

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – MINUTES**

Date: Thursday 24th July 2018
Time: 14:00 – 14:30
Place: Fire Headquarters, Hinchingsbrooke Cottage, Huntingdon
Present: Councillors Gardener, Goodwin, Gowing, Kindersley and McGuire
Officers: Rick Hylton - Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Deb Thompson - Scrutiny and Assurance Manager, Shahin Ismail – Monitoring Officer,, Matthew Warren – Deputy Chief Executive, Chris Parker – Area Commander; Louise Davies – Internal Audit

35. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/CHAIRWOMAN

It was proposed by Councillor Gardener and seconded by Councillor Gowing that Councillor Mac McGuire be elected as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2018/19.

36. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN/WOMAN

It was proposed by Councillor McGuire and seconded by Councillor Goodwin that Councillor Ian Gardener be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2018/19.

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk reported apologies from County Councillors Raynes and Scutt, and Peterborough City Councillor Bond.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

39. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 29th MARCH 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th March 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

40. REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST IRMP TARGETS

The Committee considered a report on the Service's performance against the first quarter Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) targets.

Members noted the following areas of interest in performance:

- significant improvement in the turnout time of first pump in urban areas, with average turnout time having reduced by 25 seconds compared to the same period last year;
- first pump turnout times in rural areas had increased slightly to 11 minutes 54 seconds, but this was still within the 12 minute target. Officers were seeking to establish why this had increased;
- the number of secondary fires was down in the first quarter, but there had been an increase subsequently due to the prolonged spell of hot weather, leading to grass and scrubland fires;
- one fire fatality recorded in the first quarter data had occurred in January. The Fire Service had not been called to the incident where the individual had died, and had only become aware of the incident in May, when notified by the Coroner. The Home Office had advised that the incident needed to be recorded in the 2018/19 statistics;
- disappointingly, the number of co-responding call outs continued to fall, and the future operation of co-responding may need to be reviewed;
- progress was being made in terms of diversity of the workforce, but performance still fell short of targets. 3.5% (24) staff came from Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, whilst the total BME population for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was 9.6%. Focus groups had been held in the past, and interestingly there had been a subsequent increase in the application rate, but this did not always translate in to individuals choosing a career with the Fire Service. Members requested that future reports used absolute figures as well as percentages. **Action required.** It was noted that there were still two outstanding Member reviews in this area;
- there were currently 144 female staff in the organisation, 32 in operational roles (6.7% of operational staff, the average for Fire and Rescue Services being 5.2% nationally) and this percentage was gradually increasing.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the contents of the performance report.

41. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND - UPDATE

Chris Parker, Area Commander, presented a report on the Revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, which was published in May, following a period of consultation. A paper setting out the Service's responses to the consultation was tabled, which set out the Fire Authority's response to the original consultation on the Revised Framework.

Key points noted in the report included:

- the requirement for the Service to provide resilience assets in periods of Industrial Action: the revised wording was “FRAs must make every endeavour”;
- concerns had been raised about the potential burden on resources of the new inspectorate. This was acknowledged, and the Home Office was keen to ensure that burdens were kept to a minimum;
- the requirement of the Police and Crime Act 2017 for Fire Services to collaborate with other blue light services is already inherent within the act, yet it had been placed within the National Framework, this is not the case for Police or Ambulance Services. It was confirmed that the Service continued to actively seek opportunities for collaboration. One Member commented that it was disappointing that the government did “not want to specify any further”, but another Member suggested that the Fire Service was best placed to understand its own requirements;
- the request for greater recognition in terms of road safety and water safety was very much placing the onus on the Service. Members noted the wording in the response that “The risks should be captured in their IRMP *in addition to their core functions*”;
- the Committee noted the comments on the introduction of re-engagement, and that it had to be exceptional circumstances and in the best interests of public safety.

Members noted the gap analysis, and the strong position of the Service. There were only two areas where work may be required, and actions were already in place in those areas.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the consultation outcome and acknowledge the current organisational position against the requirements of the updated framework.

42. AREAS FOR SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION

It was noted that three Members of the Committee working on the governance review which would be considered at the full Fire Authority meeting in November.

Reviewing minutes of previous Committees, one area previously identified was ‘Safe and Well’ visits. It was agreed that this was an appropriate area for scrutiny consideration, and the Terms of Reference for a review would be presented to the next meeting. It was agreed that Councillors McGuire and Gowing would participate in this review.

It was noted that there were no changes to the Fire Authority membership which impacted on the membership of review teams.

It was resolved unanimously to note the report.

43. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2017-18

The Committee considered the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2017-18. Members were pleased to note that there was an overall positive opinion, with a few suggested enhancements to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted specific issues which were ongoing, including the review in IT infrastructure, and the reasons for lack of progress in some specific areas.

It was resolved unanimously to note the report.

44. INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY 2018/19

The Committee considered a proposed Internal Audit Plan, based on corporate objectives, risk profile and assurance framework, among other factors. Members indicated that they were satisfied that there sufficient assurances in the Annual Plan to monitor the organisation's risk profile effectively, and that the standards in the Charter were appropriate to monitor the performance of internal audit.

In response to a Member question, the Committee noted the proportionate approach being taken to GDPR by both the ICT lead and the Data Protection officer.

It was unanimously resolved to note the report.

45. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Members were presented the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. It was noted that this would be updated to reflect earlier discussion under the Areas for Scrutiny consideration item.

It was resolved:

to note the work programme.

CHAIRMAN