



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Joint
Headquarters - Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 24 March 2023
from 10.00 am - 10.56 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Jason Zadrozny (Chair)
Councillor Robert Corden
Councillor Nicola Heaton
Councillor Dave Trimble
Councillor Nigel Turner

Absent

Councillor Nick Raine

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection
Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response
Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer
Catherine Ziane-Pryor, Governance Officer

18 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Nick Raine – work commitments.

19 Declarations of Interests

None.

20 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

21 Service Delivery Performance Report

Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response, and Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection, presented the report which informs members of the performance of the Service between 01 December 2022 and 31 January 2023.

The following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) The Service attended at total of 1,612 incidents during this period, which equates to a 7.7% increase on the same period last year, but with a reduction in fires and an increase false alarms and Special Service Calls;
- b) The extreme weather of the past year is predicted to result in an overall rise in the number of incidents attended by 13.9%;
- c) Attendance of false alarms continues to be a significant draw on resources;
- d) Attendance to fires peaked, particularly for Priority 3 incidents (potential hazard to human life), during the exceptionally dry summer months;
- e) The majority of incident occurred within the Nottingham City district;
- f) Attendance response time during this reporting period averaged 7 minutes and 52 seconds against the current Community Risk Management Plan target response time of 8 minutes;
- g) On-call availability was averaging 87.1%, with availability for each on-call station provided within the report. Hucknall, Misterton, Newark and Warsop delivered availability in excess of 95%, whilst Southwell continues to experience problems and does not meet the Service's minimum standard;
- h) Breakdowns of the availability of on-call and day shift crewing of appliances at Ashfield and Retford are provided in the report;
- i) Further to member's request, the availability of Whole-Time day shift appliances is provided in the report, specifically because of mechanical fault, servicing, insufficient crewing levels, replenishment of contaminated PPE, out-of-county training, or for crew welfare. Ashfield achieved the lowest unavailability at 0.38%, whilst the second appliance at Stockhill was unavailable 3.46% of the time;
- j) Reduced availability of appliances at Stockhill and London Road stations was explained due to these stations being generally more active and therefore requiring decontamination/ preparation for further callouts;
- k) In response to members' concerns that it was counterintuitive to reduce the number of appliances at both Stockhill and London Road stations, as per the recent public consultation, if these stations were more active than some others, the Chief Fire Officer assured the Committee that generally across the Service there were only six appliances in action at any time on a normal day, and that the other 20 appliances within the City and County, would be available if required and resourced to risk, with further appliances available from neighbouring services if necessary;
- l) 96% of 999 calls were answered within 7 seconds;
- m) The mobilising system continues to present ongoing issues and performance had slipped to 83%. Work continues to address the issues and it is noted that backup mechanisms are in place and utilised. The system is due to be replaced, potentially

through a joint procurement with Derbyshire, of a robust basic model that can be adapted and evolve as required;

- n) Arrangements and time scales for tendering for the new mobilising system are uncertain at the moment but members will be kept informed of progress;
- o) The significant increase in false alarms, or unwanted fire signals (UwFS), could not be accounted for and further work is underway;
- p) With regard to prevention work, the Service has now completed 2,745 Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) during the reporting period, which equates to an overall total of 93.05% of the 13,000 target for 2022/23, with an achievement of nearer 14,000 visits predicted to be completed by the close of this year, which results in next year's target rising to 14,000;
- q) A variety of safety education and prevention packages have been rolled out across multiple schools, as listed in the report. Schools in areas where communities have been affected by fatal fires, have been targeted, as have schools in areas where data led profiling has identified higher safety risks, including increased fire setting tendencies;
- r) Following members' concerns at the negative implications of naming a new school initiative 'risky schools', this title was suggested to be amended to 'safer schools';
- s) The 'Fire Setters' programme continues to work with individuals referred to the programme following fire setting incidents. Success is very dependent on the individuals as many have complex and troubled lives, but it is estimated that 50-75% of participants do not reoffend;
- t) Road safety interventions aimed at young adults in advance of them being eligible to drive, such as Operation Highway take place with partners and have reached more than 450 pupils;
- u) The 'Stay Wise' programme is being rolled out nationally through the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC), with the Service's Youth Engagement Officer seconded to help co-ordinate this work nationally and prevent each service working in isolation to develop their own education programmes;
- v) The interactive home safety advice tool 'Safe Links' is due to be rolled out soon with the intention to provide broader safety advice for people in their own homes;
- w) Evaluation of programmes is key for prevention with different approaches to different programmes. HMI acknowledged the Service's commitment to evaluation and learning from the results;
- x) The completion of 1,200 Fire Safety Audits is on target for this year, with 337 requiring informal action and 29 premises receiving formal notices;
- y) Fire Safety Inspectors continue to be shadowed until able to undertake inspections as part of their warranted status. The Service is on target to achieve the 500 Business Safety Checks for 2022/23;

