

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 MAY 2016

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Ray Halpin, Barbara Murray, Sharon Sullivan, Lesley Rennie, Anthony Boyle, Peter Brennan, Les Byrom and Paul Tweed

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from:
Jean Stapleton

9. Appointment of Member to Chair this Meeting

Prior to the start of the meeting, Members were informed of the requirement to appoint a Member to Chair this meeting, following the previous Chair's resignation as a Councillor.

Cllr Sharon Sullivan nominated Cllr Les Byrom to chair the meeting. This nomination was seconded by Cllr Peter Brennan; and the Committee voted unanimously in favour of this nomination.

Resolved that:

Cllr Les Byrom preside over the remainder of this meeting.

10. Chairs Announcement

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) the following declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda:

- Councillor Lesley Rennie declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item 3 – “Service Delivery Plan End of Year Report 2015/16”, due to being a Trustee of the Fire Support Network (now known as the Critical Risk Intervention Service).

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. The Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 17th March 2016, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

With regards to Item 4 – “Youth Engagement Update” on the Minutes of the previous meeting, Members were informed that following discussion around youth engagement provision within some areas of Knowsley, officers were now in the process of introducing a new Prince’s Trust Team, operating out of Kirkby Community Fire Station.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN END OF YEAR REPORT 2015/16

Members considered Report CFO/031/16 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning performance against the objectives and the performance targets/outcomes as set out in the Service Plan 2015/16 for the period April 2015 to March 2016.

A presentation was delivered to Members providing an overview of progress against Service Delivery Plan and Functional Plan action points; and Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s), against the outcome targets.

Members were informed that with regard to the 38 Service Delivery Plan and Functional Plan Action Points for 2015/16, 13 have now been completed; and 25 have progressed and will be subsumed into new Functional Delivery Actions for 2016/17.

With regards to the KPI’s, Members were advised that 14 have met their target, 10 were within 10% of their target, whilst 2 failed to achieve their target. One

KPI is reported annually, however this is unable to be reported on at present due to figures being unavailable.

The presentation highlighted that KPI's meeting their target included, deliberate ASB fires, percentage of accidental dwelling fires confined to room of origin, attendance at life risk incidents, the number of working days/ shifts lost to sickness absence per head for all staff; and the total number of operational staff injuries.

KPI's that were within 10% of their target, include the total number of fires, accidental dwelling fires; and deliberate vehicle fires.

Those KPI's not meeting their target, included the number of operational staff injuries obtained during routine duties; and unfortunately, the number of fire fatalities.

Members were provided with further information regarding the 16 fire fatalities and were informed that three incidents resulted in double fatalities.

With regards to the number of operational staff injuries sustained during routine duties, Members were informed that the majority were as a result of slips, trips or falls, causing strains or bruising.

Questions were raised around short term sickness; and whether there has been an increase in stress/ mental ill health absence.

Members were informed that stress/ mental ill health is a significant contributor to short term sickness absence and that this is the case across all work sectors. Absences due to illnesses such as flu and stomach upsets have decreased, however absences due to muscular injuries are still prevalent.

Discussion took place around the measures in place to support employees, including the Occupational Health provisions, Capability Procedure and work around Mental Wellbeing.

Discussion also took place around the significant reduction in long term sickness absence; and the numerous factors which have contributed to that reduction.

Members Resolved that:

- a) Performance against the objectives and the performance targets/ outcomes as set out in the Service Delivery Plan 2015/16, for the period April 2015 to March 2016, be noted.
- b) A Learning Lunch be arranged for Members regarding MFRA's Occupational Health provision.

4. Equality and Diversity (E and D) Action Plan 2013-16 Quarter 4 Progress report for Year Three Activity with Year end Year-end Status

Members considered Report CFO/030/16 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning an update on performance and progress for Quarters 3 and 4 with regards to the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-2016.

Members were provided with an overview of the report, which highlighted some notable achievements for Quarters 3 and 4, including the delivery of Road Safety presentations, the securing of funding for fire alarms to support those who are hard of hearing and the establishment of a vulnerable person's team.

Members were informed of the introduction of Breastfeeding Guidance and the signing of the MIND Blue Light pledge, aimed at supporting good mental health for emergency services staff.

The overview also highlighted the first International Women's Day hosted by MFRA, which included a range of speakers and was attended by over 50 staff and guests; and the World Café style Staff Engagement days facilitated for non-operational staff to engage with Authority Members.

Other positive activities highlighted included the Engaging with Diverse Businesses Conference which took place in September 2015, the introduction of Puffell introduced to support all staff; and the launch of "Fire Proud" – a LGBT Network.

