

Partnership Working

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260205 or John Redmond, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260278.

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of the outcomes of partnership working within the Fire Authority and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service).

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to note the contents of the report.

3 Background

The Fire Authority and the Service are actively involved in a number of partnerships, which are assessed and scrutinised by the Service's Partnership Scrutiny Group. The Service maintains a partnership register and monitors the outcome and productivity of the partnerships, in which it is involved. This report shows ongoing progress of how the Service, in conjunction with other organisations, continues to create a 'Safer and Stronger Shropshire'.

4 Partnership Assessment Group

The Partnership Assessment Group has been renamed and is now called the Partnership Scrutiny Group (PSG) and a second tier has been added in the form of the Community Safety Partnership Management Group (CSPMG). The Partnership Scrutiny Group will perform the same functions as its predecessor but will look more in depth into the benefits and costs of each partnership. The Community Safety Partnership Management Group has been set up to monitor the outcomes and actions of the Local Joint Committees (LJCs).

5 Local Joint Committees

Since the councils within Shropshire became unitary in 2009, the Service is attending a number of quarterly LJC meetings. The aim is to make the local communities within the Shropshire area aware of the dangers of fire, to educate in the reduction of fire crime, and to reach out to, and communicate with, vulnerable groups.

Attendance at the meetings is usually undertaken by the newly-appointed Assistant Group Commander in each area, whose role is to provide an identifiable, consistent link between the LJCs, the local community and the Service. The feedback from attendance at these groups has been very positive and has resulted in a number of productive contacts.

6 Vulnerable and Youth Partnerships

The Elderly

The Service has been working in partnership with other local organisations to support specific vulnerable groups, one of which is the elderly. A number of partnerships have been established in order to support the elderly members of our community. Our partners in these partnerships include START, Red Cross, Keep Shropshire Warm, Market Drayton Homecare Services and Oswestry Care.

The partners receive training provided by the Service's Community Fire Safety Team in order to perform fire risk assessments within their clients' homes. From this, the partners promote fire safety awareness and educate the elderly as to the risks of fire. They also provide referrals to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service for fitting smoke alarms and performing home fire safety checks. The aim of these partnerships is to reduce injuries and death caused by fire.

START is an organisation that provides short-term care and support of elderly people, who have just come out of hospital. They conduct Fire Safety Checklists on behalf of the Service and make referrals depending on the outcome of the survey. They carried out 321 Fire Safety Checklists last year and this work has contributed to the continued effort to reduce deaths and injuries in the County from accidental house fires.

The Red Cross provides a 'Home from Hospital' service which provided 204 Fire Safety checklists from April 2010 to March 2011.

Ludlow Partnership

A scheme to identify and target Home Fire Safety Visits and signposting activities for elderly, vulnerable people has been instigated in Ludlow in partnership with the Primary Care Trust and the local general practitioners. The scheme is a pilot in the Ludlow area with an intention to include all of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin.

Although early results have been encouraging, improved data sharing is the key to the future expansion of the project. Discussions are ongoing in terms of progressing this issue.

Youth Partnerships

The Service also contributes to a number of youth partnerships, such as those set up with the Youth Offending Service, the Driver Rehabilitation Workshop and the Institute of Advanced Motoring. All partnerships aim to make young adults aged between 17 years and 25 years aware of the dangers of fire and road traffic collisions (RTC).

In the last year, at least 65 17 to 25 year olds have undertaken the Institute of Advanced Motoring course and a further eight have been recruited in recent weeks.

The Service has continued its long association with the Crucial Crew Scheme in both Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire. So far this year over 1200 young people have taken advantage of the multi-agency scheme.

In addition to the RTC work that the Service undertakes with young people, there is also a partnership with local magistrates who refer some people with a driving conviction to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service through the Probation Service. The Service holds a driving awareness session at Wellington Fire Station, attendance at which can lead to a reduction in either their sentence or their fine.

South Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust is commissioned by the Primary Care Trust (PTC) to deliver mental health and learning disability services with the Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin area. The Service are working closely with the Trust to target people with mental health and learning issues that are likely to be vulnerable to fire. Trust staff are being trained to carry out Home Fire Risk Assessments.

7 Community Safety Partnerships

In Shropshire the strategic Community Safety group is the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which focuses on the strategy and structure of the partnership required to improve the community.

Under the CSP there are three bronze level tasking groups which cover the Northern, Central and Southern Districts. These tasking groups focus on major issues within their district and work together in order to tackle issues such as anti social behaviour within specific high risk areas.

This new structure was established in July 2010 and will be reviewed after the first six months of its existence. A new protocol and terms of reference have been established and will be sent to SFRS in due course.

The Telford and Wrekin Partnership has developed a document called 'Vision 2026' which sets out the aspirations for the Telford and Wrekin borough. All members of the Telford and Wrekin Partnership are working to 'Vision 2026'.

8 Leonardo Exchange Programme

The Leonardo Exchange Programme has now been existence since 2006, with over 130 elected Members and staff participating in one-week exchange placements. To date, the Service has partnered with fire and civil protection agencies, operating in over ten European countries. The programme has resulted in two groups of students from Poland visiting the Service in March and April and, utilising connections from previous visits, the Service sent a team across to Denmark on a Hazmat course to learn about dealing with incidents involving ammonia.

Unfortunately, the Service has not been successful this year in drawing down funding from the programme and there will, therefore, be no placements undertaken in 2011.

9 Equality and Diversity

The Service's Equality and Diversity Department deals with a number of partnerships, including the Shropshire LGB Group, Shropshire Equalities Forum, who also provide small amounts of funding to a diverse range of groups that set up projects to support specific equality and diversity criteria and Rights and Fairness Telford (formerly the Telford Race Equality and Partnership).

10 Local Strategic Partnership with Shropshire Partnership and Telford and Wrekin Partnership

Although indicators supporting previous Area Agreements have been abolished, the relevant content of these has been carried forward into provision of performance data to support the Safer Stronger Communities initiative and other Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin requirements.

This includes the Performance Management and Commissioning Group (PMCG), Bronze Tasking for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), Local Joint Committees (LJCs), Shropshire Schools Data provision, Telford and Wrekin Performance and Monitoring Board and individual action groups for areas in Telford and Wrekin.

11 Conclusion

The Service continues to invest in supporting international, national, regional and moreover local community initiatives, where tangible benefits can be demonstrated.

All partnerships are required to have protocols and an agreement in place and are risk assessed for liability and reputation. The Partnership Scrutiny Group reviewed all the partnership agreements in 2011 and made recommendations, where required.

12 Financial Implications

Information on income and expenditure within partnerships is collected and updated in line with the frequency of monitoring that takes place on each partnership and is recorded on the partnership register.

Any changes to income and expenditure are logged and discussed in the Service's Partnership Scrutiny Group and Community Safety Partnership Management Group. Income and expenditure also form part of the risk assessment of the partnerships.

13 Legal Comment

The functions exercised within the partnership working arrangements fall within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the aims and objectives of the Fire Authority.

14 Equality Impact Assessment

The report contains information on monitoring and historical data and has no impact on people. An Equality Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

15 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

16 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.