

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 As a result of a comprehensive review of the Community Safety Department, its prevention activities and resource deployment within Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), this report proposes forty eight specific recommendations which have been designed to fundamentally change the way in which the Service delivers its community safety activities in the future.
- 1.2 Fundamentally the Service will move to an evidence led, risk targeted approach to community safety making the best use of the resources it has available.
- 1.3 The changes proposed in this report are essential if the Service is to ensure that it delivers high quality prevention activities. In broad terms it challenges existing practices with regard to community risk priorities, departmental structure, resources and methods of delivery.
- 1.4 The review is designed to re-focus the activities of both the Community Safety Department, based at Service Headquarters in Worcester, as well as the activities of operational personnel based on the three Districts.
- 1.5 The review has been broken down into six key areas in order to ensure that a systematic approach has been taken in all areas. The six sections are detailed below:
 1. Community Safety Strategy
 2. Community Safety Departmental Structure
 3. Community Safety Manager's Role
 4. Community Safety Methods of Delivery
 5. Conclusions
 6. Recommendations
- 1.6 Each section has been subject to analysis of the current arrangements in place, comparison with national guidance and identification of possible areas for improvement.
- 1.7 The following paragraphs provide a summary of findings for each of the six sections and also the recommendations put forward for consideration by the Senior Management Board (SMB).

Community Safety Strategy

- 1.8 The review has identified that whilst the Service does have a Community Safety Strategy in the form of the "How To" guide, this document does not appear to be based on sound evidence or detailed demographic data, rather it appears to reflect a blend of local and national perceived priorities. The document is not widely understood by those staff responsible for its delivery and as a result many of the intervention activities currently taking place do not clearly align with the document. Also, the Service does not appear to have in

place a clear framework for delivery of the strategy with clear lines of responsibility and ownership for related key performance indicators.

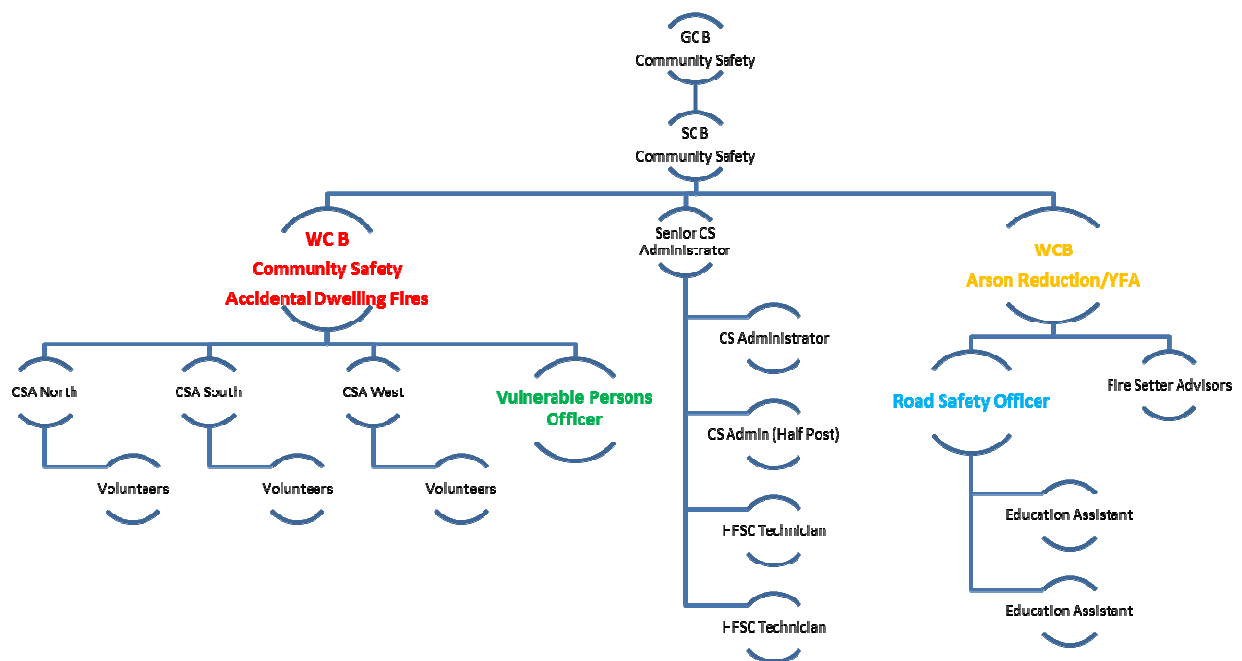
- 1.9 With this in mind and following the detailed research, which can be referenced in Part 3 of this report, the review has identified that the Service's priorities in terms of community risk, both now and in the future, can be summarised under four main headings:
- Accidental Dwelling Fires
 - Road Safety
 - Arson Reduction
 - Elderly and Vulnerable People
- 1.10 In response to the findings of the review, the report recommends that the Service should develop a revised overarching Community Safety Strategy and supporting delivery framework, based around the four areas detailed above. The delivery framework should clearly identify specific post holders who will be required to take responsibility for key Community Safety performance indicators. Whilst it is proposed that the four key areas above should become the primary focus for Community Safety work in future, the Service will obviously maintain the flexibility to react to other emerging risks as they present themselves.
- 1.11 The new Strategy should clearly identify the role of the Community Safety Department as well as the role of operational crews based at District level as their contribution is vital to the overall success of effective community engagement.

