

## MINUTES

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

16 December 2020 10.00am – 11.53 am Video Conference

#### **Present:**

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire Crime Commissioner
Rick Hylton (RHy)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Neil Cross (NC)	Finance Director and Section 151 Officer, ECFRS
Karl Edwards (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Moira Bruin (MB)	Director of Operations, ECFRS
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC's Office
Jo Thornicroft (JTh)	Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC's Office
Christine Butler (CHB)	PA to Roger Hirst (Minutes)

#### **Apologies:**

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer PFCC's Office
Dave Bill (DB)	Director of Innovation, Risk and Future Development, ECFRS
Colette Black (CB)	Asst. Chief Exec – People, Values & Culture, ECFRS
Leanne Little (LL)	Performance Analyst, ECFRS

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

RH welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies given from DB, Rick Hylton, Janet Perry would be joining the meeting late. CB will be joining later in the meeting to talk through the Equality Framework and Tracy King will be joining the meeting to give a presentation of the HMCIFRS Inspection update on the agenda.

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

The Board reviewed the Minutes of the previous meeting 30 November 2020. Minutes and matters arising agreed with no amendments.

#### **RHy joined the meeting at 10.08am**

#### **3 Action Log**

- 63/20 Signed off on 20.10.20 – Propose Close
- 68/20 JP & DB had a meeting on 11.12.20. JP is satisfied that there is consistency between the risks – Propose Close
- 69/20 PBI advised that both the relationship with Water Companies and the

- 71/20 payment of Water Hydrants are covered under the current Scheme of Delegation – Propose Close
- 72/20 JP & NC have had several budget meetings – Propose Close
- 74/20 No action due yet – Remain Open
- 75/20 JTh to set up timed agendas. This meeting has a timed agenda and they will be going forward. Propose Close
- 81/20 RHy – This meeting has not happened yet but there is date in the diary for January. Propose Close.
- 82/20 RHy – This meeting has been difficult to arrange due to national lockdown restrictions. Remain Open.
- 86/20 Tracy King will present a paper at this meeting on HMICFRS Inspection timeline. Propose Close.
- 87/20 DB to prepare a paper for the January P&R meeting which is on the Forward Plan. Propose Close.
- 88/20 LL to present in February, how to report against the Key Station Policy, which is in the Forward Plan. Propose Close.
- 89/20 JTh and RHy Response Strategy. This has been completed and is in the Forward Plan. Propose Close
- 90/20 MB to look at Classification rating for deficiency notifications. MB is currently looking at this. Remain Open.
- 91/20 No action due yet. Remain Open.
- 92/20 No action due yet. Remain Open.
- 93/20 No action due yet. Remain Open.
- 94/20 Recruitment for technical fire safety and using some of the surge funding for training costs which was not reflected in the budget. RHy – The Surge funding is not in the budget and it will be allocated as suggested re upskilling training for crews. MB to write a paper re allocation of surge funding for the new year and will be able to give an update next month. Add to Forward Plan for March. Propose close
- 95/20 RH – Paper to be submitted needs to reflect the strategic assessment of risk for Harwich and Dovercourt, looking at where we need to be in term of availability of pumps. Looking at a route to get there with milestones on a regular basis. MB this will be in the Forward Plan in January. Propose Close
- 96/20 We need to be clear in the Protection Strategy what is being enforced against. There is a paper to this meeting. This item to be closed as it is regarding the old paper and a new action to be opened for the new paper which will be coming to the Strategic Board in March. Propose Close.
- 97/20 Confirmation from CB/NC as to whether the £1.43M was a capital or revenue cost. NC – there have not been any conversations yet. Remain Open.
- 98/20 JG to report back to RH on operational training and whether there were any additional concerns. This has been completed. Propose Close.

## **Action 99/20**

RH stated that the Forward Plan does not reference where items on the Forward Plan came from. JTh to action this by reference the item of the action/Fire & Rescue Plan etc for purposes of audit trail, unless it is a standing item.

### **4. Forward Plan**

JTh took the Board through the 2021 Forward Plan which JTh has worked through with RHy, Jo Turton and Alison Brewster.

- 4.1 JTh went through the standing and substantive items for the January 2021 meeting.
- 4.2 RH asked if we were in a position to have all the areas covered for the next meeting. KE confirmed that everything is currently being worked on and both the standing and substantive items will be ready for the January meeting.
- 4.3 JTh notified the board, that February has a very large agenda and any items to be added today may need to be on an extended timeline. RHy suggested reviewing the Forward Plan at the end of the meeting in case there are any urgent items that need to be considered.

### **5. Finance Plan**

NC talked through the Monthly Finance Plan

- 5.1 Included in the finance pack is Appendix 4 2019 Reserves Publication from the NFCC across all FRS. NC felt it would useful to include to use as a benchmark of where we are. Looking at the report, the allocation of reserves has been changed between general fund and earmarked fund at the last year end.
- 5.2 ECFRS are at £13.6m and are in the bottom half of the reserves list compared to the other FRSs. In the Capital Reserve ECFRS have £8.3m, which is 4<sup>th</sup> largest on the list.
- 5.3 There is “kick-off” project starting next week to review the balance sheet, which is planned with a dedicated resource to be completed by year end.
- 5.4 A paper was previously submitted re marketing of Day Crew properties valued at approx. £2.2m. There are currently several bids on those properties in the region of £1m. NC has spoken to PBI regarding what needs to be done and a further Decision Sheet is to be produced for the formal sign off and sale transfer of those assets, which will include details on the process followed to ensure value for money.

### **Questions**

- 5.6 RH stated that we are the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest on the list insofar as percentage, although they are outrageous percentages compared with the Home Office Financial Management Guidance. The Home Office advise, that our reserves should be within 3-5%. Some of ECFRS reserves were moved last year to bring it below the 5% figure on the general fund. Looking at the earmarked reserve on this list, there is a large sum that we have earmarked but we do now have a schedule of how we are going to allocate this. This transgresses against the Financial Management Guidance. NC added that we committed to prepare a paper for the March Strategic Board that details reserves, and it will go through the earmarked reserves and show what the commitments are against each reserve and highlight that Strategy further.

**JP joined the meeting at 10.28**

- 5.7 RHy commented that for many FRS, there is a nervousness over the current financial situation due to reductions in the Revenue Support Grant and that historically ECFRS has not had the precept flexibility that is afforded to policing. For many FRS those reserves are there for a rainy day. RH added that the reason that policing has that flexibility is that the reserves have been spent and new crime has increased, which all demand resources. This level of demand is not seen in FRS. If there were new tasks for ECFRS then a further discussion would need to be held. RHY replied that ECFRS do have new tasks such as water rescue, animal rescue, fire protection, building risk review etc, means that whilst fire demand has not changed, the broad range of skills that fire undertake has changed significantly over the last 10 years, all of which need investment.
- 5.8 NC then talked through the Budget. The budget is in a consistent position compared to the last new months. The Forecast has been reviewed and a few line amendments have been made for the projection i.e. on-call and non-pay costs although by the end of the year there will be a balanced budget.
- 5.9 The virement figure was due to some permanent reductions that have been put through in terms of cost savings. By scheduling earlier in the year, those have been built into the budget process showing permanent reductions in budget. RH asked if a Decision Sheet had been signed in this regard? NC replied that the decision has gone through SLT. RH stated that virements over £250k need a Decision Sheet. NC will action.

#### **Action 100/20**

All virements over £250k need a Decision Sheet. NC will action.

