



## **PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**26 JANUARY 2022 at 10.30 am**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors Davies, May, Massey (substitute for Cllr Ali), Nutland, Payne (Chair), Windows (substitute for Cllr Eddy)

### **30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Ali, Eddy and Monk.

### **31. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The Chair confirmed the emergency evacuation procedure for the building.

### **32. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **33. PUBLIC ACCESS**

None received.

### **34. CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

Members and Officers introduced themselves.

1. The Chair made a statement regarding the continuing need for restrictions due to COVID-19. As no press or public were able 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, ie votes against a motion would be recorded first, followed by abstentions, then votes in favour.

### **35. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2021**

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

**RESOLVED – that the Minutes of 8 October 2021 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.**

### **36. PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Performance Manager outlining the performance of the organisation against targets for the period April to November for the financial year 2021/22.

The key points summarised in the report were -

1. All fire performance indicators were on target with fewer incidents which indicated less risk within the community.
2. With reference to attendance at alarms, attendance at commercial premises for false alarms continued to be slightly lower than the target. The spike in figures in October 2021 had been attributed mainly to attendance at hospitals and halls of residence and figures in November and December returning to target levels which indicated that it was not a trend.
3. Officers continued to perform community fire safety activity including Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) to fit smoke alarms and provide prevention advice. The impact of the pandemic had resulted in a reduction in visits and lower referral activity compared to the target set. Officers continued to work with partners and other agencies through new referral methods and signposting and it was expected that reporting activity would increase.
4. Work continued with regards to improving the levels of sickness and return to work interviews (RTWI) to bring levels in line with other fire and rescue services (FRSs). The completion of RTWI had dropped to 85% completion within the target timescale which showed as amber. Improvements to managerial and digital processes were being implemented to streamline the submission of sick notes for all absences.
5. Members were advised that 95% of Performance and Development Reviews (PDR) had now taken place compared to the 92% cited within the report (which was a 10% increase since the October meeting). Increased focus and action would continue to ensure that levels were maintained and target levels reached by the end of the reporting year. Some difficulties were due to the use of a legacy system which was not entirely compatible with other technical upgrades taking place.
6. At the next meeting, the Committee would be asked to consider the targets to be set for the new financial year.

Following questions from Members it was confirmed that all targets were set with full consideration of the inspection action plan and the overarching aim to ensure and improve the quality of internal processes.

The report recommendations were moved by Cllr Payne and seconded by Cllr May.

**RESOLVED – That the Performance Report for April to November 2021/22 be approved.**

### **37. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Area Manager, Head of Service Transformation Team (HST) which provided an update on the Avon Fire Authority's (AFA) Transformation Programme.

The key points highlighted were:

1. In December 2021, the Transformation Programme Board had approved the programme timeline extension from an end date of 31 March 2023 to 31 March 2024. Following full consideration of the financial implications, it had been confirmed that the additional year would result in cost neutral spend following underspends attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and delays with the recruitment of specialist staff.
2. Of the 60 work packages identified in total, a quarter had been started and implementation would increase in pace when the Digital Project Manager starts in post as of 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022.
3. The vacancies of Digital Project Manager and Fire Upgrades Coordinator had now been filled. Existing staff in other roles had been recruited which would add the benefit of the associated experiences and skills of already working within the service.
4. Workplace visits continued to update staff and ensure everyone had opportunity to feed into the programme.
5. An internal audit was currently taking place with an interim report expected within a week. Early indications were that the programme had utilised best practice and operated in line with plans.
6. Following approval by the Fire Authority, the Transformation Programme Board had agreed the following changes to the Programme Brief to provide clarity within contracts with regards to reference to 'new ways of working':
  - Flexible Working Policy removed from the Programme Brief
  - WP44 renamed 'Flexible Working Hours Policy (Flexi Time)'
  - WP45 renamed 'Agile Working Framework and processes'
7. Regarding the Corporate Risk Register (CRR) entry CRR 19 - Change and Transformation, the current Risk Rating was reported as 12 however it was expected that the risk rating would reduce to 9 once digitisation begins following the appointment of staff.

