



## OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE SPELTHORNE

### FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE REPORT

April – September 2011

#### KEY ISSUE

The performance of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in Spelthorne Borough for the period 1st April 2011 – 30th September 2011.

**This report is for information only.**

#### SUMMARY

Surrey, as a whole, continues to be one of the safest counties in the country. Accordingly the Borough of Spelthorne has contributed to this through significant reductions within most of the categories in which SFRS are measured.

Fire and Rescue performance within Spelthorne has been positive and pro-active. strategies have resulted in doing better than targets set by the service in areas such as accidental fires in dwellings, calls to Automatic Fire Alarms, deliberate fires (excluding vehicles) reducing number of malicious calls and meeting targets such as deliberate fires in vehicles.

Within the reporting period there have been no fatalities from fires in dwellings within Spelthorne but there was 1 recorded fire related injury. This type of incident, whilst extremely regrettable, involved the person being overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes with the person going to Hospital however the injuries appeared slight.

In Spelthorne the percentage of the number of fires which were contained to room of origin was 94% against a target of 92%

Spelthorne was above target for the number of fires in dwellings where no Smoke Detector was fitted at 45% against a target of 38%

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SFRS are keen to work with partners to dramatically reduce the level of incidents as detailed within this report. Fire crews within Spelthorne continue to work on projects with partner organisations to reduce the number of calls to dwelling fires, incidents of arson, 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 Visit's (HFSV) and National Safety Campaigns.

## **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **That the Spelthorne Local Committee:**

- Note the performance of SFRS within Spelthorne
- Support the achievement of personnel at Staines and Sunbury Fire Stations
- Support the commitment by SFRS to embrace new technology and improved initiatives, to reduce risk further and make Spelthorne safer.
- Endorse SFRS to continue working with partners to influence behaviour in the community.
- Consider further promotion of the SFRS Firewise Scheme with partner agencies and local contacts.
- 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 Spelthorne is devolved to the East Command Management Team, together with the personnel based at Staines and Sunbury fire stations.
- 1.2 The framework to achieve this has been through the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Borough Plan for Spelthorne 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 Spelthorne.
- 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.

## **2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTRY**

The following comparisons are based on service statistics compared to Targets set for the period April – September 2011.

- 2.1 SFRS within Spelthorne attended 124 calls to all fires including deliberate fires. Of these incidents, 15 were accidental dwelling fires, of which 94% were confined to the room of origin. SFRS has utilised local press and community events to inform the public regarding Fire Safety. By establishing effective partnership workings and promoting the Home Fire Safety Visits and targeting specific areas of the community we are actively seeking to reduce the number of incidents that occur still further. SFRS are a major contributor to the successful Spelthorne Arson Reduction Patrol.
- 2.2 During April -September Spelthorne attended 5 malicious false alarm calls against a set target of 7. Ways to target and address the number of calls are being formulated but there are no identifiable trends or patterns. Malicious calls can prevent Spelthorne teams attending other incidents and taking the teams away from value adding activities such as training and Home Fire Safety Visits.
- 2.3 During April -September Spelthorne attended 62 False alarms from Automatic Fire Detection (AFD) systems against a target set of 77 .This is figure has reinforced the position of Spelthorne in going from being one of the highest offenders for unwanted calls, to having one of lowest figures within the County. All incidents continue to be monitored and a “Call Challenge” process will further reduce the number of unwanted fire calls. Work to identify the ‘Top Offenders’ is being undertaken and appropriate actions, formulated with the Management Teams at these locations, taken to address this.
- 2.4 During April -September Spelthorne attended 56 calls to deliberate fires, excluding deliberate fires in vehicles, against a target of 61. There appears to be no pattern’s to these incidents but analysis is ongoing to ensure any trends are identified and action taken accordingly. Following all incidents of suspicious/deliberate origin, Crimestoppers ‘Arson Awareness’ boards are displayed to raise the awareness of the local community. An information pack is supplied to local businesses to provide them with information etc on methods of protecting themselves from the possibility of arson.
- 2.5 During April –September Spelthorne attended 10 calls to deliberate fires in vehicles against a target of 10.
- 2.6 During April –September Spelthorne attended 7 calls to fires in non-domestic premises against a target of 12.
- 2.7 The number of calls to accidental dwelling fires remains below target. Prevention activities such as Hot Strikes & H.F.S.V.s are believed to have a real impact on maintaining this target. 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. Partnership working has been established with Spelthorne Borough Council housing authority and their contractors A2 Housing and Metropolitan Housing, thus promoting awareness of the HFSV scheme to Local Authority Housing tenants. Work is also ongoing with Age Concern Spelthorne, with several requests for H.F.S.V.s being received and undertaken, primarily through the maintenance person referring priority requests. A target of 340 H.F.S.V.s was set to be completed across Spelthorne for 2011-12, for this period Spelthorne teams have

completed 192 and are expected to meet the target with a final total being available in end of year report.

