

MINUTES OF SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUP MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2017

Present: Councillors C Atkins, J Chatterley, P Downing, P Duckett, D Franks and J Mingay (Chair)

DCFO G Ranger, SOC I Evans, SOC G Jeffery, GC J Clayton and GC D Cook

A minute's silence was observed at the commencement of the meeting in memory of PC Keith Palmer and the others who tragically lost their lives or were injured in the Westminster terror attack that took place on 22 March 2017.

16-17/SD/34 Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Riaz.

16-17/SD/35 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

16-17/SD/36 Communications

There were no communications.

16-17/SD/37 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2016 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

16-17/SD/38 Service Delivery Performance Monitoring Report Q3 and Programmes to Date

DCFO Ranger submitted a report on performance for the third quarter of 2016/17 and an update on the progress and status of the Service Delivery Programme and projects to date.

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme project was rated as amber due to ongoing national delays. This was a national programme to replace the current Airwave system. The local project team was led by AC C Ball.

The Replacement Mobilising System was also rated as amber as the progress in implementing the mobile data terminals was ongoing with an expected completion date in May 2017.

GC D Cook advised that the Code of Connection had been submitted to the Home Office and had recently been approved. Essex Fire and Rescue Service had commenced a pilot of the mobile data terminals at four of its stations and this had been well received, with only minor issues identified.

The Retained Duty System Improvement Project was rated as green and significant progress had been made. It was acknowledged that RDS availability was a long term challenge and that the aim of the project was to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the RDS. The

introduction of an online application process for on-call firefighters would help reduce the length of the recruitment process.

Future improvements planned included the integration of the 4i mobilising system with the Gartan RDS availability module.

In relation to the performance data, Members noted that it was a largely positive report with the majority of performance indicators reaching or exceeding target levels.

DCFO Ranger reported on PI02 (primary fire fatalities). There had been four fire fatalities during the year to date, which was over the target of fewer than three. Although the view was expressed that there were circumstances beyond the control of the Fire Service that contributed to fire fatalities, it was recognised that prevention work reduced the risk of loss of life and there had been a continuing downward trend nationally in the number of fire fatalities.

PI04 (deliberate (arson) fires) was reporting as amber for the quarter as the figures were still being impacted by the seasonal spike in quarter 2. It was anticipated that this would be rectified by year-end.

DCFO Ranger advised that PI06 (number of deliberate building fires) had achieved 50% better than its target. There was no seasonal trend in this type of arson fire.

It was suggested that arson was an area that would benefit from collaborative working and that this should be referred to the next meeting of the Collaboration Working Group.

The issues affecting the performance of PI11 (the percentage of occasions when our response time for critical fire incidents were met against agreed response standards) had been discussed previously and largely related to RDS availability. Members were assured that the first fire appliance arrived at the incident within the time period set out in the agreed response standards. This indicator measured the arrival of the second fire appliance.

PI19 (percentage of FAM and HOAX calls – not attended) was missing its target by 9%.

PI24 (the percentage of building regulation consultations completed within the prescribed timescale) had only missed its target by 1%. It was noted that this was a statutory requirement; however, it was suggested by Members that the timescale only be measured from the point at which all the information had been received that would enable the Service to take a view. It was noted that this was common practice at Local Planning Authorities.

PI26 (total number of fire safety audits carried out on very high risk and high risk premises) was missing target by 40% as 31 premises were no longer assessed to be high or very high risk premises, some had been found to be un-occupied and some had been converted back into private dwellings. SOC Jeffery advised that 100% of the very high and high risk premises would receive an audit by the end of the reporting year. It was being suggested in the target-setting report that the target for this indicator be reported as a percentage rather than a figure as this would give a more accurate measure of performance.

In response to a question, SOC Jeffery reported that fire safety audits/inspections measured by PI25 were for medium or low risk premises such as smaller business premises. These were not carried out on an annual basis as the risk of fire associated with those premises was much lower.

DCFO Ranger highlighted the good performance against PI27 (total number of fires in non-domestic buildings). Fires in this type of premises were the greatest risk to firefighter safety.

Performance against PI28 (Automatic Fire Detector false alarms in non-domestic properties) would improve once the revised Automatic Fire Alarm mobilisation procedure was implemented in April 2017. This would place more responsibility on the occupier of the premises.

In relation to questions about incidents listed on the daily incident sheet, the Group was advised that charges were imposed for special services which arose from attendances to non-emergency calls.

The Group noted that there had been a significant increase in the number of Road Traffic Collisions attended by the Service.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made on the Service Delivery Programmes and Performance be acknowledged.

16-17/SD/39 Proposed Service Delivery Indicators and Targets 2017/18

DCFO submitted the proposed Service Delivery Performance Indicators and associated targets for 2017/18 to the Group for approval. He reported that it was proposed that a number of the targets be based on a 5% reduction to the three-year average.

