



MINUTES

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

31st August 2023 14:00 to 16:00 via Microsoft Teams

Present:

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
Jo Thornicroft (JT)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (fire) PFCC's office
Jeremy White (JW)	Finance Manager, PFCC's office
Moirá Bruin (MB)	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Colette Black (CB)	Director of People Services, ECFRS
Andy Smith (AS)	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ECFRS
Karl Edwards (KE)	Director of Corporate Services, ECFRS
Neil Cross (NC)	Finance Director and Section 151 Officer (ECFRS)
Sarah Smith (SS)	Procurement Manager, ECFRS
Lucy Clayton (LC)	Performance, Business Planning and Policy Manager, ECFRS
Brooke Knight (BK)	Minutes, Scrutiny Officer, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Roger Hirst (RH) Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

1. Introductions

1.1. JG welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from those above.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1. JT, MB, and JW addressed some errors from the previous minutes and agenda. Subject to amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved and agreed.

2.2. There were no matters arising.

3. Action Log

20/23 Finance Report
Management of £9.4m capital spend. Close.

30/23 Forward Plan
Timing of the next quarters performance report. Open.

4. Forward Plan

- 4.1. JT informed October's meeting is when the Unwanted Fire Signals paper will be presented. JT will be contacting everyone in preparation for the 2024 Forward Plan.

Action –31/23

Q2 Performance Report to be moved from the December to November meeting for the Panel meeting in December. Papers will need to be published by 29th November.

5. Finance Report

- 5.1. NC presented the report for July 2023. The service did go through a process of re phasing the funding. Currently sitting in a surplus for this month. YTD the employment costs, non-pay, on call and Ill health pensions are out of budget, but these pressures could be driven by the Pay Awards and the on-call spend. No increase in support staff pay is included in the budget but a rise is assumed in the forecast of outturn.
- 5.2. Operational income YTD is above budget due to interest received. Events income is below budget. Outturn has been updated for 2023 currently sitting in a deficit. The position will be presented and in line at the next Strategic Board meeting. Projected forecast of 700k year end.
- 5.3. Pension grant money has been received. The cash inflow from the pension grant was invested with the Debt Management Office. Capital spend for fleet has been moved to match timings of business case. Forecast is down due to new Service Workshops replacement, and Wethersfield replacement. YTD capital is up since last month due to vehicles and IT projects.
- 5.4. Discussion took place around events income. Discussion took place on the increase in on-call turnouts and NC explained that the service have done a lot of work around analysing on-call costs. AC informed that the service has not reached full FTE for recruitment so this would be a cause of not receiving the full return the service would expect, but the establishment is getting to where it should be, so these results will start progressing and there is confidence for year end.

6. Procurement Dashboard

- 6.1. SS presented the report. The Procurement Bill is in the Lords and scheduled go live remains October 2024.
- 6.2. One Single Tender Action (STA) in July for a one-year trial laundry contract for contaminated workwear. The decision report has been approved.
- 6.3. Monthly update, within property the cleaning decision sheet has been signed off. Ellie in the NFCC who ran the contract is leaving her role and the contract has been passed over to the new Category Manager. BA chambers evaluation is complete and decision sheet drafted.
- 6.4. Live fire training contract is prepared and been issued for signature. PPM has now been completed. ICT, Corporate services, and Operations categories headlines presented and include New Fleet Appliances. Contracts are summarised. One new entry expiring under 6 months, Hitachi CRM support for Water hydrants. Collaboration slide included showing contracts under framework, 7forces and other collaboration.
- 6.5. SS is working on savings to show where the service would have achieved these. Information will be provided accordingly.

- 6.6. PBI questioned Decision Report (DR) 25. SS informed the DR has not come back yet but there is going to be an update; now it is finalising what the offer is going to look like as they can offer some additional services within the price. Still purchasing from the same company so there has been no gap in supply. JP questioned the STA and SS explained the timing has been an issue to get this done. KE went on to explain mobilisation and de-risking this very quickly.
- 6.7. JG thanked SS and the team for their hard work and cooperation.

