



## MINUTES

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

31 March 2020, 1000am to 1300pm, Teleconference

#### **Present:**

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive, PFCC
Rick Hylton (RHyl)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Karl Edward (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Neil Cross (NC)	Finance Director and Section 151 Officer, ECFRS
Jo Thornicroft (JTh)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC's office
Claire Putnam (CP)	Board Support Officer, PFCC's Office (minutes)

#### **Apologies**

Moira Bruin (MB)	Director of Operation, ECFRS
Dave Bill (DB)	Director of Innovation, Risk and Future Development, ECFRS
Leanne Little (LL)	Performance Analyst, ECFRS
Colette Black (CB)	Ass CEO, People, Values and Culture, ECFRS

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

JG welcomed all to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from MB, DB, LL and CB. There were no other apologies.

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

There being no amendments the minutes of the previous meeting of 28 February 2020 were approved.

There were no matters arising.

#### **3 Action Log**

01/20 Action Log - Review of Existing Risk, Cladding, High Rise Residential building and Student – Due date April so remain open.

05/20 Performance Report December 2019 - MB and KE to look into a more formal assessment around reporting personal data breaches to the ICO – Paper due back in June 2020 so Action remains open.

12/20 Action Log – On-call Conversion Cashable Benefits – Paper due at this meeting so Action can close.

13/20 Performance Report January 2020 – JTh to liaise with Donna Finch in regard to the risk that the Service are holding in relation to safeguarding and to include this information in the report going forward. JTh explained the requirements to Jim Palmer and this should be reflected in the April Performance Report. Action remains open.

14/20 Grenfell Phase 1 High Level Action Plan – RHy and MB to share the updated report with JG, RH and JTh. This has now been shared and subsequent conversations between JG, RHy and JTh have taken place around proactive work with businesses. Action can close.

15/20 On-Call Development Programme Update – JTh to add the On-Call Liaison Pilot Review to the Forward Plan for April's P&R Board. Paper now being presented at this meeting. Action can close.

16/20 Forward Plan – Securing Adequate Water Supply – JTh to remove this from the Forward Plan as it will be a Workshop instead. This was due to be workshopped in today's meeting but due to Covid-19 this will be now be delayed. Keep on Forward Plan pending new date.

RHy informed the Board that with regard to Action 01/20, the building that the Service has issues with has been evacuated in line with Covid-19 and all students have gone home. For clarity, RHy confirmed that the University Of Essex Southend Building had previously stated that all students had left however the Service were advised that the University has given the option to stay or leave and the building still housed some students. Around 150 remained out of 500.

JG thanked RHy for the update and also confirmed the conversations with the owners in regard to if the cladding being removed there is enforcement action available to the Service.

#### **4 Budget Review February 2020**

- 4.1 NC took the Board through the report and confirmed there's a consistent theme as seen in previous months, however, expenditure is £1.9million lower than planned. There is a variance in employment costs due to the vacancy factor and this month's new cohort have gone through taking the firefighter numbers up to 648 which is the highest of the year. In terms of non-pay the service are £500,000 below the original plan and this is split between IT Consumables, Travel, Mileage and Property Maintenance.
- 4.2 NC confirmed in regard to Operational Income there was a £600,000 improvement compared to plan which was currently sitting around £400,000. This was due to the Section 31 Business Rate Grant for the year.
- 4.3 NC confirmed projections have previously shown an £800,000 pull on reserves, however, the latest projection is showing a £300,000 pull on reserves, which means £500,000 less drawing on reserves. The reasons behind this is there has been a £300,000 reduction in the Service's Capital Financing Charge and there has also been a review of salary costs which has led to a net reduction and pull on reserves.
- 4.4. NC stated the Service has previously been projecting £4.8million Capital Spend however after a recent Capital Review the latest forecast is showing a £2.8million total spend. This is due to asset protection works in particular the issues at Kelvedon Park which is preventing other works to commence, delay in IT spend which will roll into the new financial year and savings and reduction in fleet spend. NC confirmed that the quarterly capital meetings will be moved to monthly updates and Moira Bruin will be joining the meetings as Director of Operations. NC thanked PBI for sending over the Terms of Reference for the Police as a comparison although he has met with a slight resistance he will continue to work push forward. NC is also aware that it is a significant underspend and he has looked back on previous years and there does appear to be a trend, so will be looking into that further. RH is very supportive of NC's way forward. NC also confirmed that the Service needs to document Business Cases around all Capital Programmes.

