

**ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



Meeting	Essex Fire and Rescue Performance & Resources Board	Agenda Item	5
Meeting Date	23 October 2017	Report Number	
Report Author:	Donna Finch, Community Development and Safeguarding Manager		
Presented By	Moiru Bruin, Assistant Director of Prevention, Protection & Response		
Subject	Safeguarding		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides an overview of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's (ECFRS) approach to Safeguarding. Members of the board are asked to note the following contents of the report;

1. Current ECFRS Safeguarding practices
2. Safeguarding referral activity levels.
3. Next priorities for Safeguarding in ECFRS

BACKGROUND

ECFRS corporate vision is 'to make Essex a safe place to live, work and travel'. An integral part of this is keeping children and vulnerable adults safe from harm and when intelligence is provided and mitigate such risks as effectively and efficiently as possible. In acknowledgement of this ECFRS recognises Safeguarding as a high priority ensuring clear accessible policies and procedures in line with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and best practice and engages fully with the Safeguarding Boards Audit processes.

Over the past 20 years Fire and Rescue Service's, through their Community Safety work, have evolved to now be positioned as key agency for safeguarding alongside local government and statutory represented bodies such as the Police, Education and Health organisations. As Fire and Rescue Services continue to evolve and deliver more targeted intervention programmes and specialist Safer Community activities the need for senior level commitment and appropriate resources is acknowledged.

In ECFRS, all members of staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have direct access to the Safeguarding team and each concern is triaged and referrals are actively monitored by our Community Development and Safeguarding Manager and Deputy Safeguarding Manager. Any identified issues are addressed in line with Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) procedures.

ECFRS works in close collaboration with Local Authorities to ensure the provision of co-ordinated integrated services which meets the needs of our communities. ECFRS is working towards ensuring a clear statement of responsibility for staff and that safeguarding strategies, associated policies, and appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are in place. The Community Development and Safeguarding Manager and ACFO Prevention, Protection and Response meet up regularly to ensure safeguarding audits are updated regularly and work towards completion of the established action plan. This is achieved through working closely with the relevant Department Managers to ensure effectiveness in all areas of our business, in line with the requirements of the SET Boards.

The number of safeguarding referral case files currently open is just below 120. These cases have already been through the ECFRS's triage and have been assessed as meeting thresholds for referral. Each case file requires a regular follow up process, reviewing each case regularly and making contact with the relevant agency to ensure that the case has been accepted and confirmation that support is now in place in order for our ECFRS to close the file. It is often the case that this is a long process due to the high volume of cases with each response team.

To assure itself about the robustness of safeguarding arrangements ECFRS ensures it engages in the completion and continual updating of the self-assessment audits put in place by the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Adult & Children Boards.

ECFRS sits on the following Safeguarding Boards/groups:-

- Full Board: Community Development and Safeguarding Manager
- Executive: Safeguarding Deputy
- 11 x Task finishing groups: Safeguarding Deputy/ Community Builders

Safeguarding Training and Development

Safeguarding Level 1 training was rolled out at the beginning of the year to all staff to ensure all were updated with current legislations and responsibilities. The Safeguarding Team have also engaged at Crew and Watch Manager development evenings training in Safeguarding and the referral of safeguarding issues, to ensure procedures are known and adhered to so crews can best support the most vulnerable within our communities.

Safeguarding Level 2 training was again delivered to those in designated roles where there is considerable professional and organisational duties of care for safeguarding of adults, young people and children. This training is delivered at regular intervals, as part of their continual personal development so that staff are able to act on concerns and contribute appropriately to local and national policies, legislation and procedures.

Safeguarding Level 3 has been delivered to those within the Community Development and Safeguarding Team.

The Community Development and Safeguarding Manager and Head of HR have recently undergone train the trainer Safer Recruitment, and The Community Development and Safeguarding Manager has written a DBS policy for checks on those employees employed in a position of trust.

Organised by the Community Development and Safeguarding Manager, ECFRS led a National conference and associated workshops to over 28 Fire & Rescue Services. Called '*CFOA Safeguarding in the Modern Day Fire and Rescue Service National Safeguarding Conference*', this provided an extensive overview of history of safeguarding and its recognition within government legislation and public sector bodies, before and after the influences of serious case reviews and numerous government reforms.

The themes of the 3 workshops focused on the necessary work Fire and Rescue Services should be undertaking in order to be well placed when dealing with safeguarding moving forward and in preparation for future HMI inspections.

- Safer recruitment
- HMI Inspections
- Senior Level Commitment and Accountability

Nationally, the Community Development and Safeguarding Manager, has been requested by the NFCC to lead on safeguarding nationally as well as active in the role of National Child Protection Officer for CFOA, Duke of Edinburgh.

ADULT SAFEGUARDING

Based on the current referral data the total for 2017 is predicted to be approximately 400 Vulnerable Adult referrals (Appendix 1). This sees an increase of 300% in 3 years and is expected to rise as ECFRS increases community involvement with the introduction of Delivering Differently in neighbourhoods and Safe and Well.