SS left the meeting at 15:36pm

7. Performance Report

- 7.1. LC presented the Performance Report for August 2023. Overall, the total number of incidents decreased from June and is below the five-year average and below the total number from last year. The decrease is most likely linked to the heatwave period experienced last year and associated increase in the number of incidents. A trend in false alarms linked to building work within schools was noted. No fire related accidental or dwelling fatalities.
- 7.2. Deliberate fires were within higher tolerance levels for July. Non-domestic fires remain in low tolerance levels and are still tracking below the five-year average. The service is monitoring this trend over the next three months to ensure a detailed analysis.
- 7.3. Coverage has risen compared to July 2023. Strong efforts to enhance Braintree coverage which is now sitting at 97% compared to the decrease the past two months. Immense increase in the number of operational crew HFS visits compared to 2022. A new dashboard is available to access for all fire stations and station managers.
- 7.4. Surge in inspection requests, inquiries, and tasks due. There has been a temporary shift in the team's focus from maintaining Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) visits this month to managing increased workload. Another new dashboard has been created and is live. It has been provided to the Senior Leadership team providing an enhanced view of RBIP activity.
- 7.5. A peak in last months number of RTCs attended by the Service. A deep dive into the RTC attendance will be conducted and referenced in the Q2 2023/24 Performance Report.
- 7.6. The sickness rate remains stable currently and still below the five-year average. Reduction in six staff members on long-term sickness has been noted when compared to the previous month. Turnover has dropped since last month.
- 7.7. LC explained when the public raise a fire concern or request an inspection, the service have a statutory timeline to return those. Whereas the risk base inspection process does not have those. There is a new SLT dashboard which is deemed successful. Audits are where they need to be. Work is currently underway on the future projection tool, and this will create extra measures on the performance report. Global availability and core station availability have decreased. FOI rate has remained stable and hit target. Overall response times is sitting at middle. Call handling is below average. Turn out time is slightly above average and lastly travel time is sitting at average.
- 7.8. JG and JT thanked the service for their hard work and looking forward to what the future meetings are going to hold with LC and the team's new future projection tool.

- 7.9. PBI questioned the diversity of the ECFRS workforce and to why the number of females has dramatically dropped since last quarter, and the data presented for last month and previous years and how we optimise this data accurately. LC welcomes any feedback outside of the meeting with PBI and to run through the report together and to discuss the most valuable way to present the report in future meetings. JP raised concerns on how the targets are produced and LC confirmed that the targets are worked out on the average and the service will be moving away from this performance metric in the new CRMP. MB confirmed the changes will be in place on the next CRMP cycle. KE confirmed that the new CRMP is going to be outcome based so the data is going to be very accurate with the new technology.
- 7.10. LC finished with discussing the inspections and why these have dropped. The service has been working very closely with the protection team and LC has developed a tool on how to reach the catch up with the audits from now going forward. All the audits that have been missed have been put back into the system to be redistributed from now and till the end of the inspection process.

Action – 32/23

LC to update final bullet point on page 2 of the July Performance Report before publishing.

Action – 33/23

LC to set up meeting with PBI and JP to discuss targets and data in the new CRMP.

8. Benchmarking Report

- 8.1. LC presented the report and discussed the plans to undertake an annual exercise with the reporting. Idea of developing this new dashboard is that it automatically downloads the data and distributes it in the right way. The report allows the comparisons with family groups. National data coming through can cause discrepancies. For incident numbers the service is ranked third. Primary fires and non-dwelling fires are below average, falling middle in the family group. Call handling times are below average. Still ongoing quarterly benchmarking paper meetings with family group 4. LC to meet with the Home Office to gather more information on the incidents for the report.
- 8.2. JP questioned the new family group and how they match the service, and LC explained that it has been set by the NFCC and confirmed there has been a lot of work put into choosing the new family group. AS explained to JP that he attended the launch of the new family groups and confirmed the new family group is evidence based. PBI questioned why Essex have a comparatively high number of staff who have not stated their ethnicity. LC explained that the service is actively trying to reduce that amount, the service has reduced but it is working progress.

LC left the meeting at 15:00

9. Quarterly Risk Review

- 9.1. MB presented the report and informed of the changed risks that have turned red, being the data breach, risk of fatality, POP project and heatwave conditions. These are due to lack of confidence in SharePoint, no training and ineffectively communicating with the response resources. There are 15 risks left on the Strategic Risk Register, 1 Red, 9 Amber, 5 Yellow, 0 Green.
- 9.2. PBI questioned the timescales set out for the actions in the report and have adequate resources been provided for CCTV reduction, training and awareness, risk of

contaminates and considerations set out with SLT. Discussion took place around this and the transition from Office 365 to SharePoint with SharePoint files being created everywhere, some files were not locked down, so the service had to ensure special measures and training how to use SharePoint to prevent this.

