

MINUTES

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

28 June 2021 14.00 – 15.58pm Video Conference

Present:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire Crime Commissioner
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer PFCC's Office
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC's Office
Rick Hylton (RH _y)	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
Jim Palmer (JP _a)	Asst Director – Head of Prevention and Protection
Colette Black (CB)	Asst. Chief Exec – People, Values & Culture, ECFRS
Leanne Little (LL)	Performance Analyst, ECFRS
Jo Thornicroft (JTh)	Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC's Office
Christine Butler (CHB)	PA to Roger Hirst (Minutes)
Peter Morath	(Observer)

Apologies:

1 Welcome and Apologies

RH welcomed everyone to the meeting. RH to leave at 3.45 due to a Home Office Meeting.

RH noted that there were a couple of agenda items assigned to Dave Bill. It was noted that Dave Bill has now retired. Thanks, were given for the amazing and high quality service over a long number of years to this committee.

JG informed the meeting that the papers had been thoroughly read and asked that the salient points only were raised for discussion at their items.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed for accuracy and there were no matters arising that were either on this agenda or on the action log or forward plan. Minutes as agreed.

3 Action Log

103/20 Regarding reporting O/C availability, LL has asked if this be moved in line with Q1 reporting where it will be part of the Q1 Report. Move to August. Remain open.

9/21 Regarding speaking to the public about joint key stations. RH_y was to speak to Emily Cheyne and the last response of that was to move it to June when the Response Strategy was approved. RH_y said that the Response Strategy was approved at the last Strategic board, Emily has detailed plans in place with Darren Horsman around looking at commissioning work to display it in an animation which can be used through social media. It is not a straightforward

item to explain but the animation route will be the best way to do that. Emily is currently receiving quotes for this and she is currently off sick but when she returns there will be a firm timeline put in place for that. Remain Open

- 14/21 This was for NC to organise training for non-finance expert budget holders. This has been progressed and JP will be working with NC to put that together. NC agreed that this is key but would not happen until September. The reason for this is that additional team resource is being put in place on a temporary basis, hopefully a secondment from Essex County Council, to update our financial report to budget holders. The plan will be to get this out in a new streamlined format, and once familiar with that, the training will take place. JTh suggested that this be moved to September for the due date and NC agreed. Remain Open
- 18/21 This was regarding holding a session on Building Risk Review Program to elected members and was on hold pending the elections. MB said that Emily had been looking at this and had a date earmarked to host that event. Emily is looking to get this before the summer recess and if it is not possible due to diaries then it will be September or October. Remain Open
- 22/21 Action for JTh to circulate a report template. JTh has worked with Suzanne Harris to come up with a draft template to be used at the Scrutiny Board meetings. The fire copy is currently with Alison Brewster who is going to take it to SLT for it to be looked at to ensure that everyone is comfortable. It is in progress but not complete. Remain open.
- 23/21 Regarding the new finance reporting in PowerBi, JP and NC are in discussion and have viewed PowerBi and propose that the item is now closed.
- 24/21 This was regarding a variance in the O/C costs and there was going to be a review. NC said that the stations had been identified where the variance had arisen throughout the year. There were not any details, the review is trying to come up with the reports and they are the ones which are to be rolled out within the Service, going forward we will know what pay elements will impact on any variances in both W/T or O/C. JTh asked if this would come back to the Board or be closed out in a different way? NC said that once the new PowerBi costs have been rolled out he will bring back to the board what that looks like. JP and LL will have seen what NC is working on and NC is obtaining feedback from Station Staff before it is rolled out across the Service and the dashboards that the stations have access to via LL's platform. NC is happy to share the information but would like to ensure that it is in the correct format before it is issued. JTh asked if it would be available for the July meeting, NC would prefer if this was moved to August and then could have some dialogue in between. NC is unsure of what he will bring to the Board yet, but NC and JP will have a conversation round this. A lot of trend information has been obtained and it is how will it be presented to the board. Move to August. Remain open.
- 29/21 This was around using PowerBi and looking at the 10 minute attendance time target and how that is displayed. LL has asked if this can be moved to the Q1 reporting as it will be part of that report. JTh asked for agreement to move this item to an August due date. Remain open.
- 30/21 Regarding availability at Ingatestone. Neil Fenwick reported to the last meeting that. MB has also produced a paper which was circulated towards the end of last week which gives the current position at Ingatestone. Propose Close.
- 35/21 JTh asked if RHy had seen the updated version of the Minutes from the previous meeting. RHy had seen the Minutes and fed back to CHB. Propose Close
- 36/21 This was regarding the Finance report and the outturn report on page 3. There was additional wording that RH had asked for to show that the budget was closer to what the Service thought

would be spent. NC was confused on this asked and brought back the variance in pay costs as part of the financial pack but that is covered under the next point. NC will need a refresher on this item and there is a further conversation needed. Remain open.