- z) A broad variety of protection activities have been undertaken in this reporting year, and are listed in the report;
- aa) The high numbers of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) continue to prove a challenge with 2,767 of the 3,880 UwFS being considered due to false alarm apparatus, with 2,176 being from residential premises where people are often most vulnerable and where the Service has no statutory enforcement powers;
- bb) The Building Safety Act is progressing and will require a multi-disciplinary inspection team, similar to that the JAIT (Joint Audit and Inspection Team) operated by the Service and city council, with 23 buildings over 18 meters in height yet to be inspected;
- cc) The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 became law on 23 January 2023 and places further statutory duties on the Service and responsible persons, most significantly regarding buildings of 18 metres and more in height which will place further burdens of responsibility on the Service and require reconsideration of capacity and demand;
- dd) Other neighbouring Services don't appear to have any issues with retention of Inspection and Safety officers which is an issue in the South of the Country;
- ee) The NFCC is lobbying for further building safety measures including ensuring that tall buildings have more than one staircase.

Members commented:

- ff) When appropriate, members of the committee would welcome an invitation to observe the delivery of some of the school education programmes;
- gg) The work of officers in exceeding the target of delivering more than 1,000 Safe and Well Visits beyond the target is commended;
- hh) It's vitally important that with the rapid redevelopment of higher buildings within the City, that Safety inspections are completed in a timely manner.

Resolved to note the report.

22 2022 Fatal Fires Review

Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection, presented the report which updates members with an overview of the fatal fire incidents attended by the Service during the 2022 calendar year.

The following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) There were 11 fatalities from 7 incidents during 2022, compared to 7 fatalities in 2021;
- b) All fatalities were within domestic premises;

- c) 3 of the fatal incidents occurred within the Ashfield District Council area, 3 in Nottingham City, and 1 in Broxtowe;
- d) Ages of the fatalities ranged from a child of one year, up to a 91 year old;
- e) 7 of the fatalities matched the 'CHARLIE' profile, with 3 living alone, 2 smokers, and 2 having care packages;
- f) Of the 7 incidents, 4 addresses were known to the Service via previous interactions/ referrals, but this shows that even if known to the Service and partners and targeted for preventative support, there is no guarantee that multi-agency engagement will prevent incidents;
- g) The report sets out background information to each of the 4 addresses, including a history of engagement and support;
- h) The Serious Event Review Group meets following a fatality and considers the circumstances and what additional preventative work could be helpful;
- i) The Service ensured that community reassurance and engagement activities took place in the communities in which the fatalities occurred;
- j) Occupational Therapist input has proved valuable to support some particularly vulnerable citizens as part of the SWVs;
- k) Training and educating partners on the CHARLIE profile, which identifies those most at risk of a domestic fire, is ongoing and learning shared between partners;
- l) The mobilising system is premises focused, but the internal systems are person focused. However, people move home and things change, including complexity of health and care needs, so there is no guarantee that information gathered during SWVs, which may be useful when attending a fire, remain relevant, and resources aren't available to enable to physically check and then confirm/update the relevancy.

Members commented as follows:

- m) The communication of the Service with elected members following a local fatal incident is welcomed, as is the assurance provided to local communities following such a tragic event;
- n) Members were shocked at the continuing high numbers of incidents due to electric blankets and naked flames. Whilst scented candles remain popular, it is presumed that the use of electric blankets has increased since heating prices have risen. Also of concern is the social media trend of supposedly heating a home by using a candle and terracotta pot device, which doesn't really work anyway and can explode. The ongoing national safety awareness education, including the prominent television campaign, are welcomed.

The Chief Fire Officer responded at the request of the Chair, that the investigation into the substantial Savanna Rag site fire in Mansfield is ongoing, but local residents have expressed immense gratitude to the Fire Service for controlling the ferocious fire and preventing the loss of neighbouring homes.

Partners worked well together including Severn Trent Water which made additional water supplies available on scene to the Service in the form of 30,000 litre water tankers.

Resolved to note the report.