

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – MINUTES

Date: 21st April 2016

Time: 10.30am - 11.35am

Place: Fire Service Headquarters, Huntingdon

Present: Councillors P Brown, D Divine, D Giles, M Loynes L Nethsingha (Chairwoman),
P Sales

Officers: S Ismail, C Strickland, M Warren and D Cave

Apologies: Councillor Over

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

none

46. MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 28th JANUARY 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 28th January 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 24th MARCH 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24th March 2016 presented to the Committee for information, were noted.

48. SERVICE PRIORITIES 2016-17

The Committee considered a report on Service Priorities for 2016/17. Members were reminded that previously, headline priorities had been published annually. The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) reviewed the risks faced both as an organisation, and those risks faced by communities. The three key service priorities for the coming year were Asset Management, Service Delivery and People. The report also provided detail around medium complexity priorities, to provide greater transparency and accountability.

Members queried a number of sections of the report, where acronyms had been used, and it was agreed that these would be updated before the report was presented to the full Fire Authority meeting in May. It was also noted that some of the sections that were currently blank would be completed with the appropriate narrative before that meeting too. It was agreed that the first page of the Service Priorities document needed to be expanded: although Fire Authority Members would be familiar with the issues listed, members of the public may not have the background information, so additional narrative was required in that section. It was also agreed that the 'Description' section of the tables needed to focus on outcomes, including timescales and responsible officer(s), although this level of detail was not necessarily required before it was presented to the May Fire Authority.

A Member asked about the latest progress with succession planning, given the recent changes. Officers commented that there had recently been an internal audit on succession planning, and the outcome to that audit had been better than anticipated: a lot of work had

already been undertaken in this area, including the recent appointment of the Chief Fire Officer, and attention was turning to identifying any gaps that would need filling in future. It was agreed that a report would be presented to the next Policy & Resources Committee meeting in June, with an update on the latest position. The Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that there was a backlog of vacancies that needed to be filled, with numerous individuals in temporary positions, and it was important to resolve this as soon as possible. Although there had been considerable recruitment over the last three years, there had also been significant turnover.

Members discussed the 'Exeter Data'. It was noted that partner organisations shared information on individuals with known risk factors (e.g. aged 80+, disability, people living on their own), but only where those individuals had agreed to their information being shared with partner agencies. Where this consent had not been given, anonymised versions of data were shared. Officers explained that a key problem was identifying accurately those individuals with risk factors who were *not* known to authorities, especially those with a number of risk factors, noting that all fire deaths last years had been individuals with risk factors. Members also discussed risk factors such as hoarding, and the possibility of medical practices sharing data.

It was resolved to approve the Service Priorities for 2016-17.

49. REVISED INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report on the Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) Framework, which included a proposed consultation strategy. Members were reminded that there was a legal requirement to produce an IRMP, which had previously almost exclusively focused on community risk. Future IRMPs would also encompass other activities including organisational/business related risk. The Service Priorities set out in the previous report would form an appendix to the IRMP.

As the communities covered were generally not 'dynamic' i.e. frequently changing, it was proposed to produced IRMPs every three years in future, with those IRMP covering a time period of five years, unless there was significant changes to community dynamics. However, the IRMP would be reviewed annually, and the Action Plan refreshed. It was anticipated that this would make the IRMP a more relevant document, and a focus for the Service.

A Member observed that one of the reports to be considered later in the meeting, *Guidance on Four Year Settlements*, included the statement that "*(that there was a government expectation/guidance that)... all Fire Authorities should clearly set out how they will collaborate with the Police and other partners to improve their efficiency*", and he asked whether the risk implications of those collaborations needed to be explicitly incorporated into the IRMP. Officers briefly outlined collaborative projects currently taking place and being explored, e.g. sharing a site at Wisbech with the Police, but acknowledged that whilst the opportunities of those types of collaborative projects were being explored, the potential risks had not specifically being considered. The Member observed that the financial impact of potential collaborative projects had not been included in the budget considerations either.

A Member queried whether the Trades Unions had been involved in the development of the IRMP. Officers confirmed that the Unions had questioned whether the Fire Service had an IRMP, and officers were in the process of confirming that this was the case. The Unions had been involved with the development of the IRMP from an early stage, being consulted

throughout process and specifically as part of the consultation process, and this process could be evidenced. The Unions' views and concerns had been taken into consideration.

Whilst favouring moving towards a three year cycle, Members were keen that the actual Risk Register was monitored more frequently by Members, as this could change quite quickly. It was agreed that six monthly reviews by Members could be built into the planning process, and this would be added to the next agenda. Members noted that senior officers already reviewed the Risk register on a six monthly basis.

It was resolved to:

1. Approve the IRMP Framework attached to the report at Appendix 1;
2. Approve the consultation strategy within Appendix 1.

50. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT

Members considered a report that provided an update against the corporate priorities for 2015/16.

