

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee
held on 13 September 2017**

Present:

Members of the Committee:

Councillors Parminder Singh Birdi (Vice-Chair), Sarah Boad, John Cooke, Andy Crump, Judy Falp, Pete Gilbert, Maggie O'Rourke and Heather Timms (Chair)

Other County Councillors:

Peter Butlin - Deputy Leader (Finance & Property)
Kam Kaur - Portfolio Holder for Customer & Transformation
Howard Roberts - Portfolio Holder for Fire & Community Safety

Officers:

Elizabeth Abbott - Business Partner - Planning, Performance & Improvement
Helen Barnsley - Democratic Services Officer
John Betts - Head of Finance
David Carter - Joint Managing Director (Resources)
Tejay de Kretser - Business Development & Improvement Manager
Sarah Duxbury - Head of Law and Governance & Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Andy Hickmott - Chief Fire Officer
Tricia Morrison - Head of Performance and Interim Head of ICT Services
Rob Moyney - Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Bruce Nichol - Area Commander – Service Delivery
Dave Pemberton - Area Commander – Service Improvement
Steve Smith - Head of Property Services

1. General

(1) Apologies

Councillor Andy Jenns and Councillor Bill Olnier

(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2017

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2017 be signed as correct.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

2. Public Question Time

There were no public questions received or presented at the meeting.

3. Questions to the Portfolio Holders relevant to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

There were no questions from the committee to the Portfolio Holders.

4. Work Programme 2017-18

Members agreed the following additions to the work programme –

- Update on the WFRS Peer Review Action Plan – 20 December 2017
- Capital Investment Fund Allocations 2017/18 – Quarter Two – 20 December 2017

- Integrated Risk Management Plan; Task & Finish Group Report – 28 February 2018
- Capital Investment Fund Allocations 2017/18 – Quarter Three – 28 February 2018

5a. One Organisational Plan Quarterly Progress Report: Year End 2016/17

Elizabeth Abbott, Business Partner for Planning, Performance & Improvement presented the report and highlighted the following –

- There are five key outcomes that are measured through Key Business Measures (KBM). Of the 147 KBM in the report, 51 are relevant to this committee (27 to Resources and 24 to the Fire and Rescue Service).
- Section Three of the report shows the detailed information relating to these KBM. Members were asked to note that some KBM were new and therefore there was no comparison date available.

- Performance has been sustained at or above target for the following KBM
 - The roll-out of high speed broadband
 - Customer satisfaction levels for the Fire and Rescue Service
 - Preventative work by the Fire and Rescue Service

Steve Smith, Head of Property Services, confirmed that the 6.96% capital underspend showing for the Fire & Rescue Service (page 10) was as a result of delays to the building of the new Fire Service Training Centre. These delays were as a result of additional work being identified in relation to flooding and the subsequent planning application. It was confirmed that the build was now back on track and that an updated timeline would be provided to elected Members.

Tejay de Kretser, Business Development & Improvement Manager, confirmed that the information in Table 3.7.4 (page 6) relating to the number of visits to WCC libraries was correct (2.80 visit per person in Warwickshire) – there had been over 1.5 million visits to libraries in 2016/17.

David Carter, Joint Managing Director (Resources), confirmed that the information in Table 3.7.4 (page 7) relating to the number of ICT incidents reported, related to incidents where information had been sent to the wrong recipient and not system security breaches.

Resolved

That the Committee notes the delivery of the three years of the One Organisational Plan 2014-2018, including the final year of 2016-17 (to 31 March 2017) as contained in the report.

5b. One Organisational Plan Progress Report: April 2016-March 2017

Elizabeth Abbott presented the report and highlighted the following –

- There are three key outcomes which are measured through OOP Reported Measures (ORM). Of the 78 ORM in the report, 21 are relevant to this committee and currently 18 ORM are forecast to achieve their Year End Target.

