



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -
COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 22 March 2019 from 10.00 am - 11.15 am

Membership

Present

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark (Chair)
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan
Councillor Kevin Rostance
Councillor Parry Tsimbirdis

Absent

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor John Longdon - Observing
Craig Parkin - Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Michael Sharman - Area Manager Service Delivery
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

(19) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Jason Zadrozny - unwell

(20) DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

(21) MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

(22) SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates the Committee on service delivery performance for year Quarter 3, between 1 October and 31 December 2018.

The following points were highlighted and questions from the Committee responded to:

- (a) It should be noted that the Service not only attends incidents but also undertakes significant prevention work, which may be reflected in the 13 incident decrease in accidental dwelling fires;
- (b) A total of 2,565 incidents were attended during Quarter 3, which is an increase of 77. The breakdown of incidents is contained within the report, but most notably there were 8 fire fatalities compared to 4 during the same period in 2017;
- (c) All data is scrutinised for patterns, which can then be addressed however, some relate to the time of year such as exceptionally hot dry weather;
- (d) Now that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspections are taking place, it will be possible to compare on-call availability of NFRS to other fire services. Appendix A to the report provides comprehensive availability data for each station including movements on the last quarter's data, with nine of the 16 stations achieving 90% availability or more;
- (e) With regard to Retford Fire Station and mixed crewing, transitional support will be needed whilst more on-call officers are recruited but the focus on recruitment has attracted five more applicants resulting in the size of the section doubled within a year;
- (f) The Service has historically struggled to recruit on-call firefighters in the area of Southwell Fire Station, which has a low availability of 45.58%. This is possibly down the assumption of demographics where financial incentive is not enough to attract recruits. However, in addition to financial incentive, the Service relies on community support within an area, which can make recruitment difficult. Focused recruitment campaigns will continue within the Southwell area;
- (g) The exceptionally high availability of 99% at East Leake Fire Station reflects the admirable commitment of the staff and community;
- (h) Following the sad incident at Collingham, officers undertook comprehensive 'community reassurance and engagement activities'. It is a huge concern that a substantial number of properties did not have smoke alarms, but also that where smoke alarms were fitted, some were fitted incorrectly and others were not regularly tested and maintained. The importance of having an escape plan should a fire occur was also heavily promoted;
- (i) The Service and Nottingham Health Care Trust has been shortlisted for an 'Advancing Health Award' for reducing risk of harm from fire. The awards event will take place on 12 April 2019;
- (j) With regard to fire safety inspections, the Service does take enforcement action but it is proportionate and the likelihood of not only winning a prosecution but also achieving the award of costs is considered due to the substantial cost of progressing legal proceedings. As different services have different approaches, it is expected that the HMICFRS inspection will enable a national comparison. It is anticipated that following the Grenfell Tower incident, there will be a stronger focus on regulation and enforcement in future;
- (k) With the introduction of business safety checks, when not attending incidents, fire crews will undertake lower risk premises inspection, which will leave specialist inspectors

available to undertake inspections of higher risk businesses. Firefighters will need to be trained but overall, long-term benefits are predicted;

- (l) The full impact of the Grenfell Tower incident will not be known for some time yet, but it is anticipated that there will be changes to evacuation procedures and policies, particularly in properties where there is only one staircase. The 'stay put' policy for medium and high-rise properties relies on being safe within a compartment, but this was not the case with Grenfell Tower, so the policy is under review.

Members of the Committee expressed concern at the lack of interest shown by residents of the Southwell area in the role of retained firefighters, suggesting that community engagement is required for the benefit the Southwell community and the communities of surrounding villages to ensure that the fire station remained viable, open and operational.

It is noted that the demographic of the area maybe a contributory factor and that Southwell is a significant commuter town where residents are not available and working within the immediate area to be available as on-call firefighters. In addition, firefighters need to commit to training time. Although there is pride in being a firefighter, as incident prevention improves there are fewer incidents which results in less pay and engagement.

RESOLVED to note the report.

(23) 2018 FATAL FIRES REVIEW REPORT

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the Committee of the Fatal Fires Review which is being undertaken by Michael Sharman, Area Manager Service Delivery, who was also in attendance and contributed to the discussion.

Following points were highlighted and responses provided to members' questions:

- (a) There has been a rise in fatalities in the past year with 10 fatalities in seven fires during 2018, so a fatal fire review is being undertaken to investigate the background to these incidents to ensure fire prevention targeting of the most vulnerable people in the community, including an understanding of how circumstances can change and people may become vulnerable;
- (b) The profile of the deceased showed that three of 10 did not have English as a first language. Whilst the Service does have access to interpreters, it is recognised that some communities present specific engagement challenges, especially within the City;
- (c) Partners are assisting in rolling out of the 'Charlie' profile, which highlights factors that contribute to vulnerability, but also takes forward the Service's fire safety messages with their own work. Safe and Well Visits will also be reviewed with a plan to provide 50% more Safe and Well Visits in 2019/20. There will also be a new 'Fire Kills' campaign launched which is expected to ensure that individual and community awareness is raised;
- (d) The National Fire Chiefs Council continues to lobby Central Government for sprinklers to be fitted in all new build homes, and not just flats;

- (e) Following the Collingham incident, some staff are still receiving emotional support. Staff from all departments within the Service volunteered to help promote the fire safety message within the area of the Collingham community.

Members of the Committee were alarmed at how many homes within the village of Collingham either didn't have smoke detectors or they did have them, but they weren't working properly or the battery been removed. Concern was raised that this may not be an isolated issue, and may be a more widespread issue.

RESOLVED to note the report.

(24) SAFE AND WELL UPDATE

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates members of the Committee on the performance of Safe and Well Visits.

The following points were highlighted and questions responded to:

- (a) The Service has been undertaking Home Safety Checks for citizens since 1999, but the current Safe and Well Checks include gathering information for partner agencies to help identify and support vulnerable citizens;
- (b) There has been a significant increase in the number of households receiving the service from 1510 in 2017/18, to 1909 by February 2019. 20% of visits this year identified residents at high or very high risk within their home;
- (c) Other partner agencies have also had resources reduced so it is more important than ever to ensure that referrals for Safe and Well Visits are appropriate;
- (d) Whilst HMICFRS praised the Service for 49% of visits being to citizens aged over 65 and 23 % to registered disabled citizens, the Service needs to increase the number of visits.

RESOLVED to note the report.

(25) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY UPDATE 2018

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report, which includes an Appendix document providing comprehensive detail on the operational performance of the Service, which will be available on the Service website.

The following points were highlighted and questions responded to:

- (a) There were 11,278 incidents during the calendar year 2018;
- (b) These consisted of:
- 4591 were false alarms;
 - 1778 were primary fires;
 - 2256 were secondary fires road traffic collisions;
 - 2065 incidents were special service incidents classified as unknown/other;

- (c) With the exception of 'unknown/other' incidents, occurrences increased within each category;
- (d) With regard to the 12% increase in traffic incidents attended by the Service, at this moment it is not possible to explain why there has been an increase but a lot of data is held by other emergency responders and can be difficult to get a consolidated picture;
- (e) Initially the target to attend 90% of incidents within 10 minutes was introduced only for domestic fires, but has since morphed to include all incidents. Following consultations and focus group consideration, this has now changed to an average attendance measure.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the operational activity levels for 2018;**
- (2) to support the publication of the report to the NFRS website.**