

Item 8

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)

19th October 2006

KEY ISSUE:

This report outlines the major strands of activity being undertaken within Surrey Heath, by the Fire Service teams based at Camberley and Chobham Fire Stations.

SUMMARY:

The report contains information on new operational equipment at Camberley, provided by the Service. There is also information on the various activities undertaken by the Borough Team to reduce the risk from fire and road traffic to the residents of Surrey Heath, including direct contact public education programmes and campaigns.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee

- 1 Recognise the achievements of the Borough Teams at Camberley and Chobham, and support their commitment to embrace new technology and improved initiatives to reduce risk and make Surrey Heath safer.
- 2 Supports the achievement of the Retained duty personnel at **Chobham** Fire Station and acknowledge the availability offered by employers who release staff, and those who are self-employed.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1 Surrey Heath continues to be one of the safest Boroughs in the County, which is reflected in the following performance figures, which relate to the reporting year April 2005 to March 2006.

- The Service attended 381 calls to fires; this represents a reduction of 9% on the previous year's total of 418. We are currently on target for a further reduction this year.
- Malicious false alarm calls were down 15% from 32 to 27.
- False alarms from Automatic Fire Detection systems reduced by 13% from 331 to 289.
- There was an increase of 10% in deliberate fires, excluding vehicle fires, from 129 to 143, however, we are on target for a reduction this year.
- Deliberate fires in vehicles reduced by 27% from 45 to 33.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

2 Operational Firefighting – Compressed Air Foam System

2.1 Camberley have taken receipt of a new Fire Engine, which incorporates a revolutionary new fire fighting system. This is a computer-controlled system, which produces a compressed air foam/water mix, which has a superior fire-fighting capability to plain water. There are benefits to the Service and the environment in terms of improved efficiency at knocking down fires, and a reduction in the potential pollution of surrounding waterways from the fire scene water run-off.

3 Road Traffic Casualties

3.1 Members will be aware of the Safe Drive Stay Alive programme, which the Service is continuing to lead on. Aimed at Surrey's sixth form pupils, in an effort to educate young drivers about their actions and possible consequences whilst they are driving, this is a hard-hitting, scenario-based live stage production, involving participants from the emergency services. Also, and perhaps most poignantly, stories are told by the parent of a young person who lost their life in a road traffic collision and from a person disabled by the actions of a young driver. The production is sponsored by local companies and is totally free of charge to Surrey's schools.

3.2 The programme for November this year has just been published and it is anticipated that Tomlinscote school and Collingwood and Kings International Colleges will be sending their sixth form pupils along to this excellent event.

4 Schools' education programme

- 4.1 This is an ongoing programme of fire safety education for schoolchildren, with classroom-based input in years 2, 5, and 8. From October this year Firefighters from Camberley will be joining the Schools' Education Officer, on an ad hoc basis, to promote an increase in the use of smoke alarms in children's bedrooms. In year 6, additional input comes in the form of the Junior Citizens scheme, which is a two-week, multi-agency event. In 2006, to date, the Service delivered safety advice to 904 year 6 pupils in the Surrey Heath area.

5 Firewise scheme

- 5.1 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. In the year to end of August 2006 Surrey Heath had four referrals, of which two are still active cases.

6 Youth Engagement Scheme (YES)

- 6.1 This a week of practical fire service activities aimed at young people who, for a variety of reasons, have come to the attention of the Youth Offending Team (YOT). The first of these courses was run at Walton Fire Station in May this year, when 14 young men were referred by the YOT, to take part in a pilot programme. The scheme was judged, by all concerned, to be a great success, and is now an example of best practice, which could be appropriate for other boroughs to use.

7 Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order

- 7.1 Sunday 1 October 2006 saw the most significant change to fire safety legislation for over 30 years with the enactment of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It repeals over 64 other pieces of primary fire safety legislation. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is responsible for enforcing the Order in the name of Surrey County Council who is the Fire and Rescue Authority and this is now our primary fire safety legislation.
- 7.2 The responsibility for managing fire risks now lies firmly with the responsible person to mitigate any risk generated by their undertaking. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service can, and will, continue to give advice on fire safety matters but we cannot undertake any risk assessment or contribute to it.

CONSULTATION

- 8 The Service will consult with Members and Partners to ensure the community safety initiatives in Surrey Heath 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. Areas include flooding issues, road traffic casualty statistics and common land fires.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9 None

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

10 All Surrey Fire and Rescue Service activity continues to support the principles of sustainable development, particularly in relation to road safety, common land fires and pollution.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

11 Initiatives and campaigns within Surrey Heath will contribute to a reduction in crime and disorder particularly in relation to arson and vehicle crime.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12 All initiatives, campaigns and operational procedures will be subject of an Equality Impact Assessment. There are no equality implications directly related to this report.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

Number of Annexes: None