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| MINUTES |
| **Meeting** Essex County Fire and Rescue Strategic Board |
| **Date**  04 January 2019 |
| **Time** 09:30 – 12:30 |
| **Location** GF01, Kelvedon Park |
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**Attendees**

Roger Hirst (RH) Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, Chair

Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI) CEO, OPFCC

Jo Turton (JT) Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS

Dave Bill (DB) Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Prevention, Protection & Response, ECFRS

Glenn McGuinness (GM) Acting Chief Finance Officer, ECFRS

Anthony Maude (AM) Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Fire) – OPFCC

Sally Froment (SF) HR Business Partner, ECFRS

Emma Thomas (ET) Communications and Engagement Manager, OPFCC

Glykeria Anyfanti (GA) Boards Support Officer – OPFCC, Minute-taker

**Apologies**

Matt Furber (MT) Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of IRMP and Service Improvement, ECFRS

Carl O’Malley (COM) Police and Fire Collaboration Programme, Lead for

Charles Garbett (CG) OPFCC Treasurer

Tracy King (TK) Assistant Director, Performance & Data Management, ECFRS

Colette Black (CB) Assistant Director of HR, ECFRS

**1 Welcome and apologies**

RH welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from MF, COM, CG, TK, and CB who was represented by SF for this meeting.

**2 Minutes from the last meeting**

The minutes from the meeting on 18.09.18were approved by the Board as an accurate reflection of the discussions. There were no matters arising that had not been dealt with.

**3 Action Log**

10/18 – Audit Report. This will remain open pending discussion on OPFCC attendance at Change Boards.

11/18 – Audit Report. PBI and JT met and discussed on earlier week on the transitional governance audit report and the initial paper drafted by David Lawson and the response to it. Following RH’s steer, the final paper will be brought back in appropriate time. This will remain open.

15/18 – Programme 2020 Update. This action will remain open.

16/18 – Progress against local business plan. This action is completed and can close.

17/18 – Progress against local business plan. Until new arrangements are in place with regards to project management of the Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Strategic Governance Board (EESCSGB) JT will meet on a regular basis with the representative bodies to update them around the work of the EESCSGB and go through the papers with them. JT’s meetings with representative bodies are already in the diary. This action can close now.

18/18 – SLT projects. A relevant agenda item was added for this meeting. This action can close.

19/18 – SLT projects. This action can close.

**4 Draft Budget 2019/2020\***

GM presented the key recommendations regarding the Budget 2019/2020.

* A precept increase of 3% is proposed, equivalent to an increase of £2.03 a year for a bank D council tax property.
* The budget was drawn up on the basis of utilising existing reserves of £2.2 million during the year.
* To note the impact of the relaxation of public sector pay restraint on the budget and precept of the Authority. In this context, the Authority has provided for 2% across the board inflation at a cost of £1.035 million
* It is recommended that the Commissioner instruct the Chief Executive/Chief Fire officer to provide a balanced budget, without using reserves by the 2021/2022 financial year.

GM said that a thorough review was conducted in order to reshape the usable reserves with an aim to be able to meet the financial challenges of the future. This paper will be ready in the next few days for PFCC’s to consider. It was noted that there may be a final amendment once the council tax base figures are available, and it was left to GM to amend the budget accordingly providing the change is not material.

**Planning**

GM noted that there are 27 day-crew houses that could be used partly to meet operational requirements for the day crew service, but also to generate cash. A plan will be drawn up and presented to SLT regarding these houses.

RH understands that there is still a piece on Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) that needs to be completed. GM stated that the workshop on MTFS and the long term plan has been scheduled for end of January.

Discussion followed about the timeline of work around the development of an MTFP.

RH stated he would like to be able to have a draft MTFP with a view to share this with the Police, Crime and Crime Panel in October 2019. This would be the background to the budget planning for 2020/2021, and will be finalised in January 2020.

**Action 21/18. A draft MTFP to be prepared ahead of the Police, Crime and Frime Panel meeting in October 2019; the detailed version will be completed by January 2020.**

AM made a remark in relation to the proposed precept increase. Any increase of the council tax above 3% would require a local referendum so it is a common practice for councils to calculate the increase at 2.99%.

**Action 22/18. GM will make an annotation in brackets explaining why the amendment of the precept to 2.99% is needed.**

RH inquired as to what the risks are to this budget. GM replied that risks are related to national pay settlements, changes in the Firefighters Role map, and changes to the contracts of on-call firefighters. These issues could put pressure on the pay budget as far as income is concerned.

RH asked about the risks of not implementing the day crewed to on-call transition. JT replied that the day crew was allowed to continue with the conversion process expected to be completed by 2021.

RH observed that the number of on-call firefighters has gone down by 18 even though they are trying to increase the numbers. DB confirmed that there are difficulties to recruit sufficient numbers of on-call firefighters.

RH observed that the table on overall staff numbers (par.38) does not reflect the current capacity of on-call firefighters in terms of FTE and he would like to have this figure. At the moment, the way figures are presented could give the impression that the budget foresees reduction of the service which is not the case.