- 4.5 NC wanted to note that in regard to the Covid-19 situation, the Government has announced £1.6billion in support in a Phase 1 package and ECFRS has been awarded £290,000 which has been paid. In addition, the Section 31 Business Rate Grant for 2020/21 has been paid in whole, in advance, for £1.3million which is slightly higher than originally budgeted for. This is to help with any cashflow variances or cashflow issues that may arise. Costs the Service have incurred so far are £30,000 in sanitising products and a significant order has been placed for PPE for the coming months. Staff costs along with overtime and support staff costs are being reviewed as well as the re-employment of officers and secondary contracts for the NHS work. Update will be included in the next P&R Board meeting. RH would like to see the costs ahead of the next P&R Board meeting.

**Action: 17/20**

**NC to update RH on the potential costs incurred around Covid-19 ahead of the next P&R Board Meeting**

- 4.6 RH stated that he would like the format of the Management Account Table (Appendix 1 on page 13 of the report) changed as previously requested, for example, Total Operational Income is a single line but a proportion of it is government grants so that needs to be split out. Also, Gross Expenditure is £2.4million below original budget but is that before or after the £1.07million from Reserves. The format needs to be clearer. NC confirmed that the Budget Review Pack is being reviewed and there are a number of schedules that need amending or removed completely. NC will involve RH in the progress and keep him updated.
- 4.7 RH stated that spend on training is forecast to be £427,000 down and would like to see a 1 year history in regard to training in the next report. NC confirmed that where there has been a reduction in BAU for various reasons the Service has utilised that to fund some of the Operational Training. RH stated the Service isn't where they want to be in regard to training so there needs to be a plan to get the money spent.

**Action: 18/20**

**NC to include a 1 year training history in the report for comparison.**

- 4.8 RHy confirmed that KE is involved in re-profiling the Service's Recovery Plan which will include the Training and Capital Spend not delivered. RHy will share this report with RH ahead of the next P&R Board.

## **5 Performance Report February 2020**

- 5.1 RHy took the Board through the report and highlighted the following; The incidents are down on previous month however some of the incidents still need to be processed which is an issue with the link with IRS. Fires and casualties are also down against previous year. Demographic shows that the over 70's are still more at risk.
- 5.2 Home safety visits are slightly down due to absenteeism but this will pick up and numbers will look different going forward due to Covid-19.
- 5.3 RHy confirmed that appliance availability is going up although attendance time is down slightly.
- 5.4 RHy stated that it's encouraging to see in the report that there's a reduction in sickness and an increase in fit tech passes.
- 5.5. RHy explained that the report doesn't include the Safeguarding Closed Report but can confirm that all except 4 referrals have been closed. The Service will also start to see more high risk referrals coming through due to Covid-19.

- 5.6 JTh stated that there still seems to be low availability on Brentwood's second pump and asked if there was a paper coming to the Board on the Key Stations Policy. RHy confirmed that once the IRMP is published the Key Stations report will then follow in June 2020.
- 5.7 RH stated that the HSV Rural Classification chart was very useful in looking at Home Safety Visits however need to bear in mind ¾ of land mass and population live in what are classed as rural towns which can be harder to get to, so more work needs to be delivered around Prevention & Protection through well/home safety visits. RHy agreed but there's limited resource at present. RH acknowledged this and stated when the Covid-19 crisis has passed then this area needs focusing on.
- 5.8 JG asked when the Service anticipate the training being fully rolled out. RHy stated that the lecture based training is being rolled out now so when the Covid-19 crisis is over the focus will be on delivering it. JG stated it would be good to see a timeline of anticipated roll out and actual training delivered, RHy confirmed he will put together a paper detailing where the Service is and when they expect to deliver.

