



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Community Safety Committee

UPDATE: VULNERABLE PERSONS REFERRALS

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

Date: 16 January 2009

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on referrals of vulnerable persons to the Home Safety Check (HSC) scheme and other associated initiatives made to the Service.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : John Buckley
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 967 0880

Email : john.buckley@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries
Contact :** Elisabeth Reeson
(0115) 967 5889 elisabeth.reeson@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

Following the Community Safety Committee meeting of 31 October 2008 and presentation of a report entitled "Pub Watch Campaign – Value and Benefit", Members asked for an update on referrals made to this and other such schemes which identify persons at risk from fire related incidents.

2. REPORT

2.1 Sources of referrals for HSCs for vulnerable people come from a variety of organisations including health, housing, social care and the voluntary sector. Information from the Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) database for the period 1 January 2008 to 8 December 2008 identifies that 6472 HSCs have been completed, of which 2252 of these were requested by other agencies.

- Only a small number of referrals have been received from the Pub Watch campaign, however one of the referrals was for a high risk occupant who would otherwise have remained unknown to us;
- 245 HSCs have been completed within the deaf and hard of hearing community with specialist alarm systems fitted by the Service's trained operatives;
- 92 Sanctuary Scheme (Domestic Violence) inspections by the Prevention Community Safety Team.

2.2 The Sanctuary Scheme has been developed to assist victims of domestic violence and hate crime to feel safe and remain in their homes, without having to leave their home and become homeless. Sanctuary Schemes are now seen as a positive response to domestic violence and hate crimes when developed through a close working partnership between all key local agencies.

2.3 There are differences between the provision of a HSC visit and a Sanctuary visit:

- The referral comes from a trained Domestic Violence Co-ordinator;
- The referral procedure is a stand alone database which is treated in the strictest of confidence. Names and addresses are coded and some District Councils will not pass information by email so as to reduce the possibility of compromising the location of the victim;
- Staff within the Prevention Community Safety Team have undertaken increased security screening to enable them to provide support to the multi agency team;

- Additional training in domestic violence has been provided in order to reassure the victim that their situation is treated very seriously, which in turn reflects the increased importance that the Service puts on their situation;
- The Sanctuary HSC inspection is carried out as part of a wider assessment alongside the Service's partners to offer a balance between fire safety provisions and security of the building which will provide a reasonably safe environment given each individual circumstance of the case;
- An increased level of smoke detection may be recommended depending upon the risk;
- A provision for emergency lighting may be required, either internally, externally or both.

2.4 The pre-determined attendance to the property will be increased from two appliances to three. Crews attending an incident will be made aware of the increased risks involved and the increased level of security that may have been fitted to the property

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of the smoke alarms comes from the Service's existing smoke alarm budget and training has been provided through the partnership.

3.2 The average cost of an optical smoke alarm is £6.61 and deaf alarms cost £160.00. More complex hard wired systems may be recommended through the Sanctuary scheme at an additional cost. This at present is met through the Sanctuary partnership.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

All staff involved in work involving additional risks and increased sensitivity are subject to enhanced criminal records bureau and security clearance checks. Training is also delivered through the partnership

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial equality impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix A.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the Service is a statutory partner. It is expected that the Service works in partnership to reduce the number of incidents associated with fire related and other antisocial behavioural incidents.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

These initiatives will further reduce the risk management issues and support the way that the Service and its partners manage the risks within the county.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report and continue to support such initiatives which reduce the risks within these vulnerable groups of the community

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Initial Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

This questionnaire will enable you to decide whether or not the new or proposed policy or service needs to go through a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Title of policy or service							Update : Vulnerable Persons Referrals							
Name of Employee completing assessment:							Department and Section:							
ACFO John Buckley							Strategic Management Suite							
1. State the purpose and aims of the policy or service.														
To update Members on referrals of vulnerable persons to the Home Safety Check (HSC) scheme and other associated initiatives made to the Service.														
2. Who is responsible for implementing it?														
Assistant Chief Fire Officer Risk Reduction														
3. Who is likely to be disproportionately affected by the proposal? People from which of the equality strands? (please tick)														
Age	Disability	Family Status	Gender	Race	Sexual Orientation	Religion or Belief								
4. If no boxes are ticked – there is no need to continue the EIA														