

Fire Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Date: Thursday 12 January 2022

Time: 14:00 – 14:40

Venue: Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters

Present: Councillors Bond, Gardener, Gowing, Kindersley (Chair), McGuire (attended virtually), Taylor (Vice-Chair),

21. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Cllr John Gowing.

22. Minutes – 7th October 2021 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The action log was noted.

23. IRMP Performance Measures

The Committee received a report which reviewed the Service's progress over a four-year period using risk modelling, data from the national risk register and business delivery risks. It highlighted potential initiatives to mitigate weaknesses.

Members noted the attendance performance, with the first pump arriving quicker than the 9-minute measure in urban areas. The performance in lockdown was better due to reduced traffic levels. Attention was also drawn to secondary fires which had increased during lockdown due to people burning rubbish and due to being unable to dispose of it during lockdown.

The presenting officer highlighted statistics relating to Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) on the road network that were 4% up and collisions increased 31% on last year that was attributed to the impact of COVID-19 on traffic movements.

Members noted the statistics around the positive trend in people applying for role within the Fire Service from minority groups.

During discussion Members:

- Noted that the colours used within the report did not necessarily relate to performance.
- Noted that the grey and blue blocks contained within the report related to the same reporting period for the year before.
- Sought greater clarity regarding the recorded fall in strategic availability. Officers explained that it related to the availability of on-call stations in key locations had

reduced which was a result of the various lockdowns and people who were ill with COVID-19.

- Noted and welcomed that despite the number of calls increasing and a reduction in strategic availability, in rural areas the response time was only 3 seconds slower.
- Noted that the number of road traffic collisions attended would not include co-responding incidents. The Fire Service would attend medical incidents but not provide a medical response at a road traffic collision.
- Requested a briefing note be circulated to all Fire Authority regarding the relationship with the Ambulance Service and co-responding. Officers drew attention to the forthcoming seminar on 10th February where co-responding was an agenda item and information would be provided.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Note the contents of the performance report.

24. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority – Audit Completion Report

The Committee received a report which presented the results to date of the planned audit approach for the year ended March 31st 2021. The presenting officer commented that the process had been delayed due to many of the audits taking place remotely due to the pandemic.

During discussion Members:

- Confirmed that the report had not been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee. It was intended initially to be presented to the December meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee but then it was decided to present it to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Noted that testing of the 4 significant risks listed had concluded and there and be no change in the result of 3. With regard to the expenditure cut-off there were 11 items that had been recognised in the incorrect year.
- Noted that regarding the value of pension liability, a sample of benefits paid to 21 pensioners was extrapolated. The calculation was relatively minor in value and made no material difference to the financial statement.
- Noted that the Audit Differences reported on page 26 of the report were presented to the November Fire Authority meeting and adjustments had been made for the items.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Note the contents of the report.

25. RSM Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee received the Internal Audit progress report that measured progress against the Internal Audit Plan 2021/22. Members noted the completion of audits relating to sickness (partial assurance received) and the HR Wellbeing Strategy (substantial assurance received).

The audit plan for the remainder of the year was highlighted to the Committee and attention drawn to the ICCS and Mobs Implementation audit had been delayed at the request of the Service owing to Remainder of the plan highlighted, asked to delay one because the project has been delayed.

In response to Members' questions, Officers explained:

- The impact of COVID-19 on sickness and self-certification. Members noted that that COVID related sickness had not been included within the sickness data. However, as the pandemic phase began to end, it would be necessary to treat it as core sickness.
- Self-isolation following a positive COVID test had impacted on the Service not to the extent that some of the modelling forecast. However, the Christmas period was particularly challenging, and mitigations had been implemented.
- That the Mental Health Strategy provided lines through which people could access the support required and attention was drawn to the role of the Health and Wellbeing Advisor within the Service.

It was resolved to:

Note the contents of the report.

26. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee resolved unanimously to note its Work Programme.

Chair