



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN
Spelthorne**

Fire & Rescue Service Annual Report

29th September 2008

KEY ISSUE:

The performance of Surrey Fire & Rescue Service in Spelthorne for the period 1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008.

SUMMARY:

Fire and Rescue performance in Spelthorne has been strong and has seen significant reductions in the numbers of fires attended and false alarms caused by automatic fire alarms, however, with 58 people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions in Spelthorne, Fire and Rescue are keen to work with partners to dramatically reduce this level of incidents. The fire crews based at Staines and Sunbury continue to work on projects and with partner organisations to reduce the number of calls to Automatic Fire Alarms, Arson, Road Traffic Collisions and Dwelling Fires.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Spelthorne Local Committee

- (a) Note the performance of the Service within Spelthorne.
- (b) Support the achievement of the personnel at Staines and Sunbury Fire Stations.
- (c) Endorse the initiatives by the Service to reduce the hazards of fire and other incidents in the community.
- (d) Endorse the initiatives by the Service to work with partners to influence behaviour in the community.
- (e) Recognise that following evaluation of initiatives funding may be requested in order for them to be implemented, maintained or continued.

1 INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.2 Responsibility for delivering Surrey Fire & Rescue Services Safety Plan in Spelthorne is devolved to the North Area management team and the Borough Manager for Spelthorne, together with the fire crews based at Staines and Sunbury Fire Stations.
- 1.3 The framework to achieve this has been through the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service Borough Plan for Spelthorne 2007 -2008. 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 Spelthorne.
- 1.4 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 was, and remains, 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.
- 1.5 Surrey Fire and Rescue Performance is measured against Best Value Performance Indicators. For the Service as a whole, 13 of 20 indicators are on or better than target and four are significantly worse (over 10% off target). The four Service wide BVPI's off target are;
- BVPI 142iii Accidental Dwelling Fires, however saw a dramatic reduction in Spelthorne, 2006/07 – 59, 2007/08 – 39 reduction of 20, NB target was 51.
 - BVPI143i Deaths from Dwelling Fires, Spelthorne 2007/08 – 1,
 - BVPI 146i Malicious False Alarms not attended, Spelthorne 2007/08 – 16, one of the highest in Surrey
 - BVPI 206iii Deliberate secondary Fires (excluding vehicles), Spelthorne saw an increase on last year, 2007/08 – 98 incidents, the second highest in Surrey.
- 1.6 To continuously improve the Fire & Rescue Service performance in Spelthorne four key projects are being maintained to reduce the number of calls to Automatic Fire Alarms, Arson, Road Traffic Collisions and Dwelling Fires.

2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

The fire appliances based at Staines and Sunbury fire stations cover Spelthorne.

- 2.1 The major areas of performance for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in Spelthorne are monitored against the following groups of Best Value Performance Indicators.

- 2.2 **BVPI 142i** Number of fires attended, a reduction of 75 (18%) representing significantly improved performance when compared with the last three years, 2006/07 – 405 incidents, 2007/08 - 330 incidents. The aim is to continue this improvement by maintaining effort on the projects, links to Home Fire Risk Checks and Arson Reduction initiatives.
- 2.3 **BVPI 142iii** Accidental fires in dwellings, a reduction of 20 (33%) a dramatic performance that continues the success achieved over the last three years, 2004/05 – 71 incidents, 3rd highest in Surrey, 2006/07 – 59 incidents, 2007/08 - 39 incidents, to become the second lowest level of incidents in Surrey. The aim is to continue this improvement by maintaining effort on the projects, links to Home Fire Risk Checks and Arson Reduction initiatives
- 2.4 **BVPI 146ii** Number of calls to malicious false alarms. The level of calls has increased for the fourth year in a row, up from 34 incidents in 2007/07 to 39 incidents in 2007/08, the second highest level of activity recorded in Surrey.
- 2.5 **BVPI 149i** Number of false alarms caused by automatic detection (AFA's). Significant improvement on last years total of 335, down 42 (12%) to 293 for 2007/08. The improvement is expected to continue during 2008/09.
- 2.6 **BVPI 206i & 206iii** Number of deliberate fires (excluding vehicles) have increased to 131, up by 23 when compared to 2006/07. Refuse container fires continue to be an issue; this is being tackled through a multi-agency approach. In addition, by continuing the Arson Reduction Project for 2008-09 performance is expected to improve.
- 2.7 **BVPI 206ii & 206iv** Number of deliberate fires in vehicles, decreased from last years total of 51, down by 8 (15%) to 43.

