

Fire and Rescue Strategic Board

**Terms of Reference**

1. **Introduction**
   1. The Board has been established to enable the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (“the Commissioner”) to:
2. Provide governance and oversight of delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (‘IRMP’).
3. Support alignment of the activities of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (‘ECFRS’) with the Essex Vision, Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Vision and other public sector transformation and collaboration programmes across greater Essex.
4. Recommend to the Commissioner any collaboration agreements considered to be in the interests of the efficiency or effectiveness of one or more fire and rescue services, taking into account the existing collaboration agreements and other arrangements for co-operation to which the parties under consideration are committed; the desirability of the parties under consideration taking a consistent approach in making such agreements and other arrangements, and the opportunities available to the parties under consideration to make such agreements and other arrangements.
5. Be the primary advisor to the Commissioner on the IRMP.
6. Provide strategic oversight of the Medium Term Financial Plan and recommend to the Commissioner the use of ECFRS’s reserves.
7. Recommend to the Commissioner the annual budget for ECFRS and the annual Council Tax precept relating to ECFRS to be recommended to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
8. Approve in principle and provide strategic oversight of the key policies and strategies governing the work of ECFRS, including agreeing the Fire and Rescue Plan to be recommended to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel and agreeing in principle the IRMP, prior to formal approval by the Commissioner.
9. Provide strategic oversight of the capital programme, receiving reports from the Assets Sub-Group as required.
10. Approve as appropriate the progression of project bid proposals recommended to the Commissioner.
11. Agree in principle the annual Strategic Assessment of Risk (subject to formal approval by the Commissioner) and advise on the management of strategic risks facing ECFRS.
12. Agree the annual Statement of Assurance to be recommended to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
13. Provide strategic oversight of operation of and benefits delivered by, and receive an annual report from, EFA (Trading) Ltd.
14. Receive additional reports from ECFRS’s Senior Leadership Team (‘SLT’) and its sub-boards as appropriate.
15. Commission additional reports via the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive as appropriate.
    1. The Strategic Board has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in these Terms of Reference.
    2. The Terms of Reference of this Board will be reviewed on an annual basis.
16. **Areas of Focus**
    1. The focus of the Strategic Board will include those programmes and portfolios that together deliver the long term vision of the Commissioner including:

a) Fire and Rescue Plan

b) IRMP

c) Change programmes

d) Prevention, protection and response strategies

e) People Strategy

f) Estates Strategy

g) IT / Technology Strategy and information management

h) Fleet and equipment

i) Strategic Finance – MTFP and capital programme

j) EFA (Trading) Ltd

* 1. The operational management of ECFRS is out of scope of the Strategic Board. The responsibility of this sits with the SLT, which is chaired by the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive.

1. **Membership**
   1. The membership of the Strategic Board is as follows:
2. Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
3. Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
4. Deputy Chief Fire Officer
5. Chief Executive for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
6. Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire and Rescue) for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
7. ECFRS’s S151 Officer
8. Director of Corporate Services
9. Director of Innovation, Risk and Future Development
   1. Additional members may be invited by the Commissioner to support agenda discussions.
   2. This meeting is chaired by the Commissioner, or in their absence, their Deputy.
10. **Frequency and notice of meetings**
    1. The Board will meet at least four times a year. The calendar of meetings shall be agreed at the start of each year.
    2. Further meetings outside of the normal cycle of the Board can be convened at the request of the Chair or any of its members, subject to agreement by the Chair.
    3. Unless otherwise agreed, formal notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with the agenda of items to be discussed, will be forwarded to each member of the Board, any other person required to attend and all other appropriate persons determined by the Chair, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting.
    4. Any meetings held outside the normal cycle of meetings should be convened with a minimum notice of five working days. Extraordinary or urgent meetings may be held with less notice but should be for exceptional matters only, subject to the Chair’s agreement and quorum requirements. In this case the agenda and any supporting papers will be sent Board members and to other attendees at the same time as the meeting notice is sent out.
    5. Oral reports will not be accepted for substantive agenda items except in very exceptional cases, at the discretion of the Chair
11. **Attendance at meetings and quorum** 
    1. Members of the Board are expected to attend all meetings wherever possible. Where this is not possible, a named substitute may be sent on their behalf, who must be appropriately briefed to represent the standing member.
    2. A minimum of four members of the Board, including the Commissioner or their Deputy, must be present for the meeting to be deemed quorate. The meetings will be held in private with the matters discussed being placed in the public domain.
    3. An “open chair” will be available for colleagues attending as observers to the meeting, to support their personal development, at the discretion of the Chair.
12. **Minutes** 
    1. The Secretary will record the names of those present at the meeting, write minutes, including the key points and decisions of all meetings, along with any actions stemming from discussion that need to be taken before the next meeting.

The minutes of all meetings and decisions taken will be circulated within 7 working days of the meeting, and the minutes will be presented to the Commissioner, or the Chair of the meeting, for approval within 15 working days.

* 1. The minutes of the Board and unrestricted papers will be placed in the public domain as soon as practical after these have been approved and signed by the Chair, with exclusion to any matter deemed private and confidential.
  2. The secretariat of the meeting will be provided by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s office.

1. **Decision-making (Commissioner or Deputy)** 
   1. Although the Board has no decision-making powers, where a decision is required, the Commissioner or their Deputy (where authorised to do so under the Scheme of Delegation) may decide to take a decision on the item once discussion has concluded.