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## Report to Scrutiny Committee

25 November 2022

### Community Risk Management Update

#### Report by Deputy Chief Fire Officer

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#### Summary

This report is to present a six-monthly update against the progress of our delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2022. This is a four-year plan and therefore activity has been planned across the four years according to resources and dependencies. The Community Risk Delivery Plan is overseen by the Chief Fire Officer, which includes all activity relating to our five Strategic Priorities over these four years. The five Strategic Objectives are set out below with their alignment to the corresponding County Council Priorities:

- 1 Preventing fires and emergencies from happening  
*{Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations}*
- 2 Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be  
*{Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations & safe and prosperous economy}*
- 3 Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively  
*{Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations and helping people and communities to fulfil their potential}*
- 4 Have a safe and valued workforce  
*{Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential}*
- 5 Making best use of resources  
*{Making the best use of resources}*

This report is the first report against progress of the Community Risk Management Plan and the areas of delivery over the last six months covering the period of April 2022 to September 2022.

#### Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to review the progress of the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2022.

Key Lines of Enquiry:

- (1) The progress made over the last six months relating to the five Strategic Priorities
- (2) Identify any areas for consideration for future scrutiny or any areas to highlight to the Cabinet Member

## 1 Background and context

- 1.1 Our CRMP sets out the fire and rescue service's strategic priorities and the steps that the service will be taking to implement this new programme of work to help ensure that West Sussex continues to be a safe place to live and work.
- 1.2 The plan went live in April 2022 and this report is to show the progress against the five strategic priorities and associated projects and work packages within these.

## 2 Progress Overview

- 2.1 The start of the year was focussed on ensuring the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Governance was in place including the Community Risk Delivery Plan (CRDP) and associated annual Service Plans.



**Figure 1 - CRMP Governance**

- 2.2 The CRMP is a 4-year plan and we will update against progress and associated dependencies, that support the prioritisation and mapping as part of the CRDP. It will be reported twice a year in November Scrutiny through this report and will also have a second update as part of the annual Statement of Assurance.

- 2.3 Across Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 there has been a focus on the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) Cause of concern relating to Values and Behaviours which is to be addressed through our Leadership and Culture programme and focus on staff wellbeing and support, as well as organisational improvement across Protection, Prevention and Response to support consistency in our community engagement and compliance with legislative changes.
- 2.4 This period also saw the start of two key staff consultations for the Horsham Fire Station/Training Centre and Day Crewing seven projects which start to address the challenges of appliance availability and hot fire training. Both projects involve significant time and stakeholder engagement. With careful planning and organisation, we are currently on track for delivery on time and within budget.
- 2.5 We continue to horizon scan and assess future risks which for this quarter include the current threat of industrial action which has prompted us to initiate our Business Continuity procedures which includes testing and exercising of these plans.
- 2.6 Looking forward to Quarters 3 and 4 we will be focussed on the completion of the projects that have commenced in these first two quarters. There will be continued focus of the cause of concern relating to the Values and Behaviours as well as the Leadership programme and Response Management structure to support more frequent touchpoints for staff to share best practice and have crucial conversations.

### **3 Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening**

#### **(a) Safe and Well Visits and Referrals**

**CRMP References:** *Develop our capacity, through our frontline staff, volunteers and the frontline staff of partner agencies. [CRMP Objective 1.2] Prioritise those who have the highest risk. [CRMP Objective 1.3]*

- 3.1 In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2022/23, the service carried out 1,638 Safe and Well Visits and 813 home checks, this exceeds the half year target by 451. It has showed a month on month increase in visits in the last 12 months which we attribute to the remedial actions taken, the ongoing development of referral pathways and more customers being receptive to having someone visit their home, although our previous referral pathways have yet to return to their pre-Covid levels.
- 3.2 Staff based at fire stations are continuing to undertake reactive post-incident, as well as proactive referral generation activity. Frontline crews have delivered more safe and well visits this year than the year before, and they are now trained to deliver high risk safe and well visits. Further work is to be carried out with crews to increase productivity and capitalise on this wider resource base.
- 3.3 We have recruited and provided our volunteers with additional training to enable them to undertake a broader range of prevention work and support crews with local risk reduction activity. Looking to the next six months we plan to recruit another round of volunteers early next year.