3 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Dialogue with our partners has been continuous in order to inform current and future practice.
- 3.2 Formally this has taken place at various levels and includes the Local Strategic Partnership, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, the Joint Action Group and Nuisance Prevention Group. However, many more informal links have been created and maintained that have enhanced our overall contribution to the Borough.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 For 2008-09 a bid to support expansion and improvement of “Safe Drive Stay Alive” safety initiative for young drivers has been made. Road Traffic Collisions are unfortunately an increasingly core part of the service’s work. For 2007, Spelthorne experienced 58 killed or seriously injured people, 15

of whom were aged between 17 and 24; Fire and Rescue are keen to work with partners to dramatically reduce this level of incidents.

- 4.2 SFRS is 20 times more likely to save a life at the scene of a road accident than at a fire, and on average the service attends around 70 fatal incidents each year. Such incidents do not respect borough boundaries; a driver killed in one borough could be from any part of the county. Aimed at reducing the number of casualties on Surrey's roads, particularly involving the 17-24yr-old age range, the SDSA production has grown consistently over recent years and has now been seen by more than 28,000 school pupils and college students across the county. SF&RS is seeking to widen this approach and is seeking funding to assist with this. The funding will cover the one-off cost of re-recording and updating the DVD material used at SDSA performances, including full production and video recording. As a result SFRS will increase the number of SDSA performances in 2008/9, aiming to reach 100% of Surrey's students next year. In 2009 we aim to expand the number of shows further as a result of the more flexible format that the new DVD material will support; with delivery in each borough to reach elements of the target audience we do not currently reach. The new material will also be formatted to be of greater use to offender rehabilitation initiatives.
- 4.3 During 2008-09, following evaluation of progress with implementing the four key projects (Unwanted Call Reduction (AFA & Hoax), Dwelling Fire Reduction, Arson Reduction and Road Traffic Collision Reduction) funding may be requested in order to support risk reduction initiatives linked to the projects.

5 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Area Manager for the North (Dave Steggles) represents Surrey Fire and Rescue Service at the CDRP, the borough manager for Spelthorne (Colin Porter) represents the Service at the Spelthorne JAG, CIAG ensuring the Service's views and expertise contribute to reducing crime and enhancing safety.
- 5.2 The main area where SF&RS support the CDRP agenda and the reduction in crime statistics (BCS basket of ten indicators) is through reducing criminal damage (arson). The link between abandoned cars and arson is proven and any decrease in the former will influence the latter.
- 5.3 The Firewise Advisory Scheme continues to work with these groups. This partnership approach has ensured a wider view has been taken in order to prevent an escalation of offending behaviour.
- 5.4 Personnel from across the Borough are now contributing to the Youth Engagement Scheme (YES) run at Walton Fire Station. This sees the borough contributing financially and practically in one area to assist with youth diversion.

5.5 The fire crews at Staines and Sunbury continue to support other youth diversion and safety projects such as the Young Fire Fighters Association (YFA), Junior Citizens and Fire Fighter For a Day.

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

6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Service Diversity Strategy ensures that Surrey Fire & 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.

7 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Fire crews and appliances based at Staines and Sunbury form part of the wider resource required to meet the Fire and Rescue Services 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. The Service therefore plan to address performance issues through a balance of prevention, protection and response initiatives that are focused through the local Borough Plan to meet the identified needs of Spelthorne.

7.2 The Committee is asked to note the performance of the Service in Spelthorne and to recognise the potential for improved performance offered by the projects that form the 2008/09 Spelthorne Borough plan.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Available on request from Dave Steggles, the Spelthorne Borough Plan and the SF&RS Safety Plan
