



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT BOARD held on Tuesday, 25 October 2022 at Fire Conference Room, Clemonds Hey, Winsford at 10.00 am

PRESENT:

Members:

Councillor Stef Nelson

Auditor:

Anne-Marie Harrop, Mersey Internal Audit Agency

Officers:

Alex Waller (Chair), Chief Fire Officer

Andrew Leadbetter, Director of Governance

Paul Vaughan, Treasurer

Louise Willis, Planning, Performance and Risk Manager

Chris Astall, Planning, Performance and Risk Officer

Joanne Cartledge, Planning, Performance and Risk Officer

Tony O'Dwyer, Group Manager

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Stuart Parker

Wendy Bebbington, Head of Finance

Neil McElroy, Head of Service Improvement

2 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes from the previous meeting on 15th March 2022 were presented to the Risk Management Board and the following comments and actions were noted: -

The Chair noted the typographical error on page 2 which should be '806- ESCMP'.

The Chair advised that the Pensions Manager and Director of Transformation were due to update the risks relating to pensions next week to reflect the risk map. There were two risks associated to the pensions depending on whether the immediate detriment is implemented or not.

The Board queried the scoring of the Cybersecurity risk. It was agreed that the risk would be reviewed, and mitigation identified whilst rescoring the risk.

3 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Planning, Performance and Risk team introduced the risk register and provided an update for each risk. The following observations were made: -

720- Industrial Action – Loss of Operational staff failure to fulfil Statutory duties

The risk was discussed in further detail during Item 5 on the agenda pack.

806 – ESMCP

The Board was advised that the Service was awaiting confirmed reframed national plans following the decision to move away from the shared Fire Sector Regional Project Manager transition model. Delays on the plans were expected. It was confirmed that the Home Office would continue to provide funding directly to the Service. However, the risk remained until the Home Office could provide confirmation that funding would cover all the financial implications locally.

376 – Fire in Iconic Heritage Building

Several deep dives and mitigating evidence had been provided to the Board. The Board discussed whether it would be beneficial to conduct a peer review on mitigation for the risk and it was agreed that the Assistant Chief Fire Officer would decide the course of action to take.

ACTION: That

[1] the Assistant Chief Fire Officer consider and determine whether a peer review of mitigating action against risk 376 – Fire in Iconic Heritage Building would add value.

2046 – Funding Uncertainty

The Chair requested that further detail be added to the risk to include the actions taken to mitigate the risk which included: the IRMP cover review; sharing ideas with Members at Member Planning days; and lobbying central government.

995 – Fire Pensions – Increase in employers' contributions to firefighter pensions and 1008 – McCloud/Sergeant Judgement – Pension Case

The Planning, Performance and Risk team were asked to consider formulating risks 995 and 1008 into one risk as they were closely related.

2035 – Blue Light Collaboration

The Joint Corporate Services and the Service's Heads of Department had been realigned with monthly meetings and agreed performance measures in place. Phased departmental reviews of the Joint Corporate Services teams were underway focusing on efficiency and effectiveness. The first reviews were to be discussed at the Joint Services Management Board in November.

2033 – COVID-19

The Chair confirmed that the Service was operating business as usual, and that the risk could be closed.

ACTION: That

[2] risk 2033- COVID-19 be closed on the Strategic Risk Register.

2058 – Shortage of Fire Smoke and Deaf Alarms

The national shortage of fire and deaf alarms had been resolved and it was confirmed the risk could be closed.

ACTION: That

[3] risk 2058 – Shortage of Fire Smoke and Deaf Alarms be closed on the Strategic Risk Register.

4 OPERATIONAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES RISK MAP

The Planning, Performance and Risk team introduced the report, which presented a high-level overview of the Service's organisational risk profile concentrating on the 'red' risks. The following observations were made: -

Service Delivery

The Planning, Performance and Risk team met with the Head of Service Delivery to discuss absences and analyse mitigation. The Chair advised that absentee levels were now back to normal. However, it was appropriate to raise on the risk map.

IT

The Director of Governance advised that the Cybersecurity risk scoring needed to be raised. Further work would be completed on this in the near future.

Communications and Engagement

The Chair confirmed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer had been appointed and that a start date was awaited.

Information Management

The risk of lack of governance and evidence to meet ICO expectations had been mitigated and could be reduced to a green score.

Pensions

The Director of Governance advised that data migration to the supported IT platform was taking place next week. Once the data had safely migrated the risk could be closed.

Finance

The Planning, Performance and Risk team confirmed that several of the red risks identified by the Finance department were already included within the Strategic Risk Register.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Organisational and Corporate Services Risk Map be noted.

5 RISK REGISTER DEEP DIVE: 720 - INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The Group Manager for Operational Policy and Assurance presented a report providing an update on the position of Risk 720 'Industrial Action – Loss of Operational staff failure to fulfil Statutory duties'.

He informed the Board that the Fire Brigades Union were currently balloting on the 5% pay offer. He advised that the Service's contingency plans for industrial action and the communication strategy in the event of striking were being refreshed and finalised.

The Board noted the actions taken to mitigate the risk. A Member requested a further update on the risk be submitted to the next Member Planning Day meeting.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Risk Register Deep Dive: 720 - Industrial Action be noted.

6 WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23

The Board discussed the proposed work programme for 2022-23. It was recommended that a report on Industrial Action be presented to the Board in March 2023 if the risk was still relevant.

The Board also agreed that the Director of Governance should consider whether risk management responsibilities fell under the remit of the newly established Audit Committee. The Director of Governance would provide a recommendation to Members.

RESOLVED: That

[1] subject to the addition of the items discussed for 14th March 2023, the Work Programme 2022-23 be approved.