



MINUTES

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

01 June 2023, 1400 to 1600 via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Colette Black (CB)	Director of People Services, ECFRS
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer PFCC's office
Moira Bruin (MB)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Lucy Clayton (LC)	Performance, Business Planning and Policy Manager
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Georgie Morris (GM)	Deputy Finance Director
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC's office
Jeremy White (JW)	Finance Manager, PFCC's office
Camilla Brandal	PA to PFCC and DPFCC, PFCC's office
Sammy Bardsley	Minutes, Scrutiny Officer, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Neil Cross (NC)	Finance Director and Section 151 Officer, ECFRS
Karl Edwards (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Chris Parker (CP)	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Operations, ECFRS
Sarah Smith (SS)	Procurement Manager, ECFRS
Jo Thornicroft (JT)	Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Fire), PFCC's office

1 Welcome and apologies

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

2 Minutes of the last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and agreed.
- 2.2 There were no matters arising.

3 Action Log

- 13/23 Q3 Performance Report
Working with LC and JT to agree proposal for People Data in quarterly performance, a meeting is in place for this, JT to be invited.
The meetings have taken place and the conclusion is to continue the reporting as is; with the knowledge that there is further detail sitting behind the data should it be required. Close.
- 15/23 Performance Report
The serious after incidents response for both fatalities to be provided to the board with an email briefing.
Completed 31/05. Close
- 16/23 Enforcement and Remediation of Clad Buildings
MB to confirm the contact between ECFRS, Harlow Council and the developers are strong, to ensure the residents welfare.
Confirmed this is the case by MB and RH. Close.
- 17/23 AOB
MB noted the thanks to Southend and will be arranging an official thank you to the duty watch.
Completed. Close.

4 Forward Plan

- 4.1 The target setting paper due for this meeting was withdrawn to go through SLT, this is to be added to June's P&R meeting.

5 Finance Report

- 5.1 GM presented the Finance Report. The year-end accounts were published yesterday in line with the statutory deadlines and thanks communicated to all involved.
- 5.2 The Grey book pay award was confirmed for 2022-23 at 7% and a further award for 2023-24 at 5% will be implemented from July 2023. The Budget for 2023-24 had already been agreed and published before this decision had been made, therefore the Budget included in Grey book pay award for P1-P3 is set at 5%. The Green book pay award for 2023-24 has not been confirmed and therefore the Budget does not currently include any pay award for this financial year.
- 5.3 The month shows a deficit of £1.4m, this mainly due to some differences in the revenue support grant. In 22/23 we recognised the receipt of this grant in full in period 2, whereas we have flat phased it this financial year. There is also a significant increase in ill health pension costs which were unbudgeted. JP made the point that month one is a very initial look and having reviewed the papers discussions would be had with NC to have the in-month, the year to date and the forecast outturn on one page.

Action: 18/23

JP to speak to NC about providing information on one page in relation to the in-month, YTD and forecast outturn reporting.

- 5.4 RH indicated an exercise should take place, looking at where we believe the full year is going to be and what we are doing about it, recommending a workshop to a

strategic board presentation for an updated budget to better understand how month one leads into the years position. GM confirmed that this work had already been started in the background.

Action: 19/23

A workshop and Strategic Board paper to be set up on an updated budget.

- 5.5 Capital expenditure and the balance sheets were also presented noting there was spend not completed in the previous year that has rolled into this year, mainly around the control project, hybrid vehicles and the Shoebury final costs. RH noted the biggest slippage being in the IT area and overall with the various adjustments including vehicles at an extra £1.0m we are looking to spend £9.4m; which does not seem attainable as we are set up to spend £5-6m. GM happy to further challenge and explore this spend and provide a more detailed plan on how this spend is envisaged on a monthly basis.

Action 20/23

Finance to provide a more detailed plan on how they envision to manage the £9.4m capital spend.

- 5.6 JP noted a £1.0m spend on vehicles and queried why this was not at budget setting and asked what had changed. GM believed this was roll over and failure of delivery in the prior year. However, this was not shown on the carry forward and was shown as new. RH noted there was a spend on new Volvo cars which may attribute to this.

Action: 21/23

GM clarify the £1.0m vehicle spend, is this carried forward rather than new and to verify the Volvo vehicle amounts – are these one and the same.

6 Procurement Dashboard

- 6.1 GM Presented the Procurement Dashboard on behalf of SS with any technical queries to be taken back to SS. Recruitment for the Property and FM Category Manager has been successful and awaiting a start date. Going forward each quarter there is going to be an update on savings and collaboration presented on the new dashboard, showing all collaboration activity with the other public sector bodies. Support provided to the Operations team for them to use Delta to capture and store all Service memorandum of understandings.
- 6.2 There will be 2 decision sheets for property, one for the cleaning tender and the other for the electrical planned preventative maintenance contract, both at evaluation stage. ICT and Corporate Services and Operations Category Headlines were also presented.
- 6.3 There are no contracts running past their expiry dates and all top 10 contracts expiring in the next 6 months are either out to tender or will be imminently. During April there were no STA's. RH pleased to hear that there are no expired contracts and that all appears in hand for those nearing expiry. The papers as we get them however, don't say what's happening for the ones that run out or how this is monitored.

Action: 22/23

MB to check where expiry of contracts is monitored.

- 6.4 JP there are still issues regarding the publication of contracts which Darren Horsman is getting legal advice on, could we include in future the status of this on the dashboard. GM will take away to SS

Action: 23/23

GM to speak to SS about including the contract publishing information on the dashboard.

7 Performance Report

- 7.1 LC presented the Performance Report for February which included items on station coverage, numbers of incidents attended, Home Fire Safety Checks, very high/high risk protection audits, attendance within 15 minutes, accidental dwelling fires, calls to Control, non-domestic fires, deliberate fires and animal rescues. The report also included items on Road Traffic Collisions, people data and two fatalities this month.
- 7.2 The attendance times have been above average on this performance metric, however the most common median attendance time is 9 minutes. The average is being pulled up by a few incidents that took over 20 minutes to respond. A lot of these are due to a protracted call handling time, so we are going to do a lessons learned into this to feed back to control.
- 7.3 Regarding the risk based inspection process, the percentage of satisfactory visits is now included, this used to sit around the 90% mark and is now at around 46% for the past few months. This is promising, as it shows we are targeting and attending the premises with issues that we can help sort and rectify.
- 7.4 JG asked about home fire safety visits, which is down on the previous month, and queried if we know when we will hit the targets in a consistent way? MB does not know the underlying causes of the drop or when this is likely to stabilise and will check with JP.

Action: 24/23

MB to find out from JP why there was a drop in home fire safety visits this month and when visit numbers are likely to be in target and stable.

- 7.5 RH commented we aren't at target on many areas and the overall flavour of the report is that we are worse off this month. Do we know why it has slipped in the last month? LC the targets have become slightly harder to achieve with the aim of continuous improvement. We have been setting ourselves more challenging targets in the hopes to see them being achieved consistently by the end of the year and not necessarily every month.
- 7.6 JP The report is very well presented but it would be good to have more of the why's within the report as well as the what's. Is there anything that can be done about this? RH agrees. MB advises that the CIB highlight report may be a way to incorporate this.

Action: 25/23

LC and MB to discuss how to put data into the dashboard using the CIB highlight report and adding more context to the figures for the end users of the performance report.

8 On-call Support and Development

- 8.1 MB presented the on-call support and development paper, outlining the priorities of retention, response and recruitment; detailing the successes had thus far and projects that have impacted positively on our on-call colleagues. For example, the workforce management project which is around availability and a resource management unit around centralised crewing.

- 8.2 JG, During the project it was seen that the OCLO role had a lot of positives, now it's moving to BAU, when will we expect to see the difference that was anticipated? MB, previously there was a report that outlined the benefits and differences, that is why they have been invested in permanent roles. We could revisit the metrics around recruitment, retention and development.

Action: 26/23

MB to speak to CP about OCLO's training and the previous metrics used to measure OCLO value.

