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| MINUTES |
| **Meeting:** **Essex County Fire and Rescue Performance & Resources Board** |
| **Date:**  25 March 2019 |
| **Time:** 2.00pm to 4.30pm |
| **Location:**  GF01 - Kelvedon Park |
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**Attendees**

Roger Hirst (RH) PFCC - Chair

Jane Gardner (JG) Deputy PFCC

Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI) CEO, PFCC’s office

Dave Bill (DB) Director of Prevention, Protection & Response, ECFRS

Matt Furber (MT) Director of IRMP and Service Improvement, ECFRS

Glenn McGuinness (GM) Acting Chief Finance Officer, ECFRS

Colette Black (CB) Assistant Director of HR, ECFRS

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

Kim Pepper (KP) Minute taker – PFCC’s office

**Apologies**

Jo Turton (JT) Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS

**1 Welcome and Apologies**

RH welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from JT. The death of Charles Garbett was noted with great sadness.

**2 Minutes and Action Log**

2.1 Minutes of last meeting 25 February 2019

4.4 MF commented that the area that proved the biggest challenge concerned 7(2) (d) visits (which are risk visits to premises deemed to be at risk) and the acquisition of risk information from such visits around the county.  ECFRS have been making the visits but there are limited or no historical central or local records made for the visits. Steps are being put in place for Watches to record this information for future visits.

2.2 Action Log

2.2.1 Complaints and Grievance workshop held on 5th March. Documents are out for consultation. Item is on forward plan for June Strategic Board meeting. Action to be kept open.

2.2.2 Training – on Strategic Board agenda for June meeting. This will be an update item on the 3 months progress since the workshop. The project plan will include dates, finance, costs etc and any budget change required and how it might affect MTFP.

2.2.3 Complaints and Grievance Policy – workshop held on 5th March.

2.2.4` HMICFS peer review – MF had received a copy of RH’s notes. Work is now being carried out to put documents into the Service Improvement Plan in a clear, concise way.

2.2.5 Monthly performance report – included on forward plan.

2.2.6 On-Call development project – workshop held on 25th March.

2.2.7 Preparation for EU brexit – DB to arrange the Critical Incident Team, if required, and invite the PFCC. A national plan has been issued today. DB believes that ECFRS are in a good place.

2.2.8 Kerslake Review – paper entitled “Response to Terrorist Incidents” on agenda for August meeting.

2.2.9 Kerslake Review – “Civil Contingency Act Response” on agenda for August meeting.

**3 Forward Plan**

3.1 No comments on future agenda items.

3.2 DB asked, under the new Terms of Reference, should presentation of papers go through officers? RH said that the people presenting the paper should attend the meeting with the support of the senior officer.

3.3 29 April - Staff survey update to be deleted – it will be presented later in the year. HMI closes on 9th August (runs for 5 months). ECFRS will run their own staff survey end September/early October but dependent on the outcomes from 9th August.

3.4 Gender pay update on agenda for 29th April.

3.5 Hackitt and Grenfell – DB to check with Moira Bruin on timing. RH wonders if it should come back to P&R and upgrade as a paper to the Strategic Board about what we would do differently. DB could do an update on the succession planning paper and look at whether we need additional resources. RH asked that it goes into more detail.

**4 HMICFRS Update – Peer Review**

4.1 All information in the paper is linked to Strategic Risk 150025. The document return was submitted on 25th February. 147 documents were submitted against 53 questions and took160 hours to complete. The control measure is now closed.

4.2 The third data return was submitted on 28th February – 98% of the questions have been completed and took 140 hours to complete. The control measure is now closed.

4.3 Working on self-assessment – JT signed off last week and will be presented to SLT on 26th March. MF to circulate to JG and PBI. Will be submitted to HMI quarterly.

4.4 Discovery week will be from 29th April to 3rd May – the Service Liaison Lead, Bill Harvison, is happy with arrangements. Strategic briefing and presentation will be 24th June, and the hot debrief will now 11th July.

4.5 The Service Improvement Plan continues to be developed and all documents have been reviewed with document owners and have been put into a consistent format so SLT are confident it has been through a rigorous Q&A process. RH noted that, at the Audit Committee, HMICFRS was showing as amber on the Risk Register but on the PFCC Risk Register it is showing as red as they are thinking more about the outcome. DB will be reviewing the Fire & Rescue plan, in regard to the Risk Register, with new members of SLT on 29th March.

4.6 The self-assessment has been drafted and the final draft will be signed off on Friday. JG said that HMICFRS will want to see connectivity between our two offices. DB will speak to Emily Cheyne about provide the PFCC’s office with a copy. PBI offered to pull out key lines of enquiry and provide a one page statement – it saves time and provides a unified view. MF will ensure that PBI is included on the invitation for Task Force dates. Rick Hylton could also provide support to PBI.

**5 Monthly Performance Report**

5.1 This report was presented to SLT on 12th March.

5.2 End of year appraisals - upward trend on last year (was 40%, now 60%).

5.3 Availability of On-Call appliances. ECFRS are 100 FTE short of On-Call headcount. RH noted that the wholetime vacancy factor is 8%. That gives a 15% gap between wholetime and On-Call so 90% would be more achievable.

5.4 Attendance times – 37 seconds off target. ECFRS are looking at some FRS’ that have a Health and Safety policy so that they can compare like with like. RH feels that call handling (resource, training, IT) could be improved. DB said that procedure also has an effect. The Fire & Rescue plan will help to keep targets under scrutiny.

