

ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
 Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

Meeting	ECFRS Performance and Resources Board	Agenda Item	14
Meeting Date	June 2021	Report Number	
Report Author:	Jo Thornicroft, Head of Performance and Scrutiny (fire) - PFCC		
Presented By	Jo Thornicroft, Head of Performance and Scrutiny (fire) - PFCC		
Subject	Performance Deep Dives: 2021/22		
Type of Report:	Discussion		

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members of the Board are asked to consider the proposal for the development of the Deep Dive programme for 2021/22.

BACKGROUND

2. A programme of Deep Dives was agreed at Performance and Resources Board on 18th December 2019. These commenced in February 2021, with the final one occurring on 17th June 2021.
3. The priorities and measures from the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019-2024 formed the basis of the original deep dive programme. Three additional areas of focus were requested by the Service. These were Absenteeism, Safeguarding, and HR Case Management and Performance Management.
4. The Deep Dives have been very positive, allowing the PFCC's Office the opportunity to drill down into focused areas, meet the teams delivering at an operational level to gain a greater depth of understanding and provide support where appropriate utilising their skills, knowledge and networks. It has also made the PFCC's Office more visible to the wider Service.
5. With the development of the annual planning process, we now have the opportunity to link the deep dives to activities within the Annual Plan. This will allow us to follow the 'golden thread' from The Fire and Rescue Plan, through the IRMP and into actionable pieces of work. We can then scrutinise achievement of stated objectives and outcomes, and gain assurance of those elements that drive the achievement of the priorities within Fire and Rescue Plan.

FORMAT OF DEEP DIVES

6. The previous year's Annual Plan will form the basis of the deep dive programme with six detailed deep dives per year.
7. A wider group than the normal Performance and Resources Board will be assembled for each deep dive which will take the form of a strategic conversation, with key players from the Service who can not only add value to the discussion from their perspective, but gain some exposure to the scrutiny process.
8. The deep dives will be structured as a strategic conversation focusing on what is new, what has changed, what that means for the public and what we need to do in response. Where performance and benchmarking information is available, it will be provided.
9. Notes from the deep dives will be presented at the Performance and Resource Board for update. Any action arising can also be monitored and managed. A proposal for this is at Appendix 2.
10. Due to the timescales of the completion of activities from the Annual Plan, we will work on a rolling 6-month programme. This will enable us to capture those activities that may not yet be embedded enough for scrutiny but will be in 6 months' time. Additions will be agreed between the PFCC's Office and ECFRS. The current proposed areas of focus are at Appendix 1.
11. The final Deep Dive from the 2020/21 Programme takes place in June 2021 so it is proposed that the first Deep Dive in the new programme takes place in August 2021.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

12. The Deep Dive process supports the Commissioner's scrutiny function. By aligning the deep dives to the Annual Plan the process enables assurance of the translation of the Fire and Rescue Plan, through the IMRP to the Annual Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. None.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

14. None

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

15. The workforce was engaged in the preparation of the Annual Plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. None.

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

17. None

Appendix 1 – Proposed Timetable

Timetable

Date	Activity
Aug 2021	HMICFRS Recommendations - The service should assure itself that its workforce is productive. We will develop a tool that allows stations to ensure that they are directing their capacity towards activity that will meet our plans.
Sept 2021	Flexible Benefits, Wellbeing Policy and Mental Health Awareness
Nov 2021	HMICFRS Recommendations - The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use debriefs and improve operational learning/practise
Jan 2022	Creation of Area Community Action Plans for our operational staff, owned by Group Managers incorporating Response, Community Safety and Staff competence (4.1.7 from the 2020 Annual Plan)
March 2022	To embed the Protection Strategy into the organisation, including allocation of the Government surge funding in regard to high rises and roll out of the Risk Based Inspection Programme
May 2022	HMICFRS Recommendations - The service should develop a clear prevention strategy to guide its work and ensure it makes best use of resources to achieve its targets.

Appendix 2 – Proposed Reporting and Action Log

Notes on Case Management Deep Dive

17th June 2021

Present

Jane Gardner	Colette Black
Janet Perry	Jaclyn Thorold
Jo Thornicroft	Neil Fenwick
Steve Tovey	Yvette Borowiec
Hannah Phipps	

Introduction

Case Management sits under the priority of 'Promote a Positive Culture in the Workplace' in the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Current Work

Principles in the People Strategy

Policies:

- Dignity at Work policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Attendance Management policy
- Fitness policy

Better training is leading to earlier intervention and local resolution

Performance

Number of cases managed in year has reduced from 198 in 19/20 to 107 in 20/21

Average days to resolve a case has reduced from 164 in 19/20 to 131 in 20/21

Improved metrics from the Staff Survey showing increase in perception of fairness, toleration of bullying, harassment and discrimination and in appraisal

Overall, greater understanding and management of cases. Two examples presented explaining processes, reasoning for delays, and how these might be overcome in the future

Future Work

Disciplinary Policy – currently in negotiation with Rep Bodies

Code of Conduct – to be amended following the launch of the NFCC Code of Ethics

Social Media Policy – draft policy agreed. Awaiting agreement of the Code of Conduct

Fitness Policy – in recovery phase due to pandemic

Attendance Policy – approved but to be launched once toolkit finalised

Will be working with the FBU to design an appropriate investigations and disciplinary training workshop.

The People Business Partners are committed to undertaking a series of manager workshops to increase manager understanding, capability and availability to support timely case support.

Actions for Review

TOIL and impact on availability

Benchmarking (impact of NFCC Maturity Models)

Social Media Policy

Effect of large number of experienced managers retiring over the next 2 years

Exploration of Recruiting and investigation Team

Action No	Deep Dive	Area for Review	Contact	Update Due	Notes
01/21	Case Management	TOIL and impact on availability	CB	Sept 21	
02/21	Case Management	Benchmarking	CB	Sept 21	NFCC Maturity Model impact
03/21	Case Management	Social Media Policy	CB	Sept 21	Dependant on launch on Code of Ethics
04/21	Case Management	Effect of large number of experienced managers retiring over the next 2 years	CB	Sept 21	Reference to Workforce Plan and LEAP
05/21	Case Management	Exploration of Recruiting an investigation Team	CB	Sept 21	