

## **Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

### **SFRS Corporate Safety Plan 2017 – 2020 Update Report**

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 This report is to update the Police and Crime Panel on the delivery of the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Corporate Safety Plan (CSP - Integrated Risk Management Plan - IRMP). The publication of the Corporate Safety Plan fulfils the legislative obligations as defined within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018.

#### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the CSP 2017 – 2020 and make comment as appropriate.

#### **3. Background**

3.1 The IRMP is a document that each Fire and Rescue Authority in England is required to produce. Whilst there is no specific template that the Authority is required to follow, there is guidance detailed within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018 on the content of the plan. Each plan must:

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- reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
- demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources;
- outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
- set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat; cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it

is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;

- reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
- be easily accessible and publicly available.

3.2 The Corporate Safety Plan is designed using principles to underpin service delivery against the three priorities that were determined following extensive consultation in 2016 with the communities of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. The principles are: -

- Our Cultural Framework,
- Our People,
- Continually improving health, safety and wellbeing,
- Being accountable to our communities and helping them to help themselves,
- Information, security and intelligence,
- Protecting the environment,
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do.

3.3 The three priorities that the Service is delivering against are: -

3.3a) Education and Engagement

We will prioritise our efforts to educate ourselves, our partners and our communities. We will engage to build a safe, informed and inclusive Staffordshire.

3.3b) Community Safety and Wellbeing

We will develop innovative prevention services to ensure we can deliver the right activities to the people who we prioritise within our communities. The Service will work with partners to enable us to deliver a range of services and improved outcomes, which will ensure safety and wellbeing for the communities of Staffordshire.

3.3c) Planning, resilience and response

We will use our resources efficiently, and plan for the development of the services we deliver based on information and knowledge.

3.4 In order to demonstrate the Services performance against the key measures as detailed within the Corporate Safety Plan 2017-2020.

The key measures as detailed are: -

- Total number of incidents attended
- Number of accidental dwelling fires
- Number of accidental fire deaths and injuries

- Number of Safe and Well Visits completed
- Number of accidental business property fires
- Number of road traffic collisions (RTCS) attended
- Number of people killed or seriously injuries (KSIs) at RTCs
- Number of automatic fire alarms we attend

#### 4. Progress to Date

##### 4.1 Education and Engagement

- 4.1a) Safe and Sound continues to deliver safety education programmes across the county and between January and March the team delivered to over 3,265 years 5 and 6 pupils which covered an average of 83% of the schools invited to participate. These sessions included fire safety in the home, money-wise, anti-social behaviour, water safety and seatbelt safety. The content of each of the session is determined with local partners to ensure the educational input meets the needs of the local areas.

Unfortunately the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown meant that the physical activities planned for April, May and June has not taken place. However to ensure a continued delivery of community safety education of this nature the Safe and Sound team in conjunction with a number of partners has developed an online package which sees the delivery of a live lesson once a week for 12 weeks. This has been delivered through LearnLive who have provided their platform free of charge and the session follows a similar format with the delivery of specific workshops. As part of the lesson a live chat was also hosted giving viewers the opportunity to interact and ask questions during the lesson. The lesson can also be viewed after the event giving viewers the opportunity to complete the session at a time to suit them if they were unable to joint the live slot. Schools were also able to access the session and through the live chat facility and feedback being provided it is clear that 17 schools joined the live sessions.

The first live lesson took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> May and they have been running on a weekly basis since that date. In week 1 there were 1,272 registered log-ins and 766 messages posted on the live chat facility and during week 2 there were 1,458 registered log-ins and with over 4,000 hits on the website. The number of log-ins does not equate to the number of viewers as this may be a school class with 10 pupils that have logged in as a single user.

Work is now taking place exploring how this approach is added to the way in which Safe and Sound is delivered in the future as the engagement statistics indicate the value in further enhancing the delivery model.

- 4.1b) As part of the PFI developments the inclusion of community facilities as well as partner facilities within the Services Community Fire Stations was seen as an important method for engaging various groups around the county.

Between January and March the community facilities on the PFI 1 stations were used on 962 occasions for a total of 3723 hours. The facilities at the PFI 2 sites were used on a total of 1270 occasions equating to a total of 4863 hours.

Prior to the announcement of the lockdown as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic the Service had taken the decision to suspend all community use of these facilities in order to mitigate the potential for contamination at a station. The suspension continues and is likely to be in place for the foreseeable future.

