market Harborough – 6 appliances plus specials
Cause – Deliberate ignition

Tall Building, Leicester – 5 appliances plus specials
Cause – Accidental ignition by unattended cooking

Report Implications/Impact

31. Legal (including crime and disorder)

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

There are no direct financial implications from this report.

33. 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.

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

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

35. Environmental

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

36. 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

Callum Faint – Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

callum.faint@leics-fire.gov.uk

07800 709922

Paul Weston – Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

paul.weston@leics-fire.gov.uk

07966 111253