

Fire and Rescue Service
Headquarters, Pirehill
Please ask for Kay Ross
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SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Friday 24 April 2009

2.00 pm

Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters,
Pirehill

***Please note the time of the meeting**

A Chair and Vice-Chair's Preview (for Mr R Smith and Mrs E Bayliss) has been arranged for
1.30 pm)

Howard Norris
Secretary to the Authority
15 April 2009

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2009**
4. **Road Traffic Collisions in Staffordshire**
Report of the Director of Performance and Planning
5. **Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Overview**
Report of the Director of Performance and Planning
6. **Unwanted Fire Detection Signals (UWFD) Update**
Report of the Director of Performance and Planning presented by Mr Alan McEntire,
Station Manager Central Risk Reduction

7. **Items for Future Meetings**

May 2009	CCTV effectiveness
	Efficiencies General
	Communications Update
	Overview of the last four years of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee
Future Items date not yet specified	PFI Scrutiny
	BV207 Non Domestic Fires – Strategies being adopted and the effectiveness
	Previous Working Group updates
	Overview of the Fire Improvement Group
	Staff Wellbeing Strategy – Progress Report

8. **Date of Next Meeting** – The next meeting of this Committee will be held on Thursday 21 May 2009 at 2.15 pm

**MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2009**

Present: Mr. R. N. Smith (Chairman)

Davies, P.R.
Maryon, M.

Walker, Mrs E
Wanger, C.L.

Also in Attendance: Mr. B. Russell, Director of Safer Communities, and Mr. A McEntire, Station Manager Central Risk Reduction.

Apologies: Barber, M.J., Bayliss, Mrs. E.J., Bloomer, L.W. and O'Leary, J. MBE

PART ONE

Documents referred to in these minutes as schedules are not appended but will be attached to the signed copy of the minutes. Copies, or specific information in them, may be available on request.

Minutes

59. **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee held on 8 January 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 3 April – December 2008
(Schedule 1)**

60. The report provided Members with information regarding Service performance for the first nine months of 2008/09. Appended to the report was a copy of the primary performance information used by Service Directors and Managers to identify areas where outcomes were not meeting targets or were deteriorating.

At the Scrutiny and Performance Committee meeting held on 3 September 2008, Members were introduced to a revised quarterly performance report which was designed as part of the amended Service performance reporting arrangements following the wholesale change in national performance indicators and in anticipation of meeting the needs of CAA in 2009. This revised quarterly report had been well received and, apart from some minor formatting adjustments, had been used to report the performance for the first nine months of 2008/09 at Appendix 1.

Performance for Primary Fires (NI49) and Arson (NI33) were broadly performing satisfactorily against targets. Certain specific operational indicators (e.g. Accidental dwelling fires, non-domestic property fires) continued to cause concern and this was being addressed by the 'More for Less' campaign and changes to the support for businesses (Safety Plan). Additional technicians were being deployed and it was hoped that performance would show improving results by the end of 2008/09. Human resources performance was being maintained with the first six months results indicating an improvement in sickness absence in excess of 25%, which should bring the full year performance close to target.

Members discussed accidental dwelling fires and these were 7 over the pro rata target, but these figures were 12% better than the previous year. The Service was concentrating its efforts in vulnerable areas.

Members were informed the fire death figures for the next quarter would be above target as there had been a number of fire deaths over a short period. The average age of the recent fire deaths was 69. Many 0800 cards had been distributed and over 5000 referrals had been made to the 0800 number. The calls had not all been from the people that the Service had been trying to target. Mr Smith indicated that the Authority at its meeting on 11 February 2009 would be looking at the possibility of setting up a Working Group to look at Accidental Fire Deaths to see if further improvements could be made to reduce these incidents.

It was identified that there were 56,000 people over 65 in the Authority area who had not received visit from the Service and these were being targeted for HFRCs. The Service had carried out 7500 HFRCs since 1 April 2008. Most technicians were now in post and the Service was building their capacity to carry out HFRCs. It was anticipated that it would take approximately two years to carry out all 56,000 HFRCs but there would still be ongoing work to be done. Members were informed that 5,500 of the 56,000 people over 65 were in the South Staffordshire Area and the technicians had been located in areas where there were the highest numbers of over 65s and therefore higher risk. The Chairman asked if the projected workload relating to HFRCs could be provided for a future meeting.

A Member had recently visited an elderly person and made a referral for a HFRC as the elderly person had no central heating and there was evidence that embers from the coal fire had scorched the carpet. She had asked partners whether Central Heating could be provided. In Stoke the Service had been granted access to the city council data base in order for them to be able to identify vulnerable elderly persons.

Some people who had died in the fires were known to Social Services and had a HFRC carried out. Three of those who had died recently, had open fires. Two deaths recently recorded as accidental may be reclassified following further enquiries.

With regard to malicious calls the level overall was below target. Key stage III talks in schools had been running for five years and these seemed to have an effect on the number of calls. The percentage of non attendance at malicious calls needed to be higher.

There had been an increase in deliberate car fires in South Staffordshire. Cars had been stolen from the West Midlands and burnt out in Staffordshire.

All fires could be geographically mapped and hot spots highlighted. Crews also had local intelligence and do proactive work in certain hot spot areas.

Members discussed the difference between the number of accidental dwelling fires recorded against the smoke alarm information and were informed that not all smoke alarms were in domestic properties and some fires had been deliberately set.

There had been a 20% reduction in Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) according to Staffordshire County Councils figures but the number of RTCs attended by the Fire and Rescue Service was increasing.

With regard to business related fires progress had been made. Targets set for this are ambitious, however this years figures were 40% better than last year. New operational risk assessment work was being undertaken. It was thought that the credit crunch may lead to an increase in business fires.

There had been a 1% improvement in retained availability this year. The retention of retained personnel was still an issue as retained firefighters could transfer into the wholetime service. Some of the retained firefighters had joined West Midlands and Derbyshire. If they were employed for this brigade then they could still provide retained cover on their days off. A lot more work and effort needed to be put into retained recruitment. At the Stafford Rising Brook retained station 100 people had applied to join the retained service but not all had passed the tests.

Members discussed sickness absence. The targets for all categories of staff had been set at 5.62 days/shifts lost for all categories of staff. Much effort had been put into reducing sickness absence especially short term. Members commented that long term sickness for support staff was above target at 9.59 days and this would be looked at. The reasons for sickness absence had been looked at previously and one of the main causes for absence was stress which was not necessarily work related. Compassionate leave was granted for the death of close family and this was recorded separately.

LPSA2 – Mr Russell reminded Members that in 2005 the Service entered into a three year agreement for the reduction of deliberate primary and secondary fires. Using the 2003/04 figures as a base, the Service agreed to reduce the number of fires by 30% by March 2008. If the Service achieved a 30% reduction in primary fires over the three years it would attract 65% and secondary fires 35% of the reward grant. The Authority had reported that these targets had been achieved but they had not been met in full. The Service had achieved all of the 65% on primary fires and on secondary it had only achieved 79% of the target meaning that the Authority would receive just over £1m which would be approximately £71,000 short of the anticipated amount. The achievement was still quite substantial as the Government's own target was to reduce primary and secondary fires by 10% by 2010.

The Chairman asked where this amount of grant was shown within the budget and that information would be provided.

61. **RESOLVED** – (a) That the performance results contained in the table to the report be noted.

(b) That information on the projected workload relating to HFRCs be provided for a future meeting.

(c) That further information be provided on where the LPSA 2 grant is shown within the budget.

Unwanted Fire Signals Update (Schedule 2)

62. Members considered a report which provided additional information regarding Unwanted Fire Signals as requested at the meeting of the Scrutiny and Performance dated 8 January 2009. The information provided included details of the percentage of AFA calls attended that were actually fires (Appendix 1 to the report), the Oxfordshire policy (Appendix 2 to the report), actions of neighbouring Fire and Rescue Service (Appendix 3 to the report), and the business case for a dedicated UwFS Reduction Officer (Appendix 4 to the report).

At the Scrutiny and Performance Committee meeting held on 8 January 2009, Members were presented with information regarding Unwanted Fire Signals and the policies and actions being undertaken to reduce the incidence of such calls. Members had requested that further information be provided on several aspects of this issue.

