



MINUTES

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX AND ESSEX COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES BOARD

29 July 2019, 14.00 to 16.30pm, GF01, Kelvedon Park

Present:

Jane Gardner	DPFCC (Chair)
Pippa Brent-Isherwood	CEO, PFCC's office
Karl Edwards (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Rick Hylton (RHy)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Glenn McGuinness (GM)	Deputy Finance Director, ECFRS
Anthony Maude (AM)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC's office

Apologies

Roger Hirst (RH) PFCC

1 Welcome and apologies

JG welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that apologies had been received from RH who would leave after the first few minutes. RHy said that he would leave at three. JG agreed to reorder the agenda to allow RHy to introduce his key items.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

There being no amendments to the minutes of the last meeting on 24 June 2019, they were approved.

3 Action Log

67/18 Complaints and Grievance Policy

It was clarified that the Grievance Policy was in the process of being finalised in time for the September Strategic Board.

09/19 Kerslake Review

Paper presented at meeting. Propose close.

10/19 Kerslake Review

Civil Contingency Act Response item to be included in the Annual Report. This item has been referred to the Strategic Board.

12/19 Treasury Management Strategy

Will come to Performance and Resources Board in August. A decision sheet will be prepared. Action to check which Board appropriate – confirmed Performance and Resources Board appropriate.

20/19 Quarterly Performance Report – Absence Levels

RHy reported that the apparent increase in absence levels arose because of a change in recording days lost as opposed to shifts. Propose close.

22/19 Performance report – Environmental Stewardship

The discussion between the Chief Constable and the CFO has yet to take place.

23/19 HoBs Closure Report

The final HOBS closure report is currently completed. Will come back to August Board. Expecting move to zero system failures shortly.

25/19 Risk Based Inspection – activity update

Agreed that this should consider funding, recruitment, training, risk base inspection programme and CRM. Agreed this would come to Strategic Board in September.

28/19 Budget review – Draft Annual Accounts - Reserve Statement

Coming to Performance and Resources Board in September.

30/19 Budget Review – April 2019 – pensions virement

GM in process of drawing up decision sheet on pension's virement.

31/19 Forward Look – Real World HR Update

Paper presented for July meeting – Propose Close.

4 Monthly Performance Summary - June

- 4.1 RHy presented the June monthly summary report. He noted that this is the final version of this report – a new one is being developed with benchmarking and the relationship to Fire and Rescue Plan. Incidents are down, but response times slightly up. There is no reason why the service should not meet its response times in due course. JG noted some call-handling on some days were high. RHy said that some of these were where there were non-addressable locations, others were NILO calls.
- 4.2 In terms of on-call availability, there would need to be consideration in the IRMP regarding this. With Colchester wholetime availability, vacancies are being held for the day crew conversion. JG asked whether in the joint education team regarding arson. RHy said that this is dealt with very effectively by the education teams. KE said this issue is also addressed on the Firebreak programmes. PBI suggested that there could be a role for Safer Essex. RHy said that the challenge has always been because of the low level threat and harm there is some difficulty in engaging the police. RHy would consider how Safer Essex they can be engaged in the future, particularly local authority members.
- 4.3 Health and safety is strong. Crews being attacked is a national issue, and they are reported to the police. Sickness levels under public sector average. With regard to employee relations attendance tends to be either sickness management, or on-call not attending when their alerters go off. JG asked how easy it would be to clear the 51 cases – KE confirmed that some could be open for a year if sickness related.

- 4.4 Home safety increased – vast majority of contacts by phone. Delivered by a small number of people. Stations will be increasing the number of visits. With regard to safeguarding work has been done to filter those not down to the service.
- 4.5 It was noted how well the performance monitoring report was shaping up.

5. Response to Terrorist Incidents

- 5.1 RHy gave the background on New Dimension funding. In relation to MTA Essex has a team, part of the regional group. This work is undertaken by on-call. Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) is one of the best in the country – the funding c£857,000 for the whole of the USAR team – not just MTA - is not guaranteed beyond March 2020 – so any pressure to continue that would be welcome. There are very considerable training requirements on these teams. In terms of inter-agency operation, Airbox is where you can tell where resources are – and this is something being developed. All Group Managers are NILOs – there are three available at any time. JG said we have a good story to tell on all of this.