9 Safer Together Update

- 9.1 CB presented the safer together update, the safer together approach consists of six workstreams; Safer Recruitment, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Safe Places, Cultural Maturity Model, Mapping and Managing Allegations, the report outlined an update in each of these areas.
- 9.2 CB talked about how we incorporate recommendations from the safer together workstreams, an apprenticeship review (which was independently commissioned) and the HMI FRS spotlight report on culture and values into the people strategy action plan; in terms of monitoring those recommendations and actions going forward. Together the recommendations give around 60 actions to incorporate into what we do. It was proposed to have an in-year review of the people strategy action plan for 23/24 and look ahead to 24/25, so that we can monitor most affectively and bring assurance that we are delivering at the July strategic board. Ahead of this it was discussed if it would be helpful to meet to workshop the culture and values gap analysis from the spotlight report.
- 9.3 RH noted this is an important strand of work for us and we have loaded a lot onto it. We have learned in the last 6 months that the problems we as a service had over the past few years are more common than others were prepared to recognise at the time. We would like to think we have made more progress than others but there is indeed no room for complacency. A workshop that takes us through the detail of safer together and how it dove tails; what aspects of the Nazir Afzal report have we picked up on? What of the HMI cultural report have we picked up on? What's the gap analysis between where we are and how over what time frame, does safer together promise us the prospect of substantial further improvement; it's something we need to grasp and embrace. It's good that HMI have closed the cause for concern, but it doesn't mean to say we are where we need to be. What can we have as aspirational standards, for example what awards can we win for being good places to work, that is where we need to aim.

Action: 27/23

CB to set up mid-year review on People Strategy and workshop prior to Ethics and Integrity sub-committee in October

10 Annual Workforce Report Update

- 10.1 CB presented to note for information covering 4 sections;
Demographics - highlighting how much further we need to go, particularly in the field of positive action.
Turnover - has increased over all but is in line with our anticipation and the forecast in the strategic workforce plan, we would not expect this to decrease any time soon and it is in line with our retirement profile.
Absence - in this performance report we are down to 4.8% which is the lowest it has been for quite some time and reflects the work going on in the background.
Employee relations - highlights the decrease in average time to close cases which dropped from 108 days in 2021/22 to 81.8 days in 2022/23. (It should be noted that

the average case duration in 2020/21 was 131 days and that the 2022/23 figure represents a drop of 37.6% across the two financial years).

- 10.2 RH looking at the diversity of the workforce it appears we've gone backwards in terms of gender diversity, particularly for firefighters. The other striking statistic is our ethnicity data, where our ethnic diversity appears to have halved. CB the figures are disappointing and reflect the small numbers within the percentage points; so unfortunately, a few people leaving makes a big difference. We have held a pre-mortem on positive action with a view to setting a new 3-year plan for positive action. Clearly these figures demonstrate despite all the best input the outcomes aren't as we hoped they would be. We are hopeful that the figures will improve in August with the next set of recruits, but progress is frustratingly slow.

Action: 28/23

CB, PBI and JT to speak about when the pre-mortem positive action results go on the Forward Plan

11 Leadership, Resource and Succession Update

- 11.1 CB presented the Annual LRS update which included information on engagement with Practice to Progress, targeting positive action in terms of internal promotion and development. Practice to Progress is run by the former chief of Oxfordshire together with two other female former chief officers, they provide coaching and mentoring to female candidates hoping to progress, in particular around confidence building.

LC left the meeting at 14:30

12 Digital and Data Strategy Update

- 12.1 MB presented the digital and data strategy update advising there are 4 workstreams in delivery, control systems (going live 30th June), Networks, Frontline Technology and Intranet (due to go live 29th September). There are 2 initiations, the Finance System and the HR & Payroll System.

13 Information Governance Update

- 13.1 MB presented the Information Governance Update following a data protection audit that took place in March 2022 resulting in an action plan with 52 actions. The action plan has been further updated followed by a data breach in March 2023. The new actions have been broken down in to 4 areas; Transparency and Accountability, Record Management, Risk and Assurance and Training and Awareness.
- 13.2 RH asked what is holding us back in terms of dealing with the issues we have identified. MB There is an identified lack of confidence and familiarity with the new IT systems and SharePoint sites, this appears to be what triggered the two most recent data breaches. Work is in place to address this and mandatory training on information security has been completed.

