



Meeting	Strategic Board	Agenda Item	7
Meeting Date	17 March 2020		
Report Author:	AM J. Palmer		
Presented By	Rick Hylton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer.		
Subject	Protection Strategy - Update		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to approve the attached draft strategy (**APPENDIX A**), and draft Risk Based Inspection Programme (**APPENDIX B**) and feedback any comments.

BACKGROUND

Following the inspection from Her Majesties Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in July 2019. 4 areas of concern were identified in relation to the Effectiveness pillar, these were;

- Essex County FRS doesn't have a clear strategy for ensuring compliance with fire safety regulations
- The service isn't carrying out the number of audits of high – risk premises that it commits to as part of its Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)
- The service doesn't quality assure audits to ensure they are effective
- The service doesn't have a clear programme to ensure operational staff are competent to carry out inspections.

This paper will set out how the service intends to address these issues along with the associated timeframes and governance.

The document that drives the future direction of the Protection function within ECFRS is the strategy. That strategy has been attached to this paper.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

ECFRS recognises the areas of concern identified by HMICFRS and agreed that these are areas that need to be enhanced.



- Continuous Improvement Board
- SLT
- Performance and Resources
- Strategic Board

This structure has been set up to ensure that the service leadership team are sighted on progress and that the office of the police, fire and crime commissioner has effective oversight and is empowered to hold ECFRS to account for delivery of the action plan.

Key Areas of focus for the first six months of the plan are:

- Technical Fire Safety function currently has 9 vacancies that are in the current budget. These are being filled externally and internally, staff will need to be trained prior to being fully qualified to carry out audits.
- SLT have agreed in principle to over establish TFS inspecting officers with an expectation that the numbers will have to be increased over time. Funding for these posts in the short term will be from temporarily moving unfilled budgeted posts from Prevention
- An overarching strategy to be produced.
- High risk will be defined as: A high risk building is a building where the impact of a fire can be catastrophic. These are buildings where a lot of people live, sleep, are in need of care and/or cannot escape quickly or easily in case of a fire emergency. The risks of losing lives due to a fire are high within this category of buildings.
- Based on this definition a Risk Based Inspection Programme will be developed with a view to mitigating life risk as this is the main area of focus under the RRO.

The first piece of this work is the strategy.

This high level document forms the platform for the future direction of TFs and will be underpinned by a RBIP and an enforcement policy.

The strategy is aligned to the Building Fire Safety regulators national framework and clearly identifies the definition of a high risk premise. It also highlights the need for the organisation to be able to resource to a sufficient level to be able to understand the changing risk within the built environment following recent developments post Grenfell. The strategy allows the service to be agile enough to react to emerging trends whilst being robust and transparent enough to clearly identify the higher risk areas and target resources accordingly.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATION

The benefits of approving the strategy is that it provides a framework for the service to resource, identify and mitigate risk within the protection function under the RRO. This would have the effect of reducing risk to the people of Essex and ensuring we are able to deliver our responsibilities under legislation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None in this paper

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None in this paper.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order the service has a legal obligation to identify risk and carry out inspections relevant to the risk.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS