

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	CSCPC/14/3
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	25 JUNE 2014
LEAD OFFICER	ACFO, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
SUBJECT OF REPORT	Update on Investment in Community Safety
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On 10 July 2013, the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (Minute DSFRA/20 refers) approved an additional £450,000 of funding to support increased Community Safety activity as part of the proposals within the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>This report provides a summary of the activities funded by this investment and the proposed investment of the remaining balance.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	There are no additional resource implications as a result of this paper.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	The Corporate Plan proposal was subject to an equality risks and benefits analysis.
APPENDICES	A – Details of Activities
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Minutes of the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting held on 10 July 2013

1 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 On 10 July 2013, the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (Minute DSFRA/20 refers) approved an additional £450,000 of funding to invest into Community Safety activity as part of the 2013-14 Corporate Plan proposals. This investment was agreed in order to deliver:

- Improved community safety within the communities where changes to crewing arrangements had been agreed;
- Cost effective initiatives and partnership working to assist in recognising targeted and vulnerable groups within the community, and
- Sustainable relationships and activities that create an ongoing legacy of safety for the communities of Devon and Somerset.

1.2 This paper provides a summary of the projects that have been supported by this investment.

2. **DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE SERVICE**

2.1 Agreement to funding for any proposed initiative was subject to a detailed business case to be submitted by Group Commanders. Each business case was subject to scrutiny against its ability to meet the delivery criteria outlined in paragraph 1.1.

2.2 Details of the initiatives implemented by Groups are as follow:

2.2.1 West Devon Group

The Group Management Team identified initiatives and closer partnership working to improve safety and to address the changes to crewing arrangements. Their proposals were to:

- Deliver additional Home Safety Visits to all properties that would now be outside a 10 minute response area for Plympton and Plymstock;
- To secure the placement of a Watch Manager within the Plymouth City Council Housing Team;
- To secure the placement of a Station Manager within the Plymouth City Council Emergency Planning Team;
- To secure a seconded position of a Watch Manager within the Plymouth & Devon Racial Equality Council.

2.2.2 South Devon Group

The Group Management Team identified two key areas of support to enhance the safety of the residents within the community. Their proposals were to:

- Create a Community Risk Reduction Officer role based at a Firefighters level who is able to focus on the needs of the community, identifying people, businesses and properties that present a risk;
- Create a Community Risk and Resilience Team with two Advocate positions working to promote the safety of those properties directly affected by the crewing changes in Torquay;

2.2.3 Central North Group

The Group Management Team identified two key areas of support to enhance the safety of the residents within the community. The proposals were to:

- Deliver additional Home Safety Visits to all properties that would now be outside a 10 minute response area for Ilfracombe;
- Support 'One Ilfracombe' - the community budget project, a concept that brings together partners to pool activities and spend in key targeted areas in order to improve the outcomes across the whole community;
- Secure the employment of Advocates to support the delivery of community safety objectives as identified within the Ilfracombe Local Community Plan;
- Refurbish the existing estate of Ilfracombe Fire Station to provide secure access and facilities to support the multi-agency Town Team.

2.2.4 Somerset West Group

The Group Management Team identified three key areas of support to enhance the safety of the residents within the community. The proposals were to:

- Deliver additional Home Safety Visits to all properties affected by changes to the crewing arrangements at Taunton;
- Support the Somerset Rural Communities Council (SRCC) Village Agents scheme for 2 years (13/14 & 14/15);
- Support the 12 month secondment of a Watch Manager to the Somerset County Council Project Team for the 'Troubled Families' initiative.

3. **PROPOSED FUTURE ACTIVITY**

- 3.1 The balance of the fund remaining at this time has been ring-fenced to support an improved service wide approach to the delivery of home safety visits.
- 3.2 In light of the increase in fire related deaths and injuries across the service area in 2013/14, a review of the home safety check process was initiated. Research provides evidence that home safety visits can reduce the incidence of dwelling fires and the related deaths and injuries.
- 3.3 The Service has set an ambitious target of increasing the number of annual completed home safety visits from its current level of around 4,000 per year to an eventual target of 30,000 per year. Both our own and external research suggests that such an approach could lead to the reduction of an additional 3 lives saved per year and a reduction of 23 injuries per year.
- 3.4 To support this ambitious increase, the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority at its meeting on 29 May 2014 (Minute DSFRA/9 refers) approved the use of an additional £100,000 in the form of a ring-fenced reserve. There will be a need for the Service to work even more closely with existing and new partners in order to provide home safety visits for those most at risk in our communities. Delivery of this additional workload will require the Service to increase activity across the whole process of home safety checks. This will require the investment from the balance of the original £450,000, the additional £100,000 agreed for the 2014/15 along with the realignment of existing resources.

4 **CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Authority's decision to invest in Community Safety has enabled the Service to develop a broad range of initiatives that reach into the community and direct resources to those most at risk from fires and other emergencies. The Service will closely monitor the outcomes from this investment and report the results to the Authority.

5 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Authority note the content of this report.

