

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 MAY 2015

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robbie Ayres, Roy Gladden, Barbara Murray, Jean Stapleton, Sharon Sullivan, and Lesley Rennie. And Anthony Boyle (Independent Person)

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from:
Ted Grannell (Chair)

APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER TO CHAIR THIS MEETING

Councillor Ayres put himself forward to chair the meeting. Councillor Jean Stapleton seconded his nomination. The committee voted unanimously in favour.

Resolved that

Councillor Ayres be appointed to preside over the meeting.

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prior to the start of the meeting, information regarding general housekeeping and confirmation of the recording of proceedings was provided by the Chair to all in attendance.

The Chair then declared the meeting open and recording of the proceedings commenced.

1. Preliminary matters

Members considered the identification of declarations of interest, any urgent additional items, and any business that may require the exclusion of the press and public.

Resolved that:

- a) no declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda

- b) no additional items of business to be considered as matters of urgency were determined by the Chair; and
- c) no items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 19th March 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. Liverpool District Update Report 2014-15

Members considered Report CFO/040/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning performance of the Liverpool District against the objectives set within the Liverpool Community Safety Plan for 2014/15.

Members were provided with a presentation from Group Manager Ben Ryder, and the Liverpool District Management Team, concerning an overview of performance for Liverpool for 2014/15, partnership structures and how they are resourced; and a detailed case study. The presentation included input from Merseyside Police Chief Inspector Greg Lambert, who is the Strategic Partnerships Co-ordinator for Liverpool Basic Command Unit.

The presentation highlighted how the District performed during 2014/15 against some key performance indicators.

One area of concern identified, has been the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) within the District. However overall, performance has been good with reductions observed in the number of accidental dwelling fires. These reductions have been achieved through using resources more efficiently, with staff delivering Home Fire Safety Checks to the most vulnerable across the whole District, not just limited to their specific station area.

Good performance was also observed in relation to the alert to mobile target, and speed and weight of response is deemed to be effective, with the target achieved in relation to confining fire to the room of origin.

The presentation highlighted that the population in Liverpool is up 2% and the City is the North West hub for asylum seekers. This particular demographic comes with complex needs which the Authority need to react to; and contribute to, working alongside partners.

In addition, all Liverpool Community Fire Stations are now established Safe Haven's, for vulnerable people seeking refuge.

Members were informed of recognition received in relation to the work undertaken under the Fire Fit brand, which has been recognised for best practice by the International Olympic Committee in a recent report.

The presentation also highlighted a recent partnership initiative with Odeon Cinemas in Liverpool, in which key fire and road safety messages were broadcast prior to screenings of Disney's "Planes Fire & Rescue". This was a particularly innovative initiative, which occurred as a result of the forward thinking of a member of MFRA staff.

The presentation highlighted the partnership structures in place and partnership work ongoing within the Liverpool District, around areas such as anti-social behaviour, hate crime and vulnerable victims. Such partnership working resulted in a reduction for 2014/15 of over 500 anti-social behaviour fires on the previous year.

In addition, the presentation provided Members with an overview of some of the potential implications to the Authority, of the Care Act 2015; and how the Authority can work with partners to make a significant contribution to the safeguarding of vulnerable older people moving forward.

The Committee also heard from Chief Inspector Greg Lambert of the value of joint working between MFRA and Merseyside Police.

Finally, Members were provided with a case study, which centred on the discovery of a large number of butane gas canisters within a flat, which were being used by the occupant as a drug. Members were shown footage highlighting the dangers associated with use of butane gas and the fire risks associated with the substance.

Members discussed at length the emerging problem of "legal highs" especially in relation to the increased risk of fire that some substances bring with them, and how awareness of the inherent risks might be highlighted to the communities of Merseyside.

Members resolved that:

- a) Performance in relation to the Liverpool District Stations, and Protection and Prevention Teams delivery against the Liverpool District Community Safety Plan, be noted.
- b) Officers be thanked for the very informative presentation and the fantastic work under taken within the Liverpool District.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2014/15 END OF YEAR UPDATE

Members considered report CFO/036/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer concerning performance against the objectives and the performance targets/outcomes as set out in the Service Delivery Plan 2014/15 for the period April 2014 to March 2015.