Appendix 1 to the report outlined that for 2008 the percentage of calls from automatic fire alarms which were fires was 6.8% (243). Members requested more information on the breakdown of the fires was the alarm caused by burnt toast etc. This meant the 93.2% were not fires. It may be that when the figures were drilled down further that there might only be 2% actual fires. There may be few calls that would actually go on to be full blown fires.

The Service needed to look at whether it should mobilize as the risk of the Service not attending the call could be low. There was a reputational risk to the Authority if an appliance did not turn out to a fire. For occupied premises the Service asked for a follow up confirmation call.

A member suggested that at properties where the Service received frequent calls that they should be asked to confirm a fire before the appliance turned out.

The Service would always turn out to residential care homes regardless of whether a fire had been confirmed. Minimum staffing levels may mean that it would not be possible for the homes to call back.

Members discussed whether the Service could call the premise to check if there was a fire but this was not always possible as some calls came through a call centre. Members asked for information on the number of calls which came through call centres compared to Direct Calls. It was believed to be about 50/50 but this information would be provided to Members.

The times of the calls could also be an issue and for example the Service could look at not responding to these calls during the day without a confirmation call for a fire.

Whatever policy was developed would need to be developed with the other authorities that were part of the Regional Control Centre. The authorities were currently working together to develop single policies to cover all of the authorities.

Members discussed the Oxfordshire policy which had been running for four and a half years and they had not missed attending any calls that turned out to be fires. Members wished to be informed of the safeguards that Oxfordshire had put in place. They did not turn out unless they received a back up call to confirm a fire. Their policy was introduced after the industrial dispute and during the period of the action there had been no calls over the 8 days of industrial action and on the first day back 12 calls were received. Members asked for further information on the Oxfordshire figures eg what number of calls did they attend and what do they attend now.

Warwickshire had set tolerance levels and repeat offenders were targeted by a dedicated officer. The response by the Service was dictated by the tolerance limits set by their computerized system:- green rated properties had a full attendance, amber had a reduced attendance and red had no attendance unless there was a confirmed fire. There were currently 100 premises classified as red. Staffordshire did not currently have this technology.

Members also discussed the actions of other neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services which was outlined in Appendix 3.

Members noted that the incidence of unwanted fire signals was a substantial burden on the Service and that substantial savings could be realised if reductions in these calls

could be achieved. The Chairman and the Members of the Committee urged the Service to look further at whether it could further modify the way in which they responded to these calls thus substantially reducing turnout, reducing dangers to road users and making firefighters available for other calls and further risk reduction activities.

Members were informed that the Authority's current policy was not fully embedded, further work was to be done on call challenging and further work was to be undertaken at area commands. With regard to Keele University significant progress had been made and calls had been reduced from 80 to 39 this year. There was a lot of work ongoing to try to reduce these calls.

63. **RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be noted

(b) That information be provided on the number of calls which came through call centres compared to Direct Calls.

(c) That further information be provided on the safeguards that Oxfordshire had put in place with regard to their UwFS Policy.

(d) That further information be provided on the number of calls the Oxfordshire used to attend compared to now.

(e) That further information be provided on the number of calls from the same premise, and the number of single calls from a premise.

64. **RECOMMENDATION TO FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY:** That Members of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee strongly urge the Service to look at whether it could further modify the way in which they responded to UwFS calls thus substantially reducing turnout, reducing dangers to road users and making firefighters available for other calls and further risk reduction activities.

Note by Secretary:- Arrangements were being made for the Chairman, Mr R.N. Smith, to visit Oxfordshire with Mr Enness and Mr McEntire to see first hand what their policy entailed and he would report back to the Committee with his findings.

Items for Future meetings

65. **RESOLVED** – That the following items be brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee.

March 2009	UwFS further report
	Road Traffic Collisions in Staffordshire
	Data Quality
	Comprehensive Area Assessment(CAA) Overview
Future Items date not yet specified	PFI Scrutiny
	CCTV effectiveness
	BV207 Non Domestic Fires – Strategies being adopted and the effectiveness
	Previous Working Group updates
	Overview of the Fire Improvement Group
	Efficiencies General
	Staff Wellbeing Strategy – Progress Report

The Nature of Accidental Dwelling Fires item would be dealt with by a separate working group to be discussed at the Authority meeting on 11 February 2009.

