



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE RUNNYMEDE

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

2010-11

KEY ISSUE

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

This report is for information only.

SUMMARY

Surrey continues to be a very 'safe' county to be a resident and Runnymede is one of the safest boroughs within it.

Fire and Rescue performance within Runnymede has been positive with pro-active strategies undertaken in an attempt to reduce the number of accidental fires attended and also reduce the numbers of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection systems.

Within the reporting period, there were no fatalities from fires in dwellings in Runnymede and only two recorded fire related injuries. These injuries occurred at two separate fires, the first an 80 year old man who collapsed as the result of a small fire limited to his kitchen and the second a larger fire that resulted in the casualty jumping from a first floor window.

SFRS are keen to work with partners to dramatically reduce the level of incidents as detailed within this report. Fire crews within Runnymede 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.

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 Runnymede Local Committee:

- Note the performance of SFRS within Runnymede
- Support the achievement of personnel at Chertsey and Egham Fire Stations
- Support the commitment by SFRS to embrace new technology and improved initiatives, to reduce risk further and make Runnymede 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 Runnymede is devolved to the North Area Management Team and the Borough Manager for Runnymede, together with the personnel based at Chertsey and Egham Fire Station.
- 1.2 The framework to achieve this has been through the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Borough Plan for Runnymede 2010 – 2011. 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 Runnymede.
- 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 Runnymede three key projects are being maintained. These are to reduce the number of calls to dwelling fires, arson incidents and automatic fire alarm activation.

2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTRY

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

- 2.1 SFRS within Runnymede attended 93 calls to primary fires, down from 129 in the previous year. SFRS has utilised local press and community events to inform the public regarding Fire Safety. By establishing effective partnership working and promoting the Home Fire Safety Visits. By targeting specific areas of the community we are actively seeking to reduce the number of incidents that occur still further.
- 2.2 During 2010/11 malicious false alarm calls increased from 19 up to 26. Although a movement in the wrong direction, this figure was not above the Service target (31). Targets are set based upon the previous four years figures.
- 2.3 False alarms from Automatic Fire Detection (A.F.D) systems decreased from 175 to 167. Work is ongoing between SFRS and local partners to continue this reduction. All incidents continue to be monitored and the “Call Challenge“ process will further reduce the number of unwanted fire calls. Work to identify the ‘Top Offenders’ is being undertaken and appropriate actions to address this, formulated in partnership with the Management Teams at these locations.
- 2.4 The number of deliberate fires, excluding fires in vehicles decreased from 68 to 63 incidents. Where appropriate, Crimestoppers ‘Arson Awareness ‘ boards are displayed in the vicinity to highlight the issue to the local community. There appears to be no identifiable pattern to these incidents but analysis is ongoing to ensure any trends are identified and action taken accordingly. Information packs

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are supplied to local businesses, the aim of which is to assist the companies in protecting themselves from the possibility of arson.

- 2.5 Deliberate fires involving all vehicles decreased from 21 incidents to 11, This is mirrored across the county and is possibly a result of the continued high value of scrap metal, discouraging the 'dumping' of old vehicles on the street. Any identified abandoned vehicles are reported through the appropriate channels.
- 2.6 The number of calls to fires in non-domestic premises decreased from 21 to 15 (60% of the target figure of 25)
- 2.7 SFRS have attended 22 calls to accidental dwelling fires within the reporting period. Analysis of the available data shows that the Service confined 86% of these incidents to the room of origin with 50% of these incidents out on arrival and requiring no fire-fighting action. Of the 22 recorded incidents 55% were located within the kitchen area of the property. Of these kitchen related incidents, 50% were out on arrival. Hot strikes, an initiative to publicise recent fires in the vicinity of incidents, are undertaken accordingly and HFSV's and smoke detectors fitted where appropriate. During the Home Fire Safety Visits importance is placed upon the need for kitchen fire safety with information given relating to the high percentage of incidents we attend. A total of 592 HFSV's were completed in the Borough..

High Volume Pumping Equipment.

- 2.8 Training with this equipment continues to be a high priority as this is a National Resource. The resources are located at the two stations within Runnymede. At Chertsey this consists of 1 Prime-Mover vehicle, 1 High Volume Pump Unit (HVP) - 1 pod containing 1km of 150mm hose. At Egham this consists of 1 Prime-Mover vehicle – 2 pods each containing 1km of 150mm hose. At both locations there is also stored one module containing equipment and materials for mass decontamination in the event of a major incident.
- 2.9 Personnel at both Chertsey and Egham have received full training on the deployment, operation and make-up of all equipment. Training is ongoing throughout the year and we continue to maintain a good working relationship with Thorpe Park who allow us to use their facilities. Other potential sites around the County continue to be identified as training venues, but due to the size of the vehicles and the logistics of deploying the equipment suitable sites are difficult to obtain.
- 2.10 Within this reporting period Runnymede personnel attended a number of 'Wildfire' exercises enabling Runnymede personnel to demonstrate the delivery of large volumes of water over distance to operational personnel in support of dealing with fires in rural/ remote locations. Personnel from within the Borough have an active role within the HVP South East Regional Users Group to establish 'Best Practice' working arrangements.

3 Community Safety Activity

Schools Education Programme

- 3.1 Four hundred and seventeen year 2 pupils, 389 year 5 pupils, and 231 year 8 pupils in Runnymede took part this year in the schools education programme. 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 Chertsey

Fire Station in 2011/12. During this reporting year 724 year 6 pupils from Runnymede received this valuable life skills training.