- 3.4 There has been a continued promotion of safe and well visits through our health and social care partners and our support in training their staff to recognise and respond to fire risk. In addition, customer details are being shared to increase referrals of Safe and Well Visits.
- 3.5 We will work holistically as part of the County Council to ensure that we best keep people safe from vulnerable situations. As an example, we share data with Adults Services that help us to identify people who may be more vulnerable to fire. This has been built into a local risk map broken down by postcode and is enabling targeted prevention activity in those streets. We have also shared our data with Trading Standards to enable them to focus on the most vulnerable people to prevent them from being scammed.
- 3.6 We have been broadening and developing our partnerships with health, housing and social care colleagues. This work has included provided their staff with extensive training for them to be able to identify and respond to fire risk and refer customers and patients to us for a Safe and Well Visit. Through doing this we can reach more vulnerable people than could working as a single agency. Training in person has been delivered to the following staff groups:
- Primary Care Network Northern & Coastal
  - Social Prescribers
  - Carepoint 2
  - Fostering & Adoption
  - Chichester & Bognor Oxygen Service
  - Newly Qualified Social Workers
  - Police & Community Safety
  - Carers
  - Housing Officers and Environmental Protection Officers
- 3.7 We appointed a Rural Engagement Officer at the start of this year to support our vulnerable customers in our outlying rural communities where we do not have full time stations. This role has been extremely well received by individuals, businesses and partner agencies.
- 3.8 Crews use local data to drive and target prevention activity to areas where our most vulnerable residents live, and we make the most of every opportunity to deliver focused community safety activities following incidents at residential properties with any incident that involves a serious fire or injuries attracting a full review by the group manager where all the recommendations are collated to inform future Local Risk management Plan activity.
- 3.9 We take a risk-based approach to our prevention work, through our triage process we identify those with the highest level of risk to ensure that they receive the most immediate service, usually by our specialist staff.

**(b) Community focus with our Prevention work**

**CRMP Reference:** Place the public and communities at the centre of our activities. [CRMP Objective 1.1]

- 3.10 The focus on the public and communities is reflected in our Safeguarding and Safe and Well Visit policies and in our Local Risk Management Plans. This means that the work we do is tailored to what the person's risks and needs and to the risks that are specific to that local community.
- 3.11 Work has been undertaken over these quarters to broaden our understanding of what our diverse and seldom heard from communities and individuals need to ensure that the work we deliver best meets their specific requirements and risks.

**(c) Fire Safety Education and Programmes**

**CRMP Reference:** Provide school children with fire safety education and deliver programmes so children and young people can make safer decisions and fulfil their potential. [CRMP Objective 1.4]

- 3.12 We have introduced three new targeted programmes for children and young people, GRIT, SPARK and IGNITE. They are delivered to a wide range of children and young people and replace our previous Firebreak course. The content not only teaches children and young people about fire, water and road safety, but also about health and wellbeing including resilience building, in addition to community spirit.
- 3.13 Our new summer holiday activity programme received funding from the Holiday Activity Fund and provided a hot and nourishing meal for those who would not receive a free school meal due to it being the holidays. The new programmes are supplemented by our established, ongoing school education programme.
- 3.14 West Sussex has just reached the final for the National Fire Chiefs Council annual award for Children and Young People Champion in recognition of our work in this area.

**(d) Partnership working**

**CRMP Reference:** Strengthen and grow our partnerships, working together to keep the individuals and communities safer. [CRMP Objective 1.5]

- 3.15 There has been lots of work through the Safe and Habitable Homes Forum which is continuing to work in partnership with telecare providers to embed fire risk awareness and reduction as part of their processes.
- 3.16 We have established a pilot home oxygen user panel working closely with St Richard's Hospital, Chichester to contribute to the review of each person who is using medical oxygen at home increasing our understanding of risk.
- 3.17 Information from Sussex Police has been included in our Living Safe and Well booklet and we have been promoting the referral of vulnerable individuals with both the Police and South East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust.

- 3.18 Our Rural Engagement Officer also been forging new relationships with the Rural Policing Team, Police Community Support Officers and community wardens.
- 3.19 We also have a partnership with Southern Gas Network, where it supplies carbon monoxide detectors for us to fit free of charge in homes where we assess there to be a possible risk for example due to the age or condition of someone's boiler. This year to date we have fitted 836 detectors.

