

Outcomes of Partnership Working

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an evaluation of partnership working within the Brigade.

2 Recommendations

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

3 Background

The Brigade is involved in a number of partnerships, which have been assessed by the Partnership Assessment Group and are recorded on the Partnership Register. This report brings together information on the outcomes of those partnerships to show how Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), in partnership with other agencies and organisations, is creating a 'Safer Shropshire'.

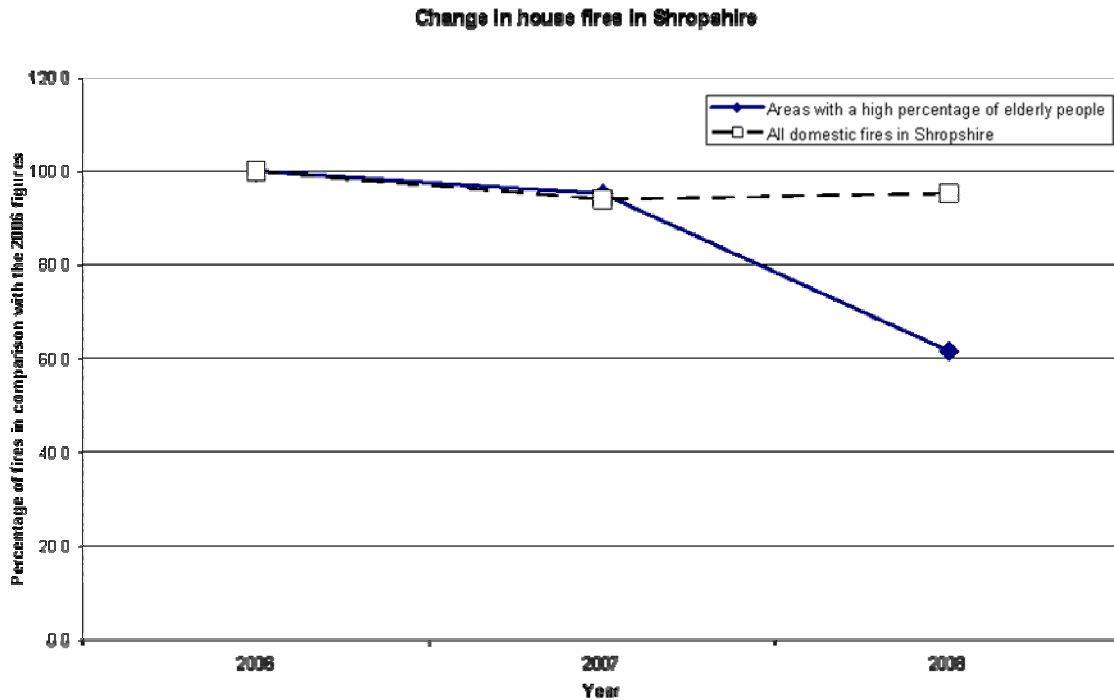
4 Vulnerable Groups (Community Fire Safety)

Elderly

One of the vulnerable groups identified in Shropshire is the elderly, thus a number of partnerships have been established with groups caring for the older members of our communities. These groups include Age Concern, Allied Healthcare Group Ltd, Community Engagement Programme, Drayton Home Care Services, Keep Shropshire Warm, Red Cross and Rubens Support and Care Agency.

The groups complete a fire risk assessment on their clients' homes on SFRS's behalf and make referrals to us. The partnerships aim to increase smoke alarm ownership and fire safety awareness, to help reduce deaths and injuries in this vulnerable group.

Areas identified by FSEC as containing a larger-than-average population of elderly people show a reduction in incidents over the last three years. The graph below shows a reduction in domestic property fires in those parts of Shropshire that have a high proportion of elderly people.



Youths

Our youth partnership with Youth Offending Service (YOS), aimed at reducing vehicle crime committed by children and young people, has resulted in no re-offenders in 2008/09. Evidence (Tyne and Wear Youth Service) suggests that offenders that have not reoffended within 12 months of their last offence are significantly less likely to reoffend at all.

