



## MINUTES

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

18 December 2019, 0945am to 1300pm, GF01, Kelvedon Park

#### **Present:**

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Karl Edwards (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Moira Bruin (MB)	Director of Operations, ECFRS
Glenn McGuinness (GM)	Deputy Finance Director, ECFRS
Jo Thornicroft (JTh)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC's office
Claire Putnam (CP)	Board Support Officer, PFCC's Office (minutes)

#### **Apologies**

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire, Crime Commissioner
Rick Hylton (RHyl)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	CEO, PFCC's Office

#### **1 Welcome and apologies**

JG welcomed all to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from RH, RHyl and PBI. There were no other apologies.

#### **2 Minutes of the last meeting**

Page 3, point 5.8 the action should be for RHyl not KE

There being no further amendments the minutes of the previous meeting of 25 November 2019 were approved and there were no matters arising.

#### **3 Action Log**

19/19 Close  
35/19 Close  
40/19 New Date of January 2020 proposed – remain open  
41/19 Close  
42/19 Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> January with RSM to agree audit plan - Close  
43/19 Going back to full budget rather than condensed. Waiting for Neil to join to take forward – remain open  
44/19 Going back to full budget rather than condensed. Waiting for Neil to join to take forward – remain open  
45/19 Going back to full budget rather than condensed. Waiting for Neil to join to take forward – remain open  
46/19 On this agenda so close  
47/19 Close  
48/19 Close

## **4 Budget Review November 2019**

- 4.1 GM took the Board through the paper and highlighted the following; Underspend £1.5million on net expenditure and in addition there is money from the Essex Business Rates Pooling of £379,000 from Essex County Council which puts the Service £1.8million better than the budget. £750,000 underspend on whole-time firefighters. £367,000 has been spent on additional shift working. On-call firefighters are on budget. Control is underspend because of the mix of staff. Support Staff is close to budget however there is an overspend on Agency Staff.
- 4.2 JG asked in regard to Control Staff are the Service still assured that there are enough people to operate how it should be operated. KE confirmed they are assured.
- 4.3 JG stated that it's her understanding that a lot of hardware had been ordered, has that all been received now? KE confirmed it had and that there were two main orders that had been placed and received, the first was for storage area network which was just under £250,000 and some of that was revenue around people, installation and set up costs. The second was the Wise Terminals that have arrived. JG asked if it's still an underspend and KE confirmed it was. GM stated that some of the spend is Capital.
- 4.4 KE confirmed that legal cost allocation will be reviewed.
- 4.5 GM went through the forecast highlighting the following; the additional resource from reserves £1787,000 which isn't business as usual it's based on decision sheets which includes revenue spend from on-call, training and ICT.
- 4.6 Under projects there is £1.2million forecast for ICT and that includes some of the capital expenditure. JG stated there are only 3 months left to get forecasted funds spent. KE stated for assurance that once Neil starts, GM will focus on a capital planning management group, whereby each month, budget owners of anything capital will meet to see if they are on track to spend what has been allocated to them. This will give the Service an oversight in regard to what's happening and to also step in and help where needed. JTh asked if there's confusion around Procurement and the fact that things have to actually be on site within the deadlines. KE agrees there isn't enough awareness around this which is why the capital planning management group will be set up.
- 4.7 GM confirmed that there is work going on around support staff and 301.5 is the headcount including agency and temp staff, HR variance is showing 5.6 over which is due to planned leave and long term sick. Community Safety/Innovation and Change was the other area being looked at in regard to resource and capacity. Also over on Finance and Pay which is down to the additional resource needed in payroll due to Civica.
- 4.8 KE stated that the Service are trying to ensure that everyone takes responsibility in regard to looking after the finances and will be looking at possible training for Budgets Holders to gain a better understanding and to be able to present their budgets back to the finance team.
- 4.9 JG extended her and RH's thanks to GM for all his hard work and support over the past 18 months when he stepped into the role temporarily. GM stated that he was proud to have been asked and it's been a privilege.