- 5.10 Regarding Capital spend, there is currently a projected spend of £4m against a budget of £8m and there has been discussion previously around the key variances. JP attended the Capital Board this week. We will land at approx £3m. There are property works scheduled and training works that are scheduled to complete in the last quarter and the sign off of the Decision Sheet for completion works for KP.
- 5.11 RH asked if there were any changes on the headcount budget, as there is a variance on the budget. NC replied that many of the roles are on-call which show the biggest variances. These numbers have been budgeted for and the figures are under in that area. NC is going through Grey Book roles with MB to ensure they are allocated and what vacancies there currently are.
- 5.12 KE said that regarding recruitment, over the last 9 months the service has been running a whole time recruitment campaign. There is a squad of 18 passing out in January. The whole time numbers will be up by the end of January plus there are further squads in April and June to allow for forecasted leavers and retirees. There is also an allowance over the next 24 months for the potential impact of McCloud/Sergeant cases, which is why the service have created pools of successful applicants that can be brought in quickly if we see a mass exodus of retirees. KE confirmed to RH that the vacancy factor is around 4% of our required total.
- 5.13 RHy commented regarding the gap, that this is due to the Fire Protection uplift for 10 posts. RH confirmed that the technical fire safety figures were 12 Grey Book under, 2 Green Book over, net 10 under. RHy agreed. RHy stated the positions will be filled as soon as qualified people are recruited. The change from Grey to Green is due to taking people with the skills as opposed to matching out the duty system. If some of the Surge Funding can be used to upskill some of the crews, that will close the gap for future years. All FRS are all recruiting from the same pool which causes issues in recruiting. To meet the requirements of the Building Risk Review in the future, we need to bring those staff and skills in. The current advert is open, but it has been very difficult

to attract and retain staff. KE added that the training package is part of the attraction for the recruitment and retention of those key roles.

**A break was taken at 10.40 due to RH internet connections being lost**

**CB joined at 10.46 for the Continuous Improvement Item on the Agenda**

5.14 RH asked RHy when he anticipated that the Fire Protection roles would be filled? RHy said that they roles would be filled this year; it is important that the roles are filled to enable the service to deliver the Risk Based Inspection Program and the Building Risk Review. RH said that we know what the problem is, we must train, which will cover shortages, ECFRS need to become a leader in this field which will serve to train and attract applicants. RHy added that MB is already working on succession planning and will bring additional support into Fire Protection to assist with that. RHy to come back with a plan of options that are available in filling the 10 posts. KE is overseeing the recruitment in those positions and will bring a paper which gives an update on the progression against fulfilling those posts and how the Service have done so and with what skill levels.

**Action 101/20**

RHy to come back to P&R with a plan of training options that are available in filling the 10 Fire Protection posts,

**Action 102/20**

KE to bring a paper to P&R which gives an update on the progression against fulfilling the 10 Fire Protection posts and how the Service have done so and with what skill levels

5.15 RH asked CB, if improved training in this area is part of what we are doing. CB replied that this area is included in Pillar 2, which is the Department Training Plans and Core-Learning Pathways.

**6. Monthly Performance Report**

RHy talked through the highlights the report in the absence of LL.

- 6.1. There is a down trend of incidents since August on all call types compared to the last three years.
- 6.2 Improvement of 11 seconds on the average response times to life threatening incidents. Attendance is still over by 28 seconds over the 10 minutes attendance time, but it is moving in the right direction. The key stations work and the Response Strategy that MB is leading on will seek to address that as a key priority of the IRMP.
- 6.3 There has been improvement of on-call availability this month, compared to last month and up on the same period last year.
- 6.4 Dovercourt availability has improved this month to 75% for the Station. RHy to speak to LL re changing some of the section regarding on-call availability to show more specific and targeted work in order to understand the performance better.

## Action 103/20

RHy to speak to LL re changing some of the section in the Performance Report regarding on-call availability to show more specific and targeted work in order to understand the performance better.