5 Local Strategic Partnerships with Shropshire Partnership and Telford and Wrekin Partnership

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to supporting a number of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Indicators in both Shropshire, and Telford and Wrekin with targets for the period 2009 to 2011 set out in the document 'Supporting Local Area Agreements Across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin – 2009 to 2011' (Appendix A).

The tables below show the results of the 2008/09 outturn of the National Indicators that Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service support in each Local Strategic Partnership.

Shropshire

NI	Our Contribution	Target	Actual	Target Met	Comment
NI1 Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	We actively supported anti hate Crime initiatives across the area. We met our BME employment targets for the whole area employing staff representative of the community we serve. We provided specialist fire safety services for those particularly vulnerable to fire through Fire Safety Advocates with specialist language skills.				The results from Place Survey 2008 cannot be published as they have not yet been verified by the Audit Commission
NI 5 Overall / General satisfaction with area	We worked with partners to reduce the number of house fires We worked with business owners to reduce the number of Commercial fires.				The results from Place Survey 2008 cannot be published as they have not yet been verified by the Audit Commission
NI 19 Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders	Our Intervention Workers worked with young people experimenting with fire to prevent them becoming arsonists. We acted on each referral from partner agencies within 48 hours. We took an active part in car crime courses reducing offending rates for young people.				2008/09 has been a base lining and target establishment year for this indicator, which is for introduction during 2009/10." The agreed target during the LAA refresh is 1.07 for 2008/09

NI	Our Contribution	Target	Actual	Target Met	Comment
NI 39 Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rate	We worked with partners to raise awareness of alcohol issues. Where possible we used media to link fire with harmful effects of excessive alcohol consumption. We also used the Be Cool Be Safe Quiz in schools to give information to young people about harmful effects of alcohol.	1516	1200	✓	This target has been achieved, but it should be noted that the target has changed slightly as the definitions used to compile this indicator also changed. Therefore the annual target has been changed.
NI 142 Proportion of vulnerable people who are supported to establish and maintain independent living	We continued visiting the homes of the vulnerable and carrying out risk assessments along with partners. We also continued to work with partners to improve the referral mechanism to identify at risk individuals developing a Home Support Protocol where multiple assessments are carried out for each visit by a public sector / voluntary sector worker.				Figures for this indicator are not available as there has been a change in the original definition
NI 145 Adults with learning difficulties in settled accommodation	We continued visiting the homes of the vulnerable and carrying out risk assessments. We continued to work with partners to improve the referral mechanism to identify at risk individuals beginning this year with a referral mechanism for older people.				As this is a new PI subject to late changes in definition SC still need more time for their systems & processes to become embedded before a robust baseline can be developed and targets agreed.

NI	Our Contribution	Target	Actual	Target Met	Comment
					Data will be collected in Q3 and Q4. This will be used to extrapolate a full year baseline to inform targets for 2009/10
NI 120 All age all cause mortality (a) men, and (b) women – Standardised Rate per 100,000 population	We continued to aim to reduce accidental fire deaths and injuries to 1 death and 28 fire injuries per year (whole of area). We continued to successfully work with partners to reduce RTCs across the area.	645	634.9	✓	a
		650	463.8	✗	b
NI 49(i) Number of Primary Fires per 10,000 population	We reduced the number of primary fires by 14% over 3 years by: Implementing our rural fire safety strategy. Rolling out our Home Safe initiative. Increasing youth education particularly in rural areas. Targeting deliberate fires by implementing our fire crime strategy. Increase the number of local business that have carried out a fire safety audit. Audit high risk business to ensure that they are applying effective fire prevention strategies.	211.62	193.1	✓	

NI	Our Contribution	Target	Actual	Target Met	Comment
NI 172 Percentage of small businesses showing employment growth	We also: Increased the number of local business that had carried out a fire safety audit. Offered all local business support to ensure that they were applying effective fire prevention strategies.	101.4			Awaiting publication of ONS report on UK Business: activity, size and location (due November 2009).
NI 163 Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher	We will work towards offering all new starters to the organisation a level 3 qualification within 2 years of starting work with us.	+2%			The original base line is from 2006 and is 70.6%. Work against the LAA targets is being led by the Learning and Skills Council. The outturn is reported at the end of the academic year.
NI 047 number of people killed and seriously injured on roads	We worked with partners in educating 16- 25 yr olds in RTC prevention. We also supported partners in delivering cycle safe schemes across the area.	9.8%	13.7%	✓	The figure is expressed as a percentage difference from the previous year.