5.5 Availability - 1% off target. Again, recruitment is an issue and affecting headcount.

Discussion took place on availability/attendance times for some stations – it was felt that there are management issues within the Service.

5.6 Waltham Abbey – some On-Call staff have qualified on BA so are crewing the appliance at night.

5.7 KSI on killed and seriously injured on the roads – on target. The reduction team have held a number of events.

5.8 KSI forward plan actions. Essex Police Bikesafe has now ceased and Fire Bike is now the only scheme in the county.

5.9 Accidental Dwelling Fire Overview - off target. Moira Bruin is drafting an interim strategy for Prevention/Reduction in ADF and will be submitted to SLT in the future. There is no stand-alone Prevention Strategy at the moment but there are business plans within departments.

5.10 HR overview – December was the first month data could be extracted for On-Call staff from Civica. ECFRS have 100 staff who account for 25% of staff absence. These will be investigated further.

5.11 100% of school children delivered an age appropriate safety message – a better explanation of what ECFRS want to achieve can be done. RH queried the figures quoted as being targeted. It also says that ECFRS have reached 98% of primary schools but the target says only 43%. He wonders how this fits with the other figures provided. MF will provide clarity.

**Action 11/19: MF to provide clarity on school visits data.**

5.12 Working Smoke Alarms – another survey is planned for 2020. The bullet points highlight feedback from 2018 report. 63,000 households still remain without some form of smoke detection.

5.13 Fires in non-residential properties – a focus for HMICFRS will be that there have been no prohibitions or enforcements. As a first step, ECFRS prefer to engage with the business to bring about change but prosecution does take place where necessary. This may be something that HMICFRS challenge.

5.14 Statutory request response rates – ECFRS are missing both targets. More work is to be done with managers. Responses need to be done in a timely manner.

**6 Ethics and Integrity**

6.1CB to attach the People Strategy to the paper for the Ethics Committee. CB and PBI and TK to ensure the paper captures points raised from workshop.

**7 Budget Review – February 2019**

7.1 Real World HR have been engaged to work on a project till next October at a cost of £85,000. GM is asking to carry over the consultancy budget to next year. The reserves use of £687k will include the £85k.

7.2 RH queried the funding surplus of £5.7m. GM to include a line on “offset timing differences” under Total Funding.

7.3 GM reported that ECFRS are £1.1m underspent. GM explained that inflationary increases, other than pay, had not been included. RH said that thought needs to be given to next year’s budget and budget holders need to receive training before September. GM said that although the forecast was to use £687 of reserves, he did expect this figure to be much lower.

7.4 General fund reserves - GM asked that the meeting consider whether they want to reduce ECFRS’ general fund reserves. RH suggested they be used but it would need to be done formally.

**8 Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20**

8.1 The strategy needs to be set for 2019/20. It will be subject to significant changes as the MFTP is developed. GM was seeking approval for Appendices 1, 2 and 3 and the continued use of the Depreciation Method and for the meeting to note the Treasury Management position for 2018/19 and the capital financing indicators for 2018/19.

8.2 Discussion took place on the grading with our principal banker. RH noted that we have a policy, we have a breach but no action has been taken. It was suggested that we could go into joint collaboration on getting Treasury management advice with the Police and GM can start the ball rolling. RH asked that something is included in Appendix 3 about what we intend to do (our principal banker does not meet our credit criteria) but will be risk adverse. GM will come forward with a decision sheet once he has taken advice. It should be sorted out in the next couple of weeks.

**Action 12/19: GM to provide decision sheet on Treasury Management Strategy**

**9 Statement of Accounts Closure Timetable**

9.1 Draft accounts will be ready by the middle of May. A review of accounts will take place at SLT on 28th May and then presented to P&R on the 29th May. ECFRS are still waiting for the final audit from Grant Thornton. RH noted that, if Grant Thornton find anything that needs action or wish to substantially review something that would be between 29th May and 21st June.

**10 Collapsed behind closed doors**

10.1 This paper had been requested from a previous meeting. ECFRS have been working on this with the Ambulance Service for three years. Out of the three emergency services, Fire were probably the best placed to attend these incidents but they are not required to attend every incident. A watching brief is being held. This fits in with the FBU’s view of the role map.

**11 ESMCP update**

11.1 This is an update paper which covers the current position of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) which will replace Airwave.  Airwave was due to be turned off at the end of 2019 but the National Switch Off Date (NSD) has been extended to 31 December 2022.

11.2    MF explained the current position.  The least risk option for ECFRS is to wait for the full service (the product known as Prime) as opposed to an incremental transition through a range of products to eventually reach Prime. A number of other FRS’ have also identified this as a way forward.  Following the review of the Full Business Case (FBC) the predicted project cost is £9bn for the life of ESN compared to £11bn if Airwave use continues.

**12 People Strategy – Review Progress**

12.1 The meeting were asked to note progress against next steps. The Strategy will be reviewed by the new SLT team and brought back to P&R in July.

**13 AOB**

13.1 Gender pay gap – data was submitted on 22nd March. The Mean pay gap has reduced from 15.6% in 2017 to 7.1% in 2018.

13.2 Self-assessment – DB will speak to Emily Cheyne and get a copy sent to all at today’s P&R meeting and arrange a time to review with the PFCC team.

13.3 Civica update – MF reported that this was much improved this month and had received the same amount of queries as a normal pay-run. No BACS payments had been made. ECFRS are working with Civica on known issues. A closure report will be going to P&R next month.

There being no other items, the meeting closed at 4.35pm.