**GM left the meeting at 10.35am**

## **5 Performance Report November 2019**

- 5.1 KE took the Board through the report and highlighted the following; there weren't any fatalities in Q2 but there were 16 injuries, of which 7 were from Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF) which is up on the previous quarter, however, it's believed that the increase in home visits will reduce this
- 5.2 121 fires in non-residential properties which again is up on the previous quarter, however KE believes the investment into Technical Fire Safety (TFS) will help combat this. TFS carried out 228 audits of non-residential properties during Q2 of which 48% were unsatisfactory. JG stated that that figure was concerning and MB confirmed that normally it's minor remedial actions that are needed, but they will be looking into this further. JG suggested looking at performance recording and highlighting the major, significant etc risks. MB confirmed the Service will be reviewing the risk based inspection programme and how high risks are defined.
- 5.3 TFS has completed the installation of the sprinklers at University of Essex high rise student accommodation block (16 storeys) and attended a hearing for the inquest on the death at Grampian flats in Southend, May 2016.
- 5.4 KE stated that there's still work to do in regard to response times and RHy will be looking into this further as he feels the Service should be hitting the target of 10 minutes. The Annual Leave Policy is being looked at which will highlight availability. MB stated that they are also looking at how the availability shortfall in staff is managed.
- 5.5 In regard to On-call availability, there will be an uplift in firefighter recruitment next quarter.
- 5.6 The Service are expecting the number of ADFs to increase over the next quarter due to the weather getting colder and KE stated that there needs to be active campaigning in regard to this to keep communities safe.
- 5.7 KE and Natalie will be visiting the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service as they have had a large increase in female firefighters and they want to understand how they did that and what can be learnt. Will be also visiting Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service to look at their mental health strategy.
- 5.8 KE highlighted some of the actions taken in Q2 to Improve Performance including, participation in the Trailblazer Group, Regional Training Initiatives, CPD event at London Fire Service.
- 5.9 JG asked in regard to activation of fire alarms there were 2 incidents at schools on Orsett Grounds but there was no follow up shown in the report. MB agreed and will take that on board for future papers.

## **6. Review of Existing Risk – Cladding High rise Residential building and Student Accommodation**

- 6.1 MB took the Board through the paper which gives assurances on high rise risk in Essex following on from Grenfell, the Bolton fire and the audits that have been completed for the Prevention Board.
- 6.2 The Grenfell Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations have been received and the Service has a high level action plan in place. The recommendations have been grouped into 3 areas, ones that are directly applicable to ECFRS, ones that vicariously apply to ECFRS and ones that don't apply to ECFRS but will impact the Service. MB will bring forward once it has more detail in it. Also received the NFCC Protection Board's view

on how to progress the Grenfell Inquiry Recommendations so MB will overlay that with what ECFRS has done to ensure it's in line nationally and fit for purpose for Essex.

- 6.3 Following the fire in high rise student accommodation in Bolton every educational establishment in Essex has been asked to provide detail back to the Minister for Education which has given the Service a good idea of what student accommodation there is in Essex and it's also built very good relationship and engagement with the University of Essex.
- 6.4 MB stated that the NFCC Protection Board has asked for the Service to provide assurances of any known high rise residential building 80metres and above which are still clad and currently awaiting remediation. This return needs to be signed off by the Fire Authority so MB will send to JG.

**Action: 49/19**

**MB to send the letter of assurance that the NFCC Protection Board have asked for to JG marked urgent to either get RH to sign off on or JG will.**

## **7 Technical Fire Safety Action Plan**

- 7.1 MB took the Board briefly through the Action Plan and confirmed that dates and milestones have now been included in the plan.
- 7.2 MB confirmed that the 4 areas of concern (Strategy, number of Audits and the Risk Based Inspection Programme, Quality Assurance and Training), raised at the Deep Dive on 1<sup>st</sup> November are progressing well and external resource is being sought to help with one or two of the concerns raised.
- 7.3 JG asked, in regard to Protection Enforcement Policies being reviewed in light of the new strategy and the expected completion date is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, are the Service happy with that proposed date as it seems quite far away. MB will speak to Jim who's leading the project. MB also stated that an additional Area Manager has been sourced for Prevention and Protection which has helped to push the project forward which is positive.
- 7.4 JG asked in regard to the IT tactical fix that was discussed at the deep dive meeting, RH had suggested bringing it forward as a business case with costs, is that going to happen or are the Service happy that it can be fixed without additional money. MB stated it's not progressing quickly enough but does understand there's a lot of work involved. KE stated that as RH committed in the deep dive to saying tell me what the Service needs and how much it's going to cost, put together a business case, he feels they should put the case together to present to RH.

