



Meeting	Strategic Board	Agenda Item	
Meeting Date	17 September 2019	Report Number	
Report Author:	Tracy King, Assistant Director		
Presented By	Rick Hylton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer		
Subject	Protection (Technical Fire Safety) within ECFRS; high level prioritisation and planned next steps		
Type of Report:	Information		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Authority are asked to endorse and support the recommended areas of immediate focus and action for Protection/Technical Fire Safety (TFS) within Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS). Action will be taken to:

- Address low resourcing levels within the department to meet current and future demands and ensure subsequent succession planning is in place
- Provide appropriate training to station based colleagues to enable operational crews to carry out Technical Fire Safety activity
- Implement quality assurance measures to demonstrate quality and consistency of audit and enforcement activity by technicians and station staff
- Provide a Protection strategy to ensure enforcement is focused and appropriate and that Protection activity identifies and targets visits to premises representing highest levels of risks via the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)

2. BACKGROUND

Protection/Technical Fires Safety is a priority area of focus for the Service. The Service have recorded the risk relating to Protection/Technical Fire Safety on the Strategic Risk Register (ref SRR150028)

It is important that the Service has a robust action plan which details the steps that will be taken to achieve improvement and mitigate risk in 4 key areas:-

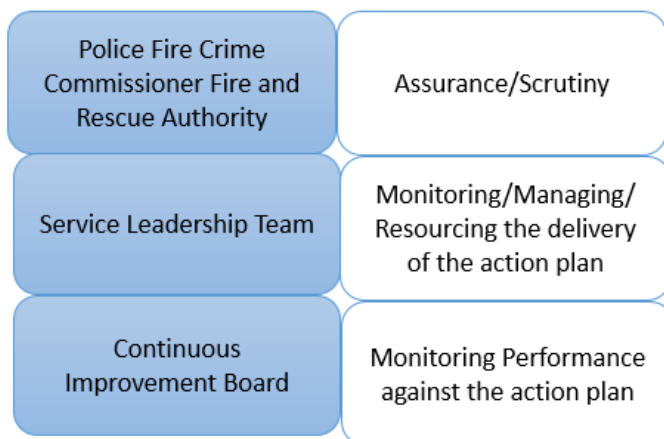
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Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspected ECFRS as part of tranche 3 inspections in July 2019. The publication of the resultant inspection report is anticipated mid-December 2019.

Initial feedback and observations from the inspection team mirrors the work and the priorities already identified by ECFRS SLT. One of those priorities is that Protection activity and our TFS department should continue to be a key area of focus for ECFRS. More specifically, the areas identified should be prioritised, actioned and progress reported back to SLT and the Authority at regular intervals until completed.

3. GOVERNANCE

The following diagram illustrates how existing governance structures will be used to monitor progress and delivery of actions within the plan.



The Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Operations will be the Strategic Lead for this plan.

4. NEXT STEPS

In terms of addressing the key areas of immediate focus detailed in the recommendations, a task and finish group will agree and set out an agreed action and resourcing plan which will:

- Revisit departmental priorities
- Ensure dependencies on other areas of business are noted and that action is taken to engage and involve (e.g.: data management, existing staffing pressures, HR processes, Training/L&D activity)
- Continue to engage with consultations following the Hackitt review and reform agenda and anticipate future resource and activity requirements

5. IMPLICATIONS

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are key risks for the Service against resourcing in the area of Technical Fire Safety specifically around:

- Increased demand for our services and expertise
- The introduction of new burdens without additional funding
- Shortage of trained, technically competent and experienced staff

These are captured in the Service strategic risk register: SRR150028

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Regulatory reform may lead to increased budget requirement for this area due to increased demand for technical fire safety and fire engineering expertise. LGA anticipate that there will be new burdens on the FRS in this area although it is as yet unclear if this will change FRS funding (LGA position statement 2018).

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

All recruitment, engagement and enforcement activity will be carried out in line with ECFRS policies and procedures. All new areas of activity and focus will be subject to equality impact assessment.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Further training will be provided to operational crews to support their carrying out of protection activities in line with relevant role maps and grey book terms and conditions. Supporting functions/departments will be engaged where dependencies are identified.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Legislative change to this Order is anticipated which will have a direct impact on the enforcement and protection activity of the Fire sector.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Effective enforcement and awareness/communication of risk associated with buildings reduces risk to crews responding as identified in The Management of Health and Safety

at Work Regulations 1999 (Regulation 3) which states: Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of:

(a) the risks to the health and safety of their employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and

(b) the risks to the health and safety of persons not in their employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by employees of the employers undertaking.