Community Safety Department Structure

- 1.12 The current structure of the Community Safety Department has evolved over the years as a direct result of past priorities which have since become either core business or are no longer relevant. Crucially, the departmental structure does not reflect the evidence based priorities identified above, which have been determined by sound current and predictive demographic data.
- 1.13 In order to address this situation and ensure that there is effective targeting of the new priority areas, as well as ensuring maximum efficiency from limited resources, the department now needs to be restructured to reflect the four new strategic priority areas identified by this review.
- 1.14 It is recommended that in future the department should establish four clear leads for each of the priorities identified above and that all individuals within the department must have clear lines of responsibility; they must also take ownership of key performance indicators, data sets, intervention strategies and evaluation processes.

- 1.15 Without such an approach the Service cannot realistically realise the maximum benefits of its investment in staff and infrastructure, which are vital to the delivery of high quality services to the general public and business communities. The proposed Community Safety Department structure, including the four departmental lead roles which have been highlighted is detailed in Fig 1 below.

Fig 1 Proposed Community Safety Department Structure



- 1.16 The above structure can easily be achieved by utilising many of the existing skills and personnel currently employed within the CS Department; however, as detailed above, the proposal does include a reduction in overall staffing numbers.

Community Safety Manager's Role

- 1.17 For the past three years the role of the Community Safety Manager has been held by a non-uniformed employee with specialist skills in Partnership liaison.
- 1.18 This arrangement is considered to have been effective and has clearly increased the Organisation's effectiveness in engaging with strategic community safety partnerships. However, the need for a stronger links between the Community Safety Department, operational crews and fire investigation, is now considered to be an important priority as one area clearly informs the other.

- 1.19 With this in mind the review has identified that the Community Safety Department has, for the last twelve months, back-filled the existing vacant Community Safety Manager's post with a uniformed Station Commander B, which has proven to be extremely effective in developing crucial inter-departmental links and communication. Vitally the link between the Community Safety Department and the operational side of Service business has been started to improve, whilst performance within strategic community safety partnerships has been maintained. As a result of this situation the report recommends that the Community Safety Department structure be adjusted to include a uniformed Station Commander B reporting directly to the Group Commander Technical Fire Safety on a permanent basis.

Community Safety Methods of Delivery

- 1.20 The review has identified that the Community Safety Department is currently engaged in a wide range of community safety activities designed to deliver key safety messages to the public and business community, including:

- Home Fire Safety Checks
- Road Safety activities
- Schools education programmes
- Water Safety activities
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Arson Reduction activities
- Volunteering
- Young Firefighters Association
- Community Safety Advisors

Home Fire Safety Checks

- 1.21 Historically, Home Fire Safety Checks have not been targeted as effectively as they could be, only utilising a small amount of the data available to inform the approach. As a result of this review, the Service has already begun to address this situation by procuring Pinpoint software, a web-based solution dedicated to increasing the impact of HFSCs, as well as securing access to key databases held by partner organisations which should further inform an evidence led approach to HFSC delivery.

Road Safety

- 1.22 Whilst Road Safety is an area in which the Service has evolved considerably over the years, and is currently delivering a number of high profile activities, there is no dedicated resource within the CS department. As a result of this report it is recommended that the Service establish a dedicated individual with clear responsibility for the development of road safety strategy and organisational performance in this area of work.

