

For Publication

**Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Service Delivery Policy and Challenge
Group
1 December 2015
Item No. 5**

**MINUTES OF SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUP
MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 10.00am**

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

DCFO G Ranger, SOC J Foolkes, SOC A Peckham, SOC J Roberts, SOC T Rogers, GC C Ball, Station Manager L Lehrle and Mr J Atkinson

15-16/SD/015 Apologies

An apology for absence was received from SOC I Evans.

Councillor Castleman advised that due to his promotion to a Portfolio Holder position at Luton Borough Council, he was standing down as one of the Council's representatives on the Fire and Rescue Authority with immediate effect. He handed the Chair to the Vice-Chair, Councillor J Mingay.

15-16/SD/016 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

15-16/SD/017 Communications

Members received the Fire Kills Campaign Annual Report 2013/14 and recognised the importance of the national campaign and the work done locally by the Service to support it.

15-16/SD/018 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2015 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

15-16/SD/019 Service Delivery Performance Monitoring Report and Programmes to date

Members received a report on the performance against the Service Delivery Programme, Projects and performance indicators and associated targets for Quarter 1 of 2015/16.

SOC J Roberts provided an update on the Replacement Mobilising System project, which had been delayed by the need for further reconfiguration tests. A full test of the final system and updated training for staff would be required following final development of the software.

It was anticipated that Essex would cut over in January 2016, with this Service following a few weeks later. Full functionality of the system, such as the Officer Paging System and the Mobile Data Terminals, would be rolled out over a 6-8 month period.

Members expressed concern that Remsdaq, the mobilising system provider, had not attended a stakeholder meeting with the Fire and Rescue Services. DCFO Ranger assured the Group that both Services had regular meetings with Remsdaq and that the concerns on the delay of the final system had been expressed.

It was noted that Remsdaq was also providing mobilising systems to East Sussex, West Sussex, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk as well as Bedfordshire and Essex.

SOC J Roberts added that the contract specified stage payments and was very explicit. The base system required more development than previously anticipated and could be expanded to include different features as required by different tender specifications.

In response to a question, Members were advised that the mobilising system was separate from the ICT Shared Service with Cambridgeshire and was subject to high security arrangements. The system was not linked to other Fire and Rescue Services but there was a system in place to allow emergency services to pass calls to each other as required.

DCFO Ranger provided an update on the review of the Retained Duty System project which had recently been added to the Group's programme report. The two year review had been awarded Government funding of approximately £300,000 and was being led by an in-house Project Manager. Any improvements would be implemented as they were identified and a new RDS availability and payroll system, Gartan, had been procured. Radical solutions were being sought to improve the availability of RDS firefighters.

DCFO Ranger reported on the performance indicators for Quarter 1 2015/16. He highlighted the good performance against PI01 (primary fires), which was 22% inside target for the reporting period.

Members also noted the improving performance against PI04 (deliberate (arson) fires) and that a number of factors, including preventative activity and partnership working, had resulted in continuous improvement against this indicator.

PI03 (primary fire injuries) was 18% outside of target and this was being monitored. It was hoped that the indicator would reach target levels during Quarter 2.

Performance against PI05 (accidental dwelling fires) had improved from the previous three reporting periods and was on target for the reporting period. A spike in incidents had been identified and a large amount of preventative work had been targeted at the hot spot areas in densely populated, urban areas of Bedford and Luton. This had resulted in an improvement in performance against this indicator.

Members discussed the new indicators relating to water safety, PI08 (number of water related deaths) and PI09 (number of water related injuries). DCFO Ranger advised that, as these were new indicators the targets would need a bedding in period.

It was recognised that, although this was not a core activity of the Service, the number of water related incidents had increased over the last few years and the Service did work with partners on preventative measures.

Members commented that the impact of this Service on water-related deaths and injuries may be difficult to measure.

Members were reminded that the target-setting for each Policy and Challenge Group was undertaken by Members during the meetings in February/March 2016 and that targets could be amended, added or removed at that time.

DCFO Ranger reported that Officers normally recommended a proportional decrease based on the five-year average.

He also reported that the figures relating to FS04 (total number of fire safety audits carried out on high risk premises) were incorrect in the report and that 153 had been undertaken in the reporting period, exceeding the target of 100.

In response to a question, DCFO Ranger advised that all performance indicators reported incidents within Bedfordshire only. The Service did respond to calls in neighbouring counties on a 'knock for knock' basis, with a formal cross-charging arrangement in place with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

There had been an issue with appliances being called to stand by at stations in Buckinghamshire following the introduction of a Thames Valley mobilising system but this had now been addressed.