**Action: 19/20**

**RHy to ask the team to put together a timetable of expected delivery for training.**

- 5.9 JG stated that the Service is so close to target to attend 90% of all calls and wants to know what's stopping them reaching that target. RHy confirmed that the biggest factor is the resource being in the right place and ensuring key stations are crewed. The Service are looking at mixed crews and additional shift work to combat this.

**6. Gender Pay Gap**

- 6.1 KE confirmed that the Service review the Gender Pay Gap on an annual basis and they have seen a small increase in the pay gap which is heading in the wrong direction. The Service is knowledgeable in regard to the underlying cause of the gap which is predominantly due to the fact that the male population of frontline staff is significant in terms of the male to female ratio. Also, there's been an increase in the uptake of additional shift work in the last 12 months which has raised the pay and again it's predominantly male staff who have taken this on.
- 6.2 KE stated that one of the positive elements of this report has been that the Service is continuing to attract and appoint qualified females into a number of Senior Leadership roles which has increased over the last 12 months and 50% of those roles are held by females.
- 6.3 RH thanked KE for the report and explanation but stated that it's still a huge move. KE confirmed that everything else from a pay banding perspective is equal and the same so the move can only be in relation to the additional shift work and secondary contracts. However further analysis will be undertaken.
- 6.4 JTh asked what the reason has been for the additional shift work over the last 12 months. KE stated that it was a combination of factors including sickness, covering pump availability, covering road safety teams and fire safety teams.
- 6.5 JG stated that the next step is that this report will be published and not withstanding the press around Covid-19 there will obviously been interest in this so are the Comms in place. KE confirmed that a response has already been drafted if the question is raised. JG has asked that the response is shared with the Board.

**Action: 20/20**

**KE will share the drafted response to the Gender Pay Gap report with RH, JG and PBI.**

- 6.6. JG asked that the detailed analysis that KE and team are doing in regard to looking further into the reasoning behind the gap be shared. KE confirmed that this analysis will be brought back to the next P&R Board meeting and JTh will add to the Forward Plan.

## **7 On-Call Liaison Officer Pilot Review**

- 7.1 RHy took the Board through the report explaining that the On-Call Liaison Officer (OCLO) Pilot was initiated in June 2019 by the On-Call Development Programme to identify and initiate innovative ways of working with and supporting on-call employees and stations, improve workforce communication and engagement, support appliance availability and develop engagement with local communities and businesses.
- 7.2 RH confirmed the objectives for the pilot were as follows; To increase the number of on-call employees. To increase engagement with the on-call workforce. Improve retention. Improve appliance stability. Support business engagement. Improve communication channels. Support and improve public awareness and understanding. Support the on-call Conversion Project.
- 7.3 RHy confirmed that the pilot was working however a lot of the time of the On-Call Liaison Officer had been taken up with the Conversion Project. RHy also stated that the Service doesn't have a problem with on-call recruitment the struggle is on-call retention and work in this area will be very important.
- 7.4 RHy confirmed that the SLT now need to decide whether they continue to invest in the On-Call Liaison Officers and a fully costed Business Case will be presented. After SLT the paper will be presented at P&R and then ultimately will be taken to the Strategic Board Meeting for sign off.
- 7.5 JTh stated that the report makes reference to a Service Policy that prevents movements between on-call and whole time duty systems, so that's a significant change that will need to be made if the posts are going to be permanent. RHy confirmed that the Service will work through the policy once a decision has been made on the posts.
- 7.6 JG confirmed for clarity that this is a paper that Dave Bill wanted brought to the meeting to keep the Board informed but asked when will the full evaluation of the pilot be presented. RHy confirmed that DB is doing the evaluation now and will look to bring an evaluation report back to the Board in July 2020.
- 7.7. JG asked if the Business Case to request the funding for these positions should come back to P&R or Strategic Board? RHy confirmed it will go to Strategic Board for sign off but will be useful to bring it to P&R first.

