



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

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

# **WATER SAFETY EDUCATION: WORKING WITH THE SPECIALIST RESCUE TEAM**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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**Agenda Item No:**

**Date:**

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on the progress of the development of water safety resources and presentations developed by the education team working with the Specialist Rescue Team.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 As the RiskWatch fire and burn resources are now in use across the county, the Service has become aware of the need to develop water safety resources to support the delivery in schools and at specialist safety events where fire service personnel are working with children and young people.
- 1.2 The principal ethos underlying RiskWatch is to educate and inform children of school age about a range of safety issues. The Fire Service approach enforces key messages about what the children can do in an emergency, how to get help and most importantly not to put themselves in difficulty in water.
- 1.3 The RiskWatch programme is now a key part of the Service's schools strategy and the Service is now seeking to develop it further to encompass water safety as this is a safety message which is not as well developed at events we attend.
- 1.4 The Service has a Specialist Rescue Team who can engage with children and young people and provide both an awareness of the work that they do in conjunction with an educational experience of water safety.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 It is important that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) supports all children and young people to reach their full potential by the provision of suitable educational programmes which support learning and development of individuals and support a successful transition to adulthood and the world of further and higher education, training or work.
- 2.2 The resources currently available for RiskWatch in schools have been developed to suitably meet the needs of a mainstream audience aged 3 – 14 years. The intention is to provide water safety resources to meet the needs of learners throughout the school ages and where appropriate give the messages to parents and carers of young children.
- 2.3 Working with the Specialist Rescue Team the Education Team will research and develop presentations which can be delivered by crews at school, station and community events to children and young people.
- 2.4 To support the activities, resources have been identified which will enable us to practically demonstrate the safe ways in which the young person can assist in an emergency by calling for help, phoning 999 and asking for the Fire Service. Techniques associated with casualty floatation using everyday materials and objects and inherent risks are to be passed on to the participants. Whilst throwing a football to keep the casualty afloat and giving the children important safety messages about the dangers of open water including the temperature, disease, steep slippery banks etc.

- 2.5 Resources used to support the activities are still in the process of being sourced but the Service is currently using a floating dummy, life ring and football in the outdoor scenario, and will source an indoor version of water hazards to enable delivery of the water safety messages to a wider audience where the waterside location is not available.
- 2.6 The project also involves the use of the specialist team as they have a range of water rescue equipment to demonstrate which make learning about water safety fun and enjoyable as well as a wealth of knowledge and experience of dealing with emergency situations which can help to educate children about the dangers of open water.
- 2.7 Working with nationally recognised safety organisations such as ROSPA, CSEC (Child Safety Education Coalition) and with LASER, (Learning About Safety by Experiencing Risk), the Service will also draw upon their expertise to ensure that the presentations meet the standard of the accredited scheme and evaluate the program to meet their criteria.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All of the above will be met from within existing budgets for RiskWatch, which are encompassed as part of the whole educational budget, which is broken down into a variety of elements.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Guidance on the use of the resource will be given to personnel who deliver the water safety element of the RiskWatch programme

### **5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

There are no specific aspects in relation to a disproportionate effect in respect of the key equality strands.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under the Fire Services Act 2004, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service has a statutory duty to make provision for the purpose of promoting Community Safety.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority are committed to reducing deaths and injuries in the community. It is clear that advances in the area related to this report complement this commitment and failure to continue this support could produce adverse effects and scrutiny from central government.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members support the approach being taken to extend the RiskWatch programme to address water safety issues with use of the specialist rescue team.

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

None.

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**