- 37/21 NC said that this is included in the Appendices to the Finance pack where NC has shown a trend which related to the movement in the pay costs which related to last year. JP said that RH had asked why the payments had so dramatically changed year on year and is that covered off in the account now. NC said that there is a note in the accounts along with the detailed movement in this pack. Propose Close.
- 38/21 Finance Report including feedback on balance sheet and cashflow. JP has advised that there has been some reporting on the Balance Sheet, but they are still under construction and this has been asked to move to July. NC confirmed that this would be in the next month's P&R pack. Remain open
- 39/21 The Monthly Performance Report question regarding changes to attendance times, this is to be aligned to the Q1 report where that information will be. Move to August. Remain open
- 40/21 RHy to circulate the Lessons Learned Report in respect of the two fatalities in Canvey. This has happened. Propose Close.
- 41/21 This is a duplicate. Propose Close
- 42/21 RHy to have a conversation with RH & JG to what the Service could do locally and possible investment in legal support around the building risk review programme. This is scheduled for 11th July. Propose Close.
- 43/21 RH request for information on some of the properties in the Building Risk Review Programme and whether they were in Brentwood. Thorndon Court and Beckett House are in Brentwood and Sale House is in Colchester. RH said that if ECFRS are enforcing against the local council then RH is a member of Brentwood Borough Council. RH asked PBI to pick up the conflict of interest and how this is managed. Re Brentwood Properties owned by Brentwood Borough Council. Propose close
- 44/21 Understanding the National impending skills gaps. CB circulated some information from the NFCC on the National Succession Planning GAP. Propose Close.
- 45/21 CB to contact Nottinghamshire Police regarding their recruitment success. CB is currently searching for an appropriate contact. Remain open.
- 46/21 Regarding the Disciplinary Policy, a new Policy had been circulated but was not on a Decision Sheet yet. There are still ongoing conversations with the fire brigade unions and at the moment they are still using the old disciplinary policy. It is planned that this will come to the September Strategic Board. Remain Open.
- 47/21 CB to organised for JG to see the wellbeing hub. This is currently being organised. Propose close.
- 48/21 Regarding Tilbury Grain Fire, RHy to set up a meeting with RH & JG to discuss lessons learned. RHy said that Louise Kotze is locating a suitable meeting diary for Neil Fenwick to go through this. Remain open

4. Forward Plan

JTh highlighted the three new items that were not on the original plan but were agreed at a previous meeting.

- Fire Safety Order Consultation and GAP Analysis.
- Covid Assurance
- Emergency Response Driving Fire Standard.

4.1 RHy said there are several fire standards coming out and we have an approach as a Service on how we plan to review, adopt, or reject those fire standards. RHy suggested that the paper be brought to the Board in order to see how the Service are taking them forward and which ones are in train and make a decision regarding the ones which the Board would like to be more closely sighted on. RH agreed. JTh to amend the forward plan for the next meeting. PBI suggested that once the Board have had sight of this paper it may be something that we would like to take forward to the Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee of the Panel. RH agreed.

5. Monthly Finance Report

5.1 NC said that included in the pack on page 4 are a month's results, with the year to date results on page 3

5.2 Currently there is £100,000 surplus for the first 2 months of the year. The key movements are in non-pay where the underspend is predominately in premises and equipment which relates to property and IT costs to date and in "Other Costs and Services" there is £116,000 underspend which is due to the under budget in insurance claims, some media costs and some community and home safety costs.

5.3 Under the line "Financing items" it appears to be on budget, and this is due to in these financial statements we are accruing the capital finance charge based upon the budgeted amount.

5.4 The Forecast is being produced for the next month, the Capital Finance Charge will be reprofiled and it will be adjusted accordingly. NC feels that we will have underspent in that area, and an approximate estimate would be £200,000. The appliances that are on order for the Capital Programmes are delayed due to the Scania Cab which would mean that the Service would not have any of the £2.3 capital spend for the appliances in this financial year. This was discussed at the Strategic Board looking at the profiling of that Capital Financing Charge again and NC feels that there will be an underspend in this area. NC will schedule something in the coming weeks in line with the forecast look at the profiling around that, to potentially see if the Service needs to make some budget reductions in that area going forward.

5.5 Regarding specific Government grants, there is £120,000 that we are better off which relates to the one-off grant that the Service has received that compensates for the non-increase in the Council Tax base this year. NC pointed out that although this helping for this year, the Service needs to ensure that it is reviewed accordingly in the budgetary pressure for next year which will be worked on for the next Strategic Board. There should be a jump back in the tax base as we come out of Covid, there needs to be some comfort and guidance from some of the districts and use some of their intelligence in that area.

5.6 The Forecast is coming up in the next month and will include some of the pressures around pay awards. The pay award is 1.5% for Grey Book and is very likely that will be accepted. There have been conversations around budgetary savings at SLT last week and there have been some identified.

- 5.7 There are ongoing conversations regarding virements and NC will continue to pick up with JP where savings have been identified and how we treat those.
- 5.8 The prior year numbers have been mentioned in these financials in the left-hand column. NC highlighted that it looks as though there is a large difference between last years and this year's numbers i.e. If you look at the prior period for last year on page 2 shows a surplus of £1.9m. NC pointed that the Capital Finance Charge and the overtime have been treated differently as last year it had all been placed into period 13 which distorted some of the numbers. NC will look at this to ensure that there are comments on the face of the document to show there is no distortion.
- 5.9 The budget timetable is on track and are due to publish the draft accounts on Wednesday. There are two decision sheets currently in transit which relates to the non-domestic rates treatment and for the actual publication of the accounts themselves.
- 5.10 Regarding the movement of pay, there has been a £3.4m swing from last year and in the appendices, there is a waterfall that tracks through those key movements that make up that swing. In 2019/20 there was a significant underspend of just over £700,000 and that related to vacancies in both Support and for watch based staff, particularly in the first 6 months of the year.

Questions

- 5.11 KE gave more context on the Capital surrounding the appliances, The Service were expecting to have received and spent that capital this year, however Scania are not able to deliver the chassis to Angloco who we awarded the build until March next year. Angloco will not be able to commence the build until they have the chassis. This issue applies to all FRs who awarded to Scania and so this is not unique to Essex.
- 5.12 RH asked what the confidence level is that it will be resolved on a timely basis? KE replied that the intelligence they have received is reliable and the chassis will be on track to be delivered for March. RH asked that KE continue to keep the board informed of any updates. KE added that there will be another round of 10 appliances in the future and it may be a consideration to bring that order forward due to the pending backlog issue in the supply chain. KE come back to the Board in due course.
- 5.13 KE said that Angloco can commence some of the build work before the chassis arrive. KE has been to see where the appliances are being built, they can only build so much until they need the chassis.
- 5.14 RH suggested that the columns in the report be given a reference and explain what the difference is between them.
- 5.15 JP said that regarding the FTE, we are still 45 under established on O/C and 20 on prevention and protection, those are two areas where the establishment is being brought up and not getting where we want to be. When does the Service feel it will get those up to establishment? KE said that on the O/C element we will have seen a marked increase in the O/C recruitment and the Service is running 3 times as many courses to keep up with the interest. KE said that there will be a much better period and there is a need ensure that we retain those people and that is one of the biggest challenges, but the gap should close over the next 18 months.
- 5.16 JG asked where the Service is with the O/C Contracts and the work that was being done on that in terms of potential for reducing the number of contractual hours. KE replied that there was a decision that went through the O/C Programme Board which was to temporarily pause

the move to new contracts. The reason for that was based on risk and unknowns the Service was not confident enough to progress that forward at that stage.

- 5.17 KE said that a slightly different approach has been taken to communicate to the Station Managers and Group Managers around giving them more flexibility around the management of hours and in the recruitment of new O/C Firefighters. Currently there is the 90-120 hour contracts and we are encouraging people not to be so descriptive and rigid to those hours. KE believes this is where some of the inflexibility and the Service managing that has had an inadvertent output in terms of some Firefighters that were leaving i.e. a Firefighter only being able to fulfil 85 out of 90 hours. The Service could probably do something more individualistic to accommodate in these instances.
- 5.18 KE said that the reason that no progress was made on the different hour contracts this time, was that when the Services reached out to various O/C stations there was a risk that potentially those stations that were giving a lot of hours would revert to the 40 hours contracts. That was the feedback from a lot of the staff and therefore the Service would be in the position of decreasing the availability at stations until more Firefighters were recruited. This would result in twice the amount of people at the station to give the same volume of hours. KE said that Service needs to review the approach to this. In the interim, the stations are being offered more flexibility and encouragement to not be so rigid with hours.
- 5.19 JP wondered where we were on the appointment of the Protection Officers? RHy confirmed that they joined the Service on 1st June and are a mix of Protection and Prevention staff. There has been a Prevention restructure and some of those posts will not be filled but Protection is an area that the Service needs to continually recruit and it needs to balance the bringing in of new skills with the impact that it has on the teams to deliver. It is about threading those recruits through carefully whilst not bringing the organisation to a halt whilst we train new people.
- 5.20 MB said that each time someone new comes in, they need to be mentored and trained up and at a time when there is immense pressure on the Protection assets, this needs to be balanced up and as quickly as possible. The Service are continually looking at new ways to bring people through.
- 5.21 JTh went back to JG's point and said that there was a video by the FRSA on a new O/C pay model that was implemented in Devon. KE said that there are discussions happening with them around this pay model. They are still in their pilot phase and we would like to know what the outputs are first.

Action 49/21

RH asked if NC could make the prior adjustment and split the financing charge to make a distinction and make it easier to read backwards if possible. NC will take this away. RH said to make a note to say this has been done.

6. Monthly Performance Report

- 6.1 LL took the Board through the salient points of this month's report.
- 6.2 From May 2021 there were fewer total incidents overall over the previous month and May 2020 due to a decrease in the attendance to fires probably due to this May being one of the wettest.
- 6.3 There are normally a higher number of secondary fires, but the number of incidents is lower due to being wet this month and resulted in less attendances.

- 6.4 In terms of incidents on the false alarms page, there is now an additional line to show the total of false alarms that were picked up by Tracy King.
- 6.5 There was an increase in the average response time to potentially life-threatening incidents to 10 minutes 31 seconds.
- 6.6 86% of fire incidents were attended within 15 minutes. LL will investigate more detail as to why this was the case and do a comparison with the last quarter for last year which should be interesting.
- 6.7 There has been some analysis on the reasons why and looking at O/C availability and the roads particularly in Q1 last year and how much that has an impact. LL is waiting for the release of the travel roads to aid comparisons further.
- 6.8 In terms of availability there was a decrease in total of O/C pump appliance availability this month compared to previous months and W/T day crew has remained the same.
- 6.9 The focus for this month's NFCC Campaign was cooking. The Service did their focus on dwellings and non-dwelling fires and fatalities.
- 6.10 LL said that next month's campaign will be about smoke alarm purchasing. LL does not have data source information at the moment, but if anyone is aware of any data on this to please let LL know.
- 6.11 Regarding fatalities and casualties that were fire related. There was 1 fire related fatality on 31st May. This individual was female and aged between 50 and 55 and died in the fire which was deemed as accidental within a caravan/mobile home. The cause if the fire was due to careless handling due to sleep from consciousness but the source ignition was from candles and no alarm was present. There is some fire investigation to take place.
- 6.12 There have been 7 fire related casualties in the May. Five of these were ADF and one deliberate fire from 6 different incidents.
- 6.13 Regarding information governance there was a decrease in the total number of statutory requests received in May. There were 51 in total, 17 were FOI's, 29 EIR's and 5 were SARS.
- 6.14 HR have continued to support for appraisals and preparation for the Updated Strategic Workforce Plan.
- 6.15 Learning and Development on page 22 is regarding protection of this report which shows the progress against the RBIP? This will be cumulative in the Q1 report. 95 full audits were undertaken and 86 of those were high or very high.
- 6.16 Desktop audits in May remain with 55 high or very high risk.
- 6.17 Home Safety has not seen an increase yet in visit requests following the lifting of Government restrictions. The Safeguarding Team have seen an increase in May compared to the previous month. This was partly due to more community engagement work going on and also a police joint working group, where they have been sharing the knowledge on what the safeguarding team can do and working together with the ambulance service.
- 6.18 The home safety visits have now been allocated to stations. There are 55 outstanding visits to be completed by stations which will be reflected in next month's report.

