

<b>Housing Select Committee</b>			
Title	Emergency services review: recommendations		
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager	Item	11
Class	Part 1 (Open)	Date	11 September 2013

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed that its select committees will carry out a review of emergency services in Lewisham. The Housing Select Committee was tasked with determining impact of the changes as they relate to the borough's housing.
- 1.2 At its meeting in March, the Committee requested that officers provide further information about how it might approach this task. A scoping report was considered by Members at their meeting on 3 April 2013 and it was agreed that the Committee would receive evidence for the review at its meetings on 16 May and 19 June 2013.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 16 May, the Committee heard from Lewisham Homes and Brockley PFI about their work to ensure fire safety in their housing stock. The Committee requested further information about work being carried out to engage with residents, as well as Lewisham Homes' plans to install sprinklers in the borough's housing stock.
- 1.4 At its meeting on 19 June, the Committee heard from Lewisham Homes about the results of a pilot project to install sprinklers in one of its sheltered accommodation buildings.
- 1.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is due to conclude its review. This report provides Members of the Housing Select Committee with the opportunity to put forward recommendations for the review.

## **2. Recommendation**

The Committee is recommended to:

- discuss and agree any recommendations it wishes to make to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee based on the evidence received.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Significant changes are being implemented, or are planned, to the way in which emergency services are delivered across London. This includes the three local emergency services in Lewisham: Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade and the London Ambulance Service; and also the provision of accident and emergency services across South-East London.

- 3.2 At its meeting on the 11 February 2013 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a scoping report, which set out the terms of reference for a review into emergency services in Lewisham. At the meeting, it was decided that the review would be co-ordinated across all select committees. Members of the O&S Committee considered the proposed terms of reference and they agreed that the review would aim to:
- clarify the key policy initiatives and financial constraints impacting on emergency services locally
  - identify the local implications for services
  - consider the potential impact of any service changes
- 3.2 As part of the review, the Committee resolved that the Housing Select Committee would:
- identify the related impact on services and performance locally, particularly in relation to tenants and housing providers (Lift call outs, fire safety checking responsibilities etc)
  - consider the potential impact of any service changes specifically in relation to tenants and housing providers
- 3.3 The Housing Select Committee agreed that its contribution to the emergency services review would focus on:
- Prevention, engagement and enforcement
  - Potential future implications of the proposed changes

#### **4. Key lines of enquiry**

- 4.1 The terms of reference for the review were been established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. At its meeting in April, the Committee agreed to address these areas by seeking answers to a set of key questions:

##### Prevention, engagement and enforcement

- How will the proposed changes impact on work to prevent fires in Lewisham's housing stock?
- How will partners continue to ensure that effective prevention work takes place?
- How much training for housing providers was carried out in previous years- and how much is expected to be carried out following the proposed changes?
- What plans do housing providers have in place to engage with residents on the issue of fire safety?
- How many issues and enforcement notices have been raised by the fire brigade for Lewisham's public housing?
- How will support be maintained for enforcement activity to be carried out?

##### Future implications

- Do the proposed changes take into account the anticipated growth in Lewisham's population, as well as likely increases in housing density?
- How will the changes to the lifts policy impact on housing providers in the borough?

- Have housing providers assessed the potential impact of the proposals to charge for multiple false alarms and unnecessary lift call outs?

## **5. The completion of the review**

- 5.1 The 11 September meeting is due to be the last session of the emergency services review.
- 5.2 In order to meet the timescales for the report by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members are asked to consider the summary of evidence gathered to date (appendix 1) and agree recommendations to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **6. Equalities implications**

- 6.1 The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.2 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.3 The Council's Comprehensive Equality Scheme (CES) for 2012-16 provides an overarching framework and focus for the Council's work on equalities and helps to ensure compliance with the Equality Act.
- 6.4 The Council's equality objectives through the CES are to:
- Improve access to services
  - Close the gap in outcomes for citizens
  - Increase participation and engagement

## **7. Further implications**

There are no direct legal, financial, sustainability or crime and disorder implications arising as a result of the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, there may be further implications arising as a result of the review. These will need to be considered, as appropriate.

If you have any questions about this report please contact Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager) on 02083147916.

Appendix 1: Emergency services review - summary of evidence

## Emergency Services Review –Summary of evidence

Key lines of enquiry:

### Prevention, engagement and enforcement

- How will the proposed changes impact on work to prevent fires in Lewisham’s housing stock?
- How will partners continue to ensure that effective prevention work takes place?
- How much training for housing providers was carried out in previous years- and how much is expected to be carried out following the proposed changes?
- What plans do housing providers have in place to engage with residents on the issue of fire safety?
- How many issues and enforcement notices have been raised by the fire brigade for Lewisham’s public housing?
- How will support be maintained for enforcement activity to be carried out?

### Future implications

- Do the proposed changes take into account the anticipated growth in Lewisham’s population, as well as likely increases in housing density?
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Key line of enquiry	Evidence Source	Theme	Evidence	Recommendation?
How will the proposed changes impact on work to prevent fires in Lewisham’s housing stock?	Brockley PFI and Lewisham Homes	<u>Prevention, engagement and enforcement</u>	The Committee heard from representatives of Brockley PFI and Lewisham Homes at its May meeting. Both organisations provided an update about their work to prevent fires and highlighted the importance of ensuring that fire risk assessments were up to date (both organisations reported full compliance). There was also a discussion about involving residents in identifying fire risks. Officers from both organisations noted the importance of identifying and dealing with risks as quickly as possible.	