- 9.3. CCTV's sites have been decommissioned but the service is keeping CCTVs in high value asset sites. Most appliances have CCTV so there is work to establish if they are still running when the appliance is parked and with the ignition turned off.
- 9.4. PBI questioned the delay in approval of the Retention Policy. CB advised the phase is closed and will be sending an update after the meeting.
- 9.5. Questions were asked on the mandatory training and status of the 9% of staff that have not completed these. The team are working on what the consequences are of failing to respond to requests to update. This is the responsibility of line managers but there will always be legitimate reason that we will not get to 100% such as new starters
- 9.6. After Orsett MB and CB investigated to find that appropriate IOSH training had not been provided and work is being done to ensure correct training is being provided under the health and safety strategy, key control measures and monthly meetings with directors to resolve these gaps. POP now running and measures in place to ensure contamination processes are properly in place. SLT and the service are working on the on-call training and the flexibility for the on-call staff members.

Action – 34/23

CB to confirm how much of the gap in mandatory training is made up of new starters.

Action – 35/23

MB to check the number of risks against the report and Spreadsheet.

10. Quarterly Grenfell Phase 1 High Level Action Plan

- 10.1. AS presented the report and updated on the Grenfell tower and Manchester Arena Inquiry. Next month will be signing off all Grenfell actions. 43 of 46 Grenfell actions have been closed and assured. The remaining three were dependant on the implementation of the new Control system, Guardian and will be Closed at the next Project Board in September. Business as usual plans in place for September 2023 Strategic Board.
- 10.2. MA12 sits with the Emergency Services Collaboration Portfolio for oversight of all 149 recommendations. 14 of these are Fire related. 11 have no gap identified and the Statements of Compliance and Closure will be completed by 31st August, and the Level 3 Assurance by next Board in mid-September. The three with an identified gap have an allocated Area Manager and a Target date for completion and a Definition of Done for full assurance. The remaining 34 are directed at other Agencies and are undergoing a full gap analysis. In addition to the 48, there are 29 recommendations directed to JESIP and requiring a multi-agency approach to compliance. 16 are included in the NFCC listed ones and Fire will lead on these from a JESIP view (to avoid duplication), the others are led by either Police or EEAST and will require input and engagement with ECFRS to meet compliance. Intel Audit completed; few issues identified but draft report to come in August 2023. Actions are being taken. Overall MB happy with report.

11. Prevention Strategy Update

11.1. AS presented the report and informed a New Partnership Manager has been appointed, partnership agreements are being revised, and case studies prepared. Great improvement of data sharing across partners. Strategic Water safety partnership commenced in July 2023. This board is Chaired by the Area Manager Ian Adams.

11.2. Home fire safety checks. Operational crews HFSCs are 192% greater than the total number of visits at the same point last year. Safe and Well visits are 9% greater than the total number of visits at the same point last year. Not where the service needs to be yet but are on target. New category statements for HFSC will generate an additional 10-20% more visits for Operational Crews monthly.

11.3. JG explained she felt very confident with how things are being progressed and thanked AS and the team's work.

12. Converted Stations Transitional Group Update

12.1. There were no questions raised regarding this paper during the meeting.

13. Information Governance Update

13.1. JW questioned the owner of this objective. KE confirmed that Anna Buckwell is the data protection officer and the owner of this objective. The service has also employed an external data protection officer through a company called IGS.

13.2. JW questioned on improvements on timescales. MB confirmed Karen Nicolls will be implementing a stringent timescale process.

13.3. JW questioned risk plan failure rate. MB explained that good quality assurance processes and upscaling the service will mean more improvement. MB informed that London Fire Brigade are now sharing their risk information with ECFRS.

14. Quarterly H&S Report

14.1. There were no questions raised regarding this paper during the meeting.

15. Quarterly Ops Assurance Report

15.1. There were no questions raised regarding this paper during the meeting.

16. Any Other Business

16.1. There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:15pm.