- 6.5 The building regs and licencing consultations were delivered within the statutory time period. The impact can be seen in this Performance Report of the second lockdown and the access to people's homes, the ability to cross the threshold and access to business. The Fire Protection Team have focused their attention on the building risk review and the planning applications as well as building reg consultations. The on-line desk top audits have also been completed in line with NFCC Guidance.
- 6.6 There were two casualties from accidental dwelling fires, out of 53 dwelling fires. The fires were common causes consistent with the age profile (over 65) that are known risk groups in Essex. There were alarms installed which alerted the resident.
- 6.7 In the people data section, there has been a change to days lost as a percentage at request of the Board which is 6%. We are aligned to the national average.
- 6.8 Fitech Fitness Assessments have restarted with a 93% pass rate. 100 were undertaken in October.
- 6.9 Three Safety flashes: -
- There was a fire in an appliance caused by a spare battery overheating. Spare batteries are no longer charged in those vehicles.
  - Issue with a seatbelt stalk that had sheered. This is due to it being wedged down the back of the appliance seats to make room for breathing apparatus sets. A safety flash for all seatbelt stalks to be checked on appliances.
  - There was an issue with a BA cylinder valve ratchet. The ratchet prevents the cylinder from closing when it is being worn. The safety flash included a video for crews to check to make sure that the ratchet was operational.
- 6.10 There have been several near misses and RIDDOR from operational training. CB is dealing these, and there are BA hot fire issues caused by burns to the skin. RHy chaired a group to review and a series of actions are now in place to mitigate those risks. This included changing the way the service operates, resizing of some fire kit and the procurements of additional gloves and personal protection for the instructors.
- 6.11 Crews are now trained in fire protection and in community safety. Those visits are starting to be rolled out, although we are not seeing the impact now due to the lockdown. A key priority for the new year is to increase the number of audits and community safety activity that the crews are taking. The harm model is being developed as part of the prevention strategy and will be able to be proportion those to where the risk is greatest.
- 6.12 RH asked when will there be a report back to the P&R board re the fire protection and community safety visits, will this be part of the Performance Report or does it warrant a separate paper? RHy replied that It will become part of the Performance Report which will include the number of audits undertaken, the home safety work, audits undertaken again risk inspection program. RH would like to have a detailed short report which shows the fire protection and community safety visits impact since March and parts to be shown in the performance report. MB to prepare a paper for the board for the March P&R Meeting.

## **Action 104/20**

RH would like to have a detailed short report which shows the fire protection and community safety visits impact since March and parts to be shown in the performance report. MB to prepare a paper for the board for the March P&R Meeting.

- 6.13 JP questioned the total pumping appliance availability. The target is 95% which has been achieved once. What is the plan to get to 95%? RHy there is a plan but the 95% is a combination of all pumping appliances and some of the on-call stations will be dragging the number down. It is not a true reflection of the attendance times. There are certain stations that need to be available in a certain area. The report is focused on station by pump at the moment, which is not very helpful. The Key Station work will help increase the attendance times. The two drivers are attending within 10 minutes and 15, it is about appliance availability in the right places. JP asked how that causes a problem? RHy explained that in certain areas there is not the availability where it is needed but there are a series of factors in the Key Station work that is done by MB's team to cover that. RHy suggested that he have a conversation with JP and MB to discuss in more detail. RH said that this does not need to be an action on the log.
- 6.14 JP thanked LL for amending the sickness and appreciates the work that went into doing this. KE added that the sickness report that was released today showed a figure of 67% is due to Covid related absence. If the Covid absence was removed, our sickness level is massively down from where we were this time last year. Even with the Covid figure we are still placed as an average overall sickness level.

## **7. HMICFRS Protection Improvement Plans Update**

### **7.a Protection Improvement Plan Update**

MB talked through the Protection Improvement Plan Update

- 7.1 MB stated that the service is on track with the Performance Improvement Plan for Protection. A peer review with the Head of Protection in Herts FRS regarding the Protection Improvement Plan prior to the HMI returning has been instigated, so that we are fully prepared for the inspection.
- 7.2 A review of the Enforcement Policy has been started and is in line with timescales and will be before the board in February.
- 7.3 CFRMIS (Community Fire Safety Risk Management Information System) is now live for Prevention and Protection and need to work on sharing information with other areas of the business to ensure that it is seamless.
- 7.4 There is still some legacy data on the old system and looking at cleansing and migrating that data across.