TREVOR STRATFORD
ACFO, Director of Operations

DETAILS OF INVESTMENT INITIATIVES BY AREA AND GROUP COMMANDS

1. Western Command

West Devon Group

1.1. Additional Home Safety Visits

The Group Management Team identified that there were 80 residential premises now outside the 10 minute response time following the changes to the crewing arrangements.

Home Safety Visits have been recognised in identifying and reducing the risk within each domestic property, having a life span of up to 7 years through the provision of advice and education, a smoke detector and additional equipment as necessary.

Cost of initiative - £1,204

1.2. Placement within Plymouth City Council Housing Team

Plymouth experiences significant problems with poor housing, deprivation and affordability. There is a high level of private renting of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) which are recognised as having a higher frequency of fires than any other type of property.

A secondment within this team will present greater data sharing opportunities for significant target groups and embed the availability of a Home Safety Visit within a key partner agency. Benefits identified include;

- Improved management of Licensed and Unlicensed HMO's
- Improved data sharing leading to improved access to high risk groups.
- An increase in the number of Home Safety Visits for a target / vulnerable group
- Reduced risk to Firefighters through risk reduction activities

The Housing Team have agreed to share the costs for this placement at Watch Manager level and therefore will cost £18,047 (50% of true cost of £36,094).

1.3. Placement within the Plymouth City Council Emergency Planning Team

The placement of Station Manager within the Emergency Planning Team was agreed with a member of the Executive Board, with the following benefits recognised as being;

- The delivery of shared corporate goals.
- Improved data sharing opportunities identifying high risk groups.
- An increase in the delivery of Home Safety Visits for target/vulnerable groups.
- A natural overlap of mutual areas of interest in community resilience and pre-planning in mitigating any natural emergency.

The costs associated with supporting this role are £38,633

1.4. Seconded position of a Watch Manager the Plymouth & Devon Racial Equality Council.

This secondment offers the Service further access to those suffering from racial equality issues and other vulnerable groups within the community.

The role is specific in the type of person able to effectively deliver in this vital area for the Service and there has been an increase in terms of awareness and engagement within groups that have historically been very difficult to engage. Improvements will be delivered through;

- Generating greater inequality awareness training to schools and our own organisation
- Supporting Step up to Respect Festival.
- Supporting the set-up of a Kurdish centre in Plymouth.
- Supporting Life Skills for those with a Learning Disability (999 DVD).
- Supporting the Services strategic direction on equality and diversity.

Cost of initiative - £49,000

The total bid from the West Devon Group is £106,884.

South Devon Group

1.5. Community Risk Reduction Officer

A role will be based at a Firefighters level with the ability to;

- Focus on the needs of the community, identifying people, businesses and properties that present a risk.
- Build strong links with other service providers, statutory and voluntary sector.
- Arrange and carry out targeted enhanced Home Safety Visits.
- AFA reduction and the targeting of repeat offenders - supporting a further cost saving initiative and Corporate Proposal.
- Deliver safety advice to businesses and residents.

Cost of initiative - £38,633

1.6. Community Risk and Resilience Team

These roles provides for Advocates to work on the following to promote the safety of those properties directly affected by crewing changes through;

- Conducting enhanced Home Fire Safety visits.
- Targeted campaigns emanating from intelligence led data.
- Delivering safety training for partners to conduct Home Safety Visits.
- Liaison and networking with partner agencies.
- Delivering schools talks.
- Delivering community action events

Cost of initiative £46,360

The total bid from the South Devon Group is £84,993

2. Central Command

Central North Group

2.1. The One Ilfracombe (community budget project) is a new concept that brings together partners to pool activities and spend in key targeted areas on improving the outcomes across the whole community.

The main focus for the Service is the development of the Town Team, a multi-agency approach to the delivery of public and voluntary services within Ilfracombe.

The proposed actions focused on

- The employment of Advocates to support in the delivery of community safety objectives identified within the Ilfracombe Local Community Plan. These persons are being trained as part of the multi-agency Town Team in providing a daily link for the Service with One Ilfracombe.
- The refurbishment of the existing estate of Ilfracombe Fire Station to provide secure access and facilities to support the multi-agency Town Team.
- In addition to this, an additional 312 Home Safety visits will be delivered to those properties impacted by the changes at the station.

The total bid from the West Devon Group is £57,700

3. Somerset Command

Somerset West Group

3.1. The Group Management Team submitted four bids for support and following careful discussion and consideration, three bids were agreed. The successful bids were;

- A funding request to support the Village Agents scheme for 2 years (2013/14 & 2014/15), run by the Somerset Rural Communities Council (SRCC), a crucial support network that Somerset Command work closely with in targeting and reaching the most vulnerable and at risk members of our remoter communities.

Cost of initiative - £50,000

- A 12 month secondment of a Watch Manager to the Somerset County Council Project Team of the National 'Troubled Families' initiative. It is well understood that the majority of public services (including ourselves) generally coming into contact with the same families either through emergency incidents or other types of service support.

Cost of initiative - £49,000

- Deliver additional Home Safety Visits to all properties affected by changes to the crewing arrangements at Taunton

Cost of initiative - £5,285

The total bids from Somerset Command is £104,285.