**The Board agreed on the recommendations of the budget paper, with the following amendments:**

* The budget paper to include figures of on-call firefighters in terms of FTE.
* The staff budget table to be amended in the way the changes are presented, and to reflect the ongoing effort to increase the on-call service.
* The proposed precept to be amended as 2.99% explaining the reasons for this amendment.

PBI mentioned that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) raised comments about whether there has been sufficient investment of reserves in training. DB mentioned that once the new training programme is put together in its practical aspects, the FBU could be invited to comment and identify any missing elements.

GM mentioned that the budget can include the overall allocation for training for 2019/2020 but not particular training areas at the moment.

AM inquired about the level of the total training budget. GM advised this is over £3 million.

**5. New Integrated Risk Management Plan Update**

DB stated that it is important to have a discussion and an agreement around timescales with regards to Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the steps to follow. A statutory public consultation on a finalised document on IRMP will be taking place by January 2020 and conclude the process. Following this, an implementation plan will be developed with starting date in June 2020.

RH stated that the intention is to take the IRMP for information to the Panel early February 2020.

AM suggested that breaking the IRMP down in areas and start working separately with the parts that will not be affected by the operational data, might help drafting the IRMP by the summer.

RH inquired whether it has been defined what evidence is required for this process. DB replied that for previous IRMP processes since 2010/2011 they have been using the same company, ORH, in order to maintain the same methodology and produce comparable data. The cost for an annual refresh work is estimated between £25K to £30K.

RH stated that he would prefer three quotes to be obtained for the process to be transparent.

**Action 23/18: Tender to be implemented for data analysis for the new IRMP.**

RH would like to know more about what needs to be accomplished between the end of January 2020 and June 2020. DB advised that from the previous IRMP experience, they would have to review issues such as back office function and collaboration between departments. Following the consultation they could be doing some background work about what new structure could look like. In June 2020 JT would present the outcome of this work to RH seeking approval.

During this period from the end of January 2020 to the end of June 2020 staff will have to remain engaged in this process.

A detailed discussion followed around the timeline and requirements for developing a new IRMP.

**Action 24/18. An agenda item to be presented to the Board with the following elements: a detailed timeline on the IRMP and the evidence base needed, the procurement basis for the evidence and how this feeds in the IRMP process, and the time of consultation on IRMP that will allow conclusion of the process by the end of January 2020.** Owners: DB and MF.

The draft Fire & Rescue Plan will have to be published on the 31st January 2019 and needs to be discussed at the Board before this date.

An Extraordinary meeting of the Strategic Board before that date will offer the opportunity to discuss both IRMP and the F&R Plan (see action 29/18).

**6. Change Board and Projects Update\***

DB referred to the peer assessment feedback around the Ten Priorities where it was highlighted that some sequencing is required and as well as re-setting the priorities. There is ongoing discussion as to how the comments from the peer assessment team can complement the recommendations from the recently published HMIFRS inspection reports.

DB referred to Appendix 2 of the paper provided which is an ongoing update of what the projects the Change Board decided. RH remarked that the table on Appendix 2 has not been mapped to the 10 Key Projects. The information presented does not update on the priorities and their interdependencies even though on the paper it is mentioned that the priorities were discussed at the Change Board on 7th November and that the interdependencies amongst the components of the priorities have been identified and mapped.

DB agreed but mentioned that mapping will be further amended following the analysis of the HMIFRS reports and peer review comments.

**Action 25/18. The item “Change Board and 10 Key Projects Update” to be added to the agenda of the next P&R Board.** Owner: MF.

**7. Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Programme update\***

JT updated that the majority of the 10 tactical projects are nearing completion.

* Safe Well Volunteers. This is now business-as-usual (BAU) and is under evaluation.
* ERIS. The pilot is underway and is finishing in March 2019.
* Joint Rural Engagement programme. This is delayed and needs to be picked up from the Fire & Rescue perspective as part of the unpicking of the CRM work which is crucial.
* Collapsed behind closed doors. This is BAU. RH inquired whether Essex Fire is going to take action if for example the Ambulance Service puts a call into the control room. DB confirmed that this is the case, and this is being implemented for 2.5 years now. Essex Fire will take action on the basis of agreed criteria that are in place, and particularly if there is potential life risk. RH inquired why this was a tactical project if this was happening already. DB explained that the project started as a pilot at a time when Essex Fire had just started doing work with the police. Gradually this project rolled out in the county. RH understands that this has been a success.

**Action 26/18. DB to provide statistics around the Collapsed Behind Closed Doors project.**

JT continued with her update.

* Community Speed Watch. This is BAU.
* Strategic Road Networks. Work is underway on that one.
* Education Teams. This is completed and rolled out.
* Duke of Edinburgh. Moved to BAU.
* Restorative Justice Firebreaks. A follow up is needed for this project.
* Student Police Officers Familiarisation Day. This is still running.