### **7b Culture Improvement Plan Update**

CB went through the Culture Improvement Plan Update

- 7.5 There is a continuous development of Culture. The Improvement Plan shows that the Service are delivering on track.
- 7.6 There are two questions that require answers before the HMICFRS visit: are all of those actions in the plan making a difference to how people feel and how we are perceived in the community in Essex and nationally. Ahead of the HMICFRS returning the Service will have the results of the staff survey (headlines are coming to the Board in January). This is a key internal measure together with the focus groups that are

taking place in the new year. The focus group is called “Everyone Matters” and is the follow on from the program that we ran last year. Everyone Matters now has a different inference due to Black Lives Matter work that has been prevalent this year.

- 7.7 CB has been in touch with the four FRS who scored an outstanding assessment in terms of culture in the previous three tranches of HMICFRS to seek a partner to review our work for feedback.
- 7.8 We are a trailblazer for the NFCC Maturity Model work which is a self-assessment. CB offered to bring more information to P&R if required,

### **Questions**

- 7.9 JP asked that the plan was either blue or green, is that correct? CB agreed. JP raised a concern that the plan may not be as perfect as it looks. RH added are we stretching ourselves? CB replied the action plan is a helpful measure of our actions and the inputs, but it does not measure if it is making a difference or not. The staff survey and focus groups and the partner work with other FRS and the Maturity Model will help us to measure if the actions are making a difference.
- 7.10 CB said that work was also being undertaken on reimagining year three, together with HR colleagues to look at the People Strategy Action Plans. Culture is only one of the six parts of the People Strategy Action Plan and CB has the same set of questions for the whole of the People Strategy and not just the Culture parts. Both KE and CB and the action board are channelling that work. There is an Extraordinary meeting early January, which will bring to fruition the work of looking at future years how the Service is challenging itself.
- 7.11 JP asked that what CB is doing at the moment and the inputs that CB is putting in are going very well but in terms of the outputs and the outcomes, they are still in Amber? CB replied that it is not known until the feedback has been obtained. The general feedback is good. The staff survey is a key data point and the feedback will be with the Board in January. The data is very qualitative, but we also need the quantitative data.
- 7.12 RH asked CB that when we are re-inspected what she expects the Service to get rated. CB replied that it is anticipated that the Service will be significantly improved. CB is working with the four ‘outstanding’ FRS to understand. We are taking the right steps and are seeing change. The awareness will help us prepare for the inspection.

## **8. Fire Protection Board Building Risk Review Update**

MB updated the Board

- 8.1 An update of the progression of the Building Risk Review against the 182 buildings that were identified. The report is returned on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. MB outlined the December return which covered the period 1<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> November. Overall 40 buildings have been reviewed and 3 buildings have been rated as “red” due to the presence of flammable cladding insulation in the external wall system. 22 buildings are classified as “amber” which we are awaiting verification of what the cladding consists of and 15 “green” which have no concerns. These figures are for clad buildings in all shapes and forms throughout the County.

### **Questions**

- 8.2 RH commented on a complaint which has been received for one of the buildings which is rated as “red”. RH offered encouragement to enforce vigorously. Although we have a complaint from a resident saying that it is expensive, he needs to complain to his landlord. MB replied that the Service would continue to discharge their statutory function.



