

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	
	COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE	
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REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

ENHANCED COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITY AS A RESULT OF SHIFT CHANGE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the anticipated additional Community Safety activities made possible from the shift change process.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Authority, through its IRMP process, has made clear the desire to increase community safety interventions and activities with the expectation of driving down risk and the occurrence of avoidable injuries within Nottinghamshire.

2.2 One of the strands of work to assist in this process is the release of capacity from within the traditional operational shift system by removing stand-down, and re-organising working arrangements to facilitate maximum community engagement opportunities.

3. REPORT

3.1 The removal of stand-down releases over 200,000 hours per annum in terms of capacity that can be focused on activities to reduce risk in the community faced by members of the public and firefighters alike. Part of the work to implement the new shifts has included revised working practices guidance that assists local managers in planning the activities of staff. By moving all work such as training, maintenance and planning in to the night, the potential for day time community engagement activity is maximised.

3.3 Increased targets with regards to core work such as home safety checks and the delivery of educational packages have also been introduced to provide a clear expectation of what it is believed can be delivered through the release of the additional capacity. Additionally, it is anticipated that crews will become more visible and engage with communities to break down cultural barriers and become integral to, in particular, those harder to reach communities.

3.4 It is accepted that this first phase of transition to the new working arrangements will be measured on inputs and outputs driven by centrally set targets. It is also expected however, that local managers will be involved in undertaking analysis of risks at a local level to enable them to set their own targets and expectations. This is a positive move forward in terms of local managers having the ability to address local issues that they have identified as being the priority areas of risk in their community.

- 3.5 The shift change process also introduces the Community Safety Team concept within the City. This new and innovative way of working adopts demand led resourcing principles which ensures that operational crews are available at times of highest call demand, but also have the ability to spend uninterrupted time dedicated to community safety activities. Furthermore, individuals have the ability to self-roster to enable a more flexible approach to work.
- 3.6 In response to the early feedback received from the Operational Assurance audit, the Service is also increasing its awareness of risks within the community by expanding the number of site specific plans held. This will enhance the safety of firefighters by putting in place plans to deal with incidents at all known risk sites within the County. These plans are then made available to crews and senior officers at the scene of operations through the Vehicle Mounted Data System (VMDS) currently fitted to all front line appliances. This ensures the ability to quickly put in place a strategy to deal with the incident, as well as early recognition of potential risks to operational crews.
- 3.7 The Service also has the capacity to increase the number of training exercises undertaken at known risk sites. These will vary in size from small local incidents involving just fire and rescue staff, to large scale regional scenarios as part of the ongoing multi agency preparation for major incidents. This not only satisfies the legislative requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), it also increases our awareness and ability to work more effectively with partner agencies.
- 3.8 Community Safety initiatives will also expand as a result of the released capacity. The First Contact Scheme, which was developed and piloted in Rushcliffe is being rolled out across the county. This scheme enables over ten different organisations to refer the elderly to other partner agencies within the scheme. Not only has this enabled the Fire and Rescue Service to target resources at those in need, we have also made referrals to other organisations which have resulted in enhanced security measures for vulnerable people being put in place, and additional financial benefits being awarded to those in need.
- 3.9 Mansfield District engaged in a project with Cycle4Life, who run a program for young people who have been excluded from secondary school. The students are taught life skills, communication skills, social responsibility, team work and ethics alongside national curriculum teaching. The program further educates about the value of systems, routine and discipline. The Fire and Rescue Service element centred around community safety initiatives, but also demonstrated how life skills are required in everyday life. The project leader recognised the Firefighters ability to engage with young people and portray a strong positive role model. Further schemes are being considered for the future.
- 3.10 Watch Managers are attending neighbourhood management team meetings to discuss and promote actions to deal with issues such as Road Safety, Arson, avoidable injuries and vulnerable persons. To further enhance this area of work a partnership evaluation is taking place to ensure the Service is represented in the right forums at the correct level to have a positive impact on the community we serve.
- 3.11 Work is underway to develop a partnership office in the Bellamy Road area of Mansfield. This will have a Fire Service 'hot desk' where information will be available, and members of the public will be able to seek face to face advice from the Service. This scheme will also enable the Service to raise its profile in the community, and with other organisations.

- 3.12 It is acknowledged that supervisory managers are going to need support and encouragement to gain the maximum benefit from the new working arrangements. This is an ongoing process as the cultural issues need to be dealt with sensitively, particularly in light of the very recent shift change.
- 3.13 Middle managers have been briefed, and are fully aware of the need to engage with operational crews to support and encourage them through the early months of the new working arrangements. Now shift change has finally arrived, the Service will move forward positively as new working practices are fully embedded in line with the new planning year.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Shift Change process and associated Community Safety activities are all budgeted for through the annual budget process.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

The Shift change process is part of a collective agreement between Management and Trade Union's. This is currently being monitored through the Member led Shift Change review group.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment on the contents of this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Initial outcomes from the implementation of Shift Change indicate greater involvement in prevention activities. Outcomes will continue to be monitored, but this meets with government expectations of the IRMP process and the concepts of a move from response to prevention.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the activities to date and continue to receive reports on progress made.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

- IRMP 2004 -05
- IRMP 2005 – 06
- Community Safety Plan 2006-09
- Civil Contingencies Act (2004)

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