			<p>In June Hilary barber from Lewisham Homes updated the Committee about the findings of a pilot project to install sprinklers in sheltered accommodation. The Committee referred its views to Mayor and Cabinet.</p>																					
<p>How will partners continue to ensure that effective prevention work takes place?</p>	<p>Brockley PFI and Lewisham Homes, LFB Lewisham</p>		<p>The Committee heard from Brockley PFI and Lewisham Homes about their in house fire prevention work. Both organisations noted the importance of providing information to new tenants and ensuring that fire exits and escapes were kept clear.</p> <p>Lewisham Homes also has a fire safety advisor who works to ensure that the organisation is compliant and its practices are up to date.</p> <p>More than 2000 Home Fire Safety Visits were carried out in 2010/11 and 2011/12. Almost 1000 smoke alarms were also installed.</p> <p><b>Preventing fires and keeping people safe</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1106 802 1848 986"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2008/09</th> <th>2011/12</th> <th>Change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Home fire safety visits</td> <td>1,451</td> <td>2,355</td> <td>62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HFSV to high risk people/places</td> <td>601</td> <td>1,619</td> <td>169%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Smoke alarms installed by LFB</td> <td>581</td> <td>938</td> <td>61%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schools visits</td> <td>48</td> <td>54</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The LSP5 sets out new targets to increase the number of HFSVs in each borough by 2016. By March '16 each fire crew will be expected to carry out nine fire safety visits a month, with 80% targeting priority groups.</p>		2008/09	2011/12	Change	Home fire safety visits	1,451	2,355	62%	HFSV to high risk people/places	601	1,619	169%	Smoke alarms installed by LFB	581	938	61%	Schools visits	48	54	13%	
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<p>How much training for housing providers was carried out in previous years- and how much is expected to be carried out following the</p>	<p>Lewisham Homes</p>		<p>At the meeting in June, Lewisham Homes provided an update about their work to engage with residents on the issue of fire safety. LHs does work with the LFB in Lewisham to raise awareness of fire risks but no figures were provided about training for officers</p>																					

proposed changes?			carrying out risk assessments.																					
What plans do housing providers have in place to engage with residents on the issue of fire safety?	Housing officers		<p>Officers asked Lewisham Homes, Brockley PFI, L&amp;Q, Affinity Sutton, Hexagon and Phoenix Housing to provide an update on their work to implement the recommendations of the Lakanal House inquest:</p> <p>The recommendations were broadly arranged under these headings:</p> <p><u>Retro fitting of sprinklers:</u>  <u>Access for emergency vehicles:</u>  <u>Training of staff engaged in maintenance and refurbishment work on existing buildings:</u>  <u>Policy and Procedures concerning fire risk:</u>  <u>Signage in high rise residential buildings:</u>  <u>Publication and promotion of fire safety:</u></p> <p>Each organisation provided an update on their work to engage with residents on issues of fire safety. This includes work to ensure that all residents are aware of fire escape plans and that routes are clearly marked.</p>																					
How many issues and enforcement notices have been raised by the fire brigade for Lewisham's public housing?	LFB Lewisham		<p>In 2011/12, 20 enforcement notices were issued in Lewisham. It is not known if any of these were for public housing.</p> <p><b>Working to make non-domestic buildings safer</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1104 1166 1850 1350"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2007/08</th> <th>2011/12</th> <th>Change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Workplace inspections</td> <td>371</td> <td>408</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Post fire audits</td> <td>56</td> <td>62</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Enforcement notices issued</td> <td>33</td> <td>20</td> <td>-39%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prohibition notices issued</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>-50%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2007/08	2011/12	Change	Workplace inspections	371	408	10%	Post fire audits	56	62	11%	Enforcement notices issued	33	20	-39%	Prohibition notices issued	4	2	-50%	
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How will support be maintained for enforcement activity to be carried out?	LSP5		The LFB highlights its commitment to carrying out enforcement activity and working to prevent fires focusing on the properties with the highest risk.	
Do the proposed changes take into account the anticipated growth in Lewisham's population, as well as likely increases in housing density?	LSP5	<u>Future implications</u>	<p>The LFB maintain that there is no necessary correlation between population growth and the number of fires. The Brigade has committed to enhancing its preventative work in order to further reduce number of fires.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the issue of risk in relation to high rise housing. It heard that – as long as suitable fire compartmentation measures were in place – there was no greater risk to people living in high rise buildings.</p> <p>Lewisham Homes informed the committee that all of its fire risk assessments were up to date and it was in the process of carrying out intrusive risk assessments for the properties with the highest risk.</p>	
How will the changes to the lifts policy impact on housing providers in the borough?	Housing officers		<p>The Committee heard that the Lewisham Affordable Housing Group had previously discussed the issue of lift releases and would keep any issues under review.</p> <p>The LFB's figures indicate that call outs to people stuck in lifts have fallen by two thirds in ten years.</p>	