## **8. Revised Programme for Day Crewed Conversions**

- 8.1 RHy took the Board through the report which shows the progress of the Conversion project and confirmed that Dovercourt has progressed well over the past six months and is due to convert to on-call on 1st April 2020. In order to support the transition and ensure the availability of both appliances the station is being supported by day duty personnel who will be there through to July 2020. The station currently has 16 on-call employees with eight applications in progress.

- 8.2 RHy confirmed that the following stations will be converted by October 2021; Waltham Abbey, South Woodham Ferrers and Great Baddow, however if the Service can convert them earlier then they will be.
- 8.3 RHy stated that each converting station was assigned a week and during that week, the On-Call Liaison team, project team, and recruitment team worked from that station to ensure there were people available at all time to meet visitors and provide information and guidance about the roles and the duty system. The fitness team also attended station events and provided support and guidance to interested candidates.
- 8.4 In order to fully support the conversions, it is essential that current day crew and on-call employees are actively and positively engaged. This includes engaging with and encouraging interested candidates, supporting promotion activities and campaigns, and supporting the training and development of new recruits. All employees at all converting stations have recently confirmed their commitment to Station Managers.
- 8.5 JTh asked the Service to provide a quarterly update on conversions which JG agreed would be useful.

**Action: 21/20**

**RHy will work with DB to ensure a detailed update will come to the Board on the progress of the conversions.**

- 8.6 KE wanted it noted that there's been a lot of success in recruiting to a number of additional roles at Dovercourt to help with the conversion. There's a new Station Manager there and 2 new Fire Fighter driving positions, and a 12 month secondment for a Watch Manager and this has helped to progress it. JG confirmed that that's really good news and also need to find a way at an appropriate time to feed that back to the Council as the Service is delivering over and above what was agreed. KE will pick that up with Emily.

## **9. Target Settings**

- 9.1 RHy explained that this report sets out the proposed targets to be used for the Service's performance measures for 2020-21. These targets have been developed by the performance and data team, in conjunction with the business owner. Targets have been set to drive continuous improvement throughout the service, whilst ensuring that resources are in the right place to deliver them. This report also details the methodology used to develop and set the targets for the services performance measures as identified within the Performance Framework. The Performance Framework aligns to the Fire and Rescue Plan and the Integrated Risk Management Plan.
- 9.2 The Performance Framework sets out, that targets will only be set where it is appropriate to do so, and that performance would be measured in one of three ways; Tolerance - Performance against upper and lower tolerance levels based on last three years' performance. Targets – Specific Targets e.g. 10 minute average attendance time Monitoring - no targets, data and information are provided for monitoring purposes.
- 9.3 There has been a recognition that the current 90% of on-call availability target is not practically achievable for a number of stations. Setting unrealistic targets can have a negative impact on performance and can fail to recognise the improvements stations are making to their availability as they have still missed "the target". It is also recognising that the On call stations provide essential risk cover to the county, this is reflected in the Key Station policy which identifies the stations that must have crews to provide the best risk coverage. In order to support this the Service have kept the Key Stations availability target at 90%. The other stations have been set targets

which will challenge them to improve, but not be so unrealistic that it feels impossible to meet. No station will have a target of less than 50% availability. For 2 pump stations, performance will be measured at Station level and will be supported with additional information within the monthly and quarterly reports to show the availability of the individual pumps.

- 9.4 JG stated that she appreciates the document is a work in progress and agrees that the Service is making it more meaningful and not just a top down approach and understands that the Fire and Rescue Plan measures are not contained within however need to think about how one document supports the other. RHy confirmed that this is just around those measures that have tolerances for and will still link into the Performance Report and Fire and Rescue Plan. JTh has been working with Lucy and colleagues on this and JTh asked in regard to the key stations policy target of 90% there's a bit of confusion around stations that have a second pump so this needs to be more defined in the policy.

#### **10. Securing Adequate Water Supply (Workshop)**

- 10.1 Workshop removed from the Agenda and will be held at a later meeting.

#### **11. Forward Plan**

- 11.1 JTh has added the update on the Gender Pay Gap and the analysis.

#### **12. Any Other Business**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.15am