14 Converted Stations Transitional Group Update

- 14.1 MB presented the converted stations transitional group update. The paper provided information on the progress of each of the individual four stations that formed part of the On-Call Conversion Project. Dovercourt although maintained 99% coverage in April with the 1st pump at 96%, the 2nd pump dropped down to 38%. Waltham Abbey is particularly low at 16% due to a shortage of drivers, this is attempting to be

addressed by attaching a new whole-time driver to the station. Baddow remains at 46% which is static from last month and SWF is also static at 56%, there is a lot of work going on to optimise the availability at these two stations by sharing the crews.

- 14.2 RH is there no trigger point that indicates this is now unacceptable? MB believes this is being worked on continuously, there are challenges around recruitment and retention. The biggest challenges come around training and the time to train drivers and OIC's. JG noted this was again coming back to a lack of drivers and OIC's and if we don't have either the pump cannot run which in turn comes full circle to the retention and recruitment issues. Out of the box thinking needs to happen to address the issue long-term including the possibility of paying to release on-call officers from their day jobs to release them for training.

Action: 28/23

MB to discuss possibility of releasing drivers and OICs for training and implications of HR and costs with CB and NC

- 14.3 JP asked if there is any issue around the way Annual Leave is being processed to ensure this is not impacting the issue. CB the annual leave policy is currently in consultation with our representative bodies with a view to making some changes, it has not been noticed however that annual leave is a trend causing this issue. MB noted the limited control we have over the leave on-call staff take compared to wholetime as we don't have the right to make the same demands of them.

15 Quarterly Grenfell Phase I High Level Action Plan Update

- 15.1 MB presented the quarterly Grenfell phase I high level action plan update. There were two strands, the Grenfell enquiry response, to which there are 40 of 46 actions closed, 5 closed awaiting assurance and 1 open and due to be resulted with the new control system being implemented at the end of June. It also covers the Manchester arena enquiry which we are at the beginning of with 149 recommendations across the different agencies. We are looking to put the same level of scrutiny and governance that we did to the Grenfell actions to these as that was seen to work well.

16 Quarterly Risk Review

- 16.1 MB presented the quarterly risk review highlighting 14 risks on the Strategic Risk Register. Red 0, Amber 6, Yellow 6, Green 0, Unassigned 2. This is an improvement as previously there were 2 Red risks that have been resolved and the less uncertain financial future bringing other risks down. There are two new risks surrounding the hot dry summer conditions and learning the lessons from external enquiries to maintain public confidence.

17 Quarterly Ops Assurance Report

- 17.1 MB presented the quarterly ops assurance with highlights to Station Audits, Failure to Responds and the Heatwave Debrief and resultant action plan to which there are 26 actions.
- 17.2 The remaining issue that was an area for improvement from HMI was around access to over boarder risk information within 10km of our borders. This has been officially reviewed and we now get this from all our borders except for London Fire Brigade which we are working on.

18 Quarterly H&S Report

- 18.1 MB presented the quarterly health and safety report. Giving an overview of the engagement in the Eastern Regional Meeting, the No Time to Lose (NTTL) Campaign and Protecting our People (POP) project team.
- 18.2 There were 18 accidents reported in Q4 against 29 in the previous quarter. There were 28 RTC incidents reported during Q4 which is the same amount as the previous quarter - Collision data is being analysed and discussed at the Operational Road Risk Group to continually monitor trends and introduce additional control measures where required. There was 1 reported Attack on Fire Service Personnel during Q4 compared with 2 in the previous quarter. This was a verbal attack on crews who were carrying out an RTC exercise on Station premises. 25 hazards were reported during Q3 compared with 20 hazards in the previous quarter.

19 Any Other Business

GM referred to some unanswered queries discussed during the finance paper, noting the capital data for the Hybrid vehicles was, as RH speculated, for the Volvos which was sitting at £0.9m of the £1.0m. On the carry forwards what was sitting in projects is the ICT control system that has moved into this financial year and the other area was the Shoebury ongoing works.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16.07