

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – MINUTES

Date: Thursday 11th October 2018

Time: 14:00 – 14:40

Place: Fire Headquarters, Hinchingsbrooke Cottage, Huntingdon

Present: Councillors Bond, Gardener (Vice-Chairman), Gowing, Kindersley, McGuire (Chairman) and Scutt.

Officers: Rick Hylton - Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Deb Thompson – Scrutiny and Assurance Manager, Shahin Ismail – Monitoring Officer, Chris Waller – Information Governance Manager, Dawn Cave - Democratic Services Officer and James Veitch - Democratic Service Officer Trainee.

46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The clerk reported an apology from Matthew Warren.

There were no declarations of interest.

47. MINUTES- 24TH July 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on the 24th July 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48. INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The Committee received a report setting out performance against the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) targets. Attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the report that set out performance against response measures, which showed that urban responses had increased compared to the previous year, but was still in target. Work had been conducted into what has caused this increase. Attendance in rural areas had improved and was now below the 12 minute target.

There was a 7% increase in the number of fires in the year to date which attributed to a number of secondary fires in July that were largely fires in the open during the summer period. Two deaths had been recorded so far in the year, which was an increase of 100% from last year. Officers noted that both deaths were recorded without the Fire Service in attendance. There was a 19.4% increase in fire casualties in the year to date compared to the same period last year. The rise in casualties had been attributed to minor injuries related to bonfires going out of control and small fires in peoples' homes. Work had been conducted in order to

understand the demographics effected by the small house fires. The number of people killed or seriously injured on the road in traffic collisions had decreased by 2% compared to the same time last year. There had been a 60% reduction in co-responding stations called for help. Officers stated that they have had a large turnover of staff over the last couple of years in an effort for them to reflect the communities they served, they had seen a 3.5% increase in the number of BME staff recruited in 2018. Officers had been conducting research into the barriers that could have caused barriers for BME applicants to join the Service. Progressively they had seen an increase in the percentage of female staff recruiting, in 2018, 21.8% of staff were female. There was a £1,969,201 difference between the budget and the spending to date, Officers suggested that this was due to delays in bills and invoice but were confident that by the end of the year they would be on target.

The Chairman with the agreement of the Committee informed the Officer that they wanted annual comparison rather than quarterly

In discussion, Members:

- In reference to minor road traffic accidents, a Member asked who was attending incidents, if the Fire Service were not? Officers advised that they mainly attend RTAs involving trappings, so if the accident was e.g. between bicycles and pedestrians, the Fire Service did not attend.
- Noting that Cambridge has very narrow roads, asked if the Fire Service had problems accessing properties? Officers commented this could cause delays but they always attend.
- One Member commented that she and Councillor Kindersley had met with a female operational manger in Peterborough, who was very effective, and asked for her positive comments to be fed back.

It was resolved to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the performance report in Appendix 1

49. ANNUAL REVIEW- CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHOIRTY COMPLIANCE WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE SCRUTINY

In August 2018, the Service became aware, through the submission of a Freedom of Information request relating to Trade Union Facility Time, of a Statutory Instrument (SI) that detailed additional publication requirements. It was clear that many other Fire Services had also not been aware of these requirements. Whilst the majority of this information could be provided, records had not been kept on the apportionment between Trade Union Facility Time and other Union activities.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that:

- the Unions could be asked to provide this information, but there was no guarantee that this third party information would be totally accurate;
- officers were unaware of any sanctions for failing to provide this information;
- time off was not routinely given for “union activities”, which included activities such as training;
- this information would be recorded and provided in future.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the current position in term of compliance

50. MEMBER LED REVIEW- EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Officers addressed the Committee and asked permission from the Chairman to postpone the item as the reports did not get circulated to Members in time.

51. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBER LED REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE- SAFE AND WELL VISITS

The Committee were presented with the Terms of Reference for the Member Led Review (MLR). The main aim of report was to understand how the service could have identified and supported the more vulnerable people within communities.

Those involved would be expected to shadow a CSO and Operational Watch while conducting visits: the anticipation was that this MLR would take at least three full days.

It was resolved to:

1. Note the report;
2. Appoint Councillors Bond and Gowing to the Member Led Review.

52. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received the internal Audit Progress Report. The Key recommendations of the auditors were highlighted to Members. Members' attention was drawn to the Audit Plan Progress on p.23 and informed that assignments would commence soon.

A Member commented that the document contained some interesting statistics but the language was difficult and impenetrable in places.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the report

53. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Officers suggested the service is effective and sustainable and they would reach all their performance target by the end of the financial year.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the work programme

CHAIRMAN