- 8.3 JP asked for clarification of the “Amber” rated items i.e. are they all ones that we do not know about? MB replied that the “Amber items are ones that can be rectified, and the Service are not so concerned about those. Many of the cases need clarification on what the external wall system consists of. In many cases the responsible person cannot tell us, they must go back and check and let the Service know so that they can satisfy themselves. MB added that it could also be rated “Amber” as we are waiting for information or there is something that needs to be done that would take them into “Green”. MB added that the service needed to comply with the classification system that was set by the NFCC.
- 8.4. RH suggested to amend the report. In the issues/further action It would be helpful to know what the yes items are in answer to and for the reader to have a summary of what the questions are in the bullets. One of bullets could be “awaiting further information” and another could be “mediation plan in place’. RHy agreed and asked MB to pick up with Jim or Mark to set out what the questions are for those 4 bullet points. MB agreed and would make the changes.
- 8.5. RHy said that to give reassurance, out of the 180 buildings that MB discussed in the report, there are 60 high rise residential buildings in Essex which have been prioritised for Building Risk Reviews and 40 of which have been done. These are classed as the most significant risk as opposed to low rise buildings, schools etc. RH asked if this could also be broken out in the report.

#### **Action 105/20**

MB to amend the Building Risk Review Report to add more details in the issues/further actions column to incorporate a summary of the questions asked re the bullet points to show why the buildings are rated as such along with a breakdown of the building types i.e. high rise, low rise, schools etc.

- 8.6 JP referred to the complaint that has been made and feels that work needs to be done around how the fire complaints are handled. MB reminded JP that there are two types of complaints, one against the Fire Service and the other regarding Fire Safety. RHy said that JP should speak to Tracy King in this regard.

#### **Action 106/20**

JP to speak to Tracy King regarding Fire Service complaints and how they are handled as she feels that some work is needed in this area.

### **9. On-Call Conversion Update**

MB updated in absence of DB.

- 9.1 There has been a revisit, refresh and a reenergisation of the on-call conversion project. The contents of the paper were discussed at the Dovercourt update meeting on 14.12.20. Most of the board are aware of the contents.
- 9.2 The on-call conversion project is to be continued as the Service needs to move away from the day crewing system. The remaining three stations will convert into on-call stations.
- 9.3 Lessons are to be learned from the conversion at Dovercourt which are allowing enough time to develop the skill set to run the station as on-call and put in some transitional planning in place to ensure that it can continue to turn out and meet attendance times.
- 9.4 The paper also highlights that Dovercourt is a key station and availability must be maintained. The three remaining stations are different due to the level of risk inherent

of those not turning out as they are not key stations. There is a focus on how we look at availability and report on that going forward and how the Service are going to meet and maintain our response standards by implementation of the Key Station Policy.

- 9.5 The SRO has been changed from DB to MB and there has been a change of Project Manager to Matt Stalker.
- 9.6 MB added that the objectives of the project would not be changed, the scope may be revisited which has been discussed and implications for budgeting around those stations. Assets will be realised by selling the day crew houses.

### **Questions**

- 9.7. RH commented that the paper says that the day crew members will be told by Christmas which is next week. MB added that there is a meeting after the Strategic Board meeting to discuss the timeline for this, for what can be achieved and also the political piece. This will be able to be actioned very quickly after the meeting. RH said that we need to have an individual plan for each station setting out how we do it. The transitional statement is key to a successful implementation. MB added that any financial implications would be spelt out in the action plan.
- 9.8 JP asked it is was the right thing to let the day crew staff know just before Christmas? MB replied that the Service committed to let the people know before Christmas, this will not be a surprise to anyone, and this is also about giving clarity on when we are going to convert. The people at the stations will have to move out of the provided housing and the Service wants to give plenty of time in that respect.