The Shoebox Theatre Lunch & Play Reading Club have been using the facilities at Tamworth Mercia Community Fire Station for the last 2 years. The group provides a session once a month and welcomes all ages and circumstances to come together to read a play and chat over a buffet lunch.

The group was initially home based, that expanded over time and popularity, with the purpose to help reduce social isolation whilst improving local residents wellbeing. On average they have between 8–14 individuals attending on a regular basis. As a non-profit making organisation the lunches are funded or provided from local charities or churches. The group is advertised by a few posters within the local area, a Facebook page and website. The use of Tamworth Mercia fire station was vital to the continuation of the group as more members joined the need for a community facility was necessary.

The members stated that they thoroughly enjoy attending this group, with new friendships having been gained and activities outside the group now taking place. One member in particular said that if he did not have this activity, he could potentially be stuck inside his home for months at a time feeling sure this would have a negative impact on his wellbeing. A new member shared some of his personal experiences and how he had been diagnosed with bipolar he stated “the afternoon had been a refuge for him, he'd turned his phone off and really appreciated that quiet time.” The group has reduced the social isolation of its members, helping them to gain confidence and the members now have a network of friends that they did not have before.

- 4.1c) Over the last three months three Prince's Trust Team programmes were completed in Cannock, Tamworth and Stafford. A total of 27 participants graduated from the programmes with a high percentage going back into education on completion of their programme. Several community projects were undertaken which included work with the Friends of Hednesford Park which saw a mental health awareness trail being created and a clear-up of the heritage trail and war memorial. The project at Colenade Gardens in Highfields, Stafford came shortly after the site had been a victim of crime with equipment being stolen and vandalism affected the area. Planters were

rebuilt, new planting was provided along with some new equipment. Finally work was undertaken at Whittington Barracks to create an area of poppies in memory of those who lost their lives in military service.

The C19 lockdown had an impact on the face-to-face delivery of these programmes along with the Fairbridge and Get Started programmes however the team have used technology to maintain the links with participants. This has helped these young people keep a sense of advancement and connection with their fellow programme participants.

## 4.2 Community Safety and Wellbeing

4.2a) In order to ensure improving outcomes for the communities of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire key performance measures are reported on a quarterly basis and compared to the same quarter from the previous financial year.

- The Service attended 1844 incidents during Q4 19/20 compared to 1876 in Q4 18/19. This is a decrease of 32 across the quarter which represents a 1.7% decrease against the time period of 18/19. Over the quarter there have been fewer calls to false alarms and secondary fires however there has been an increase in special service calls. Over the last five quarters the trend in respect of all incidents being attended is in a downward direction.
- The Service attended 137 accidental dwelling fires in Q4 19/20 compared to 141 during Q4 18/19. Of these incidents 84 were classified as low severity and 53 as high severity, in comparison to 103 low and 38 high in Q4 18/19. The top causes of these fires remain the same as the previous quarter; cooking related and faulty equipment. Over the last 5 quarters the trend remains in a downward direction.
- During Q4 19/20 there were 6 injuries and 0 fatalities which occurred in accidental dwelling fires in comparison to 2 injuries and 2 fatalities during Q4 18/19. In all of these cases the individuals concerned fell within one or more of the SAME categories.
- During Q4 19/20 5318 safe and well visits were completed in comparison to 6942 in Q4 18/19. Due to the C19 pandemic revised prevention arrangements were established resulting in safe and well visits been stopped with the exception of where an immediate risk to life was identified. Safe and Well visits are targeted and prioritised to the following groups within our communities, we continue to provide advice and guidance to all residents however the individuals identified below will receive a visit: -

Those who have had a fire and the surrounding properties

- Couples who are 85-years-old or over
- Single occupiers ages 65 or over
- Single occupiers, aged 50-64, who are smokers or alcohol dependent

- Single parents
- Couples with young children
- Anyone with alcohol dependency
- Anyone whose property is at immediate risk of arson

The Service risk stratifies the county and then at household level determines the actual stratification level the household falls into, gold, silver or bronze. This approach ensures the most vulnerable are targeted and receive a bespoke visit from a crew, technician or volunteer.

During this quarter 582 referrals onto partner agencies were made from these safe and well visits compared to 693 during Q4 18/19.

