

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

10 June 2010

Present:-

Councillors Fry, Healey, Leaves and Woodman

Apologies:-

Councillors Eastman, Foggin and Manning

***CSCPC/1. Election of Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Leaves be appointed Chair of the Committee until its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2011.

***CSCPC/2. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2010 be signed as a correct record.

***CSCPC/3. Election of Vice-Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Manning be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee until its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2011.

***CSCPC/4. Declarations of Interest**

Members of the Committee were invited to consider whether they had any personal/personal and prejudicial interests in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and to declare any such interests at this time.

Councillor Woodman declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in those items relating to South West Fire Control Ltd. by virtue of his being the Authority appointed Director on the company.

***CSCPC/5. Update on Community Safety Initiatives including Partnerships**

The Committee received for information an update given by the Director of Support Services and Improvement in respect of current initiatives being undertaken by the Service. These initiatives included:

- The implementation of a new Volunteer Policy;
- The Partnership Framework;
- An association with students from Bath University.

The Area Manager (Community Safety) gave an overview of the position in respect of the above initiatives. Attention was drawn to a new initiative in respect of the launch of a Volunteer Policy for the Service. The Service was only the second in the country to pursue this and the Policy was subject to consultation at present. It was felt that the engagement of volunteers by the Service could increase capacity and effectiveness, particularly on community safety work, and would assist in raising the profile in this area of work. A full risk assessment would need to be undertaken prior to implementation.

The Committee discussed the partnership arrangements of the Service following the Partnership Framework relaunch on 17 May 2010. It was noted that the Partnership Register was being compiled and that this would assist the Service in quantifying the work that was being carried out together with providing information in respect of the outcomes being achieved. This work had commenced with an evaluation of all of the partnerships in which the Service was involved. One of the main issues in terms of partnership working was the instigation of data sharing agreements and reference was made to work that was being undertaken to address this.

Members of the Committee commended the instigation of a marketing and community safety based project involving Bath University post graduate students in the identification of ways to target vulnerable groups in the community.

***CSCPC/6. Ellacombe Road Fire - Update**

The Committee received for information an update given by the Director for Support Services and Improvement in respect of the Inquest following the tragic deaths of two children in the fire at Ellacombe Road, Torbay. The Committee noted that the Coroner had recorded a verdict of accidental death for both children and as a result, this would be categorised as fire deaths in the context of the Service's performance statistics. This information had been fed back to the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) for further consideration.

The Area Manager (Community Safety) drew attention to a number of issues for the Service that had been considered as a result of this fire. These included:

- The Service had not been made aware of some critical issues surrounding the family prior to the fire;
- There were no smoke detectors in the property;

He added that the incident had acted as a catalyst for local agencies to work together in the prevention of a further incident like this occurring in the future and the following points of action were highlighted:

- That, in the 6 months following the incident, 1200 Home Fire Safety Visits had been carried out locally due to referrals from other agencies;
- The Service's Firesetting Intervention Programme had been fully endorsed by Torbay Council, who were unaware of its existence previously;
- That a data sharing agreements had been instigated with Children's Services at County Council level and with Torbay Primary Care Trust (covering all of their services), enabling more effective partnership working;
- That, language schools, special needs schools, home schooled pupils and excluded pupils had been contacted with a view of increasing their awareness of the dangers of fire;
- There had been training organised in conjunction with the Landlords' Association to target those particularly without smoke detectors fitted on their properties.

The Area Manager (Community Safety) stated that this had been a tragic incident but it had encouraged action to be taken to enable the Service to move forward with its prevention activities. There was a tremendous amount of work to be carried out still but the action highlighted above had proved a very positive start.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The meeting started at 10.15hours and finished at 10.55hours.