



Adult Social Care Select Committee
18 May 2012

Fatal Fire Deaths in Surrey

Purpose of the report: Scrutiny of Services/Policy Development and Review

This report was initiated to scrutinise the development of a fire strategy for the most at risk residents in Surrey following a review of the number of fire deaths in 2012. It identifies the measures that are required to ensure that the County Council has a strategy to allow for additional prevention measures to be developed and expanded to meet demographic changes in relation to Surrey's ageing population.

Introduction:

1. A report into the number of recent fatal fires in Surrey was requested by the Cabinet Member for Community Safety. A Member Reference Group held on the 23 March 2012 considered the report, attached as **Appendix 1**. Present at this meeting were:
 - Councillor Sally Marks
 - Sarah Mitchell – Adult Social Care Strategic Director
 - David Sargeant – Adult Social Care Assistant Director
 - Yvonne Rees - Strategic Director for Customers and Communities
 - Simon Moore - Assistant Chief Officer, Surrey Fire & Rescue Service
 - Bryn Strudwick - Fire Investigation & Community Risk Reduction Manager
 - Leah O'Donovan – Scrutiny Officer, Adult Social Care Select Committee
2. It was agreed at the meeting that the report produced would go to the Adult Social Care Select Committee and Communities Select Committee.
3. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) produced a Fatal Fires Report in 2010 reporting on the number of deaths in Surrey caused as a result of a fire. It was identified that between the periods 2006-2010 there were 26 fire deaths where 23 of those deaths involved an adult at risk (vulnerable adult).

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4. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister report, (Economic Cost of Fire: Estimates for 2004), estimates the costs to the UK economy that can be associated to a fatal fire totals £1.4 million. Using this national figure, the cost in relation to the 26 fires occurring in Surrey during this period would have been approximately £36 million.
5. From the information gained for this report it was identified that those at risk from a fire in their home fall into one or more categories of:
 - Over 60 years old
 - Living alone
 - Mental Health/dementia issues
 - Smokers
 - Mobility issues
 - Drug and/or alcohol issues

This is referred to as the 'High Risk Matrix' this is explained in more detail in **Appendix 1 - Members Reference Group Report**

6. In 2012 the older people's population in Surrey is 199,700 with a projected increase by 2032 to 295,400.

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| Strategy to date |
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7. It is recognised that Adult Social Care (ASC) and SFRS have developed a strong working relationship in joint prevention and response to adults at risk of fire. Since 2008, ASC and SFRS have implemented the following actions:
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in October 2008– revised October 2010.
 - SFRS Multi-agency fire safety guide for vulnerable people (Adults at risk).
 - Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) Revised Surrey multi agency safeguarding adults policy and procedures (November 2011) inclusion of the above document.
 - ASC and SFRS have included awareness within in house staff training regarding adults at risk from fire.
 - SFRS membership of the Surrey Telecare Strategy group.
 - SFRS are member of the SSAB Business Management Group and all of the SSAB's sub groups.
 - The ASC multi agency risk assessment policy, guidance and tool launched in April 2012 includes provision for partner agencies to contribute.
 - Revision of ASC assessments to include an assessed domain of 'Feeling and Keeping Safe' to include reference to smoke alarm, open fires, telecare/community alarm.
8. It is recognised both national and locally, that with the increase in the older people's population and those who will fall into the 'high risk matrix'

group, that a new older people's strategy is required to address the increased risk of fire and fire deaths.

9. The strategy and work completed to date has greatly increased the two-way referral process between ASC and SFRS and has created the platform to move forward to develop a robust joint strategy to deal with the remaining risks today and the even greater risks posed by the increase in the adults at risk population forecast for the future.

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| Moving forward |
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10. A new older people's strategy will focus on:

10.1 SCC Residential Homes

- a) Ensure that SCC homes meet all requirements of the Rosepark inquiry recommendations (**see Appendix 1, point 10 and point 13**).
- b) The need to fit sprinklers to all current and new build SCC care homes, (agreed in principle).
- c) Ensure that Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) are completed for all residents.

10.2 SCC Adult Social Care

- a) Revise content of all assessments to reflect risk of fire in particular regarding the impact of dementia or medication on a person's ability to respond to fire.
- b) Use of Multi agency risk assessment in relation to the risk of fire.
- c) Review service users falling within the definition of the 'high risk matrix' group of service users and consider within this group, the fitting of a domestic sprinkler.
- d) Quality Assurance Team to incorporate a Fire Safety check within the annual Quality Monitoring of those providers on the Surrey County Council (SCC) Home Based Care Framework Agreement.
- e) Awareness of fire safety to be promoted to those individuals purchasing their own support by SCC Communications Strategy.
- f) Framework Agreement for Care Homes to include relevant Fire safety legislation.
- g) Advice and Guidance be provided through SCC website and Surrey Information Point to advise on fire safety both in care homes and for people supported in their own homes.
- h) Sharing of information between ASC and SFRS in relation to Fire safety inspections of Registered Care Homes.

10.3 Surrey Care Association

- a) SFRS and ASC to work actively with Surrey Care Association to ensure appropriate Fire Safety training for all registered providers in Surrey is in place.

- b) SFRS to raise the awareness in relation to the requirements of the Rosepark inquiry recommendations (**Appendix 1 point 10**).
- c) The development of a partnership agreement with individual care providers to achieve an increase in referrals to SFRS and fire safety training for staff of care providers.