- The Service attended 32 accidental business fires in Q4 19/20 in comparison to 31 in Q4 18/19. The top cause of this type of incident is faulty equipment which accounted for 10 of these incidents. Over the last 5 quarters the trend for this type of incident is in an upwards direction.
- The Service attended 150 RTC's during Q4 19/20 in comparison to 156 during Q4 18/19. The Service does not attend all RTC's that occur across the county therefore this figure does not represent the totality of RTC's experienced across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. Of these incidents crews assisted with the removal of persons from vehicles on 21 occasions, whilst on 88 occasion's crews made either the vehicle or the area safe.
- The Service attended 4321 automatic fire alarm signals classed as unwanted fire signals during Q4 19/20 in comparison to 296 attended during Q4 18/19. The Service introduced a revised automatic fire alarm policy which defines the methodology the Service adopts when in receipt of these types of calls. Fire Control utilise a call challenge process for automatic fire alarms and during this quarter a further 514 calls were not attended as they were screened out by the process of call challenge. Over the last 5 quarters the trend for this type of incident is in an upward direction.

4.2b) Work continues to progress well against the Services' Community Sprinkler project with Stoke-on-Trent City Council appointing the principal contractors for the third phase of their work. This work is scheduled to start this summer and will see a further 4 high rise blocks retro-fitted with sprinklers. These works are expected to be completed next year.

It is worth noting that on May 22<sup>nd</sup> there was a fire in a flat contained within Lindop Court in Hanley. The sprinkler system in this high rise block was only completed earlier this year and the chip pan fire was extinguished successfully on activation of the sprinkler system. This event marks the first sprinkler save of a building and clearly demonstrates the importance of this work. By extinguishing the fire during its early stages the sprinkler system

reduced the impact on the occupant of the flat and their neighbours. In addition based on the average cost (2008 Economic Cost of Fire Report) of an accidental dwelling fire £44.5k this financial cost will have also been considerably reduced.

Work at Lichfield Towers has recently seen a change in managing agents following an unexpected closure of the original company. Disappointingly this occurred the week before the show flat was scheduled for works to be completed. The new management agent however is committed to delivering the aspiration of the Directors to see this work through and this will be taken forward when the management company is in a position to revisit the work.

The C19 lockdown has impacted on our ability to formally meet and present our offer to Midland Heart for a further block in Lichfield. Once the restrictions are lifted this engagement will be progressed.

#### 4.3 Planning, resilience and response

##### 4.3a) Protection funding

As part of the work following phase 1 of the Grenfell Inquiry a further £20m of grant funding has been allocated to the sector in support of protection (fire safety) work. A total of £16m has been allocated directly to FRS's to drive improvement in this area of work, with the remaining £4m being allocated to the National Fire Chiefs Council.

The Service has received circa £115k of this grant funding which was allocated using a formula that took into account the number of high rise residential buildings (11m-18m) within the Service area and other high risk residential buildings such as registered care homes, student accommodation, hospitals and hotels. Data from the MHCLG building register was used in determining the number of these types of buildings within each Service area. The Service is reviewing this data against that held locally to ensure a match between the two data sets. A focus on the delivery of inspections and audits in these buildings will form a significant part of the Service's protection work over the next 18 months.

The funding is to be used to support the improvement in protection work and the Service's delivery in line with locally agreed integrated risk management plans and risk-based inspection programmes.

##### 4.3b) Whole-time recruitment

The Service commenced its whole-time firefighter recruitment campaign during the spring which saw over 2000 applicants with 15% being female and 5% being of a BME heritage. The applicants were invited to undertake the online tests which resulted in circa 420 being invited to the job related test

days. Of the applicants invited to the next stage 15% are female and 4.7% are from a BME heritage which reflects the percentages within the original number of applicants.

The C19 lockdown however resulted in a decision being taken to delay the job related tests events which require face-to-face sessions. The job related test events have been rescheduled for August followed by the assessment centres during September.

This has also meant a delay in running the first of 2 whole-time firefighter courses which will now start in Jan 2021 followed by the second course in September 2021. These two courses will see circa 30 new whole-time firefighters joining the Service in 2021 and commencing their apprenticeship.

#### 4.3c) COVID 19 Planning & Response

Separate report on the agenda

### **Conclusion**

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel will continue to receive updates in line with their proposed work plan for the coming year and as requested.

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