

Divisions Affected – N/A

DEPUTY LEADER DELEGATED DECISION – 20 APRIL 2021

Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2022

Report by Corporate Director

Commercial Development, Assets and Investment

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Councillor with delegated responsibility for Oxfordshire County Council Fire & Rescue Service is **RECOMMENDED** to accept the continuation of the projects and adopt in the final version, the CRMP Action Plan 2021-22.

Executive Summary

2. *Each year the fire authority creates an action plan which proposes a number of new or provides an update on existing projects to support the CRMP 5-year strategy. The 2021-22 Annual action plan provides an update of the projects being conducted by the fire & rescue service in order to meet identified demands or risks.*
3. *As the projects within the 2021-22 CRMP are a continuation of those approved the previous year, no further public consultation was required, but was subjected to full internal and external consultation for a period of 12 weeks during 2018. This consultation was for the initial proposals within the 2019-20 CRMP. The Councillor is therefore invited to comment on the proposed action plan.*
4. *Following the services annual review, the projects in the CRMP 2021-22 were determined to be required to address specific areas.*
5. *The following projects will be included within the fire authority's CRMP for the fiscal year 2021-22:*
 - ***Proactive Role in improving standards in rented housing***
 - ***Establishing Community Safety Advocates or Wardens.***
 - ***To increase the diversity of the Operational Workforce to reflect the community that we serve.***

Community Risk Management Action Plan 2021-2022

6. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework to which Fire Authorities must have regard when discharging their functions. The 2018 Framework requires each Fire and Rescue Authority to produce a publicly available Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). Within Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) we have called this our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to make it more meaningful to the public. In April 2017 OFRS published the CRMP 5-year strategy for Oxfordshire, this will cover the period from 2017 to 2022.
7. Each year the fire authority creates an action plan which either proposes new projects and/or provides updates on ongoing projects to support the CRMP 5-year strategy. This report provides an update on the ongoing projects for 2021-22.
8. Our medium-term financial plan and supporting business strategy underpin the proposals within this year's action plan.
9. The Secretary of State published the latest Fire and Rescue National Framework in 2018. The purpose of the Framework was to provide strategic direction from central government whilst ensuring that authorities continue to make local decisions. The Framework sets out the Government's objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service and what fire and rescue authorities should do to achieve these objectives.
10. Each Fire and Rescue Authority should ensure that the IRMP:
 - Is regularly reviewed and revised and reflects up-to-date risk information and evaluation of service delivery outcomes;
 - Has regard to the risk analyses completed by Local and Regional Resilience Forums including those reported in external Community Risk Registers (CRRs) and internal risk registers, to ensure that civil and terrorist contingencies are captured in their IRMP;
 - Reflects effective consultation during its development and at all review stages with representatives of all sections of the community and stakeholders;
 - Demonstrates how prevention, protection and response activities will be best used to mitigate the impact of risk on communities in a cost-effective way;
 - Provides details of how Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver their objectives and meet the needs of communities through working with partners;
 - Has undergone an effective equality impact assessment process.
11. Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service published its strategic CRMP in April 2017 providing the strategic direction for the next five years. This document is subjected to annual review and updated and amended as required. The current strategic CRMP requires no amendment for the fiscal year 2021-22.
12. The following section provides an update on the projects included in the action plan for the fiscal year 2020-21.

13. • **Proactive Role in improving standards in rented housing**

Trading Standards recognised that due to large numbers of rented accommodation in Oxfordshire, that closer work with landlords and tenants, would provide a safer environment and conditions for this sector. This project has taken a multi-agency approach working with the City and District partners

Update:

A Principal Trading Standards Officer has been tasked to this area of work with efforts recently boosted from the granting of funds by National Trading Standards.

As a result of dedicated work in this area, two Trading Standards Officers are now regular participants in the Oxfordshire Housing Standards Group. We have continued to work closely with Oxford City Council on legislation regarding energy performance certificates and minimum energy efficiency standards on rented properties. We have commenced an inspection programme covering 50 letting agents across the county, with lessons learned to be shared across the wider South East region and nationally. District council colleagues have helped identify target premises and adverse findings are being shared with them as appropriate. As part of this project, the County will be asked to approve new procedures for the issuing of financial penalties. Officers will use this significant increase in contact with various parties involved in the rented accommodation market, to further associated priorities, such as fire safety, warm homes and living well.

14. • **Establishing Community Safety Advocates or Wardens.**

Community Safety Services want to attract staff to work as part of the fire and rescue service but not in an operational capacity, to deliver our prevention activities and engage with communities at a local level.

Update:

The volunteer initiative is now officially up and running and was launched at the end of September in Henley on Thames. We have six volunteers ready to identify and help the most vulnerable in the community.

We have already completed several safe and well visits in the Henley area, as well as delivering a range of safety information. We have been targeting charity shops and food banks to give awareness of campaigns such as electric blanket safety, safe and well visits and also fire safety at home.