## **10. Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework**

CB talked to the Board

- 10.1 This report is linked to the sixth of our Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives, which is to seek external review, challenge and accreditation of our actions as an employer by actively participating in relevant equality standards and benchmarks including the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework.
- 10.2 In the People Strategy Action Plan, underneath the Fair, Kind, and Inclusive strand, we have made a commitment to complete this by September 2021. A self-assessment has been completed earlier than anticipated.
- 10.3 The self-assessment currently shows that we are making progress in all of the areas. There were two areas that we have assessed as “Red” at this time and actions are being put in place to address those.
- 10.4 Community Knowledge and Engagement area is where we need to travel forward but is well articulated in the Strategy which MB is working on in Protection and Prevention.
- 10.5 CB suggested that the next steps are to continue using the LGA Fire and Rescue Equality Framework for the next 12 months. CB would like to work towards the Inclusive Employer Standard. The preference is the external accreditation of inclusivity which would help with both the employer of choice and brand as the Service continues to recruit.
- 10.6 CB said that they are currently working towards the LGA Framework being “Green” before applying to the Inclusive Employers Standard for September 2021 in line with the People Strategy and the Action Plan.

## Questions

- 10.7 JTh observed that some of the objectives have comments as opposed to actions to improve the rating.
- 10.8 JTh asked if this is going forward for the next year, how often should the Board have sight of the Framework. CB suggested that the internal group that reviews this is the Inclusion and Diversity Action Group, who would see this regularly. From a P&R perspective CB would suggest bringing back to the P&R Board in 6 months to demonstrate that this is moving forwards i.e. June. In December the Board may want to know how close

## Action 107/20

JTh to place an update of the Equality Framework on the action log/forward plan for June and December 2021 P&R meetings.

- 10.9 JP highlighted that most items were “Amber” rated. CB has an action plan that does not deliver this until 2021. CB is reassured that progress is being made in all areas but would not anticipate it being fully “Green” until September 2021.

## **11. Grenfell Phase 1 High Level Action Plan**

MB presented the paper to the Board and highlighted the changes

- 11.1 The Technical Fire Safety Team have been concentrating on the Building Risk Review activity for both tall and clad buildings and the Risk Based Inspection Program. Joint visits are being made going forward with operational crews and the Technical Fire Safety Officers, which brings together the sharing the risk information.
- 11.2 A gap analysis/assurance that our risk information is up to speed on our high rise buildings. As more detailed information becomes available on high rise buildings etc, this is reflected on the operational risk information that the crews have access to should they ever need access to that building. This will increase the information sharing available on the CIMFRS system.
- 11.3 Improvements are being made to reporting activity over the Risk Based Inspection Program, as some anomalies have been highlighted regarding how we were directing activity in that area. The Protection staff are working to the Risk Based Inspection Program and making sure that they are working to and reporting on that.
- 11.4 The Peer Review that has been instigated regarding the Protection Improvement Plan. The Service have also asked that the Grenfell Action plan to be looked over.
- 11.5 Other FRS are not at the stage ECFRS are at and are asking how ECFRS have gone about this as it is a complex piece of work and have asked the Service to share this plan with them to inform how they will go forward.

## Questions

- 11.6 RH said that the area the Service needed to expand their expertise is in enforcement. The service does not have experience in this area and more work is needed and a bolder approach is needed. MB agreed and added that this will be brought out in the reviewed Enforcement Policy, which will give the assurance on how this will be achieved and communicated. RH added that there is no need to wait for the Phase 2 of Grenfell and gave encouragement to move forward in this area.
- 11.7 JTh there are a lot of actions in the plan but is there anything that is giving MB cause for concern due to HMICFRS coming back early 2021 and Grenfell is clearly on everyone’s mind. MB replied that there are concerns, as it is a massive piece of work

but there is nothing in the action plan that concerns MB at this time. There are some early items in place i.e. smoke hoods and reviewing operational response to high rises. There are areas for concern, they are not ones that the Service has control over currently.

