

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Periodic Report of the Chairman on Authority Matters

Performance

1. The Authority has been advised of the performance for the third quarter of 2017/18.

All Attended Incidents - There have been 1982 incidents in Quarter 3 of 2017/18, compared to 2042 during the same period last year. The trend over the five quarters shown was going up due to the numbers experienced in Quarter 1 and 2.

Accidental Dwelling Fires - There have been 138 Accidental Dwelling Fires in Quarter 3 of 2017/18 compared to 143 during the same period last year. The trend over the five period timeframe is down.

Safe and Well Visits Delivered - During Quarter 3 of 2017/18 there were 6129 Safe and Well Visits delivered compared to 6732 in Quarter 3 of 2016/17.

Accidental Dwelling Fires in Gold, Silver or Bronze Households - The number of Accidental Dwelling Fires in Gold, Silver or Bronze households is 20 during Quarter 3 compared to 23 during the same period last year.

Safe and Well Visits Delivered to Gold, Silver or Bronze Households - The number of Safe and Well visits delivered to Gold, Silver or Bronze households is 1180 during Quarter 3. 1083 Safe and Well Visits were undertaken in Quarter 3 of 2016/17.

Deaths and Injuries in Accidental Dwelling Fires - There have been two deaths and eight injuries during Quarter 3 of 2017/18 compared to two deaths and ten injuries during the same period last year.

Waste Site Incidents

2. The fire at Slitting Mill is now extinguished and firefighting activities have now ceased following the Service's involvement in the site since September 2016. Responsibility for the site has been passed over to Cannock Chase District Council and the Recovery Coordination Group is overseeing the next phase in respect of the site.

Further information and progress in relation to the removal of waste at some of the higher risk sites across the County will be reported in due course. A method statement is currently being produced by contractors for the removal of waste from one site and work is ongoing to remove waste at a site in Stoke-on-Trent. There have also been some successful prosecutions by the Environment Agency at the higher risk sites, emphasising further the joint work carried out in Staffordshire to counter illicit waste site activities.

Whole-Time Prevent Training

3. The new whole-time recruits programme took place during 2017 which included the newly developed in-house Community Safety Practitioner framework. This framework has now received Skills for Justice Awards endorsement.

An evaluation of the prevention training that the 2017 whole-time recruits course completed has now concluded. In order for individuals to gain accreditation there will be a further three days' work completed which includes a formal assessment process. Feedback from those undertaking the training has highlighted the importance of this input during the initial recruits course. There was limited awareness of the complete picture of prevention at the start of the training, however there was a clear understanding how prevention fits into the role of the firefighter by the conclusion of the course.

Safe and Well Changes

4. From 12 February the Safe and Well visits were changed and a targeted approach was adopted throughout the Service. This now means that there is now set criteria that determines who will receive a Safe and Well visit. The criteria are detailed below: -

- 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.

Those who do not meet the criteria will still be able to call the Community Advice Team for safety information and where appropriate they will receive a home safety pack with all the additional advice they need. This new approach means the Service is able to target the most vulnerable people in the community and ensure residents are getting the right advice for them. The Service will be evaluating the new approach and adapting as appropriate.

Delay on Transfer of Governance to the Police and Crime Commissioner

5. The Authority has received notification that, due to some technical issues, the process for transferring the governance function of the Fire Authority to the Police and Crime Commissioner has been delayed in that the Statutory Instrument which will give effect to the change will not now be lodged in Parliament in time to allow the original date of the 1st June 2018 to be achieved.

Further detailed information is expected as to the reasons around this development. In the meantime until such time as the process of transfer is completed the Fire Authority remains fully competent and accountable for ensuring the statutory role of delivering fire services in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire are properly discharged. In this respect the full calendar of meetings of the Authority and its Committees remains in full effect and Members have been asked to ensure that these meeting obligations remain in their diaries. Further detail is still awaited.

S J Sweeney
Chairman

D M Jellyman
Vice Chairman