

## **Strategic Proposals for the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service plan 2013 to 2016**

### **Introduction**

The Strategic Proposals outlined below have been developed in accordance with the National Framework document 2012. We have used our Strategic Assessment to analyse risk from a national and local perspective identifying areas we wish to make improvement. Each of our prevention, protection, and response sections developed their proposals after considering the findings in the document.

To help people understand our proposals, we have categorised them under broader risk headings which will be our main focus for the coming planning cycle.

For each main heading we outline the risk and then explain the strategic proposal.

The proposals will be shaped during consultation into corporate objectives to be included in our 2013-16 Service plan.

We undertake a vast amount of work under our protection and prevention areas of the business to better educate and try to stop incidents occurring. However, in the event of an incident, we have robust strategies in place to respond. This proposal is to continue to better match our resources to where the risks are in Hampshire.

### **Strategic Proposal - 01 – Improving the way we respond to and support incidents**

Risks around the county are changing constantly which means we need to be smarter in how we adapt to these. Significant work has been done in gathering and analysing information which will aid us to achieve continuous review and improvement of our response assets.

We will better identify the type and location of community risks within the county using information from our Risk Map, Strategic Assessment, and Group Profiles. Then we will match our resources to best respond to mitigate and reduce these.

We also need to improve our operational effectiveness by focusing on the skills, knowledge, and experience of all of our personnel in relation to the risks in their area. Ensuring that they are thoroughly trained and prepared to carry out the roles required of a fire and rescue service that seeks to be the best.

We seek to achieve continuous improvement in all aspects of operational response and this involves the review of what pumping and special appliances we need, and ensuring that we have the most appropriate vehicles and equipment in the relevant locations around the county for an effective response.

In particular we have identified a need to:

- reposition three special appliances in Southampton to better match our resources to the risk. These vehicles are the Aerial Ladder Platform and Small Fires Vehicles currently based at Redbridge fire station. Because the majority of small fires and of high rise buildings are in the city centre area we propose moving both of these vehicles

## Appendix A

to St Mary's fire station. Conversely the Special Equipment Unit currently at St Mary's would be better placed at Redbridge fire station where it can continue to provide cover across the city as well as westwards out to the New Forest. Positioning it at Redbridge gives this vehicle much better motorway access enabling it to respond quicker anywhere in the county.

- merge the existing Special Equipment Units and Multi-Role Vehicles into a single Response Support Vehicle. We currently have Special Equipment Units at St Mary's, Basingstoke, Winchester and Cosham providing additional equipment in excess of that provided by normal appliances to an incident. We also maintain three Multi-Role Vehicles at Havant, Rushmoor and Eastleigh which also provide different additional equipment to incidents. Following the introduction of Rescue Pumps we have reviewed the usage of these vehicles and will now merge the vehicles into a single standard Response Support Vehicle providing additional equipment to incidents. We will have four of these vehicles located at the existing four SEU stations.

It should be noted that neither of these changes will result in any losses of personnel or of any response capability. We will simply be rationalising and simplifying our vehicles to get the best use out of them.

### **Risk – Fires in the home**

One of the greatest risks to our communities is a fire in the home. We can see that there is a downward trend in the total number of fires we attend each year, however accidental dwelling fires have not reduced to the extent of other categories of fire.

#### Strategic Proposal – 02 – Refocusing our efforts to reduce accidental fires in the home

We need to refocus our work and better target our resources to reduce the risk to those most vulnerable of having a fire in the home, and those that are likely to be killed or injured in a fire.

Most accidental fires in the home are caused by cooking, involving younger people, and occur in houses occupied by only a single person.

Analysis of fire incidents where people have died, identifies that the elderly, who are in social housing or supported independent living, are the most vulnerable. We also know that people known to Adult Social Services are thirty times more likely to be the victim of an accidental fire fatality than the rest of Hampshire population.

We seek to work with these two groups to identify the causes of these incidents, and will develop a targeted programme to reduce them.