- 11.8 RH feels that it is an issue which is very high on the agenda of the Fire Minister. He is very concerned that after 3 years there is still a lot of work outstanding. There is a lot of premises where there is not even a plan in place. RH said that there seems a reluctance at the Fire Services Management Committee to move this on and there is not a sense of urgency. Before the Minister takes remedial action, we as a service need to get ahead of that. MB the concern would be about the resourcing. Filling the vacancies for those posts has been discussed and it is difficult recruiting the right expertise to get this done. MB a paper will come back to P&R on how the Service plan to address that. RH reiterated the need to train in that area.
- 11.9 RHy said that one of the big questions that the Service needs answers to, is the timescales for the implementation of the Building Safety Regulator which will be the HSE and how Councils and FRS will play their part in this remedial work and the answers to those questions are still outstanding. Understanding that from an FRS perspective would be really helpful to accelerate the pace of change that is required. RH feels that we are in a position as a Service to confirm our own ideas and push them forward and gain experience and feed into shape the national direction. RHy although there is a lot that can be done, there is also a lot of areas that need guidance from the Building Safety Regulator.
- 11.10 MB recalled a risk around resourcing. The HSE are seeking to recruit people from the fire sector which is where the training is important.

## **12. HMICFRS Round 2 Inspection Timeline**

Tracy King presented the paper

- 12.1 TK updated the Board on what is known already about cycle 2 of the HMICFRS Full Inspections and to give sight of key dates and what will happen early in the new year as Field Work Week is only one part of the Inspection and there is a lot of preparation that has to be done as a service.
- 12.2 The first date is the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 when the updated Improvement Plan for the areas that we received causes for concern for is to be submitted.
- 12.3 Whilst the plan was to have a further reinspection for the Protection area, HMI have brought us forward in the tranches and they will combine the reinspection with the full inspection.
- 12.4 The next key date after December will be when we receive a document request in January which will ask us to provide approx. 53 key documents from across the Service from Strategies to Key Policies and various plans. TK has already begun work on this which will be shared with SLT colleagues before Christmas.
- 12.5 There are still a few unknown items. HMC have said that there may be a mix of on-site presence from HMI as well as virtual presence, but they are still decisions that are being taken.

### **Questions**

- 12.6 RH requested some feedback around the timing as he will not be able to report during Purdah as he cannot comment. TK will be able to clarify in the new year and will mention any dates that are difficult and is aiming for June. RHy gave the reassurance that there has been informal communication with HMICFRS, and their indication is the

inspection will be after the election period. RHy informed the Board that both Essex and Buckinghamshire are the only FRS that have been moved from Tranche 3 to Tranche 1 of the second round of inspections. This means that we have 12 months less than other services to demonstrate our improvements. RH added that a huge amount of work has been done since the last inspection and this needs to be documented so we can show the changes. Well done to the team for making it happen.

### **13. Enforcement Policy**

MB updated the Board.

- 13.1 MB has attached the existing policy to the papers as JTh wanted to see both. Things have moved on and the Policy needs to be reviewed and there has been discussion around this
- 13.2 The timeline was set out with the Protection Improvement Plan; it is still within the timeline, but the Strategy needs to be set out in the first instance before the Enforcement Policy can be revisited. MB gave reassurance that the areas to focus on for the review will be, what do we want to enforce against? what are the powers we can use? Are we using all available powers? What are the escalation routes and how quickly can we move to formal? And making sure we capture in the policy the strategic intent focus on early prosecution.
- 13.3 Ensuring that our stakeholders and the people who might be subject to enforcement understand what it is enforcing against and how we do this. We need to find ways to engage and share best practice and publicise this. There is some work with Denise Rossiter of the Chamber of Commerce to see how we can move forward with that and use her expertise. MB to have a conversation with NC on how to plug in some funding to the chamber.
- 13.4 The reviewed Policy will be brought back to this Board in February 2021.

### **Questions**

- 13.5 RH said that we will need to have a new Policy to the Strategic Board, and it will need signing off. The Policy will be brought to P&R to discuss in February with a view to take it to Strategic board in March. MB agreed.
- 13.6 RHy asked who to follow up with re the Enforcement Policy so that what we bring to P&R in February, reflects the ambition that RH has, rather than bring a paper back that did not include what was needed. JP and JTh to decide who is best to deal and to confirm to MB.

### **14. AOB**

There was not any AOB

Meeting finished at 11.53am