



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

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 2 October 2015 from 10.00am to 11.14am.

Membership

Present

Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Roger Jackson
Councillor Dave Liversidge
Councillor Mike Pringle

Absent

Councillor Ken Rigby
Councillor Eunice Campbell (Chair)

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Substitute for Councillor Eunice Campbell)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor Gordon Wheeler - Observer
John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer
Sally Savage - Housing Lead
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

7 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

Resolved for Councillor Grocock to Chair the meeting in the absence of Councillor Campbell.

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Eunice Campbell (personal)
Councillor Ken Rigby (personal)

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

10 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2015 as a true record and they were signed by the Chair presiding at the meeting.

11 **HOARDING FRAMEWORK**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs members of the release of the multi-agency Hoarding Framework for which Sally Savage, Housing Lead, has been a driving force.

The Framework which has been developed in partnership to provide a co-ordinated approach to help partners address situations where hoarding becomes an unsafe environment for the citizens involved, but in the case of a fire, also an unsafe environment for fire fighters.

Where hoarding occurs, some partner agencies may be perceived as a threat by the hoarder but the Fire and Rescue Service are predominantly perceived as neutral or positive presence where other agencies may not be welcomed. This means that the Service is better able to engage with hoarders, help assess the situation and where necessary, support progression towards a resolution. In addition, partnership working prevents duplication and with each partner issued with a tool kit, information and guidance of which agency should do what and when, ensures that all organisations are aware of their specific roles and responsibilities and the situation can be handled gently in a manner most suitable for each case.

Other partner organisations include but are not exclusive to:

Nottingham City Council;
City and County Council Environmental Health
City and County Council Social Care;
City and County Council Safeguarding Boards;
Police;
NHS;
East Midlands Ambulance Service;
Social Housing and Housing Associations;
Nottingham City Homes;
Mental Health Teams;
Public Health.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the Hoarding Framework has proved to be such a success that it has now been widely shared with other Fire and Rescue Authorities and is recognised as best practice by the Chief Fire Officers Association;
- (b) the next stage for the framework is for it to be rolled out to all fire crews to enable them to identify and share information on hoarding issues when they appear. From a Fire and Rescue safety approach, the crew consider where the person/people are sleeping, and which doors can be accessed in the case of a fire;
- (c) the Hoarding Steering Group will manage and maintain the Framework which will be reviewed every 6 months;

- (d) the Framework has also been launched at a Social Housing Best Practice event where it was enthusiastically received;
- (e) owner occupiers are often more difficult to approach;
- (f) between 2% and 6% of the population are estimated to have a hoarding issue of some sort;
- (g) hoarders often attach a sentimental value to the items they collect and keep and this must be taken into account when trying to help resolve a potentially hazardous situation.

Members commented as follows:

- (h) the Hoarding Framework is welcomed and the Service must be commended for initiating and hosting such an important element for Community Safety;
- (i) as elected Councillors who were often invited into citizen's homes, the pictorial overview of 'clutter images' provided in the Framework are extremely helpful in identifying at what level of hoarding concerns should be raised;
- (j) prior to the Framework being implemented, it was very difficult to assess and address hoarding issues.

The Multi-Agency Hoarding Framework document can be found here:

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=56661&p=0>

RESOLVED to note the report.

12 CONTRIBUTION TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which outlined how the role of Service was changing as it is now responding to 27.9% fewer incidents than during 2010, but has a far more substantial role in fire prevention and promoting safety.

The trusted image of the Service has enabled access to sections of the community when other organisations and agencies have been refused and so the Service is engaging with many 'hard to reach' individuals and communities, therefore providing a valuable partnership channel for information gaining and sharing.

The home safety checks initiative proved to be a valuable tool for providing help and advice to citizens on home health and safety issues beyond fire prevention. The checks were targeted at known high incident risk, vulnerable members of the community and the results of the checks can be seen as contributing to the reduction of reported incidents.

Two documents have recently been released 'Beyond Fighting Fires' by the LGA, and 'Fire Works' by the New Local Government Network, both acknowledge that Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) provide an integral part of Public Services and support the preventative role of Services, along with previous reports such as 'Facing the Future Review' and the 'Bain Report'. The latest documents also suggest extending this expertise to include a role in early intervention and helping to promote and even facilitate community wellbeing.

The priorities of Nottinghamshire’s Fire and Rescue Community Safety Strategy (2015-18) of ‘persons at risk’, ‘older persons’, ‘youth and education’ and ‘road safety’ have been aligned to objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that work in these areas are contributing to the wider health agenda and can assist in reducing the health burden on the public sector.

Potential collaborations are being considered which could result in the Service’s involvement in ‘Safe and Well’ assessments and provision of information to replace the ‘Home Safety Checks’. There is also a possibility that the Service has a role in some areas of early intervention, helping to prevent diseases and illness.

It has been disappointing that, unlike some Fire and Rescue authorities in other areas, a seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board was not available to the Service. However, the Service is recognised as a key provider and now has representation on the Health and Wellbeing Steering Group.

RESOLVED to note the report and support a broadening of the Service’s prevention function to include health and wellbeing.

13 FIRE COVER REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

Following a resolution by the full Fire and Rescue Authority at the last meeting, John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report and presentation which outlines the community safety implications of the Fire Cover Review 2015. The presentation was added to the agenda following the meeting.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the nature of business of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has changed with a 27.9% reduction in emergency calls since 2010 but with a greater emphasis on incident prevention and improving safety;
- (b) currently uniformed pay accounts for 64% of the NFRS budget;
- (c) the Service operates two traditional crewing models of whole time and retained crews with a crew of 5, suitable to tackle building fires, attending every type of incident;
- (d) there is an internal target of 90% of incidents to be attended within 10 minutes with the Service Currently achieving 82%;
- (e) an activity and cost analysis of a whole time crewed station (Retford) and a retained crew station (Eastwood) were presented with the following figures;

	Retford (WDS)	Eastwood (RDS)
Peak hours incidents responded to (3pm-10pm)	213	346
Off-peak incidents responded to	44	71
Annual Station operating costs(approx.)	£1m	£120

- (f) whilst Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue continue to apply the traditional crewing and duty models, some other Fire and Rescue Authorities operate a range of different models;
- (g) collaboration opportunities are being explored and some are already in operation with Fire and Rescue Authorities and also with the Police, Ambulance and the wider public sector;
- (h) several options for future crewing and duty arrangements are being investigated and considered, including:
 - (i) varying the ratio of whole time and retained staff;
 - (ii) secondary contracts for varying the level of cover to match demand but ensuring that provision stability remains;
 - (iii) a more flexible model of cover, deploying variable response (time and number of FF's) dependent on incident types.

Members made the following comments;

- (i) once the 169 co-responding call-outs at Eastwood were removed from the chart there was little difference in the activity of the two stations and yet the cost differences are significant;
- (j) a broader view of the Service needs to be considered as not all stations could effectively operate with retained crews, especially where there are currently issues with recruiting retained fire fighters from within the response time boundary;
- (k) the difference in cost needs to be justified and value for money assured;
- (l) unless decisions are to be made to close stations, there has to be changes to the way in which the Service operates to meet the savings required between now and 2020, while maintaining an appropriate level of cover;
- (m) operating targets could be revised with consideration of the reasonableness of responding to all types of incident within 10 minutes when some are less urgent than others;
- (n) attendance of automated fire alarm calls could be revisited as there are approximately 3,000 per year and 99% are false alarms;
- (o) changes will need to be very carefully considered and the impact on citizens, not just the financial constraints, fully investigated.

RESOLVED for the Chief Fire Officer to formulate and present to the Committee a range of more detailed operating options.