



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
held on Wednesday, 4 September 2019 at Lecture Theatre, Sadler Road, Winsford,
Cheshire at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: Councillors Phil Harris (Chair), Razia Daniels, Gina Lewis, Peter Wheeler, Rachel Bailey (as a substitute for Norman Wright), Mike Biggin (as a substitute for James Nicholas) and independent non-elected member Derek Barnett.

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

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

B Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James Nicholas, Terry O'Neill, Jonathan Parry and Norman Wright.

C Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interest.

D Minutes of the Performance and Overview Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Performance and Overview Committee held on 10th July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 FINANCIAL REVIEW - QUARTER 1 2019-20

The Head of Finance introduced a report which provided Members with a review of the Service's forecast financial performance and information about progress with the 2019-20 capital projects.

The Head of Finance referred Members to details of the Service's funding position. She noted that the collection fund of Cheshire East was £20k less than the anticipated amount.

She drew Members attention to the summary of forecast revenue spending. Members were reminded that the anticipated fire pension grant had been built into budget. However, the actual amount distributed had been increased due to a higher than anticipated rate for employer contributions.

She also noted that there had been an unexpected additional cost for hydrant maintenance. This was significantly higher than the budgeted figure.

The Head of Finance advised Members that dependent on the outcome of discussions regarding the project to create a joint fire and police facility in Crewe, a revised funding proposal for the capital programme may be brought to the Authority as part of the mid-year review. She suggested it may be more appropriate to fund the training centre through reserves and fund the Crewe and Chester Fire Station projects through borrowing.

Members were satisfied with the content of the report and approved the movement in reserves.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the forecast outturn position – Quarter 1 2019-20 be noted; and

[2] the movement in reserves as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

3 PROGRAMME REPORT - QUARTER 1 2019-20

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive provided Members with an update on the Service's programmes and projects. He referred Members to Appendix 1 to the report which contained a health report for the first quarter of 2019-20.

He provided Members with an update on Blue Light Collaboration and confirmed that the underlease for the Service's occupation of the Command Suite at Clemonds Hey was moving forward. He informed Members that the content of the end-state collaboration arrangement was due to be concluded in the near future.

He also provided an update on the Chester Fire Station project confirming that planning requirements had been fulfilled with demolition vehicles now on site and with the temporary fire station now ordered.

Members were informed that they would receive a report on the project to create a joint fire and police facility at the next Fire Authority meeting.

A Member queried when the Service would expect to receive a reply from the Home Office regarding the ongoing national issue of the emergency services mobile communication programme. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that due to the current political and economic climate, it was uncertain when a response would be delivered.

A Member drew officer's attention to page 27 of the report which included an update on the Sprinkler Campaign 2014. He queried the sprinklers status of a high rise building that was located within his unitary area. The Head of Protection and Organisational Performance confirmed that the high rise in question took longer to be fully fitted with sprinklers as some residents resisted initially. He confirmed that after the Grenfell incident, the attitude of building owners had changed with a significant amount of buildings in Cheshire now fitted with sprinklers or due to be.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Programme Report – Quarter 1 2019-20 be noted.

4 PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 2019-20

The Head of Protection and Organisational Performance introduced the report which provided an update on the Service's Quarter 1 2019-20 performance for each of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Appendix 1 to the report included the Corporate Scorecard, which reflected the Quarter 1 position against targets set and the year-on-year direction of travel for the KPIs.

He expanded on some of the KPIs, providing further context particularly where targets had not been achieved. These included the number of recorded deliberate fires (primary and secondary), HSAs delivered to heightened risk, thematic inspections completed and on call availability.

Members were referred to Appendix 2 of the report, which contained a description of each KPI, including a summary of current performance and any actions taken to improve performance.

The Head of Protection and Organisational Performance highlighted that the number of Safe and Well visits delivered to properties of heightened risk was below target because the Exeter data was not available. As a result, the Service had been unable to identify high risk properties. The Chair asked whether this issue had been experienced by other fire and rescue services. The Head of Protection and Organisational Performance confirmed that the Exeter data had been made available to all fire and rescue services and that all had experienced the same problem. He assured Members that the Service was piloting a new approach in an attempt to resolve the issue. Despite the problem, the Service had completed 78% of platinum risked properties.

A Member asked why Cheshire West and Chester had fewer actions concerned with Deliberate Fire compared to the other unitaries. The Head of Protection and Organisational Performance stated that the other unitary areas had a higher rate of deliberate fires therefore, more commentary was needed to describe attempts to deal with the issue. The Chair also reminded Members that any concerns within unitary areas can be discussed with the Service Delivery Managers at the Unitary Performance Group meetings.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Performance Report – Quarter 1 2019-20 be noted.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT - QUARTER 1 2019-20 AND NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE (NFI) INTERIM UPDATE REPORT

Ann-Marie Harrop (the Auditor), a representative from Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) was in attendance to present the quarterly progress summary of the 2019-20 Internal Audit Plan (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) and the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Interim Update Report (attached as Appendix 2 to the report).

