



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE ELMBRIDGE

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

28 NOVEMBER 2011

KEY ISSUE

The performance of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in Elmbridge for the period 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011

THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

SUMMARY

Elmbridge continues to be one of the safest boroughs within the County.

Fire and Rescue performance within Elmbridge has been positive. Pro-active strategies have resulted in The Elmbridge Borough Team attending 130 Primary Fires meeting the service's target of 159. Of the 130 calls, 60 accidental fires in dwellings were attended by Elmbridge teams against a service target of 67.

There were no fatalities due to primary fires and only one injury to members of the public occurred arising from fires in dwellings against a service target of four.

Targeted activities to ever reduce and maintain a reduction within this performance area will continue throughout the year 11/12.

The Elmbridge Borough Team has seen a reduction of Malicious False Alarms, against the 2010/11 target. They attended 6 against a target of 14 the Team aim to continue this reduction through 2011/12. Utilising targeted campaigns as identified in their borough plan.

The Elmbridge Borough Team has seen a reduction of calls caused by Automatic False Alarms, against the 2010/11 target. They attended 181 against a target of 198 the Team aim to continue this reduction through 2011/12. Utilising targeted campaigns as identified in their borough plan.

The team attended 64 calls to deliberate fires (excluding vehicles), against a service target of 86 .The team attended 8 deliberate fires in vehicles against a target of 19, The Service has been working extensively in partnership with Elmbridge Safety Partnership and Surrey Police, through the established Arson Task Force to combat further occurrences of this incident type.

Elmbridge team attended 23 fires in non-domestic premises against a target of 19, SFRS are keen to work with partners to dramatically reduce the level of incidents as detailed within this report. Fire crews within Elmbridge continue to work on projects with partner organisations to reduce the number of calls to dwelling fires, arson incidents, automatic fire alarm activation and Road Traffic Collisions (RTC). This year teams have been identifying derelict properties and with the assistance of our partners, EBC, Elmbridge Safety Partnership and Surrey Police these properties have been secured preventing them becoming targets for Arson, examples such as, Moore place (Esher) and Surveyor Public House (Molesey)

Preventative strategies also take the form of direct contact public education programmes; the provision of free smoke alarms through Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) and national safety campaigns.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Elmbridge Local Committee:

- Note the performance of SFRS within Elmbridge.
- Support the achievement of personnel at Walton, Esher and Cobham Fire Stations.
- Support the commitment by SFRS to embrace new technology and improved initiatives, to reduce risk further and make Elmbridge safer.
- Endorse SFRS to continue working with partners to influence behaviour in the community.
- Recognise that following evaluation of initiatives funding may be requested in order for them to be implemented, maintained or continued.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Responsibility for delivering the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Public Safety Plan (PSP) in Elmbridge is devolved to the North Area Management Team and the Borough Manager for Elmbridge, together with the personnel based at Walton, Esher and Cobham Fire Station.
- 1.2 The framework to achieve this has been through the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Borough Plan for Elmbridge 2011/2012. Issues specific to the borough such as the building of partnerships with the local authority, police, schools, youth offending team and the identification of incident trends ensure the borough team contribute fully to the specific needs of Elmbridge.
- 1.3 Through our prevention and protection work businesses are advised on how best to conform to fire safety legislation. Additionally we undertake safety activities in local schools and the community. The aim is to encourage people to change their behaviour thereby reducing the risk of emergency incidents occurring. However, accidents happen and we need to ensure we are able to respond when required through intervention.
- 1.4 To continuously improve SFRS performance in Elmbridge four key projects are being maintained. These are to reduce the number of calls to accidental dwelling fires, arson incidents, automatic fire alarm activation and RTCs.

2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTRY

The following comparisons are based on service statistics compared to the same reporting period last year.

- 2.1 SFRS within Elmbridge attended 301 calls to all fires, an upward trend of 5.0% compared to the same period last year. The number of incidents recorded, 301, up from 286, SFRS has utilised local press and community events to inform the public regarding fire safety. By establishing effective partnership workings and promoting the HFRC and targeting specific areas of the community we are actively seeking to reduce the number of incidents that occur still further.
- 2.2 During 2010/2011 malicious false alarm calls were reduced from 7 down to 6. In an attempt to reduce this figure still further, borough personnel will actively support the national hoax call campaign and highlight the potential impact that can result from making hoax calls.
- 2.3 False alarms from Automatic Fire Detection (AFD) systems decreased from 198 down 8.5% to 181. All incidents continue to be monitored and a 'Call Challenge' process will further reduce the number of unwanted fire calls.
- 2.4 The number of deliberate fires, excluding deliberate fires in vehicles, decreased by 25.4% from 86 down to 64. A link has been established with Elmbridge Business network to assist in information being passed to local businesses, the aim of which is to assist the companies in protecting themselves from the possibility of arson.

