

**Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority**

**Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee**

**Item 8**

**22 November 2011**

**Co-Responder Update**

**Report of the Chief Officer**

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**1 Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the current progress of the HFRS Co Responder Scheme. It includes the performance achieved during the fiscal year 2010-2011 and from April 2011 to the current date.
- 1.2 In 2010-11 HFRS Co Responders attended 9066 emergency calls which helped to increase the overall performance of the South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) at no cost to HFRS. Demonstrating the successful delivery of partnership working between HFRS and SCAS, this has dramatically increased the chances of survival of a patient suffering from a life threatening injury or illness by providing immediate medical care to members of the rural community.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee recognises and endorses the considerable improvements in the health and well being of our communities, and increased life chances achieved by the continuation of this partnership-working initiative.

**3 Introduction and current position**

- 3.1 Since the 2009 Co Responder agreement was signed, The Service has continued to recover the costs associated with delivering the Co Responder initiative from SCAS. The agreement has led to a sustainable way of working and paved the way for further project development.
- 3.2 An increase in skill base has now been implemented. All Co Responder stations underwent a training programme in 2010-11, which permitted Co Responders to carry out further medical skills and patient monitoring. This included paediatric basic life support and the use of the defibrillator on all ages including new born babies, the ability to administer 300mg of aspirin for patients presenting cardiac sounding chest pain and the ability to monitor blood oxygen saturations by using pulse oximetry. SCAS have funded all training and equipment requirements.

- 3.3 SCAS fund 75% of the salary of the Station Manager post to directly manage the Co Responder scheme and all aspects surrounding this scheme. The post has also provided the Service with a clear point of contact for Co Responding, which has become an integral part of HFRS.
- 3.4 The Station Manager post also acts as a liaison between HFRS and SCAS, by assisting with the SCAS Hazard Area Response Team (HART), exploring the possibility of matching training programmes of firefighters and Co Responders to exploit possible cost savings and training commitments. The Station Manager also attends SCAS operational meetings where information can be exchanged. The post-holder is currently updating existing policies and developing new policies and procedures for the Service in the field of medical intervention and SCAS related issues.

#### **4 Performance**

- 4.1 In 2010-2011 the Co Responders attended 9078 emergency calls, and thus delivered a performance increase for SCAS (Hants) of 10.95%. This means that HFRS Co Responders were first on scene for 10.95% of all SCAS (Hants) Category A calls within 8 minutes. HFRS Co Responders were the only resource to attend to these emergencies within 8 minutes on 5.80% of occasions.
- 4.2 To date this year (April 2011 to August 2011) the total number of calls attended is 3192, delivering a SCAS performance increase of 10.69%. HFRS Co Responders were the only resource to attend within 8 minutes on 5.32% of all SCAS (Hants) Category A calls.
- 4.3 These statistics demonstrate the successful delivery of the Co Responder partnership, resulting in the overall improvement and performance standard of SCAS and the dramatic increase in the speed with which medical care is given to people suffering a life threatening injury or illness in rural communities. (See Appendix A for 5 year performance overview and Appendix B for individual station performance.)
- 4.4 The new skills and equipment that have been brought into the scheme this year have led to the Co Responders having a positive impact on the outcome of a larger number of incidents that they have attended. The Co Responders do not simply 'stop the clock' for SCAS but can demonstrate that they are an integral part of the chain of survival.

#### **5 Future Developments**

- 5.1 To continually look at ways to increase the Co Responders skill base, training and the equipment used in order to improve the level of care provided within agreed guidelines and subject to SCAS funding.
- 5.2 To carry out a cost benefit study into increasing the total number of Co

Responder stations from 18 to 22. This increase was previously agreed by SMT, however due to recent financial constraints within SCAS this increase has not been realised.

5.3 To look at how Co Responders can be used differently within HFRS and SCAS in order to achieve the strategic objectives of both Services.

5.4 It is anticipated that Co Responders will be an integral part of a new initiative within the Service objective 'responding to Road Traffic Collisions in rural areas'. A pilot is planned to commence later this year.

## **6 Contribution to Corporate Aims and Objectives**

6.1 Co responding is raising the profile of HFRS in rural areas and is making a positive contribution to the corporate aim of Making Hampshire Safer.

## **7 Resource Implications**

### **7.1 Human Resources**

7.1.1 150 firefighters carry out Co Responder duties from 18 retained fire stations.

### **7.2 Physical Resources**

7.2.1 No HFRS physical resources are used to undertake Co Responder activity. All physical resources are supplied by SCAS.

### **7.3 Financial Implications**

7.3.1 The total cost for delivering the Co Responder initiative for HFRS (wages, PPE) in 2010/11 was £352,176. This total cost was funded in full by SCAS.

7.3.2 SCAS fund the cost of vehicles, communications, equipment, and training instructors, in addition to HFRS Co Responder wage costs.

## **8 Equality Impact Assessment**

8.1 No issues were highlighted during this assessment. The proposals within this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

## **9 Conclusion**

9.1 The Co Responder agreement has ensured that communities within Hampshire are supported with a level of medical cover that would not be achieved without the partnership approach adopted by HFRS and SCAS. The project is now being developed elsewhere within the region and nationally. The "Hampshire

Model” as it is now known has already been implemented in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire with the HFRS Manager helping develop the project plan for them.

- 9.2 The Co Responding role has been embraced by fire stations as it has brought benefits to station personnel. These include additional medical and driver training (funded by SCAS) and increased operational incident experience, which has also led to increased morale and motivation.
- 9.3 The Co Responder project has scope for development in many areas including helping HFRS performance in the future. However as a formal agreement currently exists, early dialogue with SCAS would need to be considered.

### **Background Information (Section 100D of Local Government Act 1972)**

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:

“None”

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