Questions

- 6.19 RH asked regarding the fire in the caravan park, there was not a smoke alarm etc is this something that we should be doing there to improve the way the caravan parks are alarmed?

MB said that the Community Safety Team are looking at engagement across caravan parks in both residential and holiday caravan parks. The focus is around the prevention of fire risk and this was caused by a tea-light candle in an unsafe position and this is about raising awareness about how easily these fires can be started and develop in a caravan and how important it is to get an early warning in the case of fire. In this instance, MB believes that alcohol was a factor in it too. There is a relation with alcohol rates, survival and fire, and there is a lot of work to be done in this area.

- 6.20 JYH said that the table on page 14, shows information on individual pumps where previously these were being grouped together. Saffron Walden appears to be doing well with their attendance and JTh wondered what does the Service do to celebrate this and what can be learnt from that i.e. are they doing something that would help elsewhere?
- 6.21 MB said that in Saffron Walden there is a very stable crew which is very dedicated and long standing. The Service is learning all the time but are at the mercy of who lives 5 minutes from the Station and Saffron Walden is very stable. MB will take away the idea of celebrating and acknowledging, which the Service do but this is something that can be done better.
- 6.22 RH asked why this could not be done in Frinton as this also has a stable population?
- 6.23 JG commented that this obviously had something to do with the geographic location. Where Saffron Walden is, businesses are very centrally located so that makes a difference but Frinton is on the outskirts of the population.
- 6.24 JG asked about the causes of the injuries as there is 7 fire related casualties from 6 separate incidents., do we know what the cause of the injuries were? LL can feedback to JG outside of the meeting and put more detailed information on the causes into the quarterly report. JG said that it was important to capture the information somewhere and show the Service are acting on it.

Action 50/21

LL to feed back to JG more detailed information of the injuries of the 7 Fire related casualties.

- 6.25 LL said that when the crews return from an attendance they complete the information on the victim, they do record cause source but this is not put into the Quarterly Report, if there anything of interest LL will let the board know. There is also the ADF Analysis and we are hoping to use that data not only about the victims but what happened in the incident and understanding more about the victims.
- 6.26 MB said that going back to Saffron Walden, the success is a lot to do with demographics as well as in Frinton there is a lot of long -term residents and the average age is significantly higher than elsewhere.
- 6.27 JTh asked regarding the increase in attendance cases, has there been a change in policy, the figure appears to have doubled from the previous month? KE replied that due to people returning to the workplace and as people's lives are slowly getting back to normality has impacted on the rise. Some of the rise is shown in the mental health area which is being monitored a little more closely than usual. It is predominately in the non-operational workforce area. Some of the measures being put in place is a piece of work with the Firefighters Charity, to do a host of wellbeing roadshows working with people to address some those anxieties that are being seen now.
- 6.28 JP wondered about the 104 days of special leave and what basis that was done? KE will take this away for review, each of the special leaves are a case by case basis and we are as flexible

as possible to allow people if they need some emergency time off is for paid or unpaid persons and whether it is compassionate reasons then recognise that and support them. JP said that there seems to be a lot more unpaid than paid circumstances.

Action 51/20

KE to review the cases of special leave and on what basis this leave was taken and also the difference between unpaid and paid circumstances and the basis on how this was done and feedback to JP.

- 6.29 RHy highlighted on the HR Dashboard regarding the Fitechs passed this month which are down again at 65%. That is something that CB is actively looking at. The Service suspended Fitechs which are the fitness testing throughout Covid, but they are being picked up again. There may be a link here with long Covid or some other respiratory issues at this time that may affect performance of the Firefighters and this is being monitored.

7. Protection Peer Review Update

- 7.1 MB said that this is regarding the Protection Peer Review that the Service instigated and believe they are on track to complete the Protection Improvement Plan prior to the HMI returning for the new inspection. This was commissioned to ensure the Service via an independent review by Herts FRS, that the Service were meeting all the HMI Recommendations and there were no blind spots or lack of evidence etc.
- 7.2 Eight recommendations were made to strengthen the Services' position, there were no big surprises and an action plan has been developed which is almost completed. There are "Amber" items which are on track, which are regarding information sharing with businesses, rebalancing skills across the flexi duty roster in terms of skills, resourcing and ensuring that there are proper links in the between the HR and People Strategy.