(e) **Targeted Community Safety**

**CRMP Reference:** *Deliver targeted community safety campaigns to address the risks identified. [CRMP Objective 1.6]*

- 3.20 Our Local Risk Management Plans have been designed around the local risk data with safety campaigns being delivered by crews. The data relating to accidental dwelling fires has been incorporated into the Local Risk Management Plans to enable operational crews target their local risk.
- 3.21 This means that local initiatives and community safety activity will be delivered to reflect the relevant trends and target the most vulnerable people, in many cases cooking, smoking and electrical safety will feature and locations targeted will use the data supplied by Adult's Social Care.
- 3.22 Crews, Prevention and Protection staff jointly deliver events where there are cross cutting building, person and firefighting risk issues for example in high rise residential buildings where we are working to address non-compliance with fire safety legislation.

**4 Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be**

(f) **Fire Safety (England) Regulations Digital Solution**

**CRMP Reference:** *Working effectively with other regulators and agencies to reduce risk. [CRMP Objective 2.5]*

- 4.1 Preparation is underway for The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 coming into force, which will implement most of the recommendations made by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry in its Phase 1 report which required a change in the law.
- 4.2 The Fire Safety Act (FSA) clarifies the scope of the Fire Safety Order (FSO) to make clear it applies to the structure, external walls (including cladding and balconies) and individual flat entrance doors between domestic premises and the common parts.
- 4.3 The regulations seek to improve the fire safety of blocks of flats in ways which are practical and cost effective for individual leaseholders and proportionate to the risk of fire.
- 4.4 The regulations will come into force on 23 January 2023 following the publication of supporting guidance which is due later in 2022. As a result, there will be a requirement placed upon all Responsible Persons (RPs) of residential buildings that contain more than two dwellings to send their local

Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) information pertaining to that premises, including floor plans, external wall construction and faults on critical fire-fighting facilities within the building. The level of detail within this information is determined by the height of the building.

- 4.5 The Home Office has defined that these submissions need to be accepted by the FRS in electronic form and have worked with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to create some templates upon which to achieve this.
- 4.6 As a result we are developing a landing page for RP's to access the forms and submit them automatically to us, and for us to have a system in place whereby that data is shared into our systems and onto our Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs). The landing page is due to be in place by December 2022 ahead of 23 January 2023 when the Regulations come into force.

**(g) Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) Reduction**

***CRMP Reference:** Using a risk-based approach, to no longer automatically respond to fire alarm actuations at low risk commercial properties. [CRMP Objective 2.7]*

- 4.7 HMICFRS reported that West Sussex attends more AFAs than the national average. Nationally attendance of AFAs is measured through a percentage that were not attended, as this presents the risk that it may mean the service is unavailable to respond to genuine incidents because they are attending false alarms. In the year to 31 March 2021, the service didn't respond to 16 percent, compared to the England-wide rate of 37 percent.
- 4.8 We have set a target to reduce AFAs in non-domestic premises by 10 percent per year. Progress is monitored through Core Measure 14 and is currently off target.
- 4.9 To address this and align with national best practice, from November 2022 we will be implementing a 'call challenge', where Joint Fire Control will seek confirmation on whether there is an actual fire before we respond to automatic fire alarm activations, otherwise there will be a non-attendance policy. We will be working with stakeholders to inform them of these changes prior to the go-live date as part of a comprehensive communication plan.
- 4.10 The changes will only affect low-risk commercial premises (such as factories, offices and shops), and will not be applied to residential buildings (such as hotels and hospitals) and domestic dwellings.
- 4.11 As always, we will respond to incidents where a fire is confirmed by sending the fire engine that will get to the incident in the shortest period of time.
- 4.12 This change in policy will bring us in line with Surrey Fire & Rescue Service, and crews will be freed up to carry out more prevention and protection work. Our colleagues in East Sussex FRS are currently looking to align their own policy to provide alignment across all three services.