She provided Members with a brief overview of the progress made against the audit plan. She reported that the volunteer project at Safety Central had been deferred until next meeting and that Members should expect a report on the national fraud initiative later in the year.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Internal Audit Progress Report – Quarter 1 2019-20 and National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Interim Update Report be noted.

6 ANNUAL EQUALITY MONITORING REPORT 2018-19

The Equality and Inclusion Officer introduced the report which provided a summary of key issues identified in the Service's Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2018-19 which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

She highlighted that the Equality Monitoring Report was divided into two sections: employment; and community engagement. This was intended to ensure that equality monitoring was taking place both internally and externally. Statistics were included in the report for both sections providing a summary of identified trends over the course of 2018-19 and compared against the position reported in 2017-18.

She informed Members that going forward, the Service's priorities would include: improving positive action in the recruitment process to encourage BAME communities to join; continuing to support and strengthen the Service's submission to the 2020 Workplace Equality Index; and encouraging staff and volunteers to be actively involved in staff networking groups.

Members praised the staff who carried out the Stonewall submission and have actively promoted equality and diversity within the Service.

A Member queried whether Fire Authority members were invited to attend the "Proud to Provide" event that the Service had recently hosted. The Equality and Inclusion Officer stated that the Chair and Deputy Chair were invited on behalf of the Fire Authority to open and close the event.

A Member requested an update on this year's Stonewall application. The Equality and Inclusion Officer believed that the Service had actioned the recommendations from last year's submission which meant that this year's submission appeared to be an improvement on last year's.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2018-19 be noted and approved for publication.

7 SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2018-19

The Group Manager for Prevention introduced a report which outlined the number of safeguarding referrals that had been made by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service from January 2018 to the end of May 2019.

Members were informed about the separate policies for the safeguarding of children and young persons and adults. Future developments were also covered.

Members raised concerns in relation to the Service's action to educate children and young persons about bullying. The Group Manager for Prevention assured Members that the RESPECT programme was designed to help children at risk of exclusion and bullying. Safety Central had also delivered sessions covering issues such as the effects of bullying and cyber bullying within their school programmes.

A Member also raised concerns about the way personal data is shared between agencies. The Group Manager for Prevention stated that the Service will make a referral to the local authorities regardless of whether another agency has already made a referral, as standard practice. He also reminded Members that partner agencies will engage the Service when there is a possibility of a fire risk to an individual and this is recorded by the Service and actioned wherever feasible.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Safeguarding Report 2018-19 be noted.

8 SAFETY CENTRAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Safety Central Manager introduced the report which presented a review of the performance of Safety Central during its first two years of operation, July 2017 to June 2019. He stated that this was the first formal report focusing on the performance of Safety Central and now that Safety Central is in a steady state of operation, an annual report would be presented to the Performance and Overview Committee.

The Safety Central Manager informed Members of the programmes that Safety Central delivers for communities and the popularity of school programmes within each unitary area. He also stated the current challenges that Safety Central faced which included managing demand for the school programmes.

Members welcomed the report and thanked all staff and volunteers for their hard work in making Safety Central a success.

A Member queried how the volunteers were praised and rewarded for their work at Safety Central. The Safety Central Manager stated that all volunteers' hours were recorded for submission to the volunteer annual awards. He also informed Members that volunteers participated in summer and winter celebrations held at Safety Central.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Safety Central Performance Report be noted.

9 FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND 2018 - COMPLIANCE REPORT

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced a report which informed Members about the work done by officers to check and secure compliance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 (the Framework).

He informed Members that officers had been working on the compliance document attached to the report ensure the Service was compliant with the Framework and in preparation for the next HMICFRS inspection. He stated that the document would be published on the Service's website.

A Member raised concerns that infrastructure was not mentioned in the document given the kind of incident that had occurred in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive assured Members that risks such as the one which occurred at Whaley Bridge were considered within the Service's risk management process and PESTELO analysis.

A Member queried whether the Service's risk register showed any concerns that were prevalent within the unitary areas. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive suggested that further discussion of unitary risks could take place at a Member Planning Day in the near future.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018 – Compliance Report be noted

[2] the content of the Compliance document be noted and approved.

10 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The forward work programme was considered by Members and no changes were made.

RESOLVED: That

[1] The Forward Work Programme be noted.