

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AUTHORITY	
date	22 October 2004	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

FIRE SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update members regarding the progression of the Fire Safety Implementation Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will recall the Fire Authority meeting of 3rd September 2004 when the draft 2005/06 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) was approved for public consultation. The main ethos of the plan is to “create safer communities by education (community safety), prevention (fire safety enforcement) and intervention (operational response).”

2.2 A Fire Safety Implementation Plan was produced as a basis to support the IRMP, and to deal with forthcoming legislation. The Fire Safety Implementation Plan will ensure a safe environment for the public by ensuring adequate fire safety measures are provided within buildings, and provide protocols for looking at those that do not meet the required standards.

3. REPORT

3.1 As from Monday 12th July 2004, the first phase of the Fire Safety restructure was put into place. This broadly includes three groups of inspecting Officers based within the geographical areas (Mansfield, City, South) and a County-wide licensing section. These are supported by Officers based at Fire Service Headquarters.

3.2 A Fire Safety advice line has also been established within Fire Service Headquarters. This deals with all queries emanating from commercial premises and is advertised on all general literature, eg: leaflets.

3.3 In addition to the new bases, the inspecting Officers are undertaking new systems of work which are aimed at adopting a risk based approach to the inspection of premises within the county and are based on the Enforcement Management Model utilised by the Health and Safety Executive. This involves gathering of information and the grading of each premises, resulting in actions to be taken. This will include the forwarding of critical information to Operational Crews and will ensure a more consistent approach to any Enforcement issues that may arise.

3.4 The collation of data from the risk based audit will bring together data which will inform enforcement/compliance, and the data that will be gathered for Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC), which in its turn informs the Integrated Risk Management Planning process.

3.5 It is recognised that (in line with national views on data collation) the Fire Safety Officer is a key player in the collection of numerous pieces of data and we are working toward linking all building information within a central accessible point, this

will assist operational response should the fire safety protection control measures in that building prove to be inadequate. The proposed new database will be a central player in achieving this aim. This data will need to meet the requirements of external and internal measures of performance, that not only the proposed Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRO) imposes, but also those required by the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI), Output Measure Performance Indicators (OMPI), Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Fire Safety Inspection Policy, etc.

- 3.6 The Chief Fire Officers Association (RRO) group have recognised that gathering data from differing sources using different systems will be inhibitory unless there is developed a common language, to allow the cross mapping of the data, not only to internal Fire Service users but to external agencies that the Fire and Rescue Service interact with. These other agencies have a great wealth of information that can be shared with the Fire and Rescue Service on buildings and workplaces.
- 3.7 Service Level Agreements are now in place with key players within the County. These include agreements with Building Controls, Environmental Health, Education (City and County), NHS Trusts, Care Standards and incorporate exchange of information, meetings and utilise the new risk based approach to their premises.
- 3.8 The Service is actively involved at a national level with the works being carried out concerning the new RRO, which is likely to be implemented in Spring 2005. We also chair the regional group that is working toward and examining ways of working together regionally. This has already resulted in a number of joint training sessions and greater cooperation between our regional Fire Services.
- 3.9 For information there are a number of issues relating to the impact of the forthcoming Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order and a further report will be produced, mid – late October 2004 dependant on the progress of the Order itself and further detail emerging.
- 3.10 A performance monitoring regime has commenced and is designed to ensure that systems of work are adequate. All visits have been pre-arranged up to December 2004 and will form an integral part of further establishing and defining the success of Fire Safety Implementation Plan.
- 3.11 The above detail shows a significant change to previous work practices and whilst a great deal of work has been required to enable this to be achieved, there are still a number of significant workstreams that need to be completed. These include working toward a national set of datasets to be utilised by all Fire Services and Building Control, Licensing Committees etc, regarding buildings and workplaces. Guidance documentation, improved information on the website, operational crews involvement/training in Fire Safety, all need to be further defined over the coming months and the issues of suitable database and mobile working also need resolving.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equal opportunity implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations contained within the report are in line with the Local Risk Management Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATION

That members note the report and continue to support the progress being made.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION

None.

Paul Woods
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER