



Meeting	Performance and Resources	Agenda no.	8
Meeting Date	28 April 2022		
Report Authors:	Head of Response		
Presented By	Director of Operations		
Subject	Response Strategy Update		
Type of Report:	Information		
Action Point No.	N/A	For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Performance and Resources Board are asked to note the progress against the Response Strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been produced to provide P&R with a progress update against the implementation of the response strategy and activity completed since the launch of the response strategy in late 2021.

BACKGROUND

Since the launch of the Response Strategy a review of our reporting methodology has been developed to enable progress against this strategy to be identified.

The response function continues to be committed to delivering against the response strategy and is continuing to evolve governance to ensure this progress is measured in all areas of response.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

This report highlights the key areas of progress thus far against the implementation of the Response Strategy.

Strategy Launch

Launching the Response Strategy focused on both internal and external stakeholders, ensuring clear, concise messaging, and importantly outlining the direction of travel for the lifetime of the Strategy.

Governance:

Since the launch of the Response Strategy the governance structure has been developed and a review of the Directorate meeting has been carried out. The new meeting structure provides greater transparency of decision making and accountability.

This board feeds into continuous improvement board by exception through Extended Leadership Team and the Head of Response. The board has as its attendee's key staff across the response function and other areas of the business that are vicariously responsible for delivery of key elements of the response strategy such as Prevention and Protection.

The Directorate updates will be performance focused to enable board members to provide: -

- Strategic and tactical updates on performance targets and projects and continually improve Service delivery through the PPR directorate
- Create a shared vision and understanding of Service priorities
- Inform reporting to other appropriate boards to enable working in collaboration and reduce isolation and duplication of efforts
- Highlight concerns for decision for escalation to appropriate boards or departments
- PFCC awareness on P-P-R performance and Service priorities

Activity since strategy launch:

- 1) Reporting externally has been developed to focus on coverage rather than availability. This is linked to the strategic stations identified by the service. Coverage is a measure of how often we have a fire appliance available for incidents in those areas that have previously been highlighted as being significant in enabling the service to meet their county wide response times. The target for coverage at all strategic stations has been set at 98%. This is to say that 98% of the time the service will have an appliance available to respond. This shift in reporting is key for the service in demonstrating their ability to dynamically move fire appliances around the county to better serve the communities of Essex.
- 2) Availability is still reported externally at the overall service level, internally it is reported at appliance level which enables local managers to effectively target interventions to improve availability. Local targets have been refined to be more realistic and deliver continual incremental improvements.
- 3) Local manager roles have been redefined and each of the Group Managers now has an area of business they lead on for the response directorate. They have devolved authority to represent the Head of Response in these areas. This has enabled more focus on key areas, leading to greater synergies with other departments and greater levels of accountability. The key areas of business represented by the Local Managers are:
 - Recruitment
 - Employee relations
 - Change
 - Technology
 - Risk
- 4) The performance dashboards have been further enhanced, these include the production of a finance dashboard to enable local managers to effectively monitor and where required take action to drive efficiency improvements. There has also been a Watch Manager dashboard developed that enables all managers to have access to and act against performance data to enhance performance.

- 5) Performance discussions have been standardised in key areas of focus to enable transfer of information and accountability at all levels of the response directorate. The key areas of focus are:

Prevention and Protection

- Home Fire Safety Check numbers
- Risk Based Inspection Programme visits and Fire Safety Checks
- Community safety partnership attendance and input

Cover

- Availability
- Coverage
- Attendance times
- Sickness management by exception

Competence

- PDR Pro exceptions
- Exercising
- Core Skills

Risk

- SSRPs
- TFPs

Budgets

- ASWs
- Overtime
- Pay/Non-Pay exceptions

These areas will be covered in all 1-2-1 meetings from the Head of Response to local Watch Managers. This will enable the response function to clearly identify and report on performance trends and take effective mitigation. It will also provide focus and accountability for all managers.

- 6) Home Fire Safety Checks remains a key focus and work has taken place in this space to identify a target which will enable ECFRS to increase the number of visits by operational crews in line with the national average. This work includes response teams working closely with prevention teams to identify the right places and people to visit.
- 7) Community Safety Partnership (CSP) attendance has increased and will continue to be tracked, the most significant piece of work in this space has been the production of packs provided to local managers when attending CSPs. This will make ECFRS attendance more productive and will clearly enable partners to see the value added by ECFRS staff being in attendance.

8) Additional Fixed term contract staff have been recruited in the Service Control to further enhance this key area of the business. This has coincided with the promotion of control staff into permanent positions which provides further resilience and continuity of leadership.

9) There has been a key focus on control training. This includes not just maintenance of skills but development of future talent and development pathways for all control staff.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

None specifically linked to this update

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities

Prevention Protection and Response
 Promote a positive culture in the workplace
 Make Best use of our Resources

IRMP Priorities

Response

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None Associated with this paper.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has a legal duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act to provide a resilient response to emergency incidents. This update is intended to demonstrate the work being done in the response function.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

None Associated with this paper.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

We have considered whether individuals with protected characteristics will be disadvantaged as a consequence of the actions being taken. Due regard has also been given to whether there is impact on each of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010:

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the work that has been and will continue to be done in delivery of the response strategy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this paper.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

None required for this update paper.

FUTURE PLANS

The response function is committed to continual improvement in line with the service's strategic intent. Further update papers will be provided to show the direction of travel.

The future plans included:

- A focus on recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters
- A review of all policies related to crewing and the amalgamation into a single crewing policy. This is an activity in the 22/23 annual plan
- A review of the control room staffing levels and structure
- A review of how training courses are prioritised across the response function
- A review of how our stations can best be utilised to support community engagement and on-call availability

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

Response Strategy: pdf_1628870512.pdf (msapproxy.net)