

ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



Meeting	Strategy Board	Agenda Item	5
Meeting Date	05 June 2019	Report Number	
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Presented By	Deputy Chief Fire Officer Rick Hylton		
Subject	Asset Strategy		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy Board Members note the contents of this report and approve both the approach and timescales for the production of associated asset strategies.

BACKGROUND

Members of the Strategy board approved the Vehicle and Equipment Asset Management Strategy 2018 – 2021 (rev 7) in June 2018. This strategy sets out the approach that Essex County Fire and Rescue Service will take to ensure these assets remain fit for purpose in terms of both maintenance and replacement.

In addition Essex County Fire and Rescue Service manages its Estates in line with the Property Strategy 2010 -2015. Whilst in terms of date the strategy has expired, the principles remain current to the ways of working and is supported by a score card system that allows for the profiling of work in two broad areas namely; Asset Protection work and Asset Improvement work.

The Local Business case for changes to governance for ECFRS, pointed towards shared use of estate between fire and police. This strategic direction is further set out in the Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2019 – 2024. To date this has resulted in a programme of work to enable Police staff to use local fire stations termed 'drop ins' and further scoping for the shared occupation of other sites. In addition there is further opportunity as defined within the LBC for a joint fleet workshops.

Both Fleet and Property Services serve to support the efficient and effective delivery of service to the public. It is therefore inherent that any asset strategy supports the service in both delivering its service to the public but is also supported by the principles of best value.

ECFRS is currently in the process of developing the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). This plan will set our ECFRS approach to delivery against the FRS plan and how it will use its resources including assets to achieve the priorities of the FRS plan and ultimately the vision of a safer Essex.

In addition to the IRMP, the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2020 – 2024 is in development. This plan will set out the financial picture for ECFRS over the medium term and enable decisions to be taken to ensure efficient and effective services are maintained and where ever possible improved.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Given the development of the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan together with the priorities within the FRS plan for making best use of resources, it is timely to consider the revision and development of asset strategies for both Property and Fleet.

These strategies should be set to enable the delivery of the FRS plan and developed to support the outcomes and recommendations from the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan.

As such, the Service leads for both Property and Fleet have been set an objective for this year to revisit and revise the respective strategies.

The first stage of this process will involve a workshop for the PFCC and colleagues from the OPFCC alongside SLT members to work up a series of principles that will enable the initial development of these strategies.

Upon the conclusion of the Integrated Risk Management Plan, and agreement of the Medium Term Financial Plan around September 2019, these principles will be taken forward to develop a comprehensive strategy and delivery plan that will support the delivery of the FRS plan and be aligned to the Integrated Risk Management Plan outcomes and Medium Term Financial Plan requirements.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

An asset strategy will enable the most efficient and effective use of resources, aligned to the FRS plan. The benefits of which will support the priorities of collaboration, making best use of resources and promoting a positive culture in the workplace. Not aligning the development of any associated asset strategies with the IRMP and MTFP, will risk a lack of coordination and duplication of which has the risk of increasing costs and impacting negatively on the collaboration agenda.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Any adjustments made to estate and fleet, both in terms of number of assets or replacement/ maintenance schedule is likely to affect financial capital and revenue costs moving forward.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

In the development and revision of the Asset management strategies there is a requirement on the Service as a public body to comply with Public Sector Equality Duty.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Development and subsequent implementation of associated asset strategies will involve the engagement of key stakeholders to ensure the key deliverables are both fit for purpose and create an environment and workplace that promotes a positive culture.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Head of Fleet is seen under Road Traffic Legislation as “the controlling mind” of the fleet, and therefore carries a personal liability under the law for the roadworthiness of the assets owned or used by the Service.

Other key laws appertaining the provision of fleet assets are detailed in section 8.18 of the strategy and relate to both Road traffic law and Health and safety law.

Failure of the Service to comply with the requirements of Road traffic or H&S legislation leading to the death or serious injury of an individual may lead to charges of corporate manslaughter against the Fleet Manager and directors of the organisation.

There are also requisite duties for the Head of Property being the seen as the responsible person for legislation such as Water Hygiene, Asbestos Containing Materials and Electricity at Work. Again, failure to comply with such building legislation may lead to associated charges.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Health and Safety at work Act (1947 as amended) places a requirement on employers to ensure that workplaces and assets to which the employee has access are both safe and fit for purpose. Any asset strategy should ensure this duty is met.