66. **Date of Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 14 April 2009 at 2.15pm but this was subject to amendment following a request by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

**Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Scrutiny and Performance Committee**

24 April 2009

**Road Traffic Collisions in Staffordshire
Report of the Director of Performance and Planning**

SUMMARY

The service has been reporting its road traffic collision (RTC) activity according to its own records of incidents and associated casualties. This activity is only a fragment of the total 'road safety' activity that is formally recorded and published according to national guidelines, by the Stoke-on-Trent and the County Road Safety units. The 'road safety' figures (killed and seriously injured and slightly injured categories) are also used for Local Area Agreement performance measurement purposes. This has led to some confusion as the Service's records of activity have shown increases in incidents and casualties, whereas the total 'road safety' performance shows improvement. This paper explains how the Service is changing the RTC reporting arrangements to avoid any confusion, whilst still retaining detail Fire and Rescue incident records for Service management purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the proposals contained in the attached document and advise regarding any areas that might benefit from further investigation.
No decisions are required.

Financial Implications

None

Legal Implications

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Risk Implications

None

Consultation and Engagement undertaken

During the development of these proposals discussions were held with the Director of Safer Communities and the Staffordshire County Observatory.

Other Implications

None

Background

Appendix 1 attached illustrates the City and County road safety performance for the period from January to July 2008, compared with the Fire and Rescue Service RTC performance for the same period. The appendix summarises how relative performance has changed over time.

Updated road safety performance for the period from January to December 2008 has recently been published, and show continued improvement in outcomes. This information will be utilised in the full year (2008/09) performance report due for presentation to the next Scrutiny and Performance Committee meeting.

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Background Documents:

Staffordshire County Council Observatory performance information
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service RTC incident records

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire Authority

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION (RTC) ACTIVITY IN CONTEXT

The following information has been taken from published Staffordshire Observatory road safety figures and Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) statistics for the period January to July 2008. Due to national verification requirements validated road safety information is available approximately 3 months later than the equivalent FRS statistics.

<i>Source : Staffordshire Observatory</i>		Jan-Jul Result	Previous 3yr Average	Difference	Target 7/12
Staffordshire	KSI	150	192	-42	173
	Slightly Injured	1814	2329	-515	2465
	Total Casualties	1964	2521	-557	2637
Stoke-on-Trent	KSI	25	50	-25	51
	Slightly Injured	523	621	-98	716
	Total Casualties	548	671	-123	767
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire	KSI	175	242	-67	223
	Slightly Injured	2337	2950	-613	3180
	Total Casualties	2512	3192	-680	3404

Fire & Rescue Service activity	Incidents attended	431	411	20
	Deaths	16	13	3
	Injuries	427	387	40
	Total Casualties	443	400	43

Source : FRS Statistics

The Observatory figures indicate that road safety performance for the period, for both County and City, is better than the average performance for the same period over the previous 3 years (2005-2007). This actual performance also exceeds the County and City road safety targets as expressed in Authority Performance Reports.








Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Activity Summary

The number of road traffic collision (RTC) incidents attended by the Service continued to rise over the period 2005 to 2008 (up by 10.75%). The proportion of total casualties associated with these attendances rose from the previous 3 year average of 12.5 to 17.6% in 2008. RTC attendance activity, as a proportion of total incidents (primary fires plus RTCs), has risen from a monthly average of 20% in 2005/06 to 27% in 2008/09 (april-December).

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is attending an increasing proportion of RTC incidents, in particular those incidents involving casualties.

Authority and Service Management Board Performance Reporting

It is proposed that the Authority and SMB performance reporting information be amended to indicate the level of Fire and Rescue road traffic collision (RTC) activity alongside the County and City road safety results published by the Observatory; see example below –

Road Safety (County + City) - Jan to Jul 2008					
KSI Killed and Seriously Injured	175	223		-21.52%	
SI Slightly Injured	2337	3180		-26.51%	
Total Casualties	2512	3404		-26.20%	
SFRS Incidents attended	431	na			

Set against continuing reductions in road safety casualties in both County and City, the number of RTC incidents attended by the Service continues to rise.

Casualty figures associated with Fire and Rescue attendance are excluded as these rise and fall with no particular significance when compared with the official KSI and slightly injured results.

**Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Scrutiny and Performance Committee**

24 April 2009

**Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) 2009
Report of the Director of Performance and Planning**

SUMMARY

On 10 February 2009 the Audit Commission published the final version of the Comprehensive Area Assessment Framework (CAA), including full guidance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in respect of the three-part assessment process –

- Operational Assessment
- Organisational Assessment
- Area Assessment

The final Framework confirmed most aspects of earlier consultation versions which have informed various Service arrangements already in progress. The document at Appendix 1 summarises these arrangements and explains how the management of improvements, assessment preparations, and associated competencies development can be managed. The proposal is aimed to strengthen operational assurance arrangements and links to Area Command community engagement activity. Implementation of the proposals will support succession planning and service development, as well as providing essential resilience and leadership for the Service's sustainable communities support arrangements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the arrangement explained in Appendix 1. No decisions are required.

Financial Implications

None

Legal Implications

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Risk Implications

The proposals offer mitigation against the following risks –

- Potential decrease in efficient service delivery and customer satisfaction.
- Potential damage to the Authority's reputation if performance is not maintained/improved.

Consultation and Engagement undertaken

Preliminary discussions with staff directly impacted and some departmental heads. During the planning of the proposals comprehensive discussions were held with the Audit Commission, IDeA and with the support officer for the Regional management Board

Other Implications

None

Background

See Appendix 1 below.

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Background Documents:

Audit Commission CAA Framework on their website www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

IMPROVEMENTS MANAGEMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

Background

The publication of the statutory guidance 'Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities' gave clear direction to public sector organisations towards more effective management and improvement of risks posed to their communities. In 2007, central Government introduced legislation which made it a statutory requirement for every upper tier (County Council) to develop and agree a Local Area Agreement. National performance assessment arrangements were reviewed and the CPA based Performance Framework was redesigned to focus performance management on the delivery of better outcomes through shared endeavour, between both local and central government, and between local partners. This review, by the Audit Commission, led to the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) proposals which will be utilized for the first time in 2009/2010.

The Challenge

The Authority must review current arrangements and adjust these to ensure that it is prepared for the requirements of CAA. A key factor is that CAA assessment work will be undertaken across the year rather than through a field work visit usually undertaken in the Autumn. This approach underpins the need for all Managers to be familiar with the CAA process and, where relevant, to develop their local arrangements to ensure that assessment activities are satisfied efficiently from routine records and procedures.

The Authority must display a clear understanding of improvement priorities

The key subjects requiring improvement attention can be identified from a few prime sources -

1. The Authority has received the results of the 2008 Performance Assessment which identified areas of improvement arising from the DOT and UOR assessments.
2. In Autumn 2008 the Authority obtained endorsement of the Equality Standard at level 3. The associated report identified areas for improvement. The Authority has adopted a E&D plan to resolve these areas and to develop the organization to level 4.
3. Following publication of the National Framework 2008-2011 the Service has reviewed its position relative to the benchmarks it contains. The results of this will be compared with the outcomes of the Audit Commission's 'Rising to the Challenge' report to identify any further gaps.

The Authority will compile and adopt a single Organisational Improvement Plan (OIP) which lists the actions, responsibilities and dates associated with achieving the improvements identified at 1, 2 and 3 above.

The CAA Regime (refer presentation)

The Authority must prepare itself for the next assessment regime – Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). CAA will be conducted under three headings –

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
IMPROVEMENTS MANAGEMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

- Area Assessment. How effectively the Authority, in concert with others, contributes to the improvement of conditions for local communities.
- Organisational Assessment. How well the Authority manages its resources, performance and direction to achieve continuous improvement.
- Service Assessment. How effectively the Authority delivers fire and rescue services.

There are national 'key lines of enquiry' (KLOEs) governing each of these assessment areas and the assessment process includes the submission of evidence based self-evaluation reports for each. In addition the Service Assessment is achieved through the employment of peer reviews carried out by accredited Fire and Rescue officers from other Authorities.

Managing the Improvement and Assessment programmes

There are two key activities to be undertaken. Firstly to progress the work that delivers improvements and secondly, the education of Managers and staff and any adjustment of processes to be effectively organised for the revised three pronged assessment regime.

The Service Management Board has specified two groups to manage this work.