In a recent document (Appendix B) prepared for the Audit Commission by Shropshire Council as a self evaluation for Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is cited in 4 of the case studies highlighted to show delivery of improvements and outcomes in Shropshire.

Telford and Wrekin

NI	Our Contribution	Target	Actual	Target Met	Comment
NI 111 First Time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17	Our Intervention Workers worked with young people experimenting with fire to prevent them becoming arsonists. We acted on each referral from partner agencies within 48 hours. We also took an active part in car crime courses reducing offending rates for young people.	1892			Figures not available
NI1 Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	We actively supported anti hate Crime initiatives across the area. We met our own BME employment targets for the whole area employing staff representative of the community we serve. We provided specialist fire safety services for those particularly vulnerable to fire through Fire Safety Advocates with specialist language skills.	73.5%	73.5%	✓	This is the base line year for this indicator
NI 5 Overall / General satisfaction with area	We worked with partners to reduce the number of house fires and worked with business owners to reduce the number of Commercial fires.	78.3%	78.3%	✓	This is the base line year for this indicator
NI 17 Perceptions of anti social behaviour	We reduced deliberate fires in vehicles and other anti social fires by 24% and 19% respectively.	25%	20.9%	✓	Target met

NI	Our Contribution	Target	Actual	Target Met	Comment
NI 39 Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rate	We worked with partners to raise awareness of alcohol issues and used media to link fire with harmful effects of excessive alcohol consumption. We also used the Be Cool Be Safe Quiz in schools to give information to young people about harmful effects of alcohol.				Information not available 2008/09 outturn due in March 2010
NI 142 Proportion of vulnerable people who are supported to establish and maintain independent living	We continued visiting the homes of the vulnerable and carrying out risk assessments and continued to work with partners to improve the referral mechanism to identify at risk individuals. We worked with partners to develop a Home Support Protocol where multiple assessments are carried out for each visit by a public sector / voluntary sector worker.	98.7%	98.4%	×	This target has only been narrowly missed (0.3%)
NI 163 Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher	We will work towards offering all new starters to the organisation a level 3 qualification within 2 years of starting work with us.	67.3%			The outturn is reported at the end of the academic year in August 09.
NI 172 Percentage of small businesses showing employment growth	We also increased the number of local business that had carried out a fire safety audit and offered all local business support to ensure that they are applying effective fire prevention strategies.	0.27%	2.41%	✓	The target of 0.27% is based upon the regional average.

Figures for the LAA outturns have been provided by Shropshire Council, and Telford and Wrekin Council

6 Shropshire Access Partnership

The Shropshire Access Partnership (SAP) has been built upon the three district Rural Transport Partnerships and became a sub-group of the Shropshire Partnership. SAP had a broad range of partners, including District Councils and a range of voluntary sector organisations.

Its key aim was to improve access to jobs, services and facilities in ways, which are sustainable, particularly for people from disadvantaged groups or areas.

In 2006 SAP was awarded £1.2m funding for a three-year programme. An evaluation of the scheme in March 2009 has indicated that there is an ongoing need across the Region for the activities of the partnership to continue. In terms of Shropshire, it is likely to be cited as best practice with regard to a variety of elements:

- Its overall approach in terms of merging with the Rural Pathfinder;
- The partnership approach and effectiveness;
- The project development and intervention through Project officer time;
- The way the Programme has further expanded and developed Wheels to Work (W2W) particularly in terms of pump priming organisations to help deliver services in a more customer focussed way.

