

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Report of a meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters at 10.30 hours on Thursday 20 May 2010.

Present: Councillors Carden, Fawthrop, Freebody, Harmer-Strange, Healy, Heaps, Howson, Kemble (Chairman), Kenward, Livings, Marsh, Ost, Pidgeon, Rufus, Scott, Sparks and Waite.

1. COMMUNICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

1.1 The Fire Authority approved the arrangements for consultation and engagement activities relating to the requirements arising from the rural review. An outline of the processes involved in the Authority's consultation was given and it was noted that consultation was to be carried out on two key parts, the first being engagement on methodology and the second being consultation and engagement on the conclusions and recommendations, once approved by the Fire Authority. Consultation and engagement was due to commence on 24 May 2010 and end on 20 August 2010, in line with Government best practice guidelines.

2. RURAL COVER REVIEW

2.1 The Fire Authority approved the findings of the review of Fire Cover and Resilience in rural areas, the 'Rural Review', and the subsequent recommendations of the Policy & Resources Panel to the Fire Authority prior to consultation.

2.2 The review, which had taken a year to complete in view of its thoroughness, covered the services provided by ESFRS in Lewes, Wealden and Rother and the proposals set out to balance effectively the match between community risk and the response and prevention resources available to the Fire Authority; this was to achieve the Authority's aim of achieving safer and more sustainable communities.

2.3 The Review Team had considered details such as historical incident activity, predictive analysis and community profiling which provided insight into community needs within each station area. The data also gave insight into whether the resources of the Service could be better allocated to mitigate risk and provide an enhanced level of service delivery.

2.4 The review highlighted a number of areas that were considered to have a significant impact on risk, both potentially and historically which included such issues as:

i) **ESFRS Resources – Station & Station Admin Areas**

Location of fire stations in relation to risk
Incident activity within each station admin area
High risk premises within each station admin area

ii) **ESFRS Resources – Appliances**

Service Response times
Average time taken for appliance to turn out to an incident (turnout time)

Attendance times of first and second appliances including phase time (time period between the arrival of first and second appliances)
Appliance availability
Pre-determined attendances

iii) **ESFRS – Staff**

Shift systems

Method of alerting staff on retained duty system

2.5 The review utilised various analysis tools used in order to obtain the information and the type of analysis that had been undertaken to better identify, understand and meet customer needs. Analysis carried out identified six groups that were more susceptible to having a dwelling fire and were identified as vulnerable. These were:

- Close knit, inner city and manufacturing town communities;
- Educated, young single people living in areas of transient population;
- People living in social housing with uncertain employment in deprived areas;
- Low income families living in estate based social housing;
- Upwardly mobile families living in homes bought from social landlords; and
- Older people living in social housing with high care needs.

2.6 The review proposed alignment of service delivery to match local demographics and community needs and sought to identify any potential impact upon the people, commercial businesses, critical infrastructure and our local environment. There was evidence to suggest that the current allocation of resources in relation to community risk was effective and efficient. However, there were opportunities to allocate resources in a different way to either enhance the service provided or deliver the service in a more cost effective way.

2.7 Members were advised of a draft people plan for subsequent development with the Way Forward Working Group and a communications strategy to ensure that all staff were kept up to date and also to ensure that those members of staff directly affected by the proposals were informed of the various options available to them pending the outcomes of both the consultation and deliberations of any future Panel/Fire Authority meeting.

2.8 Members resolved to approved the detailed recommendations of the Policy & Resources Panel and for a period of 12 weeks consultation and engagement, along with the communication of the findings of the review, to take place with all stakeholders. Finally, it was agreed that the findings of the consultation and engagement processes will be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 9 September 2010 for further consideration.

Report of a meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters at 10.30 hours on Thursday 3 June 2010.

Present: Councillors Belsey, Carden, Freebody, Harmer-Strange, Healy, Heaps, Howson, Kemble (Chairman), Kenward, Livings, Marsh, Pidgeon, Pragnell, Rufus, Scott, Sparks and Waite. Mrs Redman, Chair of the Standards Panel, and Mr Wheeler, Independent Person and Member of the Standards Panel, were also present.

3. **EAST SUSSEX FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW OUTCOMES**

3.1 The Fire Authority has considered an oral update which provided a preliminary overview of the outcomes of the Operational Assessment Peer Review which had

taken place during 24 – 27 May 2010.

3.2 The team had not produced a finalised report, but had provided Principal Officers and Heads of Department with a précis of their findings. The team had been complimentary about a wide range of work the Service had carried out and, in particular, noted that the Learning & Development Team was of Gold Standard.

4. **INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR ADDRESSING THE LIKELIHOOD OF INCREASING FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS BEING PLACED UPON THE PUBLIC SECTOR WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ESMRS**

4.1 The Fire Authority has considered a report that updated Members on the latest information with regard to Government announcements on the current financial position for the public sector and to consider options for East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service in making preparations for a tighter financial climate.

4.2 Members were informed that Chancellor George Osborne had announced reductions of approximately £6.2 billion to be made during the current financial year. The Government Department most affected was the Department for Communities and Local Government, with in-year savings of £780 million to be made. The coalition Government had made it clear that the deficit reduction programme was to take precedence over any of the other measures contained within their 'Programme for Government' document.

4.3 Members were informed that the Corporate Management Team was preparing for a much tighter financial climate and was considering options for the future financial sustainability of East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. The Service Prioritisation Programme had begun and would be actively considered by Members, Corporate Management Team and Heads of Function over the next three months.

5. **NOTE OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES, SCRUTINY & AUDIT AND STANDARDS PANEL MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

5.1 The Fire Authority considered a report which provided details of the Panel meetings held since the last meeting of the Fire Authority with regard to those issues of greater significance or requiring a decision from the Fire Authority.

5.2 Members resolved that the revised Member Allowance Scheme recommended by the Independent Remuneration Advisory Group as set out in the Report be approved.

6. **MEMBER LEAD UPDATE ON LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT (MEMBERS)**

6.1 The Fire Authority considered an update from Councillor Thomas (Member Lead for Learning & Development (Members)) on Learning and Development matters and progress as at 31 March 2010.

6.2 Members were informed that a framework which set out arrangements for responsibilities, planning, induction, financial resources, review and evaluation had been developed to provide a clear structure that could be evidenced. It was noted that the Members' Group was now well established and that the Member Lead Group was going well. All Councillors had now received a personal interview with

ACO Rolph which was helpful in order to produce development plans and a costed training plan.

- 6.3 Members resolved that the Member Lead Update for the final quarter 2009/10 be noted and the Members' Learning and Development Action Plan and Learning and Development Framework be approved.

7. BUDGET MONITORING AND PROJECTED OUTTURN

- 7.1 The Fire Authority considered a joint report that advised on the draft outturn position for 2009/10. The draft outturn for 2009/10 matches the agreed Revenue Budget after the transfer of £0.008m from Balances, as previously approved, to contribute towards additional costs related to the Marlie Farm incident. Effectively, the budget balances within existing resources. The Fire Authority noted that the draft Statement of Accounts will be presented to the Scrutiny and Audit Panel at its meeting on 24 June 2010 for approval prior to audit. The approved capital programme for 2009/10 was £3.515m, and the position at outturn was £2.853m. Slippage was being carried forward into 2010/11 of £0.492m and an underspend of £0.170m that would not be required. The Fire Authority also approved a variation to the 2010/11 Capital Programme.

COUNCILLOR TED KEMBLE
CHAIRMAN OF EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY
14 June 2010