Groups	Operational Assurance Group	Audit Commission Efficiency Group
SERVICE ASSESSMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self evaluation against KLOEs • Peer Assessment arrangements • Peer reviewer accreditation. • Improvement projects/tasks 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (May 2009) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self evaluation against KLOEs • Improvement projects/tasks • Competencies development • Efficiencies Programme Management 		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
AREA ASSESSMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Command education/toolkit/ KLOEs • LAA coordination 		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (to link with the Safer Communities Directorate)

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

IMPROVEMENTS MANAGEMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

These Groups will meet regularly and produce progress reports for comment and scrutiny to the Authority's Improvements Panel, and for any approvals to the Strategy and Resources Committee.

Coordination of the process

Our last operational assurance audit in 2006 informed us that we could improve and strengthen our operational preparedness by more robust coordination and audit preparation. This was further supported by the recent direction of travel assessment. The processes outlined in this paper go some way to augment this preparation and will require strong coordination between the three elements of

- Operational assessment
- Organisational assessment
- Area assessment

The coordination would require bridging the gaps between the operational elements of all three part of the process thus ensuring that our operational service delivery is as comprehensive as possible. This will also enable the sharing of best practice across all area commands and their engagement through the Local Area Agreements, across stations via audit, across the Operational Assurance Group and the Audit Commission Efficiency group. Peer assessment involvement will enable wider learning about best practice being implemented in other Fire and Rescue Services and the coordination role will link with and strengthen Service planning and performance arrangements.

The Service Management Board is reviewing the current Operational Assurance arrangements and will introduce improvements to ensure that the identified coordination requirements are met.

Timetable Considerations

Initial guidance from the Audit Commission indicates that the CAA timetable, particularly in this first year, will be challenging. Discussions are being held with the Commission concerning the first set of dates* as follows –

- Meetings with Principal Officers and Chair of the Authority – end March/early April
- Meeting with key managers/officers – end March/early April
- 2-day Organisational & Operational Assessment fieldwork visit – May
- 2-day Operational Assessment peer review visit – June/July
- Draft reports – July

These dates prescribe that self evaluation reports for the Operational Assessment and the Organisational Assessment are needed EARLY.

*These dates are organized to facilitate sufficient time for national moderation and assessment outcomes consultation i.e. August to October, prior to the advertised date for publication of final reports in November 2009.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Scrutiny and Performance Committee

24 April 2009

Unwanted Fire Signals

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progress regarding work to reduce the number of Unwanted Fire Signals received, and responded to, by the Service. Members will note that the total UwFS for the year 2008-2009 was 1% over the target figure set.

Unwanted Fire Signals 2008-2009

Area	Actual	Target	Difference	% under or over
Stoke	957	830	127 over	15% over
S Staffs	251	230	21 over	9% over
Cannock	259	267	8 under	3% under
Lichfield	331	311	20 over	6% over
Tamworth	235	246	11 under	4% under
Moorlands	166	230	64 under	28% under
Stafford	465	462	3 over	1% over
E Staffs	356	354	2 over	1% over
Newcastle	438	480	42 under	9% under
Service	3459	3408	51 over	1% over

Since the last report the following items have been progressed;

- A visit was undertaken to Oxfordshire FRS to gather information on their policy and how they have progressed with their work to reduce Unwanted Fire Signals
- A Call Challenge procedure has been introduced into Control to filter out some of the unwanted calls
- A training package has been produced to allow the Champions on Area Commands to deliver training to their respective personnel
- Work has been carried out to provide the Champions with much more current information regarding these calls in order to better enable them to respond to issues regarding premises

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members note the information provided. No decisions are required.

Financial Implications:

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report, although substantial possible savings are indicated.

Legal Implications:

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report

Risk Implications:

There are no specific risk implications arising from this report.

Consultation and Engagement Undertaken

The information contained in this report will be reviewed by the Service Management Board.

Other Implications:

None.

Background:

At the Scrutiny and Performance Committee meeting held on 8th January 2009, Members were presented with information regarding Unwanted Fire Signals and the policies and actions being undertaken to reduce the incidence of such calls. Members requested further information be provided on several aspects of this issue.

Members will note that the incidence of unwanted fire signals is a substantial burden on the service and that substantial savings could be realised if reductions in these calls could be achieved.

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