

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 26th APRIL 2017
REPORT OF: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE
AUTHOR: PAUL HANCOCK

SUBJECT: SCOPE OF CREWE AND ELLESMERE PORT
DUTY SYSTEM REVIEW

Purpose of Report

1. To allow Members to consider and approve the scope of the review concerned with the duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe and Ellesmere Port.

Recommended that Members:

- [1] Consider and approve the scope of the review concerned with the duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe and Ellesmere Port.
- [2] Indicate whether they wish officers to have the review externally validated.

Background

2. The Fire Authority approved the Emergency Response Programme (ERP) at its meeting in February 2013. The ERP was a four-year plan which involved a range of changes to the way that the fire and rescue service in Cheshire would be delivered once it was concluded. An important principle of the ERP was the distribution of fire cover in order to improve performance against the ten-minute response standard to life risk incidents. Amongst other activities this involved the creation of new fire stations, introduction of new and revised duty systems; distribution of fire appliances (and other resources) and crewing of those appliances.
3. The ERP was essentially a package of actions and because of its significance it was the subject of a comprehensive consultation. Accordingly, the Consultation Institute was engaged to assist the consultation process.
4. Decisions in relation to the ERP were taken against a backdrop of a continuing downward trend in activity for the Service and increasing uncertainty about funding. The ERP was captured in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2013-14 and extracts for Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester together with the published timetable

are contained in Appendix 1 to this report. When Members approved the IRMP for 2015-16 the updated timetable that formed part of it indicated that the on-call duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe and Ellesmere Port would be introduced in 2017-18.

5. The draft IRMP for 2017-18 was considered by the Fire Authority in September 2016 and approved for consultation. It included a proposal to:

Implement the proposals outlined in 2013 (and in subsequent plans) to make the second fire engines at Crewe and Ellesmere Port on-call, but pilot the crewing of a fire engine during the day at both stations at an additional cost of £200k per station, to provide Service-wide resilience and support for prevention activities and training.

This was proposed by officers to assist the transition to the on-call duty system (following a similar arrangement to that established for the second fire engine at Runcorn) and because on-call recruitment had been more challenging than had been anticipated.

6. The Fire Authority considered the feedback to the consultation in relation to the IRMP for 2017-18 at Member Planning Days (November 2016 and January 2017) and at the Fire Authority meeting in December 2016. At the meeting of the Fire Authority in February 2017 Members decided that the IRMP should be amended and resolved that there be:

No change to the current arrangements in Crewe and Ellesmere in 2017-18 pending a review, the outcome of which is to be considered by Members.

Information

7. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive wrote to Members shortly after the February 2017 Fire Authority meeting outlining the process that was envisaged to carry out the review. An extract from the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive's correspondence outlining details of the process is included at Appendix 2.
8. The review is intended to confirm the appropriate duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe and Ellesmere Port. This report is the first element of that review – approval of the scope.
9. Officers believe that the scope of the review should be:
 - Focused, keeping it as simple as possible; and
 - Externally validated.
10. The following matters should be the focus of the review:

- An assessment of the current and emerging risks;
 - An analysis of current and anticipated activity levels (broken down into day and night) and set against current performance against the ten-minute response standard for life-risk incidents;
 - An analysis of the types of incident dealt with.
11. When the review is considered, Members will also need to understand the up-to-date position in relation to on-call recruitment and training, with an assessment of the likely ongoing situation.
12. It is possible to secure external validation of aspects of the review. There will be a cost, but it will not be prohibitive.

Financial Implications

13. If Members agree to seek external validation the cost can be accommodated from within an existing revenue budget.

Legal Implications

14. There are no legal implications associated with the decisions sought from Members at this time.

Equality and Diversity Implications

15. There are no equality and diversity implications.

Environmental Implications

16. There are no environmental implications.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE