



MINUTES

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

30 November 2022, 10.00 – 12.00 via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Moira Bruin (MB)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC
Neil Cross (NC)	Finance Director and Section 151 Officer, ECFRS
Karl Edwards (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Sarah Smith (SS)	Procurement Manager, ECFRS
Colette Black (CB)	Director of People Services, ECFRS
Jo Thornicroft (JT)	Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC
Lucy Clayton (LC)	Performance, Business Planning and Policy Manager, ECFRS
Christine Butler (CHB)	Minutes, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire Crime Commissioner
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer PFCC
Chris Parker (CP)	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Operations, ECFRS
Jim Palmer (JPa)	Head of Response, ECFRS

JG agreed to change the order of the agenda and have item 7 Procurement Report as the first item as LC had a training course to attend.

7. Performance Report

- 7.1 LC presented the new style Performance Report and went through the highlights to include: high level summary report to go on social media, total incidents, trends, tolerance measures, explicit targets, FOI response rates, RTA incidents, people metrics which is aligned to the national way of reporting, percentage changes over the 5 year average, deliberate fires, domestic and non-domestic fires, attendance times, coverage, home fire safety visits, Infogov page and diversity statistics.
- 7.2 JG thanked LC and the team for the work in this and it would be interesting to have a viewpoint from MB and other SLT colleagues on how it works for them.
- 7.3 JTh referred to the analysis on response times of 20 minutes, are they known locations that take longer to reach or is this something else. LC will come back and confirm.

Action

Response times 20 minutes+ - LC to liaise with JPa to investigate the reason for the long attendance time and respond to JTh.

- 7.4 JTh referred to the SERP data and how the RTA data is collected and fed in as there is a discrepancy in the numbers. A conversation followed on understanding the figures going forward. There is a reporting issue which appears to be down to timings

and submission to SERP. There does not appear to be a deadline for submission of data which leads to discrepancies on how the data is recorded. JG commented that there needs to be a confidence in reaching Vision Zero and this needs to get some traction, conversations are needed to submit and align the timeliness of data.

Action.

Conversations to be held regarding the submission of incident data to SERP of RTA from EP and ECFRS and the discrepancies with SERP data. LC/MB to liaise with Andrea and the Service's representative on SERP, JG will speak to Roger and Andy Prophet

- 7.5 JG noted that the sickness level had increased by 1% to 6.9%. CB replied that the Service had gone back to reporting using the Cleveland Method which is positive in that it gives the consistency of comparison. With regard to the national comparison, although the Service are not on target they are in the middle ground. In the next reporting period, eight of the long term cases would have been resolved which will reflect in a downward trend in the data.
- 7.6 JP suggested that more clarification on the "why" aspect would be useful in the report. LC clarified that when the new monthly and quarterly style reports were being designed, it was agreed that the monthly report would be in this new style without much context to it due to the time that it would take to produce it. The quarterly report provides more narrative around the "why".
- 7.7 MB confirmed that the new style report is working for SLT colleagues and assists the PFCC to scrutinise and ask questions. MB suggested that less time be taken to tweaking the report going forward as it becomes difficult to service it and it would be preferential to keep to one format and set of measures.

LC left the meeting at 10.24

1 Welcome and apologies

JG welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from those above.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

Comments for Accuracy:

- 2.1 LC's job title differs in the agenda to the minute, the correct job title is on the minutes.

There were not any matters arising that were not covered in the minutes, not covered on this agenda, in the action log or captured in the forward plan:

The minutes were agreed subject to those changes listed above.

3 Action Log

- 14/21 Finance training for non-finance experts - NC said that the PowerBI training has been completed and NFCC Strategic Masterclass details have been circulated. Nothing further has been arranged regarding CIPFA budget training - to be moved to January on the Forward Plan. Open
- 21/22 School Vulnerability & Booking System for the Education Team – this is now part of Project Invoke and will not commence until April. Feedback to the Board in June 2023 – JTh to add to forward plan. Open
- 63/22 Performance Review Pre-Covid Comparator – CB to bring it as part of the HR Quarterly Report at the December meeting. Open
- 66/22 Joint Comms re Grenfell actions. The article has been written. JG to speak to Darren Horsman for clarification to whether this has been published. Open

- 69/22 Future Pension Fund Forecast Papers – PBI/NC discussion this action is still outstanding. Due date to be changed to end January 2023. Open
- 75/22 NC to explain the finance process to JP regarding the cascade and overspend to give RH the assurance on how that forecast is achieved. Actioned 15.12. Close
- 76/22 MB to circulate the new section of the Performance Report “September on a Page”. Circulated to the Board. Close
- 77/22 MB to provide more detail and information on the special services deaths to RH. Details provided. Close
- 78/22 JPa to investigate the issue of the data on prevention rates not being accurately recorded and to respond back to the board on this issue. MB JPa believes the data has been recorded incorrectly and is looking into this – info due for end January 2023. Open
- 79/22 MB to investigate the low level of FOI Compliance and feed back to the Board. Due to fault in data. Close
- 80/22 MB, JTh & LC to have a discussion regarding accessibility of the performance report and published documents. July report to have alt tags added by 1st December. JTh working with SS to correct issues. SS this is being progressed and will be done before the deadline at the end of the year. Open
- 81/22 CB to circulate sickness benchmarking data to the Board. Circulated. Close
- 82/22 JPa and RH to have an off-line conversation to explore driven questions in Special Services Data and which may impact the update information given to the board in the future. Due date to end Jan. Open
- 83/22 JTh to set up A Deep Dive to focus on Special Services for Q1 2023. Due date February 2023. Deep dive reports to be scheduled on Forward Plan. Open
- 84/22 JTh to add an update on the Special Services Data Analysis to be put on the Forward plan to bring a retrospective look at the previous year’s Special Services and any
- 85/22 JPa and JTh to set up a meeting to discuss how the On-Call Development Project Update can be presented in the best way to demonstrate the impacts to bring back and to align with the frequency determined by the Board. learning points going forward. Added to the forward plan. Close
- 86/22 MB/KE to give an update to the board on the Digital and Data operational benefits. This item is on this agenda. Close.
- 87/22 MB to look at flagging recurrent themes i.e., Weston Home and if there is any action that can be taken around that with the intention to expedite this. There is no action to be taken at the current time. Close
- 88/22 MB to include the timeframes on the next Building Risk Review report that comes to the Board, any items that need assistance to be raised before that time. This will be added to the next report. JTh to ensure that legacy items are reported correctly. Close
- 89/22 MB & JTh to set up a meeting to discuss redaction in the Building Risk Review Report as some items are “Confidential” before it is published. JTh has a redacted copy to be published. Close.
- 90/22 JTh and CB to discuss bringing the Rep Body Negotiations report to P&R and its frequency noted on the forward plan. This is on the forward plan as a quarterly item beginning January 2023 to align with SLTT reports. Close
- 91/22 JPa to go back to the team and feedback on Basildon funding and the £40m budget for improvements and make them and the local team aware of the opportunities. Due date to be changed to January 2023. Open

4 Forward Plan

- 4.1 There are no additional items to the Forward Plan for this meeting.

5 Finance Report to end of October 2022

Year to Date Summary Income and Expenditure

NC covered some of the highlights from the pack.

- 5.1 There is currently £900k surplus v £1.1m that had been budgeted for, underspend in employment costs, Whole-Time underspend, pension cost, support staff underspend of £300k, underspend in control, On-Call pay, increase in training costs, and heatwave costs. The budget does not include the 2% pay award.
- 5.2 Non pay highlights include: £150k overspend YTD, overspend in support staff for unbudgeted costs, overspend in Premises and equipment, and underspend in capital finance charge in the Capital Programme.
- 5.3 Funding is ahead by 400k which relates to the unbudgeted Council Tax Collection from the prior year.

Forecast

- 5.4 The key point is the size of the reduced deficit to 1.3m.
- 5.5 The Green Book Pay Award was officially accepted in November and payment will be processed in December. Grey Book award of 5% was rejected by the Unions on 14 November and the ballot for the industrial action is taking place.
- 5.6 Reduction in the forecast is due to the business rates collections, which consists of the amount claimed from districts and the government grant of approx £16.5m. This is expected to reduce by £700k and is noted in the forecast. There is additional government funding of £1.5m due to an inflationary increase on the top up grant which is provided for the local government financial settlement. The surplus on this will go back to the districts for the underspend in collections and there is a Section 31 Grant coming through.
- 5.7 NNDR is very complex and there is a knowledge gap, training is to be organised specifically on collections and this to be opened up to regional colleagues and a supplier via an NFCC lead has been identified.

Audit

- 5.8 The Audit accounts are being published today, 30 November, the accounts are not the final audited version as there has not been a signed audit report due to the pension assurance letters not being received in time and delays in the audit process for the pension scheme. The reason for the delay will be published on the website.
- 5.9 There are a few changes to be made to the budget paper ready for the Strategic Board and which will be circulated on 30 November at SLT and will be with the PFCC office by COB on 2 December.
- 5.10 JG thanked NC and the finance team and to JP for her work on the accounts and the budget prep.
- 5.11 JP referred to the on-all overspend of £1.3m but the report says £2.1m in the forecast. NC clarified that this was reflected in the waterfall and rectify this.

Action

Finance pack – discrepancy in overspend of £1.3m and forecast of £2.1m. NC to ensure that this is reflected more clearly in the waterfall figures.

- 5.12 JP commented that RH would like the Forecast on the front page along with the YTD. NC confirmed that this will be in the next finance pack
- 5.13 The rejected grey book offer has been accrued for, if it is not accepted and not paid, there has been a discussion with the team and may add this amount to a new inflationary reserve pot. NC will pick this up with auditors.

Action

NC to clarify with Audits the possible surplus of the rejected pay offer being set up in a new inflationary reserve pot.

- 5.14 NC expects the Cash to start reducing because of the timings of the pension payments and the finance team are very closely managing the treasury due to interest rates going up and there is money to be invested.
- 5.15 There is £1m due to be paid on the loan, there will probably be a need to borrow more next year due to larger projects such as the fleet workshop, the treasury management report at the end of the year will show what the Service needs to borrow based on the certainty that the projects are going to move forward. A decision for this process needs discussed at the strategic board in March 2023.

Action

NC will confirm regarding the audit recommendation with RSM outstanding for 22 months but believed that this item was due to be closed.

6 Procurement Dashboard

- 6.1 SS informed the Board that the Category Manager for the Property and Facilities Management has left the team and gone back to her National Role in the Procurement Hub for the NFCC. Recruitment has begun again for that role.
- 6.2 There is updated Modern Slavery Policy and Statement is currently under review and consultation and to be published early next year.
- 6.4 SS talked through the Procurement Dashboard highlights to include: Benchmarking on energy costs, ICT projects, Fleet Services and procurement of new appliances, Airwave costs, expired medical advisor contract, one single tender action re emergency hardware purchase for the Control Room.

8. Information Governance Update

- 8.1 KE reminded members that there was an independent external audit of informational governance function which has produced opinions of GDPR, and Informational governance, an action plan has been produced which will be spread over 12 months and this report gives an update.
- 8.2 KE ran through the highlights of report to include: information asset owners responsible for their own data quality, the framework for information governance has been established, Data protection awareness training, records management & GDPR Policy, IT policies to sign off, the Action Plan to be completed by the end of the financial year. The Service will be re-audited once the Action Plan has been completed

Action

Once the re-audit has taken place KE to bring an updated report to the Board in the first quarter for 2023 and JTH to add to the Forward Plan.

- 8.3 ECFRS are working on a Surveillance Policy and are linking with Essex Police and how they have implemented their own Policy, in particular how they ensure that it is protected and governed in terms of who is responsible for the data. JG suggested speaking to Mark Gilmartin in the first instance and if KE required any further assistance to go back to her. KE has a meeting with Mark Gilmartin after this meeting and will bring it up there.

9. Digital & Data Strategy Update

- 9.1 KE confirmed that the Digital and Data Strategy are on track, although the date for some of the timelines may well be extended. Further explanation on this can be in a future Strategic Board Meeting.
- 9.2 The delivery of the Control System Project is due in April 2023, there is currently work on training, implementation, testing etc to ensure that this is still on track.

Action

KE to send a link to JG of the IT Control System video.

10. Quarterly Grenfell Phase 1 High Level Action Plan

- 10.1 The Manchester Arena Report was published recently and going forward the Grenfell Report will also include reporting on fire specific areas of the Manchester Arena and the recommendations that came out of that will be used to follow that through. Any Joint actions will be picked up through the Essex Resilience Forums Strategic Board.
- 10.2 MB clarified that there are things to be learnt from the Manchester bombing but she is confident that those instances would not happen in Essex in terms of ECFRS not being informed and not deploying.

11. Quarterly Ops Assurance Report

- 11.1 GM Craig McLellan has moved to Command to replace Simon Dedman and Kerry Taylor the Station Manager from Southend is now heading up Ops Assurance.
- 11.2 Risk information chart shows that there is out of date risk information. The information has been updated but MB is unable to offer any assurance at this meeting.

Action

MB to bring back to the Board Assurance the Risk Information Chart has been updated with the out of date risks.

- 11.3 JG raised the question of personnel failures or on-calls at stations but cannot attend due to lack of drivers is t his link to the issue of DDORS. MB responded that this was linked and to the converted stations piece. This is largely due to there not being an officer in charge of driver. MB confirmed that there is a wider piece of work being undertaken on this. JPa is bringing this altogether in one systemic policy.

Action

MB to confirm a date offline to JG of when the new systemic policy and work will be brought back to the Board.

- 11.4 KE added that there is a lot of discussions and feasibility work currently going in this area to see if something different could be done for on-all. CB said that there has been some pushback from rep bodies on the level of exposure to operational incidents but are continuing to explore this.
- 11.5 CB clarified that there is a recruitment campaign for 8 external transfers who are already qualified competent drivers, and the offer has been extended to on-call colleagues, this may be extended to 10 transfers.

12 Quarterly H&S Report

- 12.1 Options are being developed on the “No Time to Lose Campaign” which is regarding firefighters being exposed to contaminants due to operational exposure.
- 12.2 The OSHENS replacement has been procured and the successful tender was Assure from Evotix, the functionality testing is currently taking place. Historical data will be kept.

Action

MB to clarify action being taken to manage the verbal abuse of firefighters at Safe and Well Visits in the report

13 Converted Stations Transitional Report – Station Update

- 13.1 Availability is unable to be maintained largely due to the lack of Officers to Drivers. Dovercourt and Waltham Abbey have the same route cause and the attendance could be improved at both these stations. South Woodham Ferrers and Great Baddow now

have a Buddy System to crew appliances to ensure that one fully manned appliance will always be available.

13.2 JTh confirmed that the frequency of the report would be quarterly in the next calendar year.

14. AOB

14.1 NC asked the Board if Beth into the P&R meetings as she is heavily involved in the accounts, and it would be a good development opportunity. JG agreed for Beth to attend as from next month.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.44