Questions

- 7.3 JG thanked MB and said well done and this is a clear example of what can be learnt from others and of where the Service is trying to improve and to look at how that is achieved.

8. Building Risk Review Update

- 8.1 MB said that this update is for the period of August 2020 to December 2021.
- 8.2 The previous 2 months returns we had missed our target, but this month the target has been reached 15 audits were completed and the return submitted on the 1st June.
- 8.3 Since the original return was received from the NFCC, which detailed 182 premises ECFRS have identified a further 62 premises. The question for us is that do we audit them on the basis of risk, or do we finish the original identified buildings and then proceed with the 62 audits? Discussions are currently in progress with the NFCC on how to deal with this which they surprisingly have not experienced before.
- 8.4 MB's preference is not to have any high-risk buildings in the additional 62 and reprioritise the inspections on that basis.
- 8.5 There is a new Head of Protection Allie O'Neill. She is liaising with NFCC and bringing back her recommendations and if her recommendation is to incorporate the 62 before the deadline, then the Service will investigate how to resource that.
- 8.6 119 audits have been undertaken to date.

Questions

- 8.7 JG wanted to say thank you and to say that time was spent with the team on 11th June who are very positive and proactive about what they are doing. Resourcing is an issue, but the team are continuing to progress with the audits. JG asked MB to pass on thanks to the team.
- 8.8 JTh asked about MB's point about identifying additional buildings, the report says that there have been 14 more buildings identified in the last month. Presumably the Service will continue to identify more as the process goes on and the currently number will become higher? MB said that as the programme is being worked through there will be more high-risk buildings that are prioritised on the basis of risk and this will be an additional workload.
- 8.9 JP asked that one of the "Red" rated buildings, Riverside Heights – is this a Braintree Building? JP has heard that ECFRS are moving people from their homes and the residents are homeless due to this particular building. MB is not aware of removing people from their homes or making any recommendations because of going through this risk review process. JP to confirm what building that is, and MB will do a further check.

Action 52/21

JB to check that Riverside Heights is a residential building in Braintree and MB to check the position regarding the Building Risk Review Programme and removing residents from the confirmed address.

- 8.10 RHys said that the whole purpose of the Building Risk Review is to triage buildings. The Service has taken the view that they will fully audit those buildings and have been proactive in finding flaws in those buildings. By way of reassurance to the community of Essex that ECFRS are taking this very seriously and are not only following the government guidance but going a step further. As a result, this will uncover more risk in Essex, but all would agree that the Service would rather know the risk and then put a resource to it.

9. End of Year Performance Report

- 9.1 The end of year report is more lengthy and more extensive than the Quarterly Reports. LL said that everyone had sight of the papers she will only cover the salient points.
- 9.2 On the opening pages instead of a summary there is a statement regarding the past year and how it was impacted with the pandemic. The number of instances per day has been put alongside things that the Service consider to be quite significant, or national announcements that were made which impacted on how we responded.
- 9.3 In terms of benchmarking, a lot of work has been done in previous Quarterly Reports and LL would like to ensure in future Quarterly reports that things are updated from the National side and included in the sections next to the measures rather than a separate section in the report.
- 9.4 LL is also looking to automate that within the team to remove the need to input information manually. There have also been discussions within the team to see how this can be done more effectively as a group and share that with other interested parties. The team is looking to be more effective also in carrying out benchmarking.

Questions

- 9.5 RH said that his focus is on the serious harm where the total is up from 2 to 5. It is a small number in total, but it is 5 too many. Is there anything there that we can learn from in terms of getting the number down as there have been years in the past where it has been zero?

- 9.6 MB said that this is being continually reviewed and is something that sits with the prevention part of the service and it fits in with our wish to have a more robust method of reevaluating what works and what does not and part of that is how we target and learn from incidents were we do target.
- 9.7 RH said is this a response issue as there have been five fatalities this year and could we have responded better? MB replied that the Services response had not been a factor in that, as if it had been failure of a major response then that would have raised as a major issue to MB, and it would have been dealt with. MB said that here the answer is no, but she will take it away and give it additional scrutiny.
- 9.8 RHy agreed with MB the this is about prevention. What the data shows us is that the people who die in fires are different to the people who are injured in fires. Injuries in fires come from cooking and distraction and tends to be the younger more mobile group and the people who die in fires tend to be over 55-60, known to adult social care, and it is that connection that the Service need to do more on to ensure that we are reaching more of these people. They are embedded in our communities and so we must do more to work with partners so that we can reach these people and our partners can do more to make them safer from fire risk.
- 9.10 Although ECFRS fit smoke detectors, if you are an immobile person all a smoke detector is going to do is tell you that you are going to die because you cannot get out of the building. We need to be investing in such things such as misting systems and giving people protection in their homes where they cannot escape. These are the next steps that the Service needs to take, and the new Prevention Strategy is very much taking the Service on that journey.
- 9.11 JTh asked what information on fatalities and casualties is shared nationally as they are very small numbers and it is quite hard to look at trends on such small numbers, and JTh wondered what went on nationally to understand that bigger picture? LL said that on page 24 she has shown the totality showing the decrease that has happened since 2010/11. They don't provide a lot of detail down to FRS level on a regular basis or in the national dataset but they do now provide a more granular dataset of all the deaths that have happened since that period of time down to district level and it provides a lot more detail of the cause of the fire and items responsible, whether the fire was accidental or whether it is was one or multiple fatality incident. That dataset is available on home office stats data tables to access that more granular dataset. LL would like to see it more joined up with local datasets and more accessible datasets available to use.
- 9.12 RH said that this is a thoroughly extensive report with lots of detail and we do have a stand in where we stand with others as well, it has given us a very clear guide as where the information could grow in more detail and work out what needs to be done differently.

10. Change Control Process for the Annual Plan

- 10.1 RHysaid that this came from this Board as to how we would control our Annual Plan in terms of what goes in, goes out and what we close off. The papers give an overview of that process and the templates that we will use regarding the change process.
- 10.2 It will be developed by the relevant Director signed off by the Continuous Improvement Board and then reported through P&R for information.

Questions

- 10.3 RH thanked RHy for letting the Board have sight of it and it looks in good shape. The Board agreed.

11. Fire & Rescue Equality Framework Update

- 11.1 CB took the Board through the Framework through two equality items.
- 11.2 The first is an update against the progress of the LGA Fire & Rescue Equality Framework and the secondly our progress against the 6 public sector equality duty objectives.

The LGA Framework

- 11.3 Thinking about this in context, this is thinking about the future. It is hoped that with the Board's agreement to move to the Inclusive Employers Framework in time and we are preparing to apply for recognition against that framework in December.
- 11.4 That framework is broader in terms of recognising a broader range of inclusion and diversity and inclusive to social economic factors which the LGA Framework isn't. This will be brought to the Board as a formal proposal in December once the Service has had an initial evaluation from Inclusive Employers before we apply.
- 11.5 We are working against the LGA framework and you can see the progress from December to date. With the updated structure CB would expect to have a bigger step forward between now and December 2021.
- 11.6 Nonetheless there has been progress over the last 6 months, in particular the People Impact Assessment regarding the quality and quantity of those and some ongoing training taking place. The difference can be seen in the papers where the People Assessment Impact Groups are being used on each paper to guide the Service as to whether a full Impact Assessment needs to be undertaken. Inclusion has been included in all the decision making.
- 11.7 The Digital Accessibility Group, which is a key part of the Digital and Data strategy and the new inclusion insights newsletter is in its 3rd month, if the Board would like to see a copy of this CB can forward it on. Each month there is a focus on a particular topic and offering colleagues some signposting traditional resources into support on each month.

12. Public Sector Equalities Act Objectives Update.

- 12.1 There is an obligation on the Service to have Equality Duty Objectives and if there was not an obligation it would still be useful to share with the public the Service's commitment.
- 12.2 These objectives are next to be reviewed in March 2022 and discussions are already being held with staff networks and beginning to think ahead.
- 12.3 The duty is to amend or replace and in December CB would expect to be coming back to the Board with news of any internal engagements on this and this is what the staff networks are telling us and the Rep Bodies, so the conversation can be held with the Board.
- 12.4 The paper describes what has been delivered most recently against each of the objectives as well as observations.

Questions

- 12.5 PBI said this is good practice in the way that the Service has developed its People Impact Assessment Process. Although they are sometimes referenced in Decision Reports, they are not very often appended as a background paper and could this please be included to demonstrate that the commissioner has considered the findings of those assessments in making those decisions? CB agreed and will ensure that happens going forward as from today's date.

Action 53/21

CB to ensure that background paperwork is appended to the Decision Report going forward to enable the Commissioner to consider the findings of those assessments in making decisions.

- 12.6 RH asked who judges whether the Service have met their objectives or not? CB replied that they are taken to the Inclusion and Diversity Action Group for a discussion, but they are not asked to make a judgement. They also come as an update to the Performance & Resources Board and although feedback is asked for, it is not approval. RH said that we agree that Service has met these by the evidence and what has been done, the Board are noting it as opposed to agreeing it? CB agreed that it probably needs more thought as to how the Service could incorporate verification especially at the time of review and toward the end of the 3-year period.
- 12.7 RH said that there should be a formal note to say that this is what is intended to be done, so that at the end it will support what has been done and to enable the objectives to be cross checked as it is a little vague at the moment. CB agreed and feels that knowing now what we know that we would have tighter objectives in the March 2022 review.
- 12.8 CB would take away and give some thought as to whether this should be an internal review or with an external partner and come back to the Board with a proposal. RH agreed.

Action 54/21

Regarding the Public Sector Equality & Duty Objectives, CB would give some thought to verification of the objectives and come back to the Board with a proposal as whether this should be via internal review or with an external partner.

- 12.9 JG said that there is a lot of good things here. JG asked regarding what the membership activity is and buy in to the networks which is something to be clear about.
- 12.10 JG asked how the mapping would be used to target vulnerability on informed targeting. There are a lot of benefits that we could get out of this. JG asked PBI if she thought it would be worth Darren Horsman and CB having a conversation as Darren has done a lot of work in this space and feel that working together could be helpful to both..

Action 55/21

CB to meet with Darren Horsman around objective 3 of the Public Sector Equality & Duty Objectives.

- 12.11 JP cannot see that CB has used protective characteristics anywhere, but it may be in there, CB seems to refer to groups and classifications? CB replied that in the Equality Public Sector Equity Duty objectives it is under the voluntary declarations where it talks about ethnicity and sexual orientation, gender, religion etc. JP said that generally we seem to have referred to groups and at the end it talks about negative impacts but it is more about that someone with a protected characteristic will not be treated differently because of that and feels that this needs to be looked at. It might be fine, but we need to get the terminology right.
- 12.12 CB asked JP to clarify if it was the wording the 6 objectives or is it the narrative underneath. JP replied that it was the narrative underneath. JP and CB to pick up offline.