**Strategic Programme of Work**

* Joint Fleet Workshops. PA Consulting IS engaged to develop the strategic business case which is due to be delivered in March 2019.
* Shared use of ECFS Estate. This has moved on really well. The next 10 sites have been agreed and will be in place by the end of January 2019. PBI confirmed that the lists has arrived.
* Provision of classroom facilities for joint training in JESIP. This is moving on well. The potential savings have been calculated.
* Joint incident command unit. This is coming to fruition. The project has come to the Board with a recommendation to use the police vehicle.
* IT Conversion Roadmap. DB mentioned that Jan Swanwick is providing an update to the Governance Board. He is now working on a report that needs to be submitted by the end of March 2019 but the basis of this will be ready at the end of January 2019. This would be presented to the next round of Star Chamber.
* Joint Procurement Initiatives. This is working extremely well along the lines of the asbestos management, physiotherapy, office furniture, legal and treasury management.
* Shared control room. The decision sheet has been approved.
* Increase resources in the Dengie peninsula. This is developing well and they are looking to pick up some learning from Cornwall. The expectation is that this will not come to the January Board but to next round of Star Chamber.
* Joint community safety function. This is moving on. January 2019 is the deadline.
* Collaborative approach to repeat callers. This has been completed and closed.

**Finance**

RH remarked that the projected benefits total so far is missing from the tracker. RH would like to know to what extent the programme is on track. PBI advised that this is hard to understand at this stage as some boxes are unpopulated. Amanda Johnson needs some support from both services in order to be able to populate some areas of the Benefits Dashboard Tracker. PBI is meeting with Amanda to discuss this issue.

Discussion followed around the fact that Appendix 1 does not seem to correspond to the 10 Key Projects and some mapping work is needed.

**Action 27/18. The Benefits Dashboard Tracker to be verified in regards with the identification of projects. This piece of work will be presented to the next Collaboration Board meeting.** Owner: AM.

**8. 2020 Programme Update\***

RH would be interested to have some information around day crew conversion. DB updated that he has taken over as project sponsor.

About a month ago, a watch manager was installed in Dovercourt station specifically to assist the conversion process. The outcomes in relation to recruitment have been positive. The service will take the learning from this location and apply it to other areas where more recruiting will be needed.

RH stated that it would meaningful for the next update to be presented by item, including timelines and its financial significance as part of the 10 Key projects. From the information provided RH is not in the position to identify the level of savings achieved.

RH pointed out that this report does not include the additional investment that was intended for community safety. DB advised that the new investment had not been included as a project per se in the 2020 Programme hence it is not being reported.

**Action 28/18. An update on the 2020 Programme by item, to be presented to the next ECFRS P&R Board meeting, including timelines, the financial significance of each item as part of the 10 Key projects, targets set to achieve and progress against them.** Owner: DB.

**9. Fire and Rescue Plan Update**

ET updated on the Fire & Rescue Plan public survey which closes on the 15th January. So far the OPFCC have received over 2000 responses on the F&R Plan. Generally the public is supportive of the priorities. There has been some good media coverage. RH had the opportunity to present the Plan on BBC Essex. The debate was balanced and useful as the media had the chance to talk to the representative bodies as well.

The results of the public survey will be analysed by an independent analyst who will prepare a provisional report by the 23rd January. A meeting with the Police, Fire and Crime Panel working group is scheduled for the 24th January. The plan is to get a draft of the survey results and a draft Fire & Rescue Plan, taking on board comments and feedback. The Plan will be taken to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the 7th February 2019. The papers will be published on 31st January. The draft plan will be finalised and shared internally with the staff and the unions.

**10. Forward Plan\* (to identify new items)**

**Action 29/18. An Extraordinary meeting of the Strategic Board to be scheduled for Monday, 28 January 2019. Items: Draft Fire & Rescue Plan, and IRMP timeline**.

The Extraordinary meeting will follow the EFCRS P&R Board meeting which is scheduled for the same day. The P&R Board agenda will include the standing items, i.e. the Financial and the Performance Report, and also the items that have arisen from this meeting, namely the item “Change Board and 10 Key Projects Update” and an “Update on the 2020 Programme by item, including timelines, the financial significance of each item as part of the 10 Key projects, targets set to achieve and progress against them.”

RH will have a meeting with the representative bodies on Monday 28th January 2019, in the afternoon.

Discussion followed regarding the agenda of the Strategic Board in March 2019.

DB will discuss with PBI the item Vehicle and Equipment Asset Strategy outside the Strategic Board meeting of March 2019.

The following items will be included in the agenda:

* A paper on IRMP
* The 2020 Programme and Change Programme and 10 Key projects combined
* Annual pay policy statement.

**ACTION 30/18. Sally Froment to provide the pay policy paper for the meeting of the Board in March 2019.**

**The open action 11/18 on the Action Log needs to be updated as follows: to include a review of the standing agenda items to all Boards on the Forward Plan.**

**11. AOB**

RH stated that as the ECFRS is a formal Board and members need to provide written reports / papers when presenting agenda items, for the sake of transparency.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 12:30.