Schools Education

- 1.23 The Service has historically provided fire safety education to schools within the two counties for over ten years; in particular targeting has focused on Key Stage 2 pupils. However there is little evidence to justify this activity and to quantify success in terms of reducing risk within the two counties. As a result of this situation the Service is currently trialling a reduction in the Schools Education Programme focusing its efforts on those schools which serve communities which incorporate only the highest risk households. This will also have a positive impact on the activities of front line resources, freeing up valuable time which can be better spent delivering HFSCs and other intervention strategies to known “at risk” groups and individuals.

Water Safety

- 1.24 The review has identified that at present there is no clear plan or structure for the delivery of water safety messages and no rationale as to where in the two Counties water safety intervention should be targeted or which groups and individuals would most benefit from it.
- 1.25 The review has not identified water safety as a key priority for the Service and therefore it is recommended that in future any activity in this area should only be considered if there is clear evidence to suggest that Service intervention activities are necessary.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

- 1.26 The review has identified that Safeguarding is a statutory obligation for the Service which is governed by several pieces of legislation. Despite the presence of a policy and training having been delivered to staff, there is evidence to suggest that some areas of the policy are not being fully implemented or adhered to. As a result of these findings the review has recommended that Safeguarding children and adults should continue to be managed and maintained centrally as a specific reference within the Community Safety Department and that any areas of non-compliance are addressed as a priority.

Arson Reduction Activities

- 1.27 The review has identified that there is no clear policy within the Service in relation to arson reduction, although it is mentioned within the IRMP 2009-12 and the “How To” guide. There is also a dedicated Arson Reduction Manager post within the Community Safety Department’s structure.
- 1.28 The review has also identified that the vast majority of Secondary fires are caused by arson and that this in turn has an extremely negative impact on local communities and the local infrastructure and contributes to people’s negative perception of high crime rates and threatened personal security. Also Arson attacks on key premises within the community such as schools, community buildings and local businesses can be devastating in terms of

disruption to people's lives and standards of living, as well as the hidden costs to the local community and prosperity of the area. Finally Central Government continue to predict a rise in arson crime over the coming years as the economic outlook for the Country continues to be bleak. For this reason it is recommended that arson reduction should not only be maintained but it should in fact become one of the four primary activities of the Community Safety Department going forward.

Volunteering

- 1.29 The Service's Volunteering Scheme currently includes 32 volunteers, working in all three District areas. Fire Service volunteers provide a valuable support function to a wide variety of front line services and in particular they are available to assist with the delivery of community fire safety intervention activities and are considered to be an important resource of the Community Safety Department. However, the review has identified that they are not currently being utilised to maximum effect with regard to supporting the four key priorities identified on Page 3.
- 1.30 The review has also identified that in order to achieve this essential re-focus, coordination of their activities would be better placed under the control of the local Community Safety Advisors who work within the Districts.

Young Firefighters Association

- 1.31 For many years the Service has hosted its own Young Firefighters Association with well established units based at both Droitwich and Redditch. The Young Firefighters Association is viewed by the Service, the community and political leaders as an excellent method of engaging, supporting and mentoring young people from a wide variety of different backgrounds to become responsible, self-disciplined young adults and therefore must remain an essential activity for the organisation going forward.
- 1.32 The review has identified that there is currently no clear strategy in relation to the YFA. Individual branches are run in different ways, in the absence of standard protocols, and each relies heavily on goodwill and the contribution of many volunteer staff.
- 1.33 The report therefore recommends that there is a complete review of the YFA, to include a clear co-ordination role for the Community Safety Department, as well as development of a clear strategy for the YFA going forward and this should be supported by organisational policy where appropriate.

Community Safety Advisors

- 1.34 The Service currently employs four Community Safety Advisors who are located within each of the three Districts. The CSAs are considered to be the primary means of outreach to the local community for the FRS.

- 1.35 This review has recognised their invaluable contribution to the Community Safety Department and delivery of the community safety agenda; it therefore supports their role in the Service both now and in the future and this has been reflected in the proposed new Community Safety Department structure detailed in on Page 4.

