



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
held on Wednesday, 16 November 2016 at Lecture Theatre - Fire Service
Headquarters, Winsford, Cheshire at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: Councillors P Harris, J Mercer, D Bailey, M Simon, D Marren and independent (non-elected) member A Ruddy.

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

B Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors H Deynem, L Morgan, and J Saunders.

C Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

D Minutes of the Performance and Overview Committee

RESOLVED: That

[1] the minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Overview Committee held on Wednesday 24 August 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

E Minutes of Policy Committee

RESOLVED: That

[1] the minutes of the Meeting of the Policy Committee held on Wednesday 22 June 2016 were received, for information.

2 2016-17 Q2 (MID YEAR) REVIEW - FINANCE

The Head of Finance introduced the report which provided Members with a summary of the Service's financial position for the second quarter of 2016-17.

He drew Members' attention to Appendix 1 of the report which contained information on the estimated revenue outturn of the Authority compared to the budget as revised after the August meeting of the Performance and Overview Committee. He expanded on the reasons for the variances which had led to the anticipated underspend at mid year of £192k.

The Head of Finance then referred Members to Appendix 2 of the report which

showed the expected outturn on the capital programme. He explained that there was a projected overspend expected on the Emergency Response Programme of £343k and expanded on the reasons for this overspend. He informed Members that the overall overspend remained well within the contingency agreed when the Authority approved the final capital expenditure for the programme.

A Member queried how the underspend would be used by the Service. The Head of Finance informed the Committee that any proposals would go to Members for their consideration and that, in previous years, it has been used to fund IRMP projects.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the 2016-17 Q2 (Mid Year) Finance review and the anticipated financial outturn presented in the report be noted.

3 2016-17 Q2 (MID YEAR) REVIEW - PERFORMANCE

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive introduced the report to Members which provided a mid year review of performance for each of the key performance indicators (KPIs) and a progress update on the delivery of IRMP programmes and projects.

He referred Members to Appendix 1 of the report which contained the IRMP Health Report. He provided Members with an update on programmes and projects which were currently slightly delayed (reflected in the amber status on the Health report), including IT delays at Powey Lane and Penketh, on call recruitment at Crewe and Ellesmere Port and the expansion of the Safe and Well visits. He also updated Members on the Blue Light Collaboration Programme and the Emergency Response Programme (ERP2).

A Member queried whether on call recruitment was an ongoing issue at Crewe Fire Station. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive informed Members that if the required number of on call firefighters were not recruited the project would be brought back to Members for further consideration.

Members also queried the reasons for the IT delays at Powey Lane and Penketh. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive informed Members that delays to the installation of optical fibre had caused slippage in the project timelines which was reflected in the amber project status for both of these new stations. He also explained that testing was ongoing and Officers were doing all they could to ensure that the IT issues were resolved before the stations became operational.

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive referred Members to Appendix 2 which contained the Corporate Performance Scorecard and explained that this reflected the Quarter 2 position against targets set at the start of the year for the organisation's Key Performance Indicators. He expanded on the work that had been undertaken by the Service in response to targets that were not met.

A Member queried the relatively high percentage of deaths in primary fires and accidental dwelling fires amongst over 65s and asked what methods were in place

for the Service to address this. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed the Committee of the investigative process that occurred after these incidents and the preventative measures that the Service employed to reduce the risk to this age group.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the 2016-17 Q2 (Mid Year) Performance Review be noted.

4 2016-17 Q2 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS AND FOLLOW UP REPORTS

The Head of Finance introduced Michael Nulty, an Internal Auditor from Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), who was in attendance at the meeting and would be presenting the reports to the Committee.

The Auditor advised Members that the Internal Audit Progress Report and Internal Audit Follow Up Report, prepared by the MIAA, provided an update on the progress made in respect of the 2016-17 internal audit plan.

The Internal Audit Progress Report included key areas identified, actions to be delivered by managers and an update on assurance levels, which indicated that overall the findings from the report were very positive with most areas receiving significant assurance.

The Auditor informed Members that the Internal Audit Follow Up Report provided an update on outstanding actions and independent assurance that actions flagged as closed by responsible officers had been completed and evidenced as such.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the 2016-17 Q2 Internal Audit Progress Report and Internal Audit Follow Up Report be noted.

5 AGE UK PARTNERSHIP

The Head of Prevention introduced the report to Members which provided an update on the Service's current partnership arrangements with Age UK and emerging partnerships with other third sector organisations.

He informed Members that the ability to analyse the benefit of the partnership between Age UK and the Service had presented challenges due to data protection issues, a lack of adequate electronic data capture and increased demand on Age UK's capacity.