Action 56/21

CB and JP to pick up the narrative regarding Protected Characteristics off-line.

13. Property Capital Expenditure Update

- 13.1 KE took the Board through the update.
- 13.2 Taking the paper as read, KE drew the Boards attention to page 6 of 7 which is a recent change of governance process that has been implemented internally to get a much better view and decision-making process on capital expenditure.
- 13.3 This is particularly in the biggest areas of capital spend which span mainly across fleet, property, and ICT. The flow diagram included gives an understanding of what has been done.
- 13.4 There has been recently signed off, implemented, and held for the first time a Terms of Reference for a Property Group and a Fleet Group, there is already a technology group in place. Predominately around the property and fleet groups, those groups have key members who will make decisions that will go forward and into the Asset Board. Those items that go to the Assets Board, depending on their financial value will get processed for a decision on their financial value and equally if it is over the £250,000 it would be forwarded to the PFCC office for further Decision Sheets etc. This is a better flow than what the Service previous had.
- 13.5 Regarding any further implications, the report runs through why some of the capital has not been spent this year and the last paragraph brings to the Boards attention that whilst there is no immediate operational implication to the spend, that the Service now have a catch-up programme put in place and the Service need to develop at pace the existing backlog. KE will bring this through within the new Property Strategy but the plan is also in place to deliver that Strategy which will give assurance that some of that work will be accelerated This will also ensure that there are no further delays into some more strategic pieces of work i.e. fleet workshops, training facilities etc..

Questions

- 13.6 RH said to KE that he was right in that the Service needed this report. A lot of the issues came up at Audit Committee last Friday when it was discussed where we were relative to our plans in terms of capital expenditure. The Service are still struggling to spend where it needs to spend. Some time ago, there was a budget of £12m to spend on capital and this amount was not being spent but there was a more realistic spending target, but the Service are still not quite managing to deliver it.
- 13.7 RH continued to say that looking at the financial report earlier, the Service is still not there this year. At only a couple of months into the new financial year, the spend is currently at £71,000, which is not a lot of what really needs to be spent. RH said that this really shows how much the new Fleet Strategy, Estates Strategy need to be laid out and then plans developed underneath them. This needs to be written down and have everyone buy into it and deliver it. RH agrees with KE but quite forcefully.
- 13.8 KE said that this will be taken on board fully and that is exactly what his intention through the delivery of those strategies is, to accelerate that work and to ensure that those groups are keeping a very robust monitoring of the capital expenditure. If there is any kind of slippage then KE's early learning in those areas is that there should be things within the plan that can be pulled forward and accelerated if there is a slippage in something else Slippage sometimes happens due to delays with contractors etc, however there needs to be a backup plan in place to bring other priorities forward.

- 13.9 JP said that the other point, when KE talks about this year, this is probably one of the things that is being done wrong. It should be a rolling programme. Looking at what has been done last year, the capital slipped but we have only spent £71,000 in the first two months. What happened to that slippage, did it just stop as of 1st March and it was started again on the 1st April? This is part of what is done wrong in capital programmes in general not just ECFRS.
- 13.10 KE said that was a very good point and his focus on the capital expenditure for this year is making sure that on making sure that everything is in place for starting 1st April 2022 to make sure that everything is lined up to start that Capital Expenditure then, rather than trying to put the plans in place to spend the Capital in-year which has already been lost. There has been a whole year of contractors not going onto site during Covid but there is something about accelerating some of the work and that inevitably will require some additional resource. KE would rather bring in the additional resource and get that work accelerated and the Capital Expenditure moving.
- 13.11 RH said that we may have some limited time to do this. RH said that learning in policing a few years ago, was that some of this takes 18 months, a 12-month plan won't do it. Once you accept that you schedule things more accurately and they start to happen, rather than things taking longer than was originally thought and feeling that it is huge mountain that does not ever get climbed.
- 13.12 KE said that he is linking in with Mark Gilmartin and has a meeting to ensure that ECFRS are aligning themselves and for KE to pick up on the benefit of Mark's experience and background in the police.
- 13.11 JP said that the only time she has seen capital spend for the full amount is where there is over commitment of 25% because it is to stop something for a little while rather than try and get it done. It can be overcome by doing the things that need to be done anyway, the Capital Programme is more likely to be spent. This works quite successfully as things can be put on hold if you meet the programme and it can be easily pulled back.
- 13.13 NC agreed with JP and one of the things discussed and set up was having a workstream for just over £2m in this budget year, albeit the asset protection budget is £1.7m.

14. Deep Dive Programme

- 14.1 JTh said that the Service ran a deep dive programme last year and the last one was held a few weeks ago. The first time round it was based on priorities in the Fire & Rescue Plan and looked at those individually and that was very helpful and good insofar as scene setting. It was also good to see other managers and members of staff on the 'coalface' to talk about issues and what is going well and what is not.
- 14.2 It was agreed previously to take this forward it would align to the Annual plan and activities. We would look at in the previous year's Annual Plan and deep dive into those so they would be a little more focused and strategic.
- 14.3 JTh has worked with RHy and Lucy Clayton and in Appendix 1 page 4, JTh has proposed 6 activities from the Annual Plan to focus in on. They will be similar in nature to what has been done previously but they will be able to be drilled down more deeply into these and they will be more of a strategic conversation.
- 14.4 JTh would like to bring the outcomes of the deep dives to P&R. Following a deep dive session, JTh would like to bring a set of brief notes to P&R for visibility and to run an action log for actions that have been agreed or things that we have decided that would like to be looked at in the future. JTh would like to propose that she will maintain the action log and will provide

this information every month to P&R to follow it through, so that as a Board there is still oversight of that process.