These referrals are assessed by the Safeguarding team to see if they reach the threshold against the Care Act 2014 and then forwarded to the relevant social care. Those that do not meet the threshold will be supported by our Community Builders on a universal level.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Based on the current referral data the total for 2017 is predicted to be in excess of 60 Safeguarding Children referrals. This is an increase of 200% in 2 years and this is expected to rise as ECFRS increases involvement with our Educational Teams, Juvenile Fire Setter advisors and Community Engagements. (Appendix 1)

Community Builders

The Community Builder role, of which there are four on the establishment (2 currently filled, and 2 vacant posts shortly to be advertised), work with communities and liaise with other agencies. The Community Builders have carried out 233 visits so far in 2017. Visits have been at the request of other agencies or where referrals do not meet the threshold for a referral to the Social Care teams. Community Builders encounter the most vulnerable within our community on a daily basis and frequently see cases of extreme hoarding and severe neglect. The role of a Community Builder is a challenging one, often with the

individual carrying out joint visits with other agencies, including social services. A visit can take up to a day, including detailed report writing and connecting with universal services and agencies.

ECFRS are seeing a large number of referrals particularly involving hoarding. As set out in the Hoarding policy from the Essex Safeguarding Adults Board, ECFRS form one arm of the referral process with regards to mitigating the risk of fire for the individual concerned and neighbouring properties. Further details on Community Builders and the many partnership and community groups they engage with can be found in Appendix 2.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

None

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

The benefits to have efficient and effective safeguarding procedures is that it ensures that the Service is legal compliant. But also ensures that in its engagement with the Communities of Essex is effective and considered in being conscious that ECFRS staff have the correct skills and knowledge to both identify the vulnerable, and know how best to get them help.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications directly associated with this paper.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality and diversity implications directly associated with this paper.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Service is currently engaging with the Fire Brigade Union on the progression of DBS checks for appropriate personnel.

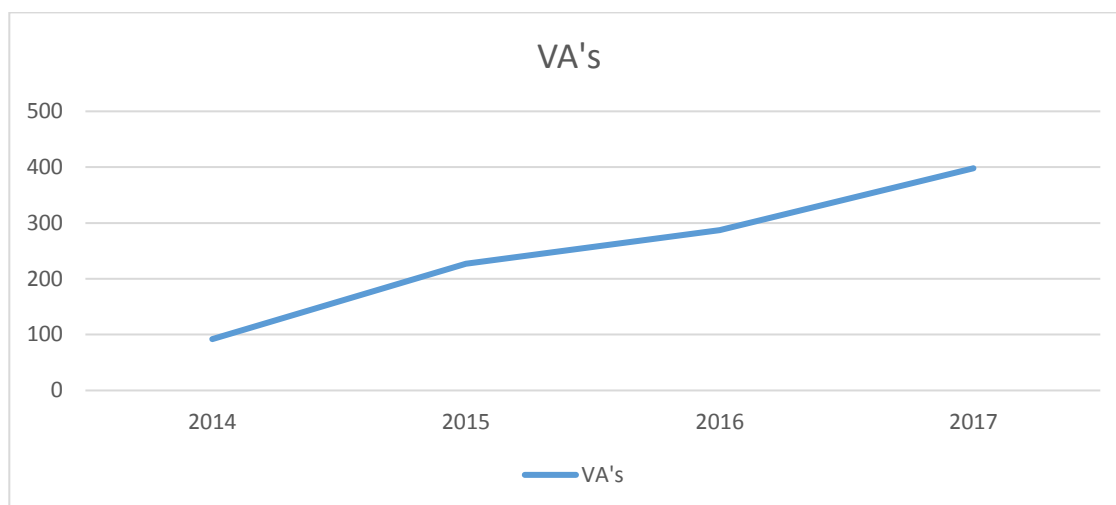
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Care Act (2014) is a key legislative part of Safeguarding, there are other aspects of legislation which also impact upon Safeguarding, further detail can be found in the SET procedures version 4.2

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: Appendix 1 – Adult Referrals & Children Referrals Appendix 2 – Community Builder Visits	
List of background documents (not attached):	
Proper Officer:	ACFO Dave Bill, Director of Prevention, Protection & Response
Contact Officer:	Donna Finch, Community Development and Safeguarding Manager