Whilst these areas of best practice have been identified, in evaluating the project it was also noted that thought would need to be given in any future partnership as to how the indirect economic benefit of providing local services could be captured and proven to the Agency's satisfaction.

7 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)

As a statutory partner, the Brigade must contribute to the activities of the various Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships throughout the County. Until 1 April this year the Brigade was involved with 6 different CDRPs. As a result of the County Council's move to unitary status this has now reduced to four.

One of the aims of the CDRPs is to reduce anti-social behaviour. In both areas, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin, the partnerships have been successful in reducing this by 21.7% and 29.5% respectively over the last twelve months (source: West Mercia Constabulary Website, Crime levels and statistics – 23/04/09).

The partnerships all have objectives to focus on reducing vehicle crime. The work to reduce vehicle arson in Shropshire as a whole has led to the number of primary and secondary deliberate vehicle fires falling year on year over the last three years. There has been a reduction in primary vehicle fires from a total of 249 in 2006/07, 226 in 2007/08 to an estimated total outturn for 2008/09 of 182, based on an outturn using figures received up to 28 March 09. This shows a reduction of 26.5% over three years.

Further evidence of how the Brigade has contributed towards the CDRPs in the County and the resulting outcomes are detailed in the document 'CDRP Performance against the Supporting Document May 2009 Update' (Appendix C).

8 Leonardo Exchange Programmes

The Brigade has now run a number of exchange programmes over the last three years with different emergency organisations throughout Europe, funded by the EU through the Life Long Learning Programme. Evaluation of the scheme by participants is an obligatory part of the programme each year and the Brigade has had excellent results with over 90% of participants being wholly satisfied with their experience. As a County employer this has now benefited over 10% of the total staff at Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

9 Equality and Diversity

The Brigade is also a member of the Shropshire Equalities Forum and Telford Race Equality and Diversity Group. The help, advice and direction gained as a result of attending these groups has assisted the Brigade going from level 2 to level 4 of Equality Standard for Government within the last 12 months.

The Equalities Forum also has an awards scheme where small grants are available to local communities, small voluntary organisations or established groups serving communities in Shropshire. To date since 2006 47 grants, totalling a sum of £35,000, have been awarded.

10 Urban Search and Rescue Facility

Shropshire is not required by the Government to have a dedicated urban search and rescue facility and is thus not funded to provide one. In an effort to increase the level of service to the public of Shropshire at no extra cost, ongoing use of Urban Search and Rescue skills are maintained through the partnership with Ennstone Products. Equivalent courses at the Fire Service College are charged at £1,400 per person per week. By maintaining our partnership with Ennstone the Brigade is able to schedule courses to fit in with the training calendar and is not confined to week-long courses. This, alongside the 'no cost' element, enables SFRS to provide an enhanced service to the public of Shropshire beyond the Government's expectations at no extra cost to the council tax payer.

11 West Midlands Regional Management Board

The results of this partnership with other Brigades in the region are well documented in the various reports to the Regional Management Board (RMB). These can be accessed via the West Midlands Regional Management Board (WMRMB) website.

The following is an extract from the WMRMB Annual Report 2007/08.

'The following outcomes/outputs are from the WMRMB Programme Plan 2006-08.

- **Integration of common specialist services (e.g. fire investigation)**
WMRMB has successfully developed and implemented strategic policy frameworks for IRMP, fire investigation and health & safety. WMRMB has also developed and implemented a regional policy to support the implementation of the Regulatory Reform Order and strategies that address the adoption of CLG and CFOA guidance documents for the reduction of false alarms. Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding has been created for the management of hoax and false fire calls/alarms. These initiatives have contributed to an overall 12 percent regional reduction in malicious calls and an 18 percent regional reduction in false alarms for the period 2005/06 – 2006/07.

Opportunities have also been explored and developed to share specialist resources where appropriate at sub-regional levels, the utilization of fire investigation and principal command ('Gold') officers being such examples. The region's staff involved in performance management have successfully developed and implemented a regional operational service assessment peer review programme in preparation for the CLG led reviews during 2006.