RHy left at 3.00 pm

6 Budget Review

- 6.1 GM updated the Board on the financial situation. The results of the first quarter show an underspend of £741,000. Firefighters are underspending even though day crew settlements have been included. JG asked whether we would underspend overall this year and GM said yes. In terms of reserves on-call and training not as yet released. Unlikely that we would use £2.4 million, but not as yet possible to determine how much of the reserves will be used.
- 6.2 With regard to Additional Shift Working – JG said the budget seems high, and what control mechanisms are there around this. KE said that this is something that needs to be looked at in line with a number of other policies such as annual leave which need to be resolved.
- 6.3 In terms of premises and equipment, there is a plan to invest in ICT. JG asked whether there is an emerging plan and KE replied that there is including desk top replacements and purchasing of servers, and would bring a paper to the September Strategic Board.

Action: KE to bring IT business case to the September Strategic Board.

- 6.4 A lot of work is going on with regard to the capital programme. A key issue will be service workshops and what any FRS contribution would be.
- 6.5 With regard to on-call recruitment JG noted that some stations such as Wethersfield has 25 per cent leavers, and asked would the on-call development programme deal with this? KE said that a message has gone out saying that if anyone was thinking of leaving to get in touch with us first. In terms of support staff GM noted that Civica would require another person, as it has more manual intervention - the savings will be made on licences etc. HR is also an area under pressure at the moment. Overall there is no overspend on support staff.

7 Annual Health and Safety Report

- 7.1 The BA malfunction was noted, and the vehicle collisions seemed high. KE said these were largely low speed and reminders were needed about the appropriate procedures to avoid this. It was agreed that it was a good report.

8. On-call development Progress

- 8.1 KE said there are two strands to the on-call development programme – how do we improve recruitment, and secondly review of terms and conditions. Good work has been done in Dovercourt in terms of recruiting, and same needs to be done in South Woodham Ferrers. Looking at availability – the question is, is 5 minutes too restrictive; and could two stations be doubled up to make one crew. On-call liaison officers are providing a role in ensuring communication with on-call teams, ERB is vitally important to ensure availability is known, including officers – KE said that hoped it would be rolled out in October/November time. The main benefit would be updating control on availability. JG said that we should consider whether extra resource could speed this process up. PBI asked if all the experiences of the past IT were being captured. KE said Matt Furber is doing this, but from his perspective scoping and ensuring end user testing and involvement were where improvements can be made. It was agreed that progress regarding on-call development would be put on the forward plan at three months intervals.

9. Everyone Matters

- 9.1 KE said that Real World HR have been undertaking staff interviews and reporting into Colette Black, who would be getting a final report in October identifying exactly what they have found. JG said this is an important piece of work, but there is a question as to whether this will tell us more than what we already know; people are jaded and just want to see things done. KE said there is an element in this work of triangulating what we have already done, and identifying whether things have moved on. PBI said that it was important to be clear as to when the impact of any action is likely to be seen. JG said that there is excitement in the workforce that something will happen, and that needs to be captured while possible. KE said Colette is developing up a plan which will be going to SLT, including helping managers to identify poor behaviour. JG said it would be important to bring the plan back to the Board, and KE would liaise with Colette with this.

Action: KE to identify when the Real World HR plan will be ready to come back to Performance and Resources Board.

10. Dispute Resolution Agreement

- 10.1 KE said that there were still some concerns expressed by the FBU regarding operational competence and the talent pool process. It was agreed that this would be brought back in due course.

11. Risk Register

- 11.1 KE said that the risk register was well received at the Audit Committee. They did however challenge on number of control owners for 0015, the large numbers of controls on the data risks, and 0014 regarding deaths and injury, why we had it and the police did not. Overall the Audit Committee felt it was in a healthy condition.

12. Forward Plan

- 12.1 All points raised had been captured and will be included. It was noted HR management of vacancies was due, and KE confirmed it would be there at the next meeting.

13. Any Other Business

- 13.1 There being no other business, the meeting closed at 4.30pm.