ITEM 14

- 2.5 Deliberate fires in vehicles decreased by 69% from 26 to 8, in an attempt to reduce this figure still further, borough personnel will actively support the Borough scheme of reporting all vehicles to E.B.C.
- 2.6 The number of calls to fires in non domestic premises increased to 23 from a service target of 19. This is a large category to report on as it ranges from properties including domestic garden sheds to large retail shops.
- 2.7 The number of calls to accidental dwelling fires shows a 10% decrease from 67 in 2009/10 to 60 in 2010/11, of those incidents 97% of the fires were confined to room of origin, which the Service believes is a success of smoke detector ownership. Following all dwelling fires Hot strikes, an initiative to publicise recent fires in the vicinity of incidents, were undertaken accordingly and H.F.S.V.s and smoke detectors fitted where appropriate. Targeted campaigns throughout the borough were successful, particularly a campaign in Cobham WHICH produced 100 H.F.S.V at an estate containing 400 properties N.A total of 720 H.F.S.V.s were completed in the borough.

Operational Equipment Update

Waterborne Capability.

- 2.8 In April 2009 a new powered boat was purchased and is based at Walton Fire Station. The boat is a Pioneer Rescue boat, 5.5m long powered by a 4 stroke 75HP outboard engine. A specific feature of this type of craft is a bow ramp to assist in casualty handling and rescue. This boat has been used numerous times during this reporting period most notably when two people lost their lives after falling in to the river Thames at Pharaohs Island, Shepperton. Walton is the base station for the service's Swift Water Rescue technicians and equipment, smaller inflatable boats, Ice Paths etc are carried in a designated vehicle which also transports the boat to incidents, the swift water rescue teams and equipment are used on all incidents involving water from fires on the river and islands through to incidents involving flooding. Personnel from other stations in Elmbridge are currently receiving training to deal with flooding incidents .The Team have been successful in obtaining funding through DEFRA to enhance the waterborne capability to supply a national resource which can be used to assist in county wide incidents.
- 2.9 The services Large Animal rescue team and equipment are based at Cobham Fire Station, personnel from Esher Fire Station have also received awareness training to assist the crews from Cobham. Further training is planned at Silvermere equestrian centre for 2011 The Service Incident Command vehicle is also based at Cobham and teams at Cobham and Esher are trained to operate the vehicle which provides a strategic command point at larger scale incidents

- 2.10 Between Cobham and Esher Fire Station there are 52 personnel who provide operational cover based on a 2-2-4 shift based system personnel are flexible and can provide cover at either station to allow for un planned shortfalls such as sickness or annual leave. Walton Fire Station is crewed by 12 personnel who provide operational cover between 0800 and 1900 hours, outside of these hours the operational cover is crewed from a team of 18 Retained Fire fighters, All crews when not attending operational incidents are working in the community to make the people of Elmbridge feel safe in their homes the additional personnel at Walton allow for dedicated teams to work in partnership with teams such as Elmbridge Community Partnership, without having to be called away to attend incidents which improves the success of Community action days. This crewing system is one of only two in Surrey and provides a family friendly system for personnel who do not wish to work on 2-2-4.
- 2.11 In the draft Public Safety Plan (P.S.P) proposal, crewing systems in Elmbridge have been identified to change; the proposals are that Esher Fire station will be crewed during the day by whole time crews but no appliance at night. At Walton it is proposed to return to a 2-2-4 shift crewing system with on call crew supporting at night and at weekends. There are no proposals to make any changes at Cobham. These changes will still provide for additional Community work to be completed and provide family friendly shift systems without a reduction in operational capability.
- 2.12 In March the operational capabilities of Fire Service in Elmbridge and Runnymede were tested when a series of exercises was completed utilising the empty building which previously housed the employees of Unilever in Station Avenue, Walton. This year the scenario was a number of persons were missing in a basement and operational crews were committed to search the building for any casualties and extinguish any fires. This exercise was timed to coincide with the issue of new Breathing Apparatus sets recently purchased by the service. The exercises held during the day and nights, were realistic and a great benefit to operational crews and managers.