The Head of Prevention advised Members of emerging partnerships with alternative organisations, such as the British Red Cross, and their potential to offer home visits to some individuals and also have systems in place to provide evidence as to the value of the work carried out.

Members were also informed that funding currently provided to Age UK Cheshire for

the Dementia Advocate service would be reallocated to support a dedicated Dementia Advocate position within the Service's Prevention team to aid the delivery of Safe and Well visits.

A Member queried whether developments on this project would be brought back to Members for further consideration. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive commented that the Head of Prevention could engage with the relevant Member Champion and feedback to all Members as necessary.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Age UK Partnership report be noted.

6 ANNUAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT 2015-16

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager introduced the Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report 2015-16. He informed Members that the report provided the Authority with information about the management of health and safety in the Service. He highlighted to Members the key achievements of the Service throughout 2015-16 and informed Members that the Service was performing well nationally.

A Member queried whether there were incentives in place to maintain a low percentage of sickness in the Service. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed the Committee that continual professional development (CPD) rewards of £1k for operational staff and the work of the occupational health unit (OHU) and HR had helped to maintain low sickness levels throughout the Service.

A Member requested further information concerning the statistics presented on violence and aggression towards staff and how many of the incidents were linked to the Prince's Trust Programme. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager informed the Members that he would provide them with a further breakdown of the statistics. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that violence towards the Service's staff was extremely rare and that follow up mechanisms were in place via the police.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report 2015-16 be noted.

7 ANNUAL ROAD SAFETY REPORT 2015-16

The Arson Reduction and Road Safety Manager introduced the report to Members which attached the Authority's Annual Road Safety Report 2015-16, containing details of the interventions delivered by the Service. A Member queried how the Service recorded the number of faults found in tyre checks as part of the TyreSafe winter driving events and requested that these statistics be provided in future reports.

Members congratulated the Prevention team on the comprehensive report which highlighted the team's work on road safety and their successful public engagement.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Annual Road Safety Report 2015-16 be noted.

8 INTERIM BONFIRE UPDATE

The Arson Reduction and Road Safety Manager provided Members with an interim update on the preventative and operational activities of the Service during the bonfire period. He confirmed that a full report would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in March 2017.

He reported that there had been a significant increase in the number of fires attended by the Service over the period, with 31 out of the 105 incidents attended occurring in Winsford. The Arson Reduction and Road Safety Manager summarised the prevention work carried out by the Service in partnership with the police, with particular reference to work occurring in Winsford in response to the increase in incidents.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the interim bonfire update be noted.

9 PROSECUTIONS UPDATE

The Protection Office Station Manager presented the report which provided an update on the Authority's audit activity and prosecutions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order).

He referred Members to the report which detailed the number of ways in which a fire safety inspector may become aware of unsatisfactory business premises and the range of enforcement options available to the inspectors. He advised Members that the Protection department undertakes a routine, risk based programme of audits and inspection which was based on fire frequency data and guidance provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government, supplemented by local intelligence and knowledge.

He concluded by informing Members of the Service's 100% prosecution success rate since the introduction of the Order in October 2006 and the extensive press coverage following each prosecution to provide public reassurance and send a clear deterrent message to businesses.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Prosecution Update be noted.

10 NW FIRE CONTROL - ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the report to Members, which provided an update on the performance associated with North West Fire Control (NWFC).

He advised Members that the report provided a broad measure of performance and updated them on system performance, call handling and mobilising performance, costs of service, staff performance, training and skills and meeting arrangements.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the NW Fire Control Annual Report 2015-16 be noted.

11 ON CALL AVAILABILITY

The Head of Service Delivery introduced the report to Members and advised that it offered a comparison of on call performance for the first half of 2015-16 with the same period in 2016-17, including information for all on call fire appliances and a brief explanation of the key issues affecting performance.

He updated Members on the current availability percentage of on call appliances and the procedures and incentives to improve performance. He also informed Members of the current recruitment and retention levels and plans to improve numbers through reward schemes and rolling out the Cardiac Response pilot to on call stations.

A Member queried whether the changes to the Unwanted Fire Signal Policy and resulting decrease in call outs would impact on call stations and retention levels. The Head of Service Delivery advised Members that the volume of Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) attended by on call stations was very low, but there could be an impact on call outs. However the implementation of the reward scheme and the introduction of Cardiac Response pilots at on call stations were all measures introduced to improve recruitment and retention levels.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the On Call Availability report be noted.

12 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The forward work programme for 2016-17 was submitted to Members for consideration and they were asked to agree any additional items that they wished to include for future meetings.

A Member requested that a report concerning the performance of the Occupational Health Unit be added to the forward work programme for 2016-17.