Partnership Engagement

- 1.36 The Service has, for many years, positively engaged in Partnership working, at all levels, with great success. However little or no consideration has been given to evaluation of the local partnerships, which have been developed by both the Community Safety Department and Districts. With this in mind it is recommended that a review and evaluation of all Partnerships needs to be conducted in order to ensure that they meet the strategic needs of the Service and co-ordination of local partnership activity needs to be the responsibility of the Community Safety Department, ensuring that local representatives are actively working towards the Community Safety strategy.

Community Safety Budget/Costs

- 1.37 A full review of the Community Safety Budget has been undertaken as part of this review and the outcome has been that the Community Safety Department should be able to return a saving of £189,000 year on year for the Service.
- 1.38 The proposed changes to the budget were implemented on the 1st of April 2011 and the department now benefits from strict management and control of spending. Lead references are no longer authorised to spend and work on the basis of a 'zero budget'. All spending is strictly authorised by the Head of Department.
- 1.39 In addition the estimated savings from the proposed new Community Safety Department structure should realise a further saving of approximately £91,000 year on year.

Summary of Progress

- 1.40 In the best interests of the Service a number of changes have already been made in support of the recommendations detailed within this report, as not to do so would have hindered obvious areas of improvement to the detriment of the organisation and the communities it serves. All of the recommendations already implemented have been introduced with the full backing and authorisation of the SMB and they include the following:

- Restructure and reduction in Community Safety Department Revenue Budget.
- Refocus of schools education programme to focus on high risk groups only
- Partial re-structure of the Community Safety Department to include the introduction of HFSC Technicians, Senior Administrator and reduction of the Juvenile Firesetter post

- Procurement of Pinpoint software to support the evidence led approach to HFSC
- Entry into data sharing agreements with key partner agencies including the NHS and Age UK.
- The nomination of lead individuals within the Community Safety Department to take responsibility for key performance indicators.
- Change of focus for Community Safety Department intervention activities to include the four new areas of priority.
- Commencement of the development of intervention evaluation tools for all campaigns and activities
- The introduction of seasonal intervention campaigns based on internal and external indicative data.
- Enhanced internal data capture and performance monitoring procedures to inform reactive and long term departmental business.

1.41 A final outcome of the review has been the identification for an ongoing annual review of departmental business and strategy in order to ensure that the Service continues to keep track on the changing community risk profile and to ensure that the best possible service is provided to the public at all times.

The following table gives a summary of the recommendations identified by this report, including whether or not each recommendation has already been implemented in full, partially implemented or has yet to be implemented:

Summary of Recommendations	Anticipated Completion	Priority
The structure of the Community Safety Department needs to be changed to reflect the findings of this report	Apr-12	High
The Community Safety strategy should be reviewed and amended to reflect the findings of this review for all areas of work	Jun-12	Medium
Develop an evaluation tool to determine the successes of work undertaken in relation to reducing risk in the community	Apr-12	Medium
Identify those most at risk from fire and target them as a priority	Apr-12	High
The Community Safety Department needs to develop broader engagement with partner agencies and community groups to exchange information and target the most vulnerable	Jun-12	Medium
The HFSC Technicians and/or the Volunteer Programme could be extended to provide a cost effective solution to Community Safety in RDS locations	Jun-12	Low
A set procedure should exist to establish the causes of all fire related deaths and serious injuries, working closely with Fire Investigators	May-12	High
Determine the success of current Road Safety initiatives and incorporate into strategy as appropriate	Apr-12	Medium
The Schools Education Programme should be part of a targeted strategy that reflects the findings of this report	Complete	Medium
Safeguarding is a statutory responsibility and should be managed and maintained centrally as a reference of the Community Safety Department	Apr-12	High
Develop a robust system for monitoring operational activity to allow proactive and reactive initiatives to be developed	Complete	High
Determine volunteer involvement within the Service in supporting the reduction of risk including local access to volunteers	Jun-12	Medium
Complete a review of the YFA to include recommendations to move forward in line with the Service's strategic objectives	Jun-12	High

Develop an events strategy in line with the outcomes of this review	Apr-12	Medium
Administration for the CS and TFS department needs to be reviewed in its entirety	Complete	High
Establish a permanent Flexi-Duty Station Commander B post as the head of the Community Safety Department	Apr-12	High

The table shows that a number of recommendations of this report have already been implemented or started as they were deemed to be in the interest of the Service. These recommendations have been agreed by SMB outside of this report