Following questions from Members it was confirmed that:

1. With reference to the transformation timeline document (Appendix 1), 'WP06 Corporate A6' was on hold while evaluation of the implications of removal of the form in its current format takes place. Once Fire Watch has been upgraded, the issue and work package would be able to be completed.
2. Roles and contracts involved fixed term contracts which would end at the end of the programme. Work had taken place with the Finance Manager

- and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to identify where costs would be ongoing after the end of the programme (such as Fire Watch and Business Management Information System).
3. With reference to the overall risk process, the Clerk & Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Avon Fire Authority (AFA) held responsibility for the Reserve Strategy and the Audit, Governance and Ethics Committee (AGEC) held responsibility for the Corporate Risk Register.

**RESOLVED – that the report be noted.**

### **38. HER MAJESTY’S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) INSPECTION ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT**

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<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and presentation to the AFA on the same date. The covering letter and press release were also included as appendices.

The key points highlighted were –

1. For clarity, it was noted that in para 5.4, December 2022 should say December 2021.
2. Ongoing progress against the ‘round 1’ action plan (Appendix 1) reported that the inspection plan was 94% complete with six outstanding actions remaining out of 102.
3. In the latest inspection report (‘round 2’), it had been confirmed that the three causes for concern from 2018 had been discharged with no further causes for concern. New areas of improvement were now being addressed within a ‘round 2’ action plan. Those six remaining outstanding actions from ‘round 1’ would be consolidated into the ‘round 2’ action plan.
4. The established governance arrangements had gained favourable comment, with a maintained corporate focus on driving forward improvement. The update reports regarding the HMICFRS findings would continue to be presented to PRSC with an action plan to be presented in April 2022 for scrutiny and approval.

Following questions from Members it was confirmed that:

1. Councillor Massey requested focus on the under-representation of women and members of ethnic minorities within FRS’s. Officers confirmed that the HMCIFRS Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England acknowledged that the recruitment of minority groups and females presented recruitment challenges across the fire services which were not unique to AF&RS and that the action plan would address the challenges and look to make improvements.

Members acknowledged the positive improvements and achievements from round 1, however, they were keen to focus on the improvements now required following the round 2 inspection.

Councillor Windows joined the meeting during this item.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. That the progress made against the seven remaining outstanding actions contained within the most recently approved version of AF&RS' HMICFRS Round 1 inspection action plan (Appendix 1 of the report) be noted.**
- 2. That the AF&RS Round 2 HMICFRS inspection report (Appendix 2 of the report), the covering letter from HMI Wendy Williams (Appendix 3) and the accompanying HMICFRS press release (Appendix 4) be noted.**
- 3. That the current HMICFRS inspection activity and next steps be noted.**

**39. 2021/22 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Head of Finance presented the report which provided a summary of the third quarter update (as of 30 November 2021) on the 2021/22 Capital Programme.

The following key points were highlighted:

1. Capital expenditure from April to November 2021 was £2.233m, with a forecast outturn position of £3.445m.
2. The underspend was largely attributed to fleet appliances that had been ordered but delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit. In November 2021 and January 2022, deep dives had taken place into Fleet and Premises programmes which had then fed into the capital programme proposals for the next three years which were due to be presented to AFA in March 2022.
3. It was noted that in future, only actual expenditure would be reported rather than hard commitments.

In response to the presentation, Councillor Davies queried if there was any operational or inflationary impact of the trend of capital programme delays. The Head of Finance confirmed that the deep dive evaluations had reviewed how the Capital Strategy and the Fleet Strategy were programmed. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) (Service Delivery) confirmed that the direct operational impact was currently minimal.

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Fleet Capital Programme had been considered by the Fire Authority in December 2021 with some adjustments made following comments received. Comments made above would be communicated to the relevant officers.