10.4 Telecare

- a) To ensure that the Surrey Telecare strategy includes recommendations from the Members Reference Report, (**see Appendix 1**).
- b) To ensure that Telecare provided to adults at risk includes a linked smoke detector including those with existing Telecare that currently do not have a networked smoke detector.
- c) To consider the findings from research that shows the most efficient and cost effective means of detecting the fire, raising the alarm inside the property and calling the emergency services leading to the rescue of the person, is a smoke alarm connected to a monitoring centre (i.e. Telecare).
- d) To review all older people receiving a service from ASC assessed as High or Moderate (as defined in high risk matrix) to assess for telecare including a smoke detector where there is currently no telecare in place, and of upgrading an existing community alarm to incorporate a smoke detector (High being given first priority).
- e) To produce new guidance and training for SFRS and ASC staff on the importance of the protection that Telecare can offer adults at risk.

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| Conclusions: |
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- 11. Since 2008 there has been a considerable amount of joint working undertaken between ASC and the SFRS in relation to:
 - Robust partner working and communication between the Fire Investigation and Community Risk Reduction Manager and ASC Senior Manager for Safeguarding Adults.
 - Raising the awareness of ASC staff regarding fire safety including the agreement of a 2 way referral system..
 - SFRS officers attending ASC Team Meetings.
 - Fire safety, Home Fire Risk Assessment referrals being embedded within the content of safeguarding adults staff training.
 - Joint visits being undertaken with SFRS officers and ASC Practitioners.
 - SFRS fully engaged as a strong partner in relation to the SSAB.
 - Full Serious Case Review undertaken in 2010 regarding a fire death on an adult at risk, and recommendations implemented.
 - Revision of Memorandum of Understanding between ASC and SFRS (October 2010).

12. In light of the increase in fatal fire deaths both Nationally and within Surrey, for those adults at risk falling into the 'High Risk Matrix' group, a new SCC strategy needs to be developed that will address the increased risks of fire in an ageing population. A strategy that will build on the lessons learnt from national inquiries, serious case reviews and links with the 'Ageing Safely - Protecting an Ageing Population from the risk of fire in the Home', CFOA.

Financial and value for money implications

13. There are currently five SCC Residential Care Homes for older people that do not have a sprinkler system installed (See **Appendix 1**, point 11). The cost of this is currently being considered by ASC however would be seen to be a priority in relation to affording those residents maximum protection in the event of a fire.
14. There is a financial implication in relation to those service users falling into the 'High Risk Matrix' who requires enhanced Telecare, Telecare and domestic sprinklers. This is currently being considered by ASC in terms of costs and budget.
15. To provide the minimum offer of telecare involving linking a fire alarm to the community alarm, the maximum charge possible to the Surrey resident assessed as having critical or substantial needs is £27.00 per month, subject to reduction under Fair Access to Care Services assessment. If the resident agrees to be assessed under Fair Access to Care Services and is assessed as having critical or substantial needs, part of this monthly cost will be met by the Council irrespective of income and capital; if capital is below £24,500 then depending on income level, the council may reduce the monthly payment from the resident further, possibly to zero.
16. Given that the estimated costs to the UK economy that can be associated to a fatal fire totals £1.4 million, (Economic Cost of Fire: Estimates for 2004) there is value for money by investing in a robust Prevention Strategy in terms of monetary and human gain.

Equalities Implications

17. Covered by existing equality policy and procedures.

Risk Management Implications

18. Without the development and implementation of an Older People's strategy there is every likelihood that there will be a rise in fatal fires possibly matching the percentage rise in the older people population.
19. SCC should consider such a strategy that will allow for additional prevention measures to be developed and expanded as necessary in order for the increased risk of fires to be managed as the older population grows.

Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy

20. A revised Strategy would meet a number of priorities for Customer and Communities and ASC Directorates in particular:
- Improve Fire Prevention through increasing the number of Home Fire Safety visits that are targeted on vulnerable households.
 - Partnership working in the interests of Surrey County Council to work towards the protection of the people at high risk in Surrey.
 - Embracing a community based approach, joint working with partners to identify the needs of local communities allowing people to live independently and safely, receiving the support they need and local and community settings.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee is asked to scrutinise the report and endorse the following recommendations:

- a) Surrey Fire & Rescue Service to develop, in conjunction with Adult Social Care, an older person's strategy and a sprinkler threshold strategy to meet the needs of the rising older person's population.
- b) Relevant staff within Surrey Fire & Rescue Service to have access to Adult Social Care IT systems in order to obtain timely information and to manage the flow of information in relation to an adult at risk.
- c) Surrey Fire & Rescue Service and Adult Social Care to develop a marketing strategy, proposed as being 'Surrey Cares', that includes the development of a partnership agreement for staff of care providers.
- d) Relaunch the working practices and services supplied under the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service and Adult Social Care Memorandum of Understanding to increase the fire protection of vulnerable adults living in the community.
- e) To develop strong links between Surrey Fire & Rescue Service and Surrey Care Association.

Next steps:

Development and publication of the Older Person's Strategy – To be completed by July 2012

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Sources/background papers:

1. Ageing Safely - Protecting an Ageing Population from the risk of fire in the Home – CFOA
2. Rosepark Care Home – An examination of the Facts – Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, 20th April 2011
3. Older People Population in Surrey – Surrey
4. Fatal Fires 2006-2010, SFRS
5. Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board, Serious Case Review re 002 and CC
6. Members Reference Group Report **(Appendix 1)**

Glossary of terms used:

ASC – Adult Social Care

MOU – Memorandum of Understanding

SFRS – Surrey Fire & Rescue Service

SSAB – Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board