3 Community Safety Activity

Schools Education Programme

- 3.1 This is an ongoing programme of Fire Safety Education for school children, with classroom-based input in years 2 (595 Children), 5 (552 children), and year 8 (360 children). Firefighters from Elmbridge will be visiting Nursery school children promoting the Early Years Learning Box. In year 6, additional input comes in the form of the Junior Citizens scheme, which is a two-week, multi-agency event and is once again being hosted at Walton Fire Station in June 2011. In 2010 approximately 1300 children took part from schools all across the borough.

Firefighter For A Day

- 3.2 This initiative consists of a day structured around raising the awareness of risks and the implications of fire. Practical scenarios are included to run alongside theoretical sessions that allow the students to have hands on experience of firefighting skills. It is important to target appropriate participants for these courses, with the intention of raising aspirations, particularly to vulnerable teenagers. These include those that have been excluded from mainstream education.

4 Firewise Scheme

- 4.1 This scheme is aimed at young people who have displayed an unhealthy interest in fire, which has led or could lead to deliberate fire setting. It has been running for many years with great success.
- 4.2 For the reporting period April 2010 to March 2011, 72 young persons in Surrey were referred onto the scheme from 9 different agencies, Following initial visits by Firewise advisors, six monthly checks are made with parents/carers to check on progress. Current statistics show that 95% say they have not had any incidents since the visit, and others say that incidents have become less frequent and far less serious. When parents/carers were asked if they were satisfied with SFRS95% said they were "Very Satisfied" and 5% said they were "Satisfied"
- 4.3 Firewise - In this reporting period Elmbridge has received 6 referrals (7 referrals made in 2009/2010). Follow up calls indicate that the outcomes have been successful with no repeat incidents.

Youth Engagement Scheme (YES)

The Youth Engagement Scheme is a one week, five day practical programme (Monday to Friday), based on a fire station, for young people aged 14 – 17. The scheme aims to aid personal development of the young people and address anti-social behaviour in the community, including fire and vehicle related crime. YES is part of an intervention package, which can last up to 3 months and is delivered in partnership with Surrey Youth Justice Service and Educational Welfare Service. The course is accredited by the National Open College Network, which provides three credits towards accessing future post 16 courses, such as the Public Service course. This unit was written by Surrey Youth Justice Service. 36-42 young people per year in north Surrey attend a course at Walton Fire Station. This year within the borough of Elmbridge, 28 referrals were made, 10 young people started the course & 8 young people graduated from the scheme, 1 young person did not graduate due to illness. Since the scheme started in 2006 70 young people from Elmbridge have started courses and 65 have graduated

5 Domestic Fires

- 5.1 Borough Personnel continue to work alongside existing partners in generating HFSVs and fitting smoke detection where required. In addition borough Teams proactively promote the free HFSV service at all public events attended. It is expected to undertake 415 HFSVs within the borough this year and data shows we are on target to achieve this figure.

6 Automatic Fire Alarms: Reduction In Number Of Calls

- 6.1 New initiatives introduced by SFRS are aimed at reducing the number of unwanted fire alarm signals. These measures include top offenders being issued letters reinforcing recent changes to legislation and their responsibilities. Along with visits from the protection team based in Elmbridge this is then further supported with data gathering inspections by borough personnel.
- 6.2 Available statistics show a reduction of 3.5% (198 incidents down to 181 incidents) compared to the same period last year.

7 Road Traffic Collision Reduction

- 7.1. SFRS continues to actively promote the 'Safe Drive, Stay Alive (SDSA), campaign and personnel from within the borough are promoting this to local schools and colleges. In November 2010 a total **11 800** young people (1353 from schools and colleges located in Elmbridge) attended a performance of SDSA. During 2010 a new DVD was produced and has been used for the 2010-11 performances, the new format is very up to date and well received by the young people and sponsors.

Only two colleges from Elmbridge who are invited do not attend (Esher College and Yehudi Menuhin School)

7.2 Fire station open days this year focused on RTC reduction, at all venues across Elmbridge the 'fatal vision' beer goggles and the recently purchased driving simulator was used to interact with members of the public, this activity afforded the crews the opportunity to promote road safety and get the drink drive discussions going, raising the general level of awareness amongst drivers and young people who will soon be drivers .

Other Community activities

Sainsburys 'Fire Safety Week' to generate HFRCs.

Neighbourhood Watch AGM held at Sandown Park used to promote Community Fire Safety, specific to "wheelie" bin fires.

Training given to NHW champions identified by PC Mark Howells.

One Elmbridge partnership – Community Partnership Days
Elmbridge Community Safety team- Community Action Days- St Johns Estate, Lower Green Thames View House, Cobham Heart Shopping centre, Vicarage fields.

