

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



Meeting	Performance and Resources Board	Agenda Item	
Meeting Date	18 th December	Report Number	
Report Author:	DCFO Rick Hylton		
Presented By	ACFO Moira Bruin		
Subject	Home Safety Visits by Operational Crews		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner notes the contents of this report.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

In support of the delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan, ECFRS has committed to re-introduce the delivery of Home Safety Visits by Operational Personnel. This will increase the number of people that ECFRS is able to reach and to whom we are able to deliver our core fire safety messages. The more people we are able to visit (from our key at risk communities), the greater chance we have of preventing future fires in the home. This supports the priorities within the Fire and Rescue Plan of Prevention and protecting those most vulnerable.

As part of this commitment, the Home Safety Team and North East Group ran a pilot to test the impact of the re-introduction of this work and to develop robust and effective processes. Following the conclusion of the pilot period, this paper sets out the proposed process for introducing operational personnel delivering Home Safety Visits across the remainder of Essex

BACKGROUND

Fire and Rescue Services have a unique brand that places them as one of the most trusted public sector agencies. This provides FRS' with an opportunity to access the homes of some of the most vulnerable communities and provide them with advice and fire protection that will reduce the risk of a fire occurring and reduce the likelihood of harm in the event that it does. It also provides an opportunity for signposting and referral to other agencies that otherwise may not have occurred as a result of the access gained by the fire service. In Essex, Home Safety visits are currently carried out by Community Safety officers and volunteers. These officers deliver home safety visits and work in partnership with other agencies to provide safe and well visits, that aim to keep those most vulnerable safer in their homes. These visits, include identifying potential fire risks, take action to reduce fire risks, ensuring working smoke alarms are fitted, advice on social welfare, advice on slips, trips and falls, health prevention and crime prevention. In the year to 31 March 2018, the

Service did 8,513 home fire safety checks. But the Service is doing less than half the national average of checks per 1,000 population (4.7 compared with 10.4). In recognition of the opportunity to deliver more, the Service recently decentralised management of its prevention teams. This provided the opportunity for the reintroduction of home safety visits by operational crews. The following benefits are expected to be derived from such an introduction:

1. More people in Essex will have working smoke detection in their homes and therefore a greater chance of escape should a fire occur
2. More people in Essex will have a greater awareness of how to live safely in their own homes
3. Operational Personnel will have exposure to home based risk in their local communities prior to an emergency occurring
4. Local communities will be more exposed to, and become more familiar with their local crews

In order to manage the reintroduction of Home safety delivery by Operational crews a pilot was delivered in the North East Group with the following deliverables.

1. A Home Safety training package for Operational Personnel
2. A process for allocating Home Safety Visits to stations for them to undertake
3. A process for ensuring that any visits conducted by Operational Personnel, whether self-generated or allocated by the Home Safety Information Team are captured and uploaded to CRM
4. The supply of equipment required to conduct Home Safety Visits for all Essex Fire Stations
5. An on-going evaluation and quality assurance plan and procedures for Home Safety Visits delivered by Operational Personnel
6. An amended risk assessment to frame the visit for our Operational Personnel

This pilot successfully concluded in September 2019, with the full evaluation of the pilot against the key deliverables in appendix 1.

The 11 action points have now been closed out, and as a result phase 2 of the programme (Service wide roll out) is due to commence in January. The training will be delivered by e learn, once stations have undertaken the training they will be able to begin delivery. By adopting this approach the Service will be able to 'switch on' stations much quicker than requiring visits by trainers to stations. This approach was successful in NE command and therefore is expected to deliver roll out in quarter 4 of 2019/20.

A copy of the training package is attached as appendix 2.

The Service wide roll out will initially seek to achieve an additional 3,500 home safety checks per year. This would result in the Service delivering around 8.6 visits per 1,000 population. It is important to note whilst increased quantity is a key deliverable, at the core of this roll out is to ensure a targeted and person centred approach of which will prioritise quality over quantity. This will also be balanced against the requirement on stations to maintain competencies and deliver operational risk visits. Our On-call staff in addition are not contracted to deliver this work, and so delivery in these areas will be based upon staff volunteering to undertake.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications of the roll out is circa £20,000 additional spend on equipment. Salary costs for On-call staff undertaking is budgeted within current On-call establishment budget.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None identified at this stage.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

The workforce representative bodies have been engaged with as part of the pilot and wider roll out plan via the Service JNCC meetings

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England lays down a priority for fire and rescue authorities to make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

A full risk assessment has been undertaken prior to the commencement of phase 1 and will remain under review via the Health and Safety Strategic Group chaired by the DCFO.