- 3.2 The Youth Engagement Scheme (YES) for pupils that have had difficulties with mainstream education received 17 referrals for Runnymede youngsters, seven of which gained places with a 100% successful completion to graduation.

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 (4 from Runnymede) in Surrey were referred onto the scheme from 10 different agencies. Following initial and follow on visits by Firewise advisors, 6 monthly checks are made with parents / carers to check on progress.

5 Domestic Fires

- 5.1 Borough personnel continue to work alongside existing partners in generating Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV's) and fitting smoke detection where required. In addition Borough Teams proactively promote the free HFSV service at all public events attended. It is expected that we will undertake 340 Home Fire Safety Visits within the Borough this year and data shows we are on target to achieve this figure. Greater emphasis is being placed on targeting more vulnerable persons of the community.

6 Automatic Fire Alarms: Reduction In Number Of Calls

- 6.1 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. This is then further supported with data gathering inspections by Borough Personnel. This policy has proved successful with year on year figures steadily reducing.

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 actively promoting this to the local schools and colleges. This year 971 pupils from Schools/College within Runnymede attended the presentations at SDSA performances. A new DVD and supporting materials developed by SFRS to assist in reaching our target audience was introduced this year with great success.
- 7.2 SFRS have taken an active role in raising awareness of the consequences of driving at speed and under the influence of drink or drugs by supporting National Campaigns and at a local level giving through practical demonstrations and safety advice to members of the public. Events attended this year included the 'Black-Cherry Fair' among others.

8 Community Room

- 8.1 The Community Room at Chertsey Fire Station is now into its fifth year of

Operation and continues to be an extremely useful resource to the Borough, Local Partners and the Fire Service. With the funding received from Local Committee Members in 2007, 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. Improved I.T. facilities now assist Borough personnel in delivering various training packages to Local Community groups.

- 8.2 Regular bookings for the room are now taken from The Youth Justice Service and Age Concern Runnymede, who make full use of the facilities on offer. We are this year trialing the room's use as a resource for 'Home Educated' children from this and neighbouring boroughs.

9 Consultations

- 9.1 SFRS will consult with Members, partners and key stakeholders to ensure the community safety initiatives in Runnymede 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 obtained from the North Area Manager Les Dodd on 07968 834550 or Runnymede Temporary Borough Manager Mark Barrett on 07968 834483.

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 Temporary Borough Manager (Mark Barrett) represents SFRS at the Joint Action Group (JAG) ensuring the Services views and expertise contribute to reducing crime and enhancing safety.
- 12.2 Initiatives and campaigns within Runnymede will continue to contribute to a reduction in crime and disorder, particularly in relation to arson. Business premises are given advice to prevent opportunist arson attacks as well as accidental fires.

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, for example the Wentworth PGA Tournament.

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 road traffic collision injuries to the residents of Runnymede, including direct contact, public education programs and campaigns.

13.2 Fire crews and appliances based at Chertsey and Egham form part of the wider resource required to meet the Fire and Rescue Services Public Safety Plan for Surrey (see Annex 1 for latest information). 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. Road traffic collisions do not respect Borough boundaries; a driver killed or seriously injured in one Borough could be from any part of the County or outside of it.

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 Runnymede.

13.4 The Committee is asked to note the performance of SFRS in Runnymede and to recognise the potential for improved performance offered by the projects that forms the 2011/2012 Runnymede Borough Plan.

LEAD OFFICER: Les Dodd – North Area Manager
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 07968 834550
E-MAIL: leslie.dodd@surreycc.gov.uk
CONTACT OFFICER: Mark Barrett Runnymede Borough Manager
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 07968 834488
E-MAIL: Mark.barrett@surreycc.gov.uk
BACKGROUND PAPERS: IRMP, Runnymede Borough Plan, SFRS Website.

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ANNEX 1**Update on Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Public Safety Plan for 2011-2020 to Local Committees**

As you may recall, the Fire Service recently embarked on a public consultation about significant changes to its Service. This took place over a staged, 9-month period, giving residents and staff the opportunity to shape the future of the fire and rescue service. Proposals for change were set out in its draft Public Safety Plan (PSP) for 2011 - 2020.

The Service engaged with stakeholders through a variety of means including local committee meetings, focus groups, a consultation questionnaire, the media, Libraries and events. In addition, Surrey's Chief Fire Officer went 'back to the floor' to visit every single operational watch and team – quite a task comprising 82 visits.

The consultation response resulted in 643 survey returns and more than 100 written submissions from Members, residents, district, borough and parish councils and Surrey Fire and Rescue Service staff.

The Service listened to the feedback received and made a number of amendments to the final plan. Changes have subsequently been made including reinstating fire engines during the night at Guildford, Reigate, Dunsfold and Walton-on-Thames. Further changes to the draft plan also included fire engines at Cranleigh and Chobham being available 24 hours a day and not just at night.

The final version of the Public Safety Plan for 2011 – 2020 was approved by the Cabinet of the County Council in July 2011. The plan and supporting documentation including the consultation report, is now available at www.surrey-fire.gov.uk/psp.

Please accept our sincere thanks for your contribution to our consultation. As we implement the plan we wish to continue the dialogue with our stakeholders to provide information on progress and to also review our actions. Any further revisions to emergency response cover will be the subject of further public consultation, in which you will be invited to participate.

If you require further information please contact the Public Safety team via psp@surreycc.gov.uk