Discussion took place around the Breastfeeding Guidance and its implementation and around engaging with individuals with dementia.

Members were advised that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer has signed up to Dementia Friends on behalf of the Authority, with staff from Southport Community Fire Station having undertaken training around dementia.

Members were further informed of the aspiration for all staff in a public facing role to receive dementia awareness training.

Members Resolved that:

The level of progress made in quarter three and four, be noted.

5. Annual Environmental Performance Report

Members considered Report CFO/032/16 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning the annual environmental performance for Authority owned properties.

Members were provided with an overview of the report, which highlighted reductions in the amount of gas and water used by the Authority and the amount of waste produced. The reductions in gas and water usage are attributable to robust management systems now being in place, enabling issues to be identified and resolved much sooner than previously.

Members were also advised of an increase in the Authority's electricity usage, which is attributable to the full completion of the JCC building.

Members were advised that some element of each utility is recovered from partners sharing Authority premises.

The overview confirmed that no Category 1 or 2 Environmental Incidents had been reported during the year; and informed Members of a trial of electric vehicles for tender drivers.

Members Resolved that:

The annual environmental performance of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority property, be noted.

6. Review of the effectiveness of public consultation

Members considered Report CFO/033/16 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning scrutiny of performance of the arrangements for public consultation, particularly in relation to the proposals to close or merge fire stations.

Members were informed that in order to gain some independent external scrutiny regarding the procedures in place around public consultation, the Authority's Internal Auditors was requested to undertake a review of the consultation work undertaken, including consultation around the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) undertaken by Opinion Research Services (ORS).

Members were provided with an overview of the report, highlighting the key findings of Internal Audit.

Internal Audit noted that consultation around the Authority's IRMP had been limited in the past, however they found that over the past two years, the Authority has taken adequate steps to engage and inform interested parties during consultation exercises.

Questions were raised by Internal Audit during the review concerning a postal survey utilised as part of one consultation exercise and the cost effectiveness of this approach. However it was noted that this approach was only used once to address a particular issue.

Members were informed of a recommendation from Internal Audit regarding the capturing of information used to inform future exercises. Members were advised that a "Lesson Learnt Log" is being devised.

The Lead Member for Strategy & Performance commented on the report, endorsing the use of a Learning Log as a good way forward and highlighting the current round of consultation forums underway around the IRMP, which Members are invited to attend in an observer capacity.

Members Resolved that:

The information contained within the report, concerning public consultation arrangements, be noted.

7. MFRA/NWAS Collaborative Response to Cardiac Arrest Incidents Trial Update May 2016

Members considered Report CFO/040/16 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning a review of the performance of the co-responding trial between Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). This trial is being undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the NJC Circular 13/15.

Members were provided with an overview of the report, compiled utilising two months of data, to provide an insight as to how the trial is progressing.

Members were informed that the trial commenced on 29th February 2016 at three stations (Southport, Speke and Wallasey); and is due to conclude on 30th June 2016. During the period reported, assistance was requested on 54 occasions, with attendance made on 31 occasions and positive outcomes achieved on 5 occasions. Furthermore, attendance had also been declined on three occasions during the period, due to the need to maintain our ten key stations.

Members were advised of the data protection related issues associated with the follow of outcomes for casualties assisted, therefore the 'positive' outcomes reported are for individuals handed over to NWAS with a pulse. Work is currently underway to establish a compliant way to verify the outcome of the interventions.

Members were further informed of discussions underway with representative bodies to expand the trial as originally intended; and the safeguards in place to protect all involved in the trial.

Members suggested that a refresher training session be arranged for Members on the use of defibrillators. It was agreed that this be actioned following the Annual General Meeting and appointment of new Members.

Members Resolved that:

- a) The performance of the co-responding trial between Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), be noted.
- b) A training session be arranged for Members following the appointment of new Members, on the use of defibrillators.

8. Standing Item: Forward Work Plan

Members reviewed the Forward Work Plan for 2015/16.

It was noted that a significant number of reports have been provided to the Committee during the Municipal Year, with an overview of the status of reports within the plan provided.

With regards to the item "Implementation of the Management Review and Impact on Partnership Arrangements", Members were informed that arrangements were currently under review with regards to partnership arrangements, therefore this item will be deferred.

In relation to the item "Implementation of HR Policies" Members were informed that given the nature of the item, a report will be submitted to a meeting of the full Authority.

The Chair of the meeting thanked all present for the scrutiny work undertaken by the Committee throughout 2015/16; and to all staff for the excellent reports provided.

Close

Date of next meeting Date Not Specified

Signed: _____

Date: _____