

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
SCRUTINY AND FEEDBACK REPORT TO THE
PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14TH FEBRUARY 2013

SUBJECT: HOME FIRE SAFETY DELIVERY STRATEGY PILOT UPDATE

REPORT NO: CFO/018/13

REPORTING OFFICER: DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

CONTACT OFFICER: AREA MANAGER MYLES PLATT

OFFICERS CONSULTED: COMMUNITY SAFETY MANAGER KEVIN JOHNSON

Purpose of Report

1. To ask Members to note the progress made to date with regards to the Home Fire Safety Strategic Delivery pilot delivered from 2nd July 2012 - 3rd January 2013 as requested by the Performance and Scrutiny Committee on 4th October 2012.

Introduction & Background

2. On 17th May 2012, MF&RA approved report CFO/045/12 to pilot a new Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) strategy between 2nd July 2012 and 31st March 2013.
3. The report recognised that the universal offer of free smoke detectors to all members of the community in Merseyside was not sustainable in the medium to long term and that the removal of this provision would create a gap in service delivery.
4. It was therefore agreed that free smoke detector provision would be targeted to the most vulnerable and that any low risk individual who had previously received free smoke detectors from MF&RA and required replacement smoke detectors would be offered an alternative service delivered by the Fire Support Network (FSN), based on a cost recovery model.

5. FSN is a registered charity with a Constitution that allows the charity to deliver Fire and Rescue Service outcomes in Merseyside as well as other community safety related initiatives. Currently, FSN are commissioned to deliver services on behalf of MF&RA in conjunction with Fire Service Direct (FSD). These Services include the following:
 - Low risk home safety visits
 - Appointment's management for Community Fire Protection
 - Home safety data management
 - Emergency heater provision
 - Youth engagement services
 - Help desk for estates.
6. The main delivery objectives of the pilot are:
 - a) To target MF&RA resources more effectively to ensure that the focus is on the most vulnerable in the community.
 - b) To reduce the capital burden of £685,000 incurred by the provision of smoke detectors.
 - c) To deliver the installation of smoke detectors for low risk clients on a cost recovery basis over an agreed period of time, thus reducing the revenue for provision of services from Fire Service Direct (FSD) and Fire Support Network (FSN).
 - d) To maintain a free fire safety advisory service for all in the community.
7. The cost recovery model pilot commenced on 2nd July 2012 and up 3rd January 2013 FSD has handled 33,206 outbound calls and 17,971 inbound calls which include requests for advice, high risk referrals, appointments and low risk visits.
8. From the total 51,177 calls handled, FSD booked 7,200 appointments for FSN to deliver cost recovery HFSC visits, of which 3,718 were considered as chargeable. The remaining 3,482 HFSC visits were not charged due to the appointment being either an initial visit, being scored as a high/medium risk and referred appropriately, or the accommodation already having hardwired/working smoke detectors.
9. In addition to the above, it is recognised that more than 50% of fire deaths and injuries involve people aged over 65 years old. Therefore in line with the CFOA National Older Person's Strategy (Ageing Safely), FSD and FSN have implemented an Over 65's campaign, which concentrates on ensuring that all over 65's receive a telephone risk assessment, including where required, emergency heating provision, and any other appropriate intervention measures proportionate to the risks identified.
10. Between 2nd July 2012 – 3rd January 2013, the over 65's campaign has contacted and risk assessed 12,741 households that have an occupant aged 65 or over.

11. The model has recovered costs of £100,800 up to and including 21st December 2012.
12. Since the pilot commenced, FSD and FSN have been approached to deliver additional community safety related services for example carbon monoxide alarms and dry riser testing.

Equality & Diversity Implications

13. An Equality and Impact Assessment was submitted with CFO/045/12 and remains current.

Staff Implications

14. All staff who are currently employed at FSD are subject to the fundamental review of support services being undertaken by the Area Manager for Prevention and Protection.

Legal Implications

15. Any proposed changes to FSD services will be considered by the MF&RA legal and human resource teams.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

16. FSN/FSD revenue costs are currently £379,945 (£184,945 FSD and £195,000 under a Service Level Agreement with FSN). The aim is to reduce the revenue provision for both FSD and FSN year on year as costs are recovered. Revenue reductions for FSN and FSD will be considered as part of the fundamental review of support services and budget setting for 2013/14.
17. The cost recovery model has also reduced the burden of the £685,000 capital provision for smoke detectors.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

18. Through focussed vulnerability profiling, MF&RA will be able to target its resources on those members of the community who are most at risk of fire in the home.
19. FSD and FSN will continue to offer an alternative service to those members of the community not eligible for free smoke detectors, thus ensuring the level of smoke alarm ownership is maintained within Merseyside.

Contribution to Our Mission – To Achieve:

“Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters”

20. By reducing risk in people’s homes in Merseyside, making a positive difference to our communities and providing an excellent and affordable service.

Recommendations

21. That Members;

- A. Consider making recommendations to Authority for the continuation of this model beyond 31st March 2013.
- B. Consider making recommendations to Authority for officers to establish a governance model for providing community safety services beyond the pilot.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/045/12

*Glossary of Terms

HFSC	-	Home Fire Safety Check
MFRS	-	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
FSD	-	Fire Service Direct
FSN	-	Fire Support Network
MFRA	-	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority
CFOA	-	Chief Fire Officers Association

**Currently part of the IRMP 2012-2015 Consultation