

Council – 15 February 2022

Avon Fire Authority - Report from Councillor Ruth Jacobs

Station 18 Champion Weston- super-Mare

This report is something I am very proud to present.

Station 18 and my team in the Fire Service are committed to the community and area they represent.

You will have heard before of the initiative in my ward which takes place each and every month - the Emergency Services - Fire, Police and Ambulance - as well as my Parish team travel through the ward to ensure that Emergency Services can access the narrow roads in an emergency. This initiative has worked as residents are helping to ensure that there is easier access - so the initiative is working.

There are obvious pressures within the station but despite these the crews train hard and facilitate training.

Over the last few months they have strengthened their water capability and qualifications training with their hovercraft. They have carried out some joint training with their colleagues from Portishead with their drone and continue to work with their partner agencies such as the Coastguard a new 'Hovercraft working group' with a view to purchasing a new hovercraft and equipment and are waiting for management to facilitate this.

While Covid 19 has reduced their community interactions they try whenever possible to interact. Whether this is in an incident, out and about on their station ground or at station during visits. They try to make every contact count and try to offer advice and leaflets. Whenever there is an incident the appliance often attracts lots of attention so this is a perfect opportunity to remind others to test their smoke alarms. or clean their chimneys or other advice that sometimes gets forgotten. Their Key Stage 2 learning programme has taken a hit but they have schools scheduled for the New Year.

They also continue to host visitors to the station (where appropriate) and have recently showcased the station to staff from across the organisation that are not normally station based. Their comms team recently joined them across Fireworks night to provide a real time stream of the appliance across Twitter. This was fun and well received. Staff from their Control room are joining them soon to understand how appliances work and improve their working relationship.

They recently hosted an exercise at an old industrial building in Weston and invited 6 other appliances to attend. This provided a safe but realistic training opportunity and was

received by all attending crews. It also created a natural opportunity to once again engage with their community and it caused quite a spectacle.

I hope all councillors, colleagues and others will join with me in thanking all the crews and staff at our Fire Station 18 Weston-super-Mare for all they do to keep us safe, and indeed all the staff at Avon Fire and rescue.

Councillor Ruth Jacobs