### **Risk – Business (commercial) incidents**

We attend around 300 fires in non-domestic premises each year. These incidents can have a negative impact on the business concerned and the local economy leading to income loss, jobs reduction, disruption to community facilities and environmental impacts. In commercial premises we encounter the highest use of acetylene and hazardous materials, so if there is a fire in one of these premises the immediate community can

## **Appendix A**

experience disruption. Reducing the number of these incidents will mitigate the effects they can cause.

Through analysis we know that many new businesses fail within the first five years. However if we can improve their chances by helping them reduce fire-related risk we can have a positive effect on the business specifically and the economy more generally.

### **Strategic Proposal – 03 - Increasing (improving) community safety with sprinklers**

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority plays a key leadership role in promoting a better understanding of the benefits of sprinkler systems. Accordingly, the Authority and the Service work to encourage building owners and developers to install these systems where there is a case for doing so. For example, where there are risks to people, or where there is a clear business case in terms of cost and benefit.

Sprinklers can add clear value and are proven to save lives and property; they improve firefighter safety; minimise environmental damage and reduce the economic cost of fire. They also assist in ensuring business continuity and rapid recovery from fire. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority actively pursues its sprinkler strategy.

We propose to explore innovative projects using sprinkler systems within identified (risk assessed) high-risk and high potential loss properties to reduce community risk.

### **Strategic Proposal – 04 - Improving economic sustainability through effective business support**

Historically the Fire and Rescue Service has been a regulatory agent in relation to fire safety by enforcing the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Whilst this is a statutory duty, regulatory sanctions should be considered as a last resort and we should be much more proactive in supporting businesses to comply with fire safety regulations with the minimum of financial burden. In the current economic climate we need to do as much as possible to maximise economic growth whilst also minimising community risk.

To reduce the risk that people face within the business environment, we must ensure that we understand that risk. We need to know who is at risk, when, why and how. Understanding this and the motivation of stakeholders will enable us to proactively match our resources to that risk and assist Responsible Persons to take effective ownership of their business risk.

Our community fire protection approach will be to provide more effective support to commerce and industry to assist them to reduce the risks that they face from fire in a practical and cost effective way. We will provide business continuity advice and enable local businesses to become key partners as we endeavour to assist our communities to be more able to respond to emergencies (community resilience).

### **Risk – Community incidents**

This risk covers a wide range of incidents which affect the whole community or neighbourhood, from fires in public buildings to severe weather (flooding). The loss to, and

## Appendix A

effect on the local community can be devastating and we need to work with them proactively to mitigate this.

### Strategic Proposal – 05 - Improving how our communities are able to respond to emergencies (community resilience)

We have a duty to work with local authorities, other agencies and the community to identify risks in their locality and to develop emergency and business continuity plans to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency incidents.

An effective community resilience strategy will enable us to ensure close links to local communities, parish councils as well as both the voluntary and business sectors so as to improve local readiness for dealing with emergencies and to enable a quick recovery.

Community Resilience is also an active work-stream of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and serves to mitigate the potential affects of elements within the LRF Community Risk Register. We aim to work closely with our partners on the LRF on a number of areas to ensure communities and local businesses are prepared and a variety of support is available.

### **Risk – Road safety**

Each year HFRS attends some of the most serious road traffic collisions (RTCs) that occur on the county's roads. As well as causing serious injury and death these incidents can have a significant economic impact through disruption to the road network.

### Strategic Proposal – 06 – Reviewing our role in road safety and creating safer road users in Hampshire

We will encourage partnership working across geographic and statutory borders so that there is a collective responsibility for road safety and common goals to work towards.

Our Road Safety Team will implement a new road safety strategy for the Service based on the risk and with a clear delivery focus. The team will be based at our Road Safety Centre in Winchester. We will encourage partners to make use of these facilities to support the reduction of the risk on our roads.

We will have the goal of being a centre of excellence in road safety. Resources need to be made available to support education and undertake targeted initiatives, and social marketing tools need to be utilised to support delivery of our road safety messages.

**We will consult with our stakeholders on each of the above proposals to help shape and gauge innovative and new ways of working to ensure we are constantly improving to reduce the risks faced by our communities.**