The Capital Strategy would be presented to the March 2022 meeting of AFA for approval and then monitored through the PRSC.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the latest expenditure position on the 2021/22 Capital Programme be noted.**

#### **40. GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY PROGRESS UPDATE**

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

The following key points were highlighted:

1. Of the 29 internal actions; 14 had been completed and 15 remain in progress.
2. Despite progress in many areas, the extension of a number of target completion dates had been due to a number of reasons. These include the link to and progress of other significant projects such as the Provision of Operational Risk Information (PORIS) and the requirement for national projects to deliver as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report.
3. Work was ongoing in collaboration with Bristol City Council to produce Computer Aided Design (CAD) plans annotated with additional information. These plans improved the site-specific risk information in relation to high rise residential buildings (HRRB) with 42 plans now live on front line appliances (an increase of 23 from October 2021).
4. A business case had been approved in October 2021 for a PORIS solution relating to internal actions 2, 3, 4, 12, 18 and 20.
5. Hearings for phase 2 of the inquiry had commenced on 27 January 2022 and were ongoing.

In response to the report, the following points were clarified:

1. PORIS involved risk information such as the presence of hazardous materials and the number of floors and lift information for a building.
2. It was confirmed that the Business Fire Safety Department had responsibility for the audit of all buildings that fell under the definition outlined by the Grenfell inquiry. Using the original definition, AF&RS had identified 187 buildings however, a different criteria and category had now been outlined. The new criteria had been taken into consideration and actions were being reconsidered.
3. The Clerk & Monitoring Officer agreed to ask the Business Fire Safety Department to provide a map which identified those buildings that fell within the category.
4. Further information would be provided to Elected Members within a briefing session to outline the new category of buildings and explain the link between the Business Fire Safety Teams and operational actions.

**RESOLVED – That the report be noted.**

#### **41. COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING UPDATE**

The Collaboration and Partnerships Manager (CPM) provided the Committee with an update on Collaboration and Partnership working undertaken by the Services since the launch of the Services Collaboration Strategy 2021-2026.

The following areas of activity were highlighted:

1. It was confirmed that the informal Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) referral partnerships were now the responsibility of the Community Partnerships Advisor (CPA) within the Risk Reduction (Service Delivery) team. The CPA monitored the planning, provision and evaluation of training.
2. An audit had provided evidence of completed reviews and gathered feedback to help improve the effectiveness of partnership working. Recommended actions included a referral agencies performance rating system to monitor performance.
3. The CPM role focussed on 34 formal collaboration and partnership relationships and ensured relevant documents were completed during a formal planning process before collaborations commence.
4. Reviews had taken place with the 34 partnerships to capture the impact of COVID-19 on those arrangements.
5. Work continued to review the Collaboration Strategy and Framework, bring processes in line with best practice and adopt the principles of ISO accreditation.
6. New collaborations had been established with The Prince's Trust and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College to increase engagement with young people. Objectives and outcomes had been set with which to measure performance against.
7. Practitioner training had been very popular which had led to the offer being extended.
8. Service personnel continued to support the challenges faced by the South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWAST) with their work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Work included support with Category 1 response and at Mass Vaccination Centres (MVSs). At present there are nine trained vaccinators. The support provided to SWAST in various forms has totalled over 570 hours support from June 2021 to December 2021.

In response to the report, the following comments were received:

1. The ACFO (Service Delivery) confirmed that AF&RS safeguarding leads connected with safeguarding boards and officers within each of the Local Authority area Councils.
2. Councillor May highlighted the potential of linking further with the Safeguarding Boards of large corporate organisations.
3. The presentation information from a recent Members Development Session on safeguarding would be provided to Councillor May, including the names of relevant officers.
4. Elected Members asked for their thanks and appreciation to be communicated to the nine trained vaccinators who have spent a lot of time supporting the COVID-19 vaccination centres.
5. Councillor May volunteered to be the 'Collaboration Champion' on behalf of the PRSC.

The report recommendations were moved by Cllr Payne and seconded by Cllr May.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **Noted the report which demonstrated that the Avon Fire & Rescue Service is working collaboratively with other Fire and Rescue**

Services, emergency responders and external organisations and agencies to support the Service's strategic priorities of making our communities safer and making our Service stronger.

2. That Councillor May be appointed the 'Collaboration Champion' and serve as a key contact for collaboration matters.
3. That a vote of thanks and letter of appreciation be sent to those nine trained Vaccinators who had been assisting the COVID-19 pandemic response with SWAST.

#### **42. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting take place on 21 April 2022 at 10.30am.

The meeting closed at 11:50

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**Chair**