

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

27 April 2022

Present:

Councillors Chesterton (Chair), Biederman, Corvid, Radford (Vice-Chair), Randall-Johnson (vice Parker-Khan) and Redman.

Also in attendance in accordance with Standing Order 39:

Councillor Coles.

Apologies:

Councillors McGeough and Parker-Khan.

* **CSC/21/16** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* **CSC/21/17** **Strategic Priority 1 and 2 Performance Measures: Quarter 3 2021-22**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/22/6) on performance by the Service in Quarter 3 of the current (2021-22) financial year against those Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) associated with the following two Strategic Priorities as approved by the Authority for 2021-22 (Minute DSFRA/21/ refers):

Strategic Priority 1: “Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing and supporting the local economy”; and

Strategic Priority 2: “Our operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in our Community Risk Management Plan”.

The performance status of the Service KPIs was based on the following criteria:

Succeeding	The KPI was achieving its target
Near Target	The KPI is less than 10% away from achieving its target
Needs Improvement	The KPI is at least 10% away from achieving its target

In summary, the report identified that Quarter 3 performance against the KPIs was:

	Succeeding	Near target	Needs improvement
Priority 1	11	7	1
Priority 2	8	5	0

The Priority 1 KPI needing improvement related to the number of home fire safety visits completed, which varied from target by 31.6% (9,236 completed visits against a year-to-date target of 13,400). The report identified the main factors behind the ability to deliver the expected level of productivity, together with actions intended to secure performance improvement.

In debating the report, the following points were raised:

- that finalised data for quarter 4 reporting would be submitted to the next meeting. Analysis of the raw data, though, showed some improvement for the number of home fire safety visits completed, which should see performance at 82% (14,800 visits) against the full-year target of 18,000 visits;
- measures to improve home fire safety visit performance included targeted leaflet drops by wholetime crews, with a home fire safety visit subsequently booked if requested;
- the Service continued with “hot strike” leaflet drops for those areas where a fire had recently occurred;
- the Service also undertook seasonal fire safety campaigns (e.g. barbecue safety in summer; bonfire safety in November; candle safety at Christmas);
- that, in setting targets for prevention work, it was necessary to balance quantity with quality. In general terms, prevention activities were targeted at those groups identified as being most vulnerable;
- that targets set were based on capacity to deliver during a normal year. The COVID pandemic had, however, impacted on reaching targets set for the last two years.

The Committee commented that it would be helpful if:

- a report could be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee specifically on home fire safety visits (targeting; processes involved etc.); and
- information could be presented to a future Members’ Forum meeting on the impact of the implementation of Pay for Availability on appliance availability across the area served.

* **CSC/21/18** **Risk-Based Inspection Programme**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/22/7) on the risk-based inspection programme used by the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) to enforce the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2004 (the Order).

The risk-based inspection programme sought to target the highest risk premises within Devon and Somerset against which to undertake fire safety audits, using staff trained in line with the national competency framework. Normal risk premises also had an inspection regime using a fire safety check which could be undertaken by appropriately trained staff.

While there was currently no national definition for a “high-risk” premise, the Service had re-defined what it considered to be “high-risk” by using various data sources and risk attributes. The current Service definition for a high-risk premise, which informed the risk-based inspection programme, was:

‘Buildings identified as Category 1 “Higher Risk” are more likely to have vulnerable occupants, through unfamiliarity and/or their mobility. They are likely to have evacuation methods consisting of stay put, delayed, or phased/progressive strategies.

Any fire safety failures or lack of compliance places occupants at significant risk due to the critical reliance on the building design and management of any evacuation strategy. Buildings that have the potential to cause significant harm and/or large loss of life in the event of fire, including indirectly due to community impact/loss, will be our highest priority’.

The types of Category 1 (Higher Risk) premises were identified in the report and included:

- premises used for sleeping/residential of 6 or more storeys;
- very large commercial premises (15,000sq.m or over);
- all hospitals;
- care homes; and
- significant sleeping accommodation providers (e.g. hotels; boarding and guest houses).

With the exception of hospitals (which were inspected annually), all other Category 1 (Higher Risk) premises would be inspected initially every three years, reducing to annual inspection once recruited inspecting officers achieved competence.

The report identified Fire Safety Inspection Officer development and competency requirements alongside the expected number of inspections to be undertaken in each year and some of the potential risks and challenges that could impact on delivery.

The risk-based inspection programme was complemented by a communications strategy and compliance education on the requirements of the Order. The Service would be seeking to introduce a more comprehensive compliance education strategy during 2022-23.

* **CSC/21/19** **Prevention - Children and Young People**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/22/8) on core, prevention-based, engagement activities of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) for children and young people. These were focussed on the following areas:

- education in schools to promote fire and road safety;
- Fire Cadet and Academy programmes;
- “Out of the Blue” courses; and
- fire setter intervention programmes.

The elements of each of these activities, together with the delivery mechanisms, was detailed in the report. Delivery against each of the activities would be reviewed during 2022 to ensure alignment with the approved Community Risk Management Plan and the Service delivery plan 2021-23.

The Committee acknowledged the considerable voluntary effort required for the successful delivery of many of these initiatives and asked that their appreciation of the work of all involved be placed on record.

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