As discussed under the previous item, it was being proposed that the target for PI26 (the percentage of fire safety audits carried out on high and very high risk premises) be changed from a number to a percentage as the number of premises in those categories fluctuated throughout the year.

This was agreed with the proviso that the full-year numerical figure of audits undertaken on high and very high risk premises be reported to Members at year-end.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Service Delivery Performance Indicators and Targets and Information Measures for 2017/18 as set out in Appendix A of the submitted report be endorsed.

16-17/SD/40 New Internal Audit Reports

The Group received the internal audit in relation to the Data Quality- Incident Recording System. The audit had been awarded an opinion of reasonable assurance and had identified gaps in the control framework for data quality from the Incident Reporting System.

An action plan had been developed and was currently being progressed for implementation in May 2017.

RESOLVED:

That the associated managements comments and actions which will be added to the Service Delivery Audit and Governance Action Plan Monitoring Report be acknowledged.

16-17/SD/41 Effecting Entry for Medical Emergencies Pilot Results

SOC I Evans provided the Group with an update on the outcomes of the pilot to provide assistance to gain entry to premises in case of medical emergency. The pilot had originally been intended for a 6 month trial period. This period had already been exceeded and a final evaluation by this Service, the Police and Ambulance Service had not yet been undertaken.

The results of the pilot to date indicated that the Service was making a positive improvement to outcomes and providing a valuable service to the community and appeared to be a good use of the Service's resources.

There had been a number of issues raised, particularly in relation to call handling and the boarding up of premises.

It was noted that on 63 of the 220 incidents, the Fire and Rescue Service was the first emergency service in attendance. The Service's role as set out in the memorandum of understanding was to gain access in cases of medical emergencies, although there had been occasions when an initial medical response had been provided whilst Ambulance Service attendance was awaited.

RESOLVED:

That the report be acknowledged.

16-17/SD/42 Operational Decision Making Procedures - Exception Report

There were no exceptions to report.

SOC Evans advised that the operational decision making procedures were being updated in line with national guidance on operational discretion.

16-17/SD/43 Customer Satisfaction Report

SOC Jeffery introduced the customer satisfaction results for the third quarter of 2016/17 (1 October – 31 December 2016). 99% of respondents across all survey areas were either very or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided.

The Service had received three complaints during the quarter. SOC Jeffrey advised that these had now been resolved. 21 compliments had been received during the same period.

RESOLVED:

That the report and the continuing excellent levels of customer satisfaction be acknowledged.

16-17/SD/44 Corporate Risk Register

GC Cook submitted the update on the review of the Corporate Risk Register in relation to Service Delivery. There had been no changes to individual risk ratings and updates had been provided for CRR44 (if the Service does not have a reliable accurate system for continuously monitoring and updating the availability and skills of Retained Duty System (RDS) operational personnel and RDS appliances then there could be delays in mobilising the nearest available appliance to emergency incidents. This could significantly impact upon the effectiveness and mobilising of our emergency response, increase risks to firefighters and the community, reduce our ability to monitor performance, undermine RDS employees confidence in the Service and could result in negative media coverage) and CRR46 (due to a range of factors

which deplete the number of staff available to crew fire appliances the cost of using of pre-arranged overtime to cover wholetime crewing has become excessive and crewing arrangements lack resilience).

RESOLVED:

That the review by the Service of the Corporate Risk Register in relation to Service Delivery be approved.

16-17/SD/45 Work Programme 2016/17

The Group considered its work programme for 2016/17.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be received.

16-17/SD/46 Police and Ambulance Collaboration

Mr I Howarth, Partnership Development Manager, gave a presentation on current and proposed collaboration with other emergency services. The Service had positive working relationships with both the Police and the Ambulance Service and a number of collaborative workstreams were in progress.

This included the sharing of estate, with Bedfordshire Police having a presence at Ampthill, Bedford and Leighton Buzzard fire stations and Shefford and Luton being considered as tri-service stations with the Police and Ambulance Service.

The Service was also working with the Police in relation to vulnerable people searches, use of unmanned aircraft vehicles and the operational deployment of body worn cameras.

Closer working between the tri-service control rooms had been agreed with daily briefings to share intelligence over the JESIP channel planned. This would also fulfil the line test requirements.

Mr Howarth reported on future opportunities for collaboration that were currently under consideration. These included joint training, occupancy of Bury Park Community Centre, active listening training for Fire Control staff, joint working on community safety initiatives with Luton Borough Council and cooperation with the Police on the 'Herbert Protocol' to search for missing vulnerable people with dementia.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received.

The meeting ended at 11.20 am