A presentation was provided, which gave an overview of the progress against the Authority's Service Delivery Plan. This covered Integrated Risk Management Plan Action Points, Functional Plan Actions, and Key Performance Indicators.

Members requested that information be provided concerning the causes of Accidental Dwelling Fires, as this would be useful in scrutinising prevention work. The Committee were informed that there is a great deal of information available, which can be provided to Members and brought to the attention of partners; and that this information reinforces what is known about individuals who are most at risk.

The Committee scrutinised the figures for RTCs and raised questions, such as whether it was realistic to have any targets, and what would take priority should there be a fire and an RTC at the same time.

Regarding the setting of targets, Members were informed that the Authority has a statutory duty to attend incidents where a life is at risk. Therefore it is appropriate to have targets to monitor incidents, to help inform where resources should be targeted in collaboration with partners. In terms of attendance at incidents, Members were informed that on most days, there will be both RTCs and fires occurring simultaneously, with data showing that the response standard is being met and both types of incident are being responded to effectively.

Members discussed the implications arising from the Care Act 2015, in relation to how the Fire and Rescue Service might play a wider role in the general health and wellbeing of the Community, in conjunction with and working alongside health and care providers. Members proposed inviting representatives from the health sector to a special meeting of this Committee to look at how they and the Authority might work together to address some of the issues arising from the Care Act 2015, moving forward.

Members resolved that:

- a) The Service Delivery Plan 2014/15 for the period April 2014 to March 2015 be noted and,
- b) Officers be requested to make the necessary enquiries and initiate steps to arrange a single purpose Performance and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the care agenda,
- c) Representatives from relevant partners and organisations, be invited to the single-purpose committee in resolution b) above.

5. Equality and Diversity (E and D) Action Plan 2013-16 Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 Progress Report for Year two activity with year end status

Members considered report CFO/037/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer concerning an update on the Quarter 3 and 4 progress with the Equality and Diversity (E&D) Action Plan 2013 -16 for all Year 2 Actions.

Members were informed that the Authority has received two awards in the past year: the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) National Fire and Rescue Service award for Positive Action with regards to its recruitment process; and the Matrix standard, awarded for work in relation to the provision of information to young people, through the Authority's youth engagement programmes.

Members were also provided with information concerning the use of Authority premises as "Safe Havens" and the occasions on which premises have been used for such a purpose.

In addition, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members of a change in language used when referring to non-operational staff, who will now be referred to as "Fire & Rescue Service Staff", as opposed to "support" or "green book" staff.

Information was also provided to Members around the recent firefighter recruitment; and discussion took place around opportunities for Members to meet with the new recruits. Members were informed that they would be invited to attend the recruit pass-out parade; and also that the recruits had been provided with a presentation around the role of the Authority as part of their training programme.

Members resolved that the level of progress made in Q3 and 4 and during the year, be noted.

6. Review of Injuries sustained as a result of operational activity year ending March 31st 2015

Members considered report CFO/031/15 of the Chief Fire Officer concerning performance data relating to operational staff injuries; resulting from an attendance at operational incidents and those as a result of training.

The committee scrutinised the number and types of injuries reported, in particular the high number of injuries caused by lifting; and asked how this was being addressed. Members were informed that lifting is integral to the role of a firefighter and consequently firefighters will, on occasion, suffer an injury as a result. However, Members were informed that all operational staff receive regular manual handling training, which is also intrinsic to all other training delivered.

Members resolved that the information contained within the report in relation to Health & Safety performance in the operational environment, be noted.

7. Standing Item: Forward Work Plan

Members considered the Forward Work Plan (FWP) of the Performance and Scrutiny Committee for 2014/15 and in particular those items that were completed and those which would carry over into next year's plan. Opportunity was given to discuss further items of scrutiny for the FWP 2015/16.

Resolved that:

- a) A report on the impact of Automatic Fire Alarm actuations be brought to the next meeting
- b) The Forward Work Plan for 2015/16 be agreed at the first meeting of this committee in the new municipal year.
- c) Work with health partners be included as a topic for scrutiny on the Forward Work Plan for 2015/16

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 23 July 2015

Signed: _____

Date: _____