

**Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority**

**Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee**

**1 July 2010**

**The relocation of resources in Portsmouth**

**Report of the Chief Officer**

Contact: Group Manager Kevin Evenett 07918 888 075 kevin.evenett@hantsfire.gov.uk

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 Copnor fire station was closed in the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008. This closure enabled the service to meet Objective 10 of the Fire and Rescue Plan 2008 – 2011 ('Relocating our resources in Portsmouth').
- 1.2 The closure of Copnor Fire Station and relocation of resources to Havant, Southsea and Cosham stations has not affected the Service's ability to meet the target of responding to critical incidents within eight minutes (LPI 20a First attendance within 8 minutes) in the central Portsmouth area.
- 1.3 Following closure there has been an increase in community safety activity in the central Portsmouth area.
- 1.4 The relocation of resources from Central Portsmouth has supported the change of Havant fire station from day crewing to continuous crewing with positive effect; home safety visits have increased and response to incidents has improved.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee note the contents of this report and the successful implementation of the expectations outlined in Objective 10 of the Fire and Rescue Plan 2008 – 2011. ('Relocating our resources in Portsmouth')

**3 Introduction and background**

- 3.1 As a result of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority agreeing to relocate resources from Copnor, Copnor fire station was closed on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008.
- 3.2 The relocation of sixteen firefighters to Havant enabled the change from day crewing to continuous crewing contributing to an increase in the number of home safety visits

(HSVs) carried out and an improvement in incident response times. The full effect of the change was in the report delivered to this Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2010 entitled "The change in duty system at Havant Fire Station from day crewing to continuous crewing."

- 3.3 The remaining response resources were also relocated. Eight firefighters and the special equipment unit vehicle relocated to Cosham Fire Station; 20 firefighters and the fire appliance were relocated at Southsea Fire Station.
- 3.4 The protection officers, administrators and support staff, totalling 20 people, were relocated to Southsea fire station. This was solely a change of location and has had no impact on the services they deliver.
- 3.5 Sections four and five below detail the effects of the changes in critical incident response and community safety activities in the central Portsmouth area. They are based on two years of historical incident and community safety data, the year before and the year after closure (1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2008 and 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2009), analysed by the Community Risk Intelligence Department.

#### **4 Response Times (critical incidents)**

- 4.1 In the year following the closure the number of critical incidents decreased within central Portsmouth. It is not possible to state what effect the closure of Copnor Fire Station has had on this reduction. However, it is likely that the increase in risk reduction activities influenced the reduction in incidents attended.
- 4.2 The Service achieved the response times in this area as measured by LPI 20a (first attendance within 8 minutes)
- 4.3 In the year prior to closure Copnor met the Service target of attending 80% of critical incidents within eight minutes (8/80); 95% of incidents were attended within this time. In the year following the closure the 8/80 target was also achieved with 87% of incidents in the central Portsmouth area attended within 8 minutes.
- 4.4 To contribute to the achievement of this target and provide resilience, one appliance from Southsea is currently relocated to central Portsmouth daily between the hours of 1400 – 2100. Central Portsmouth achieves the target of 8/80 for critical incidents in 86% of cases in this time period. However, during the hours between 2100 and 1400, when the appliance is returned to Southsea, central Portsmouth maintains an attendance time of 86% within eight minutes.

#### **5 Community Safety**

- 5.1 Southsea and Cosham crews ensure that community safety is maintained in the central Portsmouth area.
  - The number of community safety activities have increased by 22% to 802, between Oct 2008 – Sept 2009 compared to 654 in the previous year. (Service

level data not available).

- The number of HSVs conducted in central Portsmouth increased by 20% to 743, from 621 in the previous year (Service = 26% decrease). The difference between central Portsmouth and the Service in this instance can be explained by the following:
  - a significant increase in number of HSVs undertaken following the closure leading to an increase in central Portsmouth.
  - a halving of the target for HSVs across the Service in March 2009 leading to a decrease in numbers service wide.
- Community events increased by 171% to 19 events compared with seven in the previous year (Service level data not available).
- Youth projects increased by 150% to five compared with two in the previous year (Service level data not available).

5.2 Increased community safety activity has had the outcome of reducing risk within central Portsmouth. The community contact point has been instrumental in achieving this.

## **6 Supporting our corporate aims and objectives**

6.1 The closure of Copnor Fire Station and relocation of resources, completes Objective 10 Relocating our resources in Portsmouth from the Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2008 - 2011

## **7 People Impact Assessment (PIA)**

7.1 This assessment was carried out by the Project Manager. The relocation has had no PIA impacts.

## **8 Resource implications**

### **8.1 Human Resources**

Personnel were relocated as follows:-

- 16 firefighters to Havant fire station
- 20 firefighters to Southsea fire station
- 8 firefighters to Cosham fire station
- 20 protection and support staff to Southsea fire station

## 8.2 Physical Resources

Appliances were relocated as follows:-

- Water Tender Ladder to Southsea fire station
- Special Equipment Unit to Cosham fire station

Havant Fire Station was refurbished to accommodate the needs of a continuously crewed duty system. Some internal building work was required at Southsea to accommodate the additional response, protection and support personnel relocated there.

Copnor fire station was decommissioned and is awaiting sale.

## 9 Conclusion

- 9.1 The closure of Copnor station has not affected the ability of the Service to respond to the majority of critical incidents in the area within the target of attending 80% of incidents within 8 minutes.
- 9.2 The relocation of resources in Portsmouth allowed personnel to be transferred to Havant, which resulted in no additional staff costs required to meet the demand for the change of duty system.
- 9.3 The Service has increased its risk reduction activities in central Portsmouth since the relocation of resources. This has contributed in a reduction in risk in this area of Portsmouth.

## 10 Background papers

- 10.1 The following documents disclose the facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of the report:

Paper to Service Management Team "The Change in duty system at Havant Fire Station from day-crewing to continuous crewing", 11<sup>th</sup> January 2010, by Group Manager Ian Gray

10/016 Copnor Closure Impact, Community Risk Intelligence 15<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Note: The list excludes: (1) published works; and (2) documents that disclose exempt or confidential information defined in the Act.