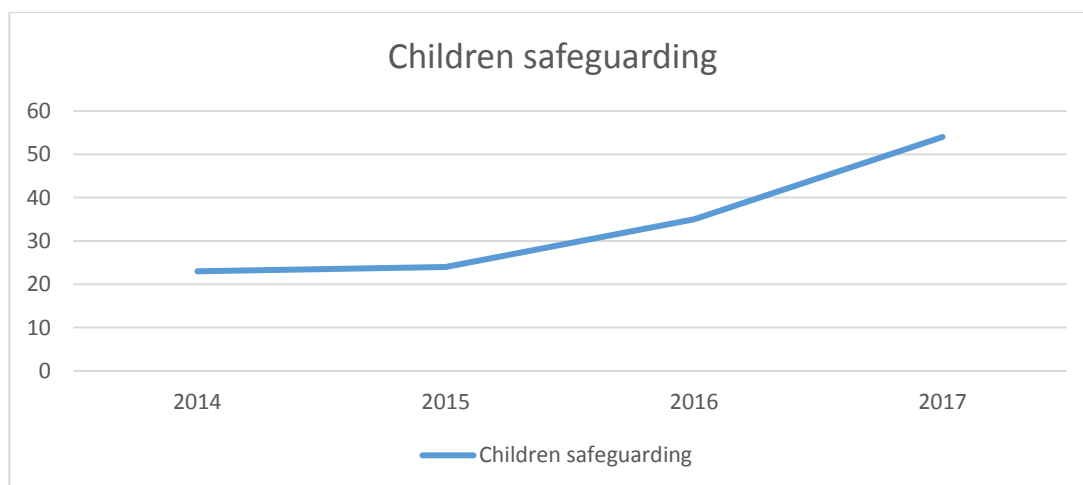
Appendix 1

Vulnerable Adult referrals



2014: VA referrals 92
2015: VA referrals 227
2016: VA referrals 287
2017: VA referrals 398 (projected)

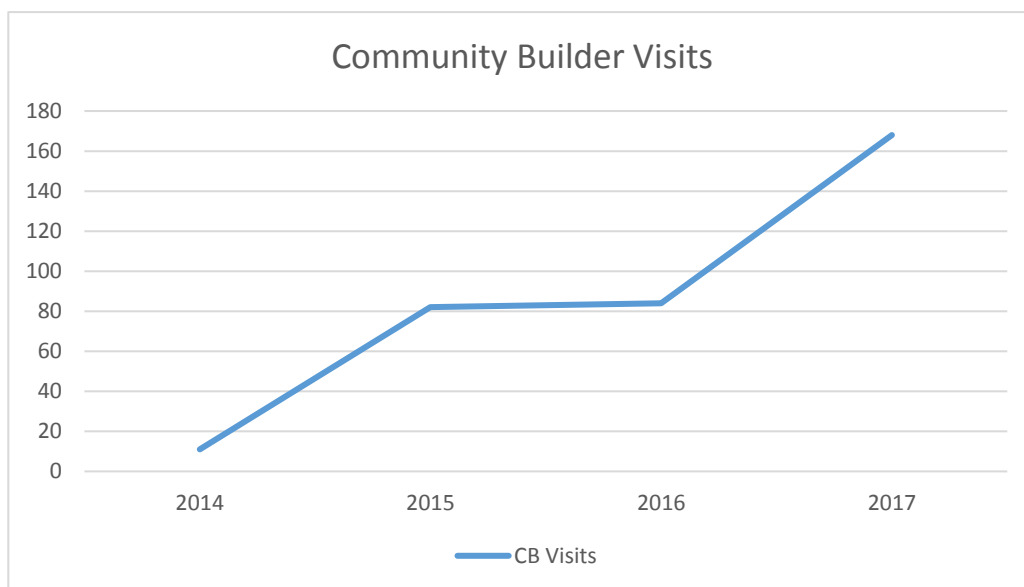
Vulnerable Children referrals



2014: Referrals: 23
2015: Referrals: 24
2016: Referrals 35
2017: Referrals 54 (projected)

Appendix 2

Community Builder Visits



2014: Community Builder visits 11
 2015: Community Builder visits 82
 2016: Community Builder visits 84
 2017: Community Builder visits 225 (Projected)

An example of some of the partnership work taking place for the services Community Builders:-

- Colchester RAG/CSP 6 weekly
- Tendring RAG/CSP 6 weekly
- Colchester Hub 6 weekly
- Tendring Hub 6 weekly
- One Colchester monthly
- Older persons Forum monthly
- NHS systems resilience group 2 monthly
- Pan Essex Dementia action alliance 3 monthly
- Tendring Dementia action alliance 2 monthly
- Colchester Dementia action alliance 2 monthly
- Jaywick forum 2 monthly
- Domestic abuse Forum 3 monthly
- Jaywick network team 3 monthly
- Lads Need Dads Monthly often with other commitments
- Inclusion Ventures monthly often with other commitments
- Harwich foodbank 6 weekly often with other commitments
- Colchester voluntary services often with other commitments
- Teentalk 6 weekly
- Uttlesford Neighbourhood Steering group
- Braintree DAA
- Harlow DAA
- Crime and ASB Group-Safer Harlow
- Harlow Hoarding Panel
- Community Safety Partnership Thurrock
- Hoarding Boards : Southend, Tendring, Harlow and Thurrock
- Local Action Groups Thurrock