



**AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

07 OCTOBER 2022 at 10:30 am

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors, May, Nutland, Tucker, Payne (Chair), Wilcox

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Davies, Eddy and Monk.

Noted that Cllr Ali was not in attendance.

17. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The ACFO explained the emergency evacuation procedures for the room/building.

18. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

19. PUBLIC ACCESS

None received for this meeting.

20. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

1. The Chair made a statement regarding the continuing need to be sensible due to COVID-19. To reduce the need for press or public to attend in person, the meeting would be recorded and uploaded to the AFA website.
2. The Chair explained the voting system for the meeting, i.e., votes against a motion would be recorded first, followed by abstentions, then votes in favour.

Members and Officers introduced themselves.

21. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 JULY 2022.

It was moved by Cllr Payne and seconded by Cllr May that the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of 15 July 2022 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

22. PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Performance Manager (CPM) outlining the performance of the organisation against targets for the period April to August 2022

The key points summarised in the report were:

Prevention:

1. Two of the four fire indicators are off target. The exceptionally dry weather in August has had an impact upon all three Deliberate fire indicators, as a consequence the Service is now off target for Vehicle and Secondary fires.
2. Home Fire Safety Visits are just off target (87% of the target), however delivering of educational packages is ahead of target (111% of the target).

Protection:

1. The target for call challenging Malicious False Alarms has been met. The Service is just off target for reducing attendance at False Alarms in business premises.
2. The targets for processing Building Regulations and Licensing Applications have not been met, however there is confidence that this will improve as the staffing issues are resolved.

Response:

1. Almost all response indicators are on target, with the exception of calls for assistance to Service Control (93% of the target) as a result of the high volume of calls received in August. The number of 999 calls received and the number of incidents attended are both up compared to last year, 999 calls by 23% and attended by 21%.

Resilience:

1. Off target for reducing shifts/days lost to sickness. High numbers of shifts/days have been lost to COVID-19 in the first few months of the year; however, this is steadily decreasing with 42 shifts/days lost in August. Long Term sickness (over 28 days) remains the main issue, accounting for 59% of the shifts/days lost.

Improve our Service:

1. On target for reducing H&S incidents that have resulted in lost time.
2. Just off target with reducing carbon emissions. On target for incidents.
2. Revenue Budget variance is on target with zero variance against plan.

Invest in our Staff:

1. The Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) for staff are off target with 89% in date. It is recognised that this is an area where there is a need to improve consistency of performance.

Following questions from Members the following points were made/clarified –

1. A question was raised concerning the progress of the 'net zero' goal. It was highlighted that this is a linear progression, and that the Clerk would check when another update was due from the Environmental Manager.
2. It was asked that Councillors note the significant increase in suicide attempts from 7 to 25. As the Fire Service is not the primary agency, we do not set targets to try to reduce this.
3. It was confirmed that a letter had been written to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) regarding police action being taken following deliberate vehicle fires, this will be followed up.

Resolved -

That the Performance Report for April to August 2022/23 be noted and approved.

23. 2022/23 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Head of Finance presented the report which provided an overview of the 2022/23 Capital Programme and operational updates and additional context information for 2022/23 projects.

The key points highlighted were –

1. Control element may slip into the future year due to national issues in terms of change of supplier, and delays in supply.
2. It is expected that both Fleet and Premises will spend their allocations within 2022/23.

Following questions from Members it was confirmed that

1. The Fleet order costs were guaranteed at time of order.
2. Premises costs are going to be managed within capital allocations.
3. The only appliances to be replaced are those already outlined. Ancillary vehicle replacement will be reviewed at the Capital Steering and Prioritisation Group meetings.
4. It was confirmed that details of proposals for the redesign of Bath Fire Station will be provided at the December 2022 Fire Authority meeting.

Resolved –

That the latest expenditure position on the 2022/23 Capital Programme be noted.

24. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Area Manager, Head of Service Transformation Team (HST) which provided the sixth update on the AFA Transformation Programme.

The key points highlighted were:

1. The Transformation team are struggling to fill three vacancies, these being a Microsoft 365 trainer, a Digital Developer, and a Business Change Officer. These vacancies are proving difficult to fill due to the low salary being offered in comparison to other organisations and the private sector. The Transformation management team are working hard with our HR Business Partner to ensure suitable candidates are attracted to apply for these roles.
2. It was reported that the migration to 365 was near completion, which will free up resources. Work has started on digitalising forms, this should assist with reducing administration time, and increase efficiency.
3. The FireWatch upgrade: The Technical Design Phase is complete, the Build Phase is 95% complete, there is a one week overrun, with the completion date of installation now being mid-January 2023.