**(h) Upskilling staff with Fire Safety and Fire Investigation Qualifications**

**CRMP Reference:** *Develop and train our response crews with fire safety and fire investigation qualifications. [CRMP Objective 2.1]*

- 4.13 The mandate for this project has been agreed and work is now underway to equip our Supervisory Managers with the necessary skills to enable them to investigate fires more thoroughly and pinpoint fire causes to provide more robust evidence to feed risk planning and LRMP activities. This is being supported with a wider training plan to upskill all station-based crews with a wider understanding of Fire Protection, as this in turn not only enables the FRS to keep a greater number of people safe by making every contact count, but will greatly improve their understanding and interaction with the built environment making them safe and more effective during emergency incidents.

## **5 Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively**

### **(i) Day Crewed 7 days a week**

**CRMP Reference:** *Enhance Day Crewed immediate response cover activity 7am - 7pm, 7 days a week. [CRMP Objective 3.7]*

- 5.1 Following public consultation on proposals set out in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022 - 2026, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) has commenced work on this strategic priority through the implementation of enhance day crewed immediate response cover activity from 7am – 7pm 5 days a week to 7 days a week.
- 5.2 The strategic approach taken to developing and implementing the proposals below has been one of inclusive co-design. Crewing options were developed through task and finish groups in which all stations and wider stakeholders were represented. This approach was taken to maximise the diversity of the ideas that would be considered in the development of these proposals and realise the overall strategic aim of empowering and supporting our people.
- 5.3 The Day Crewed 7 (DC7) Task and Finish Group had four meetings with extensive discussion at the relevant stations between each meeting and exploration of other duty systems within the country. The CRMP proposal is for DC7 to be delivered using 12 personnel on each fire station with all staff working 12-hour shifts.
- 5.4 The formal staff consultation process commenced on Monday 3 October 2022 and lasted until noon on Tuesday 8 November 2022. Following this a Management Response will be issued and the implementation follows shortly after subject to deliver the consultation outcomes.
- 5.5 The increased fire cover to 7 days a week is planned to go live in Quarter 1 2023/24.

### **(j) Local Risk Management Plans (LRMPs)**

**CRMP References:** *Develop and evolve our Local Risk Management Plans, working with key partners. [CRMP Objective 3.4] & An inclusive approach to local risk management [CRMP Objective 2.2] Deliver targeted community*

safety campaigns through LRMPs to address the risks identified. [CRMP Objective 1.6]

- 5.6 Whilst this objective sits in the Response Service Plan these are fundamental to the delivery of the Service plans for Prevention and Protection as well.
- 5.7 The annual review of our local risk management plans has been undertaken and the reporting tool refined.
- 5.8 The review included feedback from station staff on what analysis would support their activity and performance improvements. This was built into the data visualisation app to support managers and staff to own and understand their progress.
- 5.9 The development of the LRMPs for 2023/24 will be started in Quarter 3 to ensure they are in place for March 2023 ready for go live on 1 April 2024.

## **6 Strategic Priority 4: Have a safe and valued workforce**

### **(k) Leadership and Cultural Change Programme**

**CRMP reference:** *Strengthen leadership and people management skills*  
[CRMP Objective 4.1]

- 6.1 Work continues on our Leadership and Cultural Change Programme, to which all supervisory and middle managers have access, providing learning, information and guidance on the behaviours, expectations and practical skills required of our managers at all levels.
- 6.2 The first module of this programme was rolled out to 76% of our leadership colleagues in 2022 (Quarter 2). The evaluation of this programme following the training, showed the success of the first stage being felt by 98% positively.
- 6.3 The module covered a broad range of areas including FRS Reform white paper, Code of Ethics; Culture; Dignity & Respect; Psychological Safety; Emotional Intelligence and self-awareness.
- 6.4 The next modules planned include:
  - Inclusion (Quarter 4 22/23)
  - Wellbeing (Quarter 4 22/23)
  - Coaching Skills (Quarter 1 23/24)
  - Difficult Conversations (Quarter 1 23/24)
  - Developing High Performing Teams (Quarter 2 23/24)
  - Effective Performance Management (Quarter 2 23/24)
  - Managing Conduct & Performance (Quarter 3 23/24)
  - Managing Grievances (Quarter 3 23/24)
  - Managing Sickness Absence (Quarter 4 23/24)
  - Next steps (Quarter 4 23/24)