The volunteers have also delivered water safety information for businesses close to the Thames, these include pubs, restaurants and cafes. We are aiming to be at the local town market weekly to generate safe and well visits as well as giving out safety information

and also recruiting for on call stations. We have made some good connections with local charities who we hope we can work alongside in the future to target the vulnerable in our community.

15. • **To increase the diversity of the Operational Workforce to reflect the community that we serve.**

Community Safety Services recognised that its operational workforce did not necessarily reflect the community it served. Following on from the successful work carried out with attracting more women in to operational roles. The service is now looking to attract more people from the BAME communities to join as operational firefighters

Update:

Our service operates a blended approach to the recruitment of its staff. Our recruitment media, including videos and social media campaigns are inclusive and show the diversity we wish to reflect. In addition to operational and support staff recruitment campaigns, it incorporates the provision of apprenticeships to provide opportunities for development through a recognised qualification.

We are committed to being an open and inclusive employer and are proud to be in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, identifying the service as an equal opportunity employer of choice. This demonstrates the services ongoing commitment to underrepresented groups, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) community. Central to this work is the active staff Inclusion Group and allies' approach, to promote an inclusive and supportive workplace. This approach extends to support and advice for female staff and addresses issues affecting women in the workplace. The Service supports positive action and community events to engage with and recruit from traditionally under-represented groups, such as women and black and minority ethnic residents, making the service more diverse and more representative of our communities. Since 2017 we have seen a continued increase in the percentage of women and Black and Minority Ethnic firefighters joining our service in both operational roles and leadership roles.

16. *The published document will be amended to include further explanation as to the origins and rational of each project. (pages 8, 9 and 10 of the CRMP)*
17. *The published document will be amended to include figures for the progress that has been made to the end of March 2021 for the targets set in the 365alive vision. (page 4 of the CRMP)*

Financial Implications

18. Each project will fully recognise the prevailing economic constraints, delivering efficiencies or allowing existing/additional services to be delivered more effectively. If any budgetary pressures result from the implementation of these

projects, they will be managed within existing budgets or highlighted to Cabinet through the annual Service Resource and Planning process.

Comments checked by: Rob Finlayson, Finance BP (Communities and C,OD & CDAI) rob.finlayson@oxfordshie.gov.uk

Legal Implications

19. No legal implications

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Staff Implications

20. Each project will fully recognise the prevailing economic constraints, delivering efficiencies or allowing existing/additional services to be delivered more effectively. If any budgetary pressures result from the implementation of these projects, they will be managed within existing budgets or highlighted to Cabinet through the annual Service Resource and Planning process.

- 21.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

22. No SCIA implications

Sustainability Implications

23. No implications

Consultations

24. The 2020-21 CRMP has not introduced new projects and so formal consultation has not been required. However, the projects within this CRMP action plan were subject to full consultation when they were recommended for the 2019-20 CRMP.
25. The agreed projects within the 2019-20 action plan, were subject to a full internal and external consultation for a period of 12 weeks. The Councillor was invited to comment on the proposed action plan for 2019-20 and are now invited to comment on the planned activity for 2021-22.
26. For the consultation of the 2019-2020 action plan, we sought the assistance of the County Council's Engagement and Communications teams.

27. For the 2019 to 2020 consultation, we set ourselves the following aims and objectives:

- To increase community involvement and feedback from residents to the annual action plan consultation;
- To gain feedback from the public on understanding their views on what the priorities should be for the Fire and Rescue Service over the next 12 months;
- To increase levels of public engagement with the Fire and Rescue Service in general;
- Provide mechanisms to sustain increased levels of participation.

28. The methods we used, focused on OCC's six key principles of consultation:

- Keep an open mind and run consultations in an open and honest way;
- Be clear about what we are consulting on and what we will do with the findings;
- Give all relevant parties the chance to have their say;
- Provide sufficient time and information to enable people to engage;
- Take views expressed in consultations into account when we make decisions;
- Provide effective and timely consultation feedback.

29. The areas of the focus for the consultation were as follows:

Live consultation on CRMP:

- Online portal questionnaire
- Focus Groups
- Locality briefings
- Hard copy questionnaires

Engagement activities:

During the consultation we engaged with all neighbouring fire and rescue services, as well as Thames Valley Police and South-Central Ambulance Service.

- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service;
- Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service;
- Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service;
- Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service;
- Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service;
- Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service.

30. The service held engagement events with 70 Fire and Rescue personnel from all areas of the service.

31. The service attended Locality meeting engaging with the local councillors in Witney, Faringdon and Wantage, Abingdon and Woodstock and the City of Oxford.
32. A formal management meeting took place with the representative bodies (FBU) to reply specifically to points raised.
33. The engagement and communication team supported the consultation in the following areas.
 - Oxfordshire County Council residents' contacts;
 - Engagement team contacts;
 - Voluntary organisations;
 - Intranet and internet publication and news feeds;
 - Hard copy distribution to libraries.
34. Through this approach we interacted with various stakeholder groups, which amounted to consultation with over 200 people.
35. As a result of the engagement work, we received informal feedback at the events and formal responses from 58 individuals. A full consultation response report was published in April 2019.

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