Members noted the following update:

- Combined Fire Control system – there would only be one provider in the market, and was not getting through the User Acceptance Testing. The whole system was not proving to be very stable when it was rolled out. Other Fire Services had rolled it out but then *rolled it back* as they had no confidence in the system. There was no system nationally that was robust enough. Cambridgeshire was working with the supplier, who was aware of the issue, but this represented an ongoing risk. The CFO reassured Members that the current Control system worked fine, and would continue to do so for the next 4-5 years – this related to the next generation technology, and it was an issue nationally. Given the pace of technological change, it was anticipated that this would be resolved in time.
- Tactical and Strategic Command Provision: Officers reported that there had been a chemical leak at Grafham Water recently, and gave information about the incident, which had been quickly resolved. Members noted that all local residents had cards advising on the alarms, and how different tones signified the beginning and end of an incident. A Member queried the position with the prison, and officers confirmed that the prison went into lockdown.
- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Project: 93% of staff were now using the Virtual Desktop, and it was expected that the remainder would have migrated to the system by the end of the year.
- Asset Management Software – officers were working through the implementation plan with the supplier at the moment, which would enable assets to be tracked accurately.
- The redevelopment of Yaxley Fire station was still on target, and was currently ahead of schedule.
- The MDT review (Mobile Data Terminals on fire appliances) was progressing well, and the new devices would be much more useful and intuitive – the current MDTs could only be used in the cab of the appliance, the new ones would be truly mobile.

- Review of the Service's Rescue Capability appliance – this had been put on hold in terms of equipment, the issue was crewing arrangements. This would be considered at Fire Authority in May.
- Strategic review of training facilities – this was rated as amber because it was taking longer than anticipated. There was currently no training facility at Sutton, the training facility at St Neots had been condemned and facilities at Milton needed enhancing. It was clarified that with regard to the FBT (Fire Behaviour Training) facility at Cambridge Airport, Marshalls were unwilling to grant a lease longer than three years.
- Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) – the Service was looking to move to new technologies provided by a standard mobile provider, but the timescales had slipped slightly.
- The On call review would be considered at a Fire Authority would be coming back to FA later in the year

It was resolved to note the Programme Status Report.

51. RELOCATION OF HUNTINGDON FIRE STATION TRAINING CENTRE AND FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS (HUNTINGDON HUB)

Members were reminded that the Fire Authority had taken the decision in November 2015 to relocate Service Headquarters and the Huntingdon Fire Station to a new site on move to St John's Business Park in Huntingdon.

The progress report included the latest proposed designs of the building, including internal layout. There had been consultation with all staff groups on the proposals, and their suggestions had been included in the design where possible. It had been made clear to the developer that the cost envelope for the project would not change. A letter of engagement had been signed, so that preliminary work could start. Members noted issues with the planning process, including discussions with Huntingdonshire District Council on CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). It was anticipated that based on current timescales, the actual relocation to the new site should take place during the first quarter of 2018.

Work was ongoing with potential partners at the site, including MAGPAS. It had emerged that their requirements were more complex than originally anticipated, especially around the landing of the helicopter, so they were now looking at alternative sites, although some of these were nearby, which would still give opportunities for savings through shared working.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that senior officers had also been in discussion with the Ambulance service, who were looking to move from their current site, and there had also been some very early discussions with Cambridgeshire Constabulary about the potential for sharing office space, and joint training.

Members noted ongoing work focussing on how the value of the existing sites could be maximised. Marketing recommendations, disposal options and strategies for the sites, including the potential to profit share on developments, were being explored.

The Committee resolved to note the report.

52. GUIDANCE ON FOUR YEAR SETTLEMENTS

The Committee received an update on guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), on how the four year financial settlements would operate.

Members noted that the only condition attached to the four year offer was that the Fire Authority must publish an efficiency plan. The government would not be offering guidance and do not appear to have a mechanism in place to accept or reject the plans. With regard to collaboration with the Police and other partners, this could be combined in the same documentation as the Efficiency Plan, medium term financial strategy and transformation programmes. It was suggested that the focus was more on efficiency, e.g. Fire Services working together in issues such as procurement, rather than political or integration per se.

The Committee resolved to note the report.

53. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee Work Programme and Seminar Programme as updated at the meeting was noted.

54. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The future time and dates of the Policy and Resources Committee already scheduled in the New Year were noted.

Noting the Fire Service's involvement in the serious accident on the A14 the previous day, all Members asked for their appreciation to be passed on to crews for the hard work they do in these difficult and distressing incidents. The Committee discussed how staff were supported, noting there were both chaplaincy and counselling facilities available, and that the Fire Service had signed up to the MIND pledge. Members asked for a brief review on the services available to operational staff to a future meeting, and also for the numbers of fatalities the Service had dealt with.

Chairwoman
30th June 2016