Following a request from the committee, it was agreed that Tejay de Kretser would provide information relating to the number of visit to libraries with a comparison to previous years; in particular the information will include data from the newly refurbished library in Stratford-upon-Avon. It was noted that recorded visits to libraries included visits for campaigns such as the Summer Reading Challenge.

With regard to the Summer Reading Challenged, Members requested that more work is done to encourage all libraries to promote the scheme through schools.

It was also agreed that Tejay de Kretser would provide information relating to the number of on-line visits to access library services.

Andy Hickmott, Chief Fire Officer, confirmed that the performance for the attendance of a second fire appliance was 93.9% for June 2017 which was back on target. The issue of the geographical locations impacting the attendance time for second appliances was discussed. Andy Hickmott confirmed that on a day to day basis the demand for service is monitored and resources moved around the county accordingly. In particular the location of Warwickshire was noted – there is a central road network and a high number of vehicles drive through on a daily basis; not necessarily all Warwickshire residents. The access to Motorway Road Traffic Collisions is a high consideration for the Fire Service.

Resolved

That the Committee notes the progress of the delivery of the One Organisational Plan 2020 for the quarterly period of April-June 2017 as contained in the report

6. IRMP 2017-2020 Task and Finish Group

Councillor Heather Timms confirmed that the membership of the task and finish group would be five elected Members (3 from the Conservative group, 1 from the Labour group and 1 from the Liberal Democrats group).

The following Members were proposed and agreed by the committee –

Conservative – Councillors Heather Timms, Andy Jenns and Pete Gilbert

Labour - Councillor Maggie O'Rourke

Liberal Democrats - Councillor Sarah Boad

Resolved

That the Committee:

- 1) Agrees to the establishment of a Task and Finish Group in accordance with the Terms of Reference, as outlined in Appendix A of the report; and
- 2) Agrees that the Task and Finish Group should comprise Councillors Timms, Jenns, Gilbert, O'Rourke and Boad.

7. Fire Deaths in Warwickshire between 3 January and 24 February 2017

Bruce Nichol, Area Commander for Service Delivery, presented the report in relation to three fire deaths following accidental dwelling fires in early 2017. This was in contrast to the previous four years when the County had only one fire related death.

The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) work proactively on preventative work within the communities they serve. Warwickshire FRS (WFRS) received an additional £200,000 to continue the delivery of their preventative programme.

Following the three fatal fires the decision was taken to invite Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to review the prevention work and in particular the following areas – the overall structure, roles and governance for prevention and community safety; WFRS's direction of travel and corporate vision; WFRS's use of data in delivering outcomes; and the identification of opportunities to improve delivery.

SFRS reported that WFRS is delivering good outcomes but that there were opportunities to improve the engagement with community groups and partner agencies.

The three casualties all fell into the same categories despite the fires taking place in separate districts of the County. These included - all three casualties lived alone; all three casualties lived in council, district, borough or housing association properties and all three casualties were trapped and unable to self-rescue, due to either mobility issues and/or alcohol/drug dependency. Two out of the three casualties were known to other agencies and classed as vulnerable.

The report from SFRS outlined areas to explore and the decision to concentrate on data sharing, especially in relation to vulnerability, will be a key target for WFRS. The additional £200,000 in the 2017/18 budget will look at four key areas; capacity and priorities; the use of data; increasing the number of Safe and Wellbeing checks; and the use of local resources to deliver Community Safety.

Two of the fires were caused by overloaded power sockets and following a question from the Chair, it was confirmed that Station Commanders have had meetings with relevant housing officers and that they will be working directly with housing suppliers moving forward.

Bruce Nichol confirmed that the prevention agenda will be a major focus for WFRS and that this will include working with partnership agencies to identify training opportunities for the organisations. Work with Dr John Linnane, Director of Public Health, is currently being undertaken with regards to the M.E.C.C programme (Making Every Contact Count). The Five Ways to Wellbeing is also being offered.