RESOLVED:

1. That progress made on the Service Delivery Programmes be acknowledged.
2. That it be noted that Members wish to review PI08 and PI09 during the annual target-setting exercise.

15-16/SD/020 Customer Satisfaction Survey Report End of Year (1 April 2014-31 March 2015)

SOC J Foolkes presented the results of the customer satisfaction surveys conducted from 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015. Overall, 97% of respondents across all survey areas stated that they were very or fairly satisfied with the Service. Response rates to electronic surveys also continued to be high and ranged from 60-79%.

No complaints had been received during the reporting period.

Members requested further detail on the 25 respondents who were not very or fairly satisfied with the Service during Quarter 3 of 2015/16.

RESOLVED:

1. That the high levels of customer satisfaction achieved throughout the year be acknowledged.
2. That Members be sent information on the 25 respondents who were not very or fairly satisfied during Quarter 3 of 2014/15 by email as soon as this was available.

15-16/SD/021 Customer Satisfaction Survey Report Quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2015)

DCFO Ranger presented the results of Customer Satisfaction surveys conducted during Quarter 1 2015/16. 99% of respondents had been very or fairly satisfied with the Service and the response rates ranged from 64-75%.

There had been five complaints during Quarter 1. Four had been completed at Stage 1 and upheld and one remained outstanding.

RESOLVED:

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

15-16/SD/022 Operational Decision Making Procedures – Exception Report

GC C Ball advised that there were no incidents to report.

15-16/SD/023 Fire Hydrants

Members received a report on the current issues associated with the provision of fire hydrants for supplying water for firefighting in Bedfordshire and the resources being employed to manage these issues effectively.

Members discussed the potential use of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to provide fire hydrants in new developments.

SOC J Roberts reported that this had been challenged by developers in court and they had been successful in having this requirement removed as there was legislation that required the Fire and Rescue Service to provide fire hydrants.

He advised that it was much more cost effective to plan the sites of and requisition funding for fire hydrants at an early stage but this funding was then earmarked and often had to be rolled across financial years until building on the developments began.

It was suggested that the Fire Services Minister be lobbied for a change in legislation to make it easier for planning authorities to include developer contributions to fire hydrant provision in Section 106 and CIL agreements and that letters also be sent to all three constituent authorities.

SOC J Roberts reported that Station Manager (Control) L Lehrle had developed a risk-based inspection programme which had led to a significant decrease in maintenance costs for the Service.

RESOLVED:

1. That the details in the report be acknowledged.
2. That the fiscal implications and the option for hydrant provision to be funded by developers be considered during future budget setting processes.
3. That further details of the case history involving the use of Section 106 funds on hydrant provision be submitted to the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority on 21 October 2015.
4. That the Fire and Rescue Authority be recommended to authorise that a letter be sent on its behalf to the Fire Services Minister requesting a change in legislation so that developers could be held accountable for funding fire hydrants in new developments.
5. That the Fire and Rescue Authority be recommended to authorise that a letter be sent on its behalf to all three constituent authorities suggesting the use of Section 106 funding for fire hydrant provision.

15-16/SD/024 Corporate Risk Register

SOC T Rogers introduced the review of the Corporate Risk Register in relation to Service Delivery. There were no updates to individual risks in the Register.

He advised that there had been a change to the individual risk rating 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: the residual likelihood of this risk had reduced from 4 to 3, with the overall reduction in the risk rating from 16 to 12 as the system had been tested and found to be robust and accurate.

He reported that an internal audit of Business Continuity, including Risk Management, had been conducted and had been awarded a green audit opinion and the Authority could take substantial assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area were suitably designed, consistently applied and operating effectively.

RESOLVED:

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

15-16/SD/025 Work Programme

The Group received its proposed Work Programme for 2015-16.

It was suggested that further integration with Amey's road safety OSCAR car be explored by Officers.

Members were advised that the OSCAR car did attend a number of Fire Station Open Days and that further integration with the programme could be investigated.

In response to a question about the issuance of smoke detectors (including carbon monoxide detectors) to private sector landlords, SOC Foolkes reported that over 3,500 detectors had been distributed to private sector landlords in Bedfordshire. The final issuing day would be 23 September 2015.

It was noted that, following the recent publication of a consultation paper, reports on further collaboration with other emergency services would be submitted to the full Fire and Rescue Authority in due course.

RESOLVED:

1. That the work programme for 2015/16 and the 'cyclical' agenda items for each meeting in 2015/16 be acknowledged.
2. That opportunities to integrate with Amey on the OSCAR car road safety programme be explored by Officers and that their findings be presented to a future meeting of the Group.

The meeting finished at 11.50am