



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of the meeting held on **16 JANUARY 2009** at the Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, from 10.00 am to 10.41 am.

Membership

Councillor S Fielding (Chair)
Councillor B Grocock
^ Councillor J Hemsall
Councillor P Henshaw
Councillor P Owen

Members absent are marked ^

15 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hemsall.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

17 MINUTES

RESOLVED

- (1) that the minutes of the last meeting held on 31 October 2008, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair;
- (2) that, further to minute 8, the initial work being undertaken by Mr C Webb to underpin the review of the retained service to ensure its resilience and availability and the intention to report to this Committee in due course on the outcome(s) of the review, be noted.

18 FLOOD PREPARATION REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. The report informed members of work undertaken to ensure readiness in the event a major flooding incident, both by the organisation in a direct capacity, and collaboratively via its participation in other groups such as the Inland Water Strategic Group, the Emergency Planning Liaison Group and the Local Resilience Forum. Recommendations made by the County Council's Drainage and Watercourses Select committee review were also being pursued.

The report also outlined on-going activities in the areas of prevention, response and recovery to maximise local communities' preparation, protection and support in the event of a major incident. As part of Service preparations, appropriate budgetary provision was also being made to ensure that all firefighters would receive level one training and all fire engines would be equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment. Training would be staggered, with those stations such as Ashfield, Retford, Newark and the new Highfields site, which already had swiftwater response capabilities, being prioritised first.

Notwithstanding the training to be provided to parish councils and the identification of the desirability of providing the service locally, Members commented that a proposal to cascade incident warnings to local communities via a network of volunteers, with local contact via parish councillors was likely to encounter difficulties in the reliability of volunteer structures. If continuation of this option was contemplated, then it should be supplemented by contacts with principal agencies such as hospital and/or primary care trust databases as a means of identifying the most vulnerable, at risk, residents.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the progress be noted;**
- (2) that the Chief Fire Officer be requested to respond separately to Members regarding the timescale for completion of the Flood Response Plan.**

19 PEER REVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. Mr Horton explained that its original review of operational service delivery undertaken in 2006 was now in the process of being revisited by the Audit Commission.

The report outlined the key lines of enquiry, methodology and framework which would form the basis for the review. Reflecting on positive experiences by Services in Suffolk and Cornwall, a peer review would be undertaken by Excellence in Business to gain a measure of its current position in preparation for the main review. The outcome(s) of the peer review process would be considered by the Performance and Management Committee in due course.

The Audit Commission review was expected to take place during mid-February 2009, with initial feedback being provided during March. A further report would be submitted to this Committee on the outcomes of the full review, identifying areas for further improvement.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

20 VULNERABLE PERSONS REFERRALS: UPDATE

Further to minute 12 dated 31 October 2008, consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.

The report outlined the source organisations which enabled the Service to identify those individuals who were at greater risk from fire and for the Service to improve existing or provide additional measures as necessary. Examples of the benefits of the schemes included:-

- the identification of one high risk occupant via the Pub Watch initiative;
- the fitting of specialist alarm systems for deaf or hard of hearing individuals following the completion of 245 reviews, with a secondee from the Primary Care Trust providing basic sign language training for staff;
- 92 inspections of premises by the Prevention Community Safety Team, following referrals under the Sanctuary (domestic violence) Scheme. Staff form part of a multi-agency team who undertake a risk assessment of the premise and install additional provision where required. Fire crews are also informed of any additional security measures installed to enable them to gain entry in an emergency.

Officers had previously used measures such as media advertising and community advocates to provide information to hard to reach sectors of the community, and although increased use of community outreach and employment diversity workers were currently being used, there are difficulties in establishing longer term contacts with vulnerable groups within society. Suggestions for additional contacts, such as the use of community elders, would be welcomed.

The current funding arrangements and difficulties for the First Contact organisation, from which the Service had received many, high quality referrals, were referred to.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;**
- (2) that the Chief Fire Officer report to a future meeting of the Committee the outcomes of a review of First Contact and the value of its activities to the Service;**
- (3) that the Chief Fire Officer report to a future meeting on the activities of the Fire Investigation Team.**