

For Publication

**Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Service Delivery Policy and Challenge
Group
16 June 2016
Item No. 5**

**MINUTES OF SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUP
MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2016 AT 10.00am**

Present: Councillors C Atkins, J Chatterley and J Mingay (Chair)

DCFO G Ranger, SOC I Evans, SOC G Jeffery and AC C Ball

15-16/SD/037 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brown, Downing and Franks.

15-16/SD/038 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

15-16/SD/039 Communications

DCFO Ranger reported that the Service's Fire Special Operations Team had recently been assessed through a peer review and the initial feedback had been extremely positive. Positive comments had been made about the Service's organisational culture and its consistency throughout all levels of the organisation.

Councillor Atkins advised that, at a meeting of Bedford Borough Council's Executive the previous evening, thanks had been expressed for the assistance from the Service in response to the flooding incidents earlier that day.

SOC Jeffrey confirmed that 24 calls had been received by the Service to respond to incidents of flooding, mainly in the north of the County around Harrold. A team of Officers had provided support to Control in order to co-ordinate the Service's assets and the Service's Press Officer was currently drafting a press release to inform the general public of the activity of the Service, including the rescue of individuals from vehicles stuck in flood water.

DCFO Ranger reminded Members that the Service had been delegated responsibility by the Local Resilience Forum to co-ordinate operational resources in the event of wide-area flooding in Bedfordshire.

15-16/SD/040 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2015 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

15-16/SD/041 Service Delivery Performance Monitoring Report and Programmes to Date

DCFO Ranger presented his report on the performance against the Service Delivery Programme, projects and performance indicators and associated targets for Quarter 3 of 2015/16.

AC Ball provided an update on the RMS project. He advised that following the provider being held to contract, as supported by Members at the previous meeting of the Policy and Challenge Group, progress had been made in rectifying the remaining issues and testing of the system was being undertaken. The legal process was continuing to run alongside the progress made in the last two to three weeks by the provider.

Members were requested to support the commissioning of a review of the Service's involvement in the project. It was recognised that this Service was a client of Essex Fire and Rescue Service and that it was that Service that held the contract with the provider.

DCFO Ranger reported that the Retained Duty System Improvement Project was on target.

In relation to the performance against the Service Delivery performance indicators, DCFO Ranger advised that performance against CPI02 (Primary Fire Fatalities) had missed the target for the quarter and it was unlikely that the year-end target would be met as there had been three fatalities in the first three quarters with one other fatality awaiting the post-mortem results.

Conversely, performance against the indicator measuring the number of accidental dwelling fires (PI05) was 4% above target for the reporting period.

Members were advised that the Service intervened to improve fire safety in the homes of vulnerable individuals where it was aware of the issues and where the occupant was willing to co-operate.

The target relating to FS04 (total number of fire safety audits carried out on high risk premises) had not been met as the number of high risk premises had reduced dramatically in the last few years from over 800 to 224 as the result of actions taken to drive down the risk of these premises. The target for this indicator was proposed for amendment and this would be considered under the next item.

RESOLVED:

1. That progress made on the Service Delivery Programmes be acknowledged.
2. That the commissioning of a review into the involvement of the Service in the RMS project be supported.

15-16/SD/042 Proposed Service Delivery Indicators