Joint reassurance patrols with PCSOs in areas identified through JAG, specifically areas in St John's estate in Walton and Lower Green area of Esher.

Leaflet Drops in relation to six Service/Nationally launched campaigns.
Dialogue with Elmbridge Housing trust to have HFRC information provided to every new tenant in a starter pack.
Fire Service attendance at Police panels.

Targeted HFSV campaigns at St Johns estate, Sugden rd, Lower green & Cobham Fairmile, Vicarage Fields

Three station open days - Open day themes were RTC reduction based with operational demonstrations and advice given

Water safety advice given at Moseley lock, Hampton Ct

Community Action and Partnership Days are held in Areas where any incidents of Arson have been identified, working with EHT and EBC to remove rubbish/graffiti and give advice on refuse bin fires.

Brooklands Public Services Day (May Bank Holiday weekend) to promote safety on roads and demonstrate role of Fire Service at a RTC.

Notifying Elmbridge Borough Council of derelict property and vehicles for removal/boarding up.

Informing EHT of small incidents
Encouragement EHT/JAG to inform Fire Service of incidents which are not reported to Fire Service.

7 Community Room

The Community Room at Walton Fire Station is now an extremely useful resource to the Borough; the facility has been able to be offered to many local partners for them to hold meetings and training sessions as well as giving Borough personnel a professional environment in which to educate the local community groups which frequently visit the station.

- 7.1 Regular bookings for the room are now taken from the Youth Justice Service and Local councillors.

8 Consultations

- 9.1 SFRS will consult with Members, partners and key stakeholders to ensure the community safety initiatives in Elmbridge continue to target priority areas and contribute to our aim of making Surrey safer. Additionally, there may be issues not covered within this report that Members may wish to discuss further. Further information may be attained from the North Area Manager Les Dodd on 07968 834550 or Elmbridge Borough Manager Kevin Noble-07800 621957.

10 Financial And Value For Money Implications

- 10.1 All other initiatives are carried out within existing budgets of Surrey Fire and Rescue with no additional funding being sought at this time.
- 10.2 Following evaluation of new initiatives funding may be requested in the future in order for effective implementation, maintenance and review.

11 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 11.1 SFRS Diversity Strategy ensures that Surrey Fire and Rescue Service provide a fair and equitable service, both internally to all of our staff and externally to the communities of Surrey. We value everyone within these audiences, as an individual, whether they are an employee or a service user.
- 11.2 All initiatives, campaigns and operational procedures will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. There are no equality implications directly related to this report.

12. Crime and Disorder Implications

- 12.1 The Area Manager for the North (Les Dodd) represents Surrey Fire and Rescue Service at the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), the Borough Manager (Kevin Noble) represents SFRS at the Elmbridge Community Incident Action Group (CIAG), Station Manager Stuart de Fraine ford represents SFRS at the Elmbridge Joint Action Group (JAG) ensuring the Services views and expertise contribute to reducing crime and enhancing safety.
- 12.2 Initiatives and campaigns within Elmbridge will continue to contribute to a reduction in crime and disorder, particularly in relation to arson and vehicle crime. The link between abandoned cars and arson is proven and any decrease in the former will influence the latter.

ITEM 14

- 12.3 The borough manager and fire safety officers participate in multi agency visits within the local authority and Police to licensed premises. This entails advising owners/licensees, or using enforcement powers in the interest of public safety.

13 Conclusion And Reasons for Recommendations

- 13.1 The report contains information on the various activities undertaken by the Borough Team to reduce the risk from fire and RTC injuries to the residents of Elmbridge, including direct contact, public education programs and campaigns.
- 13.2 Crews and appliances based at Walton, Esher and Cobham form part of the wider resource required to meet the Fire and Rescue Services Public Safety Plan for Surrey. The number of calls to incidents is not directly in the control of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. The number of calls is influenced by outside factors, for instance, a long hot summer, changes in scrap prices for vehicles or an individual with an unhealthy interest in fire. RTCs do not respect borough boundaries; a driver killed or seriously injured in one borough could be from any part of the county.
- 13.3 To address these issues SFRS plan to address performance issues through a balance of prevention, protection and response initiatives that are focussed through the local Borough Plan to meet the identified needs of Elmbridge.
- 13.4 The Committee is asked to note the performance of SFRS in Elmbridge and to recognise the potential for improved performance offered by the projects that form the 20011/12 Elmbridge Borough Plan.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: IRMP, Elmbridge Borough Plan, SFRS Website.P.S.P.