- **Development and implementation of effective resilience plans for large scale emergencies**
WMRMB has overseen the implementation of 9 mass decontamination response units, 5 mass decontamination resilience units, 2 interim urban search and rescue units, 6 high volume pumping units, the introduction of a specialist hazardous material identification team and 96 thermal imaging cameras. In support of Element 1 of Civil Contingencies Act, WMRMB has also identified sources of risk within the region and assessed their likelihood of occurrence and potential impact. The activities of the resilience project board are now fully embedded within the day-to-day resilience arrangements for the region. Public awareness of the measures to secure and maintain resilience are publicised through the region's website, with advice and links to all key government sources of information provided.
- **Introduction of regional personnel and human resource functions and development of a regional approach to training**
The introduction of regional personnel and human resource functions and development of a regional approach to training represents one of many success stories from the region. WMRMB has been creative in developing and implementing several strategic regional policy documents, but moreover, has combined resources to deliver:
 - Common policies for individual personal development records and assessment
 - development centres

- Common policies for the development of firefighters, supervisory and middle managers and workplace assessment
- Regional resourcing strategies
- National recruiting processes
- Community outreach networks

In addition, WMRMB has facilitated the procurement of regionally branded Firefighter Recruitment DVDs.

- **Establishment of regional control centre**

WMRMB's full-time regional Fire Control Project Team is now well established and undertakes a key role in coordinating the region's preparations to ensure the smooth transition to the new Regional Control Centre (RCC), in parallel, to the controlled migration to the digital Airwave Service.

The region is active in both its support and contribution to the nationally led FiReControl and FireLink projects. In February 2006 the *Local Authority Control Company* was formally incorporated, resulting in the formal establishment of the '*West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre Limited.*' The anticipated transition (cut-over) to the RCC is expected to commence in 2009, with a projected completion scheduled for 2010. During this period the Project Team will coordinate over 2,200 nationally defined transition activities.

- **Introduction of regional procurement within the context of a national procurement strategy**

WMRMB has been extremely proactive in supporting the establishment of FireBuy to drive the national procurement strategy, with the region's FRAs actively engaged in FireBuy call-off contracts. Cooperation within the region has resulted in the implementation of regional procurement arrangements supported by lead procurement officers within each FRA. WMRMB has implemented a regional contracts register that assists in the procurement of operational equipment, hydraulic testing, e-tendering arrangements, regional insurance options, regional utilities contracts and stockholding rationalisation. Collaboration has also been achieved in the areas of technical services and regional occupational health. WMRMB has also established a regional Transport Officers' Group and Estates Officers' Group and has created an environment of true collaboration in the context of regional procurement.'

12 Operational Collaboration Group

Constituted through the RMB and CFOA this group of regional partners has successfully developed joint operational protocols, launched a web site that enables all regional services to share significant health and safety issues, developed a regional training and exercise strategy, supported operational elements of the Regional Control Centre project and developed a single risk assessment protocol for operational incidents.

13 Conclusion

The time and money invested in partnerships by the Brigade can demonstrate tangible outcomes as described in this report which provide value for money for Shropshire.

14 Financial Implications

Information on income and expenditure within partnerships is collected annually and is recorded on the Partnership Register and in the Medium Term Financial Plan. Income and expenditure also forms part of the risk assessment of Partnerships.

15 Legal Comment

All partnerships are required to have protocols or an agreement in place and are risk assessed for liability and reputation consequences.

16 Equality Impact Assessment

This report contains information on monitoring and historical data and, therefore, has no impact on people. An EQIA is not required.

17 Appendices

The following appendices are not attached to this report, because of their length, but can be found on the Service's website:

Appendix A

Supporting Local Area Agreements Across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin – 2009 to 2011

Appendix B

Comprehensive Area Assessment – Shropshire's Self Evaluation, June 2009

Appendix C

Supporting the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships within Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin 2006-2009

18 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings	*	Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	*
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*