



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

**Report to: COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date: 22 FEBRUARY 2016**

**Report By: GROUP MANAGER MICHAEL JAFFRAY**

**Subject: EAST LoTHIAN PREVENTION INITIATIVE**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise East Lothian Community Safety Scrutiny Committee of the development of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) “holistic” approach to Home Safety initiative within East Lothian.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That East Lothian Community Safety Scrutiny Committee note the development and forthcoming implementation of this initiative within their Local Authority area.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The fire and rescue service have recognised, for some time now, the value and importance of incorporating preventative activity into traditional service delivery. Whilst responding to emergencies is still the primary role of the fire and rescue service, preventing incidents is paramount in reducing the number of fire casualties and fatalities.
- 3.2 The cornerstone of SFRS prevention activity is the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) programme and a HFSV can be defined as: ‘A comprehensive

assessment carried out by a trained assessor, which examines the levels of fire risk within the home. It provides a means to mitigate the risk through the provision of guidance, advice and, if required, the installation of long life battery operated smoke and heat alarm(s)'.

- 3.2 The HFSV programme is fully embedded in day-to-day service delivery throughout the SFRS. Across East Lothian alone, over 1300 homes received a HFSV in 2015. To ensure the HFSV service is reaching all sections of the community, particularly persons who may be at risk, it is imperative that SFRS work in partnership with statutory services and third sector organisations.
- 3.3 Equally, it is incumbent upon SFRS to ensure that members of the community, who they have engaged, are directed to the appropriate service dependent on their perceived needs.
- 3.4 There is an opportunity for the SFRS to broaden its preventative role to promote other aspects of safety within the home and subsequently reduce unintentional harm. This initiative endorses a “first agency through the door” approach which aims to improve overall service delivery.
- 3.5 Furthermore, this initiative will seek to enhance partnership working and develop inter-agency collaboration in support of service delivery. Proposed inter-agency collaboration may include the development of a generic role, which will explore opportunities to combine job skills including community safety, health promotion and firefighting. It is envisaged that costs can be shared between participating agencies, which would encourage efficiency savings whilst at the same time improve outcomes across several sectors.

#### **4 INITIATIVE PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 4.1 The aforementioned proposal was taken to the Safe and Vibrant Communities forum in November 2015. This was warmly received by all present and 3 main themes were identified, these included:
  - Prevention of accidents in the home
  - Increase in community resilience
  - Increase pool of Retained Firefighters in East Lothian

- 4.2 An initial meeting was held under the “Prevention of accidents in the home” theme involving SFRS and the Adult Services team at East Lothian Council (ELC). Again, the proposal for SFRS to expand their role in promoting community safety was well received and several areas for discussion came forward from the group.
- 4.3 A scoping exercise was carried out by SFRS to gain an awareness of existing services and explore how SFRS can integrate, complement and potentially add value to these services. The scoping exercise involved consulting all teams within Adult Services, including the Contact Team, Duty Team and Telecare services.
- 4.4 This proved to be a valuable exercise and resulted in the formation of a working group with representation from all teams within Adult Services and ELC Housing.
- 4.5 Further meetings have been held and the working group have agreed the following actions thus far:
- Initiative will target the elderly and very young (over 65’s and under 5’s)
  - ELC Contact Team will promote HFSV programme and generate referrals on behalf of SFRS
  - ELC Duty Team and Contact Team have received training on SFRS Community Safety Engagement Toolkit (CSET) referral system
  - Telecare Team to receive CSET training
  - Contact Team have been registered as partner agency on CSET with Duty Team and Telecare to follow
  - Duty Team are currently reviewing falls assessment form which will be utilised by SFRS during HFSV
  - The Falls Team, who are managed and co-ordinated by the Duty Team, will provide training to SFRS staff in relation to falls assessments
  - Development of an interim multi-agency referral process until such times an efficient joint system can be established
  - SFRS will purchase small domestic adaptations for issue to householders based on assessed needs

- Small adaptations equipment list has been drafted and circulated to working group for agreement with procurement to follow by SFRS
- Other facets of safeguarding people in their homes will also be considered e.g. fuel poverty, financial harm and home security
- Project will be evaluated during implementation and will include service users

4.6 In consultation with initiative partners, all have agreed to pilot the project in the North Berwick and Musselburgh areas. These areas have high service usage and high levels of unintentional harm resulting in hospital admission. In addition, this will provide a contrast in terms of evaluation with outcomes being measured in a Retained remote rural area and Whole-time urban area.

4.7 The prevention of accidents in the home theme is a key element in the evolution of a generic role hence the focus on this part of the initiative. Work towards increasing community resilience and strengthening the pool of Retained Firefighters will ultimately be driven by the development of inter-agency collaboration and the creation of a generic or joint role.

4.8 The next phase of the project is to engage with Health and Children's services to investigate further collaborative opportunities and seek their representation on the working group. In addition, other partners such as Police, Home Energy Scotland and Care and Repair will also be invited to join the group as the project develops. It is anticipated that more agencies will be co-opted into the group as and when required depending on progress of the project.

4.9 In order to gain some impetus and begin to produce some positive outcomes, it is imperative that the project commences and is not delayed by becoming too unwieldy in the early stages. As the project moves forward, emerging issues will be addressed, taking a collaborative approach and finding a mutually beneficial solution for all, including service users. Ultimately, it is anticipated that the project will strengthen partnership working within East Lothian, promote service integration resulting in more efficient and effective delivery of services.