It was confirmed that work is being undertaken regarding the growing trend of the homeless using derelict buildings and identifying the associated risk that this carries. The WFRS prevention team is looking into this issue and carrying out spot checks on known derelict buildings.

Resolved

That the Committee notes the contents of the report.

8. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Wider Fire Reform Programme

Dave Pemberton, Area Commander for Service Improvement, presented the report and provided the following background – the Home Office assumed responsibility for fire and rescue services in 2016. In February 2017 fire reform continued with the introduction of three key pillars –

- Accountability and Transparency
- Efficiency and Collaboration
- Workforce Reform

Accountability and Transparency includes the introduction of a new inspectorate and in July 2017 HMIC was formally given responsibility for this. While full details of the inspection process are yet to be made available, the fire service is confident that it will be similar to the PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) programme. Pilot inspections will take place in May 2018 with all fire authorities having inspections by the end of 2019.

The following information was confirmed by Dave Pemberton –

- There will be no direct cost to WCC (there may be some facilitation costs)
- There will be a pre and post inspection process
- There is a pre-inspection self-assessment

Following a question from the committee, it was confirmed that the inspection process is considered to be an improvement tool; if a fire service was deemed as needing support to improve, that would come from within the industry (in the first instance). Dave Pemberton will supply information relating to the potential additional costs, including staffing requirements that may arise during the inspection process.

Resolved

That the Committee notes the latest position on Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Wider Fire Reform Programme, as outlined in the report.

9. Update on Property Rationalisation Programme Phase 2

Steve Smith presented the report and highlighted the following information –

- The Property Rationalisation Programme was first started in 2011
- Since 2011, 140 buildings have been taken off WCC's portfolio
- The re-design of services; and the introduction of different ways of working; will release buildings that could be considered under the Property Rationalisation Programme

Following a request from Members information was provided on the One Public Estate programme –

- It is led by the Local Government Association
- Promotes property rationalisation across public services
- Promotes joined up service integration
- Funds of up to £500,000 are available for projects that would free up land for housing or job developments

WCC are expecting the result of their bid on 15 September 2017

Resolved

That the Committee endorses:

- 1) the approach in relation to the delivery of the remaining savings target associated with the Property Rationalisation Programme; and
- 2) the approach in relation to managing future property rationalisation.

10. Progress Report on the Digital First Programme

Tejay de Kretser presented the report and highlighted the following developments to Members –

- The website had been upgrade and now has much better functionality
- The Intranet will be upgraded by the end of 2017
- The Internet will be upgraded in 2018

Members were informed that there had been a noticeable increase in users accessing the online services via mobile phones and/or tablets; this had been taken into account during the design stages for the internet upgrade.

Other highlights of the Digital First Programme included the retention of the WCC website as a SOCITM (Society of Information Technology Management) four star website.

There is now also a “live chat” option available via the homepage which connects users with the contact centre.

Members were informed that three new Community Hubs were being launched in the new two weeks. These are pilot schemes that will offer support to local residents; which includes digital assistance. In 2016 19 WCC libraries helped over 100,000 residents get online.

Following a discussion about feedback from online services, such as reporting potholes, it was agreed the Tejay de Kretser would ensure that all elected Members were aware of the services provided by WCC by circulating the information. IT services will also be available at the next full council meeting – 21 September 2017) to answer any queries Members have.

Following a question from Members, it was confirmed that businesses also use the WCC website. Licencing and other services are available on-line to businesses but they are not accessed in the same numbers as residents. Primarily because businesses aren't individuals but also a lot of business services are not yet online.

The guidance for online service design was confirmed as including Industry Standards, Information Governance Guidelines and an aim to ensure consistency across authorities.

Resolved

That the Committee considered the content of the report.

11. Urgent Matters

None

12. Any other business

A Business Rates Update briefing note was circulated to Members.

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee was confirmed as 20 December 2017 at 2 p.m. in CR2, Shire Hall.

The meeting rose at 15.38 pm

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Chair