Following questions from Members the following points were made/clarified –

1. The concerns regarding the delays with the FireWatch upgrade timeline were clarified. It was agreed that a narrative outlining the delays will be provided.
2. An explanation was given regarding the avenues being investigated for alternative approaches to the three vacancies in the transformation team, it was acknowledged that this could cause delays in the project if these positions are not filled.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

25. ROUND 2 HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) INSPECTION ACTION PLAN

The Committee received a report of the Service Liaison Officer (SLO) providing an update on HMICFRS Inspection Action Plan. The second 'round 2' HMICFRS inspection report was formally tabled following its publication on 15 December 2021. The latest approved version was included as an appendix.

The key points highlighted were –

1. It was noted that the version of the plan (Appendix 1) was not SLT approved at the time of publishing but has subsequently been approved.
2. The action plan is currently 29% (18/63) complete with 46% (29/63) of actions in progress and 25% (16/63) not yet started, some of these are sequentially dependant on the completion of some of the actions that have been started. Of the four actions carried forward from round 1 into round 2, there were two standalone actions, and two which were similar to new actions and therefore were assimilated. The two standalone actions have been signed off as completed, therefore all legacy actions are now complete.
3. The routine biannual data request is expected 7 October 2022 which needs to be completed, quality assured, signed off and submitted by 18 November 2022.

4. Preparations are under way for the Round 3 inspection, it will be based again around the three pillars of effectiveness, efficiency, and people format. There will be a move from four to five graded judgements (with the addition of 'adequate'). There will be a focus on service improvement. Inspections will be undertaken using a hybrid approach of physical on-site inspection and remote virtual interviews.
5. The Service is taking part in an HMICFRS pilot scheme of its fire control assessment product ahead of its wider rollout during Round 3 Inspections.
6. HMICFRS plan to publish a more detailed 'characteristics of good performance' which will replace its existing judgment criteria. It is these new characteristics of good performance which should allow gap analysis to be undertaken which will, in turn, enable an informed roadmap to 'outstanding' to be developed as discussed at the last meeting.

Following questions from Members the following points were made/clarified –

1. The ambition to move to 'outstanding' was received well by Councillors. The resource implication was noted.
2. Additional resources should now address the delays with PORIS.
3. Confirmation was sought that the Service are using the four unitary area contacts to ensure engagement with the different business types to share BFS information.
4. Thanks was noted for the involvement of the IT staff in the replacement of the Citrix system.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

26. GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received a detailed update report on the progress that had been made in respect of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report and recommendations.

In summary Members noted that:

1. Phase 2 of the Inquiry commenced 27 January 2021 to examine the reasons why the fire at Grenfell happened. The inquiry hearing closed on the 21 July 2022. The panel are now preparing their final report which is expected by the end of 2022.
2. The cost of the project totals £99,229, with £95,126 already allocated against specific grant funding. Benefits of this funding can already be seen in a recent incident at Twinnel House where a lot of smoke curtains were used to stop smoke spread throughout the building, and improved procedures when tackling fire in high rise buildings.
3. Of the 29 internal actions 17 are complete and 12 are in progress. Since the previous update, three internal actions have had their target completion dates delayed until December 2022. The primary reason for the delays relates to compatibility of other emergency services systems to ours.
4. The third phase of the improved tall buildings training for operational crews is underway. It consists of 20 coached exercises, taking place in local authority high rise residential buildings (HRRB), to provide a realistic environment and bring together the skills and knowledge acquired through phase one (e learning) and phase two (practical input).

5. Work with Bristol City Council (BCC) to improve site-specific risk information in relation to high rise buildings and the Computer Aided Design (CAD) plans and Premises Information Plates (PIPs) for these has continued following the appointment of a full time CAD technician into the Provision of Operational Risk Information (PORIS) team. Of the 63 HRRB in Bristol, 60 have had CAD drawings completed, leaving three plans to complete.

Following questions from Members the following points were made/clarified –

1. It was noted that of the three HRRB that have the CAD plans outstanding, two sets of plans should be completed in the next two weeks, the third has been delayed as the building is currently surrounded by scaffolding.
2. Following a recent fire in a HRRB it was confirmed that the procedures employed by the Service worked very well, and there is regular engagement with the Local Authorities.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved -

That the next meeting of the PR&SC will take place on 18 January 2023 at 10.30am.

The meeting closed at 11.35hrs

Chair