## (l) **Wellbeing – Champion Health App**

**CRMP Reference:** *Support the health, wellbeing and ways of working of our staff. [CRMP Objective 4.6]*

- 6.5 Champion Health was adopted for a year by West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to improve our understanding of the health and wellbeing status of our organisation. It provides valuable quantitative data which informs our Health & Wellbeing Strategy. Collecting anonymous data has enabled us to benchmark our current organisational health & wellbeing status, identify where further action is required and indicate which activities provide the most effective improvement.
- 6.6 Wellbeing is a responsibility for both the organisation and individuals and to support this we want to provide our staff with tools to measure and monitor their current health and wellbeing and enable them to maintain and/or improve their personal lifestyle aspirations easily and objectively.
- 6.7 In the first year 37% of our staff across the WSFRS have signed up and completed their health assessment. 51% of these staff have actively use the platform regularly.
- 6.8 Champion health has been renewed for a second year so we can introduce more staff with the app and utilise the data to provide targeted meaningful interventions, advice and guidance
- 6.9 Progress of the work focussed on this area of work can be seen in our Core measure 26 which related to fitness tests which has been shown as green for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 at 97% of fitness tests in time.

## **7 Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources**

### (m) **Horsham Fire Station**

**CRMP Reference:** *Horsham, which is capable of supporting a more diverse workforce in the future, becoming a blueprint for the fire estate [CRMP Objective 5.1]*

- 7.1 The Horsham build is progressing well, with the main structure of all buildings now completed and internal finishes well underway. This period has seen the installation of the Live Fire Training technology and the preparation of integrating operational systems into the infrastructure. Decorative detail has started in some areas, including the demarcation of the different areas of contamination management.
- 7.2 Additional approval of Section 106 funding of £110,000 has enabled further enhancements including installing a rig to allow 'working at height' training inside the garage area, which will enable training in all weathers, a revised layout of the Breathing Apparatus building for better management of contaminants and additional features added to the replica Incident Command unit to allow for a more realistic training experience.
- 7.3 This period has seen considerable engagement with stakeholders including local residents, through newsletters and coffee mornings, and with staff groups and Members.

- 7.4 In September there was a *Topping Out* ceremony, attended by the Council Leader, which was a great event and attracted local and national trade press.
- 7.5 Fire and Rescue Service teams have focused on the transition into the building and a dedicated Training Transition Manager has been appointed. This role is focusing on enhancing the training offer to meet key risks and business needs and is looking at how we can use the change to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- 7.6 The build is currently on track for handover to West Sussex County Council in Spring 2023 and Fire and Rescue Service operations starting in the Summer.

#### (n) **Estates Improvement Plan**

**CRMP References:** *Develop and deliver an Estates Improvement Plan. [CRMP Objective 5.1] Improve the layout of our buildings to support equality and diversity. [CRMP Objective 5.2]*

- 7.7 Viability studies have been completed and the associated funding for stations has been approved through Capital and Assets Board in January 2022.
- 7.8 This decision allowed the next stage of Feasibility to be undertaken and visits to the stations in phase 1 have been completed and options will be presented to the FRS in Quarter 3 2022/23.
- 7.9 Prioritisation will be key across the next few months once the options are selected to allow the organisation to get the work commissioned on the first stations in 2023/24.
- 7.10 Phase 2 will be funded through the future capital programme and will be presented in parallel to ensure that feasibility can be undertaken following the commissioning of phase 1 to maintain momentum.

### **8 Proposal details**

- 8.1 For Scrutiny Committee to support progress to date, for the period April 2022 to September 2022 and the next report of continuous improvement will be provided through the Annual Statement of Assurance in Q2 23/24 Scrutiny Committee for November 2022 – March 2023.

### **9 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)**

- 9.1 None

### **10 Consultation, engagement and advice**

- 10.1 None

### **11 Finance**

- 11.1 There has been a significant support from Cabinet and investment from the County Council which has helped drive the improvement plan and continuation of this has been crucial for enabling successful embedding of

improvement over the life of this Community Risk Management plan and beyond.

## 12 Risk implications and mitigations

| <b>Risk</b>                         | <b>Mitigating Action<br/>(in place or planned)</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Impact of current financial climate | Careful budget planning, also review of performance and budget matters through the PRR report considered at scrutiny and Cabinet. |

## 13 Policy alignment and compliance

- 13.1 There are no social value, crime and disorder, equality duty, human rights, public health, Climate Change or legal implications arising from this report.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

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### Appendices

None

**Background papers: None**