### **Operational Update**

- 2.8 Crewing levels with the Borough remain at 52 personnel.
- 2.9 Spelthorne personnel have proactively maintained their skills of service new equipment and vehicles in the event that should an incident occur whereby they would be required, they would be able to assist in its resolution.
- 2.10 Personnel at both Staines and Sunbury maintain a good working relationship with our neighbours (London FRS and Royal Berkshire FRS). Regular cross-border exercises and training takes place to facilitate the possibility of utilising resources at incidents.
- 2.11 To ensure skills are maintained Spelthorne personnel working alongside personnel from Runnymede have organised and attended a series of High-Rise Building exercises to test their response and resource capabilities within the Sunbury area.
- 2.12 SFRS are currently building their water rescue capability to enhance resilience within the Service. All Spelthorne staff have completed an initial 'Water Awareness' course, Module 2 and further training is planned for January & February to enhance this skill to Module 3 (Swift Water Rescue ), With the planned arrival of the Services' second boat to be based in Spelthorne, further training is planned in April for RYA level 2 .Once fully trained Spelthorne personnel will assist in the services response not only to incidents in county but also to assist in operations outside of the County under the D.E.F.R.A response capability scheme.

### **3 COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITY**

#### **3.1 Schools Education Programme**

In the reporting period, 308 children have been provided with Fire Safety Education. Within LA schools, 132 children were seen in Year 2. Classes, 152 within Year 5 classes and 0 within Year 8 classes. Within Independent Schools 0 children were seen. Visits to Special Educational Needs establishment saw 24 children receive Fire Safety Education. In Year 6, additional; input comes in the form of the Junior Citizens scheme, which is a two-week, multi-agency event. This years Spelthorne Junior Citizens will be in October 2011 at British Airways Learning Centre at Heathrow.

#### **Youth Engagement Scheme (YES)**

3.2 The Youth Engagement Scheme is a one week, 5 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. There were no courses run for this period.

#### **3.3 Young Fire Fighters Association (YFA)**

The YFA has been running for eight years and is based out of Staines Fire Station in its own purpose built building. However, its current status is under review as there are currently no students attending this group. The number of instructors available for overseeing the group has reduced and this has led to a review of its role and the feasibility of it remaining a viable resource for Spelthorne residents. This still remains under review.

### **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 2 referrals were made in the Spelthorne area.

### **5 DOMESTIC FIRES**

5.2 Borough personnel continue to work alongside existing partners in generating Home Fire safety Visits (H.F.S.V.s) and fitting smoke detection where required. In addition Borough teams proactively promote the free H.F.S.V service at all public events attended. It is expected that personnel will undertake 340 Home Fire Safety Visits 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 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.
- 6.2 Available statistics show Spelthorne teams are on target for this reporting period attended 62 calls against a target of 77.

## **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 the local schools and colleges. The event will be held again In November 2011 .and will be reported on in end of year report, previous event held in Nov 2010 showed that a total of 11800 young people (306 from schools and colleges located in Spelthorne) attended a performance of SDSA. The following schools/colleges attended: Halliford (50 pupils), Bishopwand (75), Surrey Care Trust (STEPS) Spelthorne (10), NACRO (14), Brookland's College – Ashford Campus (157). St Pauls Catholic College had booked for the 2<sup>nd</sup> November but this clashed with another commitment. They could not attend any other dates. The 2010 presentations continued to utilise the new road traffic collision reconstruction DVD to enhance and update the SDSA performances. Members funding (£5000 from 2008) contributed to the production costs of the new films.

## **8 COMMUNITY ROOMS**

- 8.1 The Community Rooms at Staines and Sunbury Fire Station continue to be an extremely useful resource to the Borough, local partners and the Fire Service. With the funding received from Local Committee Members, 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 who frequently visit the station.
- 8.2 Regular bookings for the rooms are now taken from the Youth Justice Service and the Youth Offending Team, who make full use of the facilities on offer.

## **9 CONSULTATIONS**

- 9.1 SFRS will consult with Members, partners and key stakeholders to ensure the community safety initiatives in Spelthorne 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 East Area Commander Eddie Roberts on 07968-834-490.

## **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 Commander for the East (Eddie Roberts) represents Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, Group Manager Weldon-Gamble the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) while the Community Impact Manager (Kevin Noble) represents SFRS at the Spelthorne Joint Action Group (JAG) ensuring the Services views and expertise contribute to reducing crime and enhancing safety.
- 12.2 Initiatives and campaigns within Spelthorne 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.
- 12.3 The Protection Manager for Spelthorne 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.

## **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 Spelthorne, including direct contact, public education programs and campaigns.
- 13.2 Fire crews and appliances based at Staines and Sunbury 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, seasonal climate variations, changes in scrap prices for vehicles or an individual with an unhealthy interest in fire. Road

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traffic collisions 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 manage these issues SFRS plan to address the performance through a balance of prevention, protection and response initiatives that are focussed through the local Borough Plan to meet the identified needs of Spelthorne.

13.4 The Committee is asked to note the performance of SFRS in Spelthorne and to recognise the potential for improved performance offered by the projects listed above and those further detailed within the 2011/12 Spelthorne Borough Plan.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** IRMP, Spelthorne Borough Plan, SFRS Website.

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