Questions

- 14.5 RHy said that from a Service perspective, he is very supportive and to thank JTh. This is a good example of taking something and working together between the Service and the Office to get in place so that there is a benefit for the Office and the Service in sense of assuring the work that is done.
- 14.6 RHy said that the HMICFRS Inspection is likely to begin in the 1st Week of September, we may need some flexibility in terms of the August/September deep dive. There is nothing yet for October so it may be beneficial to shuffle around the dates.

Action 57/21

JTh to look at moving the Deep dive dates to accommodate the HMICFRS Inspection the first week in September.

- 14.7 PBI really welcomed the work that has been done and in particularly running the action log is going to be very beneficial. Once of the difficulties that was got into over the last year is where actions were agreed in the deep dive process but then have not featured in any of the other action logs that have been run and this will bridge that gap.
- 14.8 JTh was conscious that the circle was not been completed previously. RH agreed that it does need to be followed on at SLT, or Strategic Board.
- 14.9 RH said that having completed the substantive items, he needed to leave the meeting to attend another and JG would take over as chair from this point (15:42). RH thanks everyone that joined the meeting and thanked them for being well prepped and was very focused.
- 14.10 JG asked if everyone would just like to take questions on the following update papers as they are for update only. RHy agreed.

15. Quarterly Plan Update

- 15.1 JTh asked why some of the actions do not have a start date or a due date and they probably do need to have. RHy agreed and Lucy is currently chasing people to do this. RHy will address this.

Action 58/21

RHy to address with Lucy Clayton the due dates that are missing on the Quarterly Plan Update.

- 15.2 JG noted there is one action that is passed its due by date which is the HMICFRS recommends that the Service should ensure it has effective systems in place to reliably understand operational capabilities and resources available in response to incidents.

16. Quarterly Grenfell Phase 1 High level Action Plan update

- 16.1 JP said that in the pre-meet there was question over the presentation of it in terms of what was still left to be done and thought there would be more detail? MB agreed with JP and to reassure the Board, this report is part of a wider piece of work. Area managers are changing as of 1st July and the Service will be looking at who will be taking this forward. This is becoming quite a complex piece of change with many longer-term impacts and some dependencies and the Service are looking to put in place better governance and reporting on this. This will be

placed into the change piece and will be placed more centrally and should be by the September report.

- 16.2 JG thanked MB and commented that if the Board cannot understand it then the public certainly will not in its currently form.

17. Quarterly Change Programme Update

17.1 JTh asked regarding the RAMSDAQ 4i and IRS upgrade project. The benefits and risk rag is “Amber” but the overall project is “Red” and JTh wondered if there was a specific update or explanation for that?

17.2 KE replied that Closure Report is currently being pulled together for the upgrade works because it has gone as far as it can with REMSDAQ in terms of the upgrade. There are a few elements still outstanding but rather than put too much focus in trying to resolve it which could be a never-ending situation, the Service is going to focus on the new system. They are not significant risk factors but “nice to have” improvements which would have been done if the Service had kept the existing system in place. The Service will be out of the standstill period as of midnight tonight and will be able to talk about the new supplier from tomorrow going forward.

18. Quarterly O/C Conversion Update

18.1 JTh said that this is the first time that we have seen any finances relating to this which was good to see and have an understanding on this. JG it shows how much we are working and developing together as a group

18.2 JP wanted to check that NC had been involved in the finances for the Quarterly O/C Conversion Update. NC confirmed that he was part of the Board and this information was prepared and vetted as it has been pushed through the Board.

19. Quarterly Risk Review

19.1 JP asked who had taken this on now that Dave Bill has left? KE has taken this on as he does the same report to the Audit Committee as well. Other colleagues are assisting to produce the report but KE is presenting it.

20. Dovercourt Action Plan

20.1 JTh asked that as there is an issue with availability but wondered that it seemed that a lot of leave days impacted on the availability and JTh would like to understand how that is managed?

20.2 MB said that although the Service cannot stop people taking leave that they are entitled to, the best that can be done is to manage that, so people don’t take leave at the same time i.e. drivers. MB explained that what was being seen here was an impact of the sickness especially around the driving availability. Two long-term drivers have been lost and the Service cannot prevent others taking their leave over the summer period. This is explained in the paper.

20.3 JG said that the driver situation is unfortunate, and MB agreed that this has knocked the availability back quite a bit and has been disappointing.

20.4 RH y added that now this is an O/C station when the O/C staff wish to take leave they are normally taking that leave to align with family commitments and their full-time employer.

Even if the Service were to say that leave could not be taken, there are other priorities in their lives, and it makes it much difficult to control than a W/T colleagues.

- 20.5 JP wondered how this fit in the building project development (police station) that is going on their too. Is it a separate project or is it seen as combined in some way? JG said that this is in the very early planning stages and not at that stage yet. MB agreed and said that there is something in that ensuring that the culture of the fire station is ready to receive. The station has come on fantastically well since its conversion, there is a connection on how well they would work together although not actually sharing the building.

AOB

No AOB

Meeting ended at 15.58