**Action: 50/19**

**MB & KE to put together a business case, including what is needed and how much it's going to cost in regard to the IT tactical fix and present to RH.**

**CB joined the meeting at 10.50am**

## **8. Home Fire Safety Visits by Stations**

- 8.1 MB took the Board through the paper and confirmed that the pilot had been completed. MB also stated that the paper had two attachments these being a full evaluation and lessons learnt and the next steps. Roll out is expected by Q4 19/20 and includes the training package.

- 8.2 MB noted for the Board that on-call staff are not contracted to carry out Home Fire Safety Visits however it's felt that the on-call staff will volunteer to do this and will be paid.
- 8.3 MB stated that Data Management around this is extremely important and will be in a position for Home Office Reporting by May 2020.
- 8.4 JTh asked in regard to lessons learnt and face to face delivery of training, has this been pushed back to e-learning. MB confirmed that it had but it would be followed up with a short face to face session with a qualified officer.

## **9. Real World HR Report (Everyone Matters)**

- 9.1 CB asked the Board to note the content of the 3 reports, to note the next steps and to note the managers briefing paper.
- 9.2 CB confirmed that the diagnostic achieved what was needed as it analyses not just the presenting issues but what's also underlying them.
- 9.3 CB explained that the 3 areas of focus would be resilience around working relationships, understanding issues around capacity and positive actions around fairness. These will form the basis of the conference in February along with self-awareness, support and development for managers.
- 9.4 CB stated that the Voice Action Group will start again in January which will comprise of 6 different groups with 6 different chairs delivering and supporting one strand each of the Cultural Development Plan. One of these will be the Open Day at HQ.
- 9.5 CB stated that the original plan was to have 3 Task and Finish groups on each of the 3 priorities however the feedback received in the managers briefing was it was too much of an ask when capacity is stretched so it's been condensed down to a day/day and a half of further engagement.
- 9.6 CB suggested that Real World HR are invited back in 18months to take a small sample snapshot of employees and to use the same diagnostic to gain feedback. CB would welcome views to ensure the plan is on track.
- 9.7 KE stated that external auditors are keen to hold a half day run through to gain assurances around the cultural journey as they're still not 100% that all things "Lucas" have been dealt with. KE confirmed the Service want to look forward not backwards so will be sitting down with the auditors February/March time to take them through everything and focus them on where the Service is heading.

**CB left the meeting at 11.15am**

## **10. Deep Dive Programme**

- 10.1 JTh took the Board through the report explaining that this would be a year's programme of Deep Dives against the Commissioner's priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019-24 with space for emerging issues. Priorities with measures and "We Wills" to provide basis for scrutiny and discussions.
- 10.2 JTh further explained that a wider than normal Performance and Resources Board will be assembled for each Deep Dive which will take the form of a round table discussion, with key members from the Service who can not only add value to the discussions but also gain exposure to the scrutiny process.

- 10.3 If in agreement, JTh will work with Tracy to set out the Programme for the year, starting in January.
- 10.4 KE liked the “We Will” aspect of the new programme and thinks this will also work well for HMICFRS Inspections. KE welcomed the Deep Dive Programme however he stated that there would be a need to be able to forward plan for this.
- 10.5 All agreed so JTh will create the Deep Dive Programme Plan for the year.

## **11. Forward Plan**

- 11.1 JTh confirmed there won't be a Draft IRMP at the January meeting as there's an Extraordinary meeting sometime in January to approve this document.
- 11.2 Training, Quality Assurance and Feedback has been added by CB.
- 11.3 KE confirmed that the MTFP has been signed off in the Strategic Board Meeting pending one anomaly that RH raised, however KE is working around the details of the £4.3million saving which will be put on the Forward Plan for the Strategic Board in March.
- 11.4 KE confirmed that single tender actions will be brought to P&R monthly as a standing agenda item.

## **12. Any Other Business**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.50am.