

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

6 February 2013

Present:-

Councillors Leaves (Chair), Mrs. Bakewell MBE, Brooksbank, Foggin and Healey.

Apologies:-

Councillor Fry

***CSCPC/23. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2012 be signed as a correct record.

***CSCPC/24. Receipt of National Award**

(An item of urgent business taken in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Chairman determined that this should be considered as a matter of urgency to enable the Committee to be apprised of a recent development at the earliest opportunity.

The Community Safety Manager advised the Committee that, at its annual meeting on 5 February 2013, the Market Analysis Segmentation Toolkit organisation had awarded the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service a national award to recognise innovative use by the Service of data in seeking to reduce road traffic casualties.

The Committee asked to have placed on record its congratulations for this achievement.

***CSCPC/25. Fire 999 DVD - Plymouth People First**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Support (CSCP/13/1) together with a presentation from Plymouth People First (a self-advocacy organisation for adults with a learning disability) on production of the organisation, in partnership with the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, of a fire safety DVD – “Fire 999”. Adults with a learning disability were directly involved in the planning and performance of the 30 minute film which, in discreet sections, covered night time routines, what to do in the case of a house fire and how to book a home fire safety check. The DVD also featured an interactive element on how to spot a fire hazard.

The accessible nature of the film made it appropriate for many different community and protected characteristic groups. To date, some 500 copies had been dispersed in the Plymouth area and feedback indicated considerable success in promoting fire safety awareness particularly amongst adults with a learning disability.

Wider plans for use of the DVD included making it an e-learning package for sale to other UK fire and rescue services, with the income generated being reinvested to facilitate adults with a learning disability delivering appropriate training alongside Service advocates, thereby providing meaningful employment while promoting fire safety prevention to numerous vulnerable groups.

***CSCPC/26. Specialist Rescue Provision Update**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Support (CSCP/13/2) together with a presentation on the specialist rescue provision currently available within the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service. There were currently four specialist rescue facilities currently located at Barnstaple, Plymouth, Exeter and Bridgwater. Each was equipped to deal with incidents involving safe working at heights and confined spaces, large animal rescues and water rescues with the facilities being strategically located with the intention of providing a specialist response, if required, within 40 minutes. Supporting this was a network of 23 Specialist Rescue Advisors – flexible duty response officers specially trained to support the Specialist Rescue Teams in their operational activities.

The report highlighted partnership working with a number of organisations, including the British Equine Veterinary Association, the police, ambulance and coastguard services and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. The Service's water rescue resources (which featured 3 Type B powered rescue boat teams and 4 Type C swift water rescue teams) were each declared on the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) National Assets Register established following the widescale floods of 2007 to hold details of all assets trained and equipped to a national standards and available for national deployment.

Future developments for the Specialist Rescue capability included the introduction of an additional water rescue provision at Exmouth fire station together with joint training exercises with partner organisations to secure a full understanding of inter-agency working.

***CSCPC/27. Promotion of Domestic Sprinklers**

The Committee received for information a presentation on Service activities to promote the installation of both domestic and commercial sprinklers. Rather than adopt a traditional lobbying route, the Service stance was to seek ways to directly influence the community to educate, inform and promote the installation of sprinklers in both commercial and domestic premises. To do this, the Service had produced a series of innovative posters, leaflets and DVDs and was currently engaged in a project with a social housing provider initially to install sprinkler systems in two properties identified as being most vulnerable, with a view to then using this as a model to promote further installations.

The aim of the Service was to encourage all social housing organisations to:

- either fit all existing properties with sprinkler systems; or
- fit sprinkler systems into all new-builds or significant refurbishments; or
- to fit sprinkler systems in the most vulnerable properties.

Additionally, the Service was seeking to encourage the National House Building Council to promote the fitting of sprinklers in all new builds as a way for that organisation to demonstrate a commitment to enhancing community safety.

The presentation highlighted the benefits associated with sprinkler systems (which included both a reduction in fire deaths and fire related injuries and reduced risk to operational crews), debunked certain myths around sprinkler systems (e.g. that a fire would cause all sprinkler heads to actuate; or that systems resulted in considerable water damage) and indicated that the cost of fitting sprinkler systems had, in recent times, reduced considerably to approximately £1,500 to £2,000 for fitting a system in a standard, “two up, two down” residence.

***CSCPC/28. Job Centre Plus - Building on Success**

The Service received for information a presentation on the next steps in taking forward its innovative initiative with Job Centre Plus. The initiative, aimed at unemployed people between the ages of 18 to 24, had a number of defined “hard” outcomes (e.g. achieving, on completion, a job, interview or access to another Job Centre initiative; achieving a qualification) together with “soft” outcomes such as increased motivation, self-esteem, attitude etc.

To date the Service had delivered 20 programmes involving 240 participants. Of the 216 participants having completed a programme, all had secured three qualifications, with 60% gaining employment and 40% other Job Centre Plus programmes.

Going forward, the Service had secured a commercial contract with Job Centre Plus to deliver, in 2013-14, 48 programmes reaching approximately 600 unemployed 18 – 24 year olds, of which it was anticipated some 300 – 400 would secure employment at the end of the programmes.

While this required an increase in support afforded by the Service to the initiative, this increase was more than off-set by the value of the contract which should see the Service secure a profit and provide deliver an invaluable opportunity to deliver community safety messages to one of its prime target audiences.

***CSCPC/29. Marketing Update**

The Service received for information a presentation on the Service Christmas 2012 fire safety campaign together with the proposed 2013 campaign aimed to coincide with the national Fire Kills initiative.

The Christmas 2012 campaign had featured the use of posters with “quick response” (“QR”) codes which, when scanned, directed the viewer to a fire safety message on the Service website. Distribution of the poster had been targeted at those locations where a positive response to this approach had been received during the 2011 campaign.

The 2012 campaign also featured the production of a video, inspired by the corporate advertising of a well-known high street store, focused on the prevention of cooking related fires (which accounted for approximately 50% of all domestic fires attended, some 70% of which were caused by human distraction).

The spring 2013 campaign would focus on promoting the testing of smoke alarms for which the Service, in conjunction with a local distributor, had recently launched an innovative tester. Orders for the testing device had already been placed by both the Mid and West Wales and Humberside Fire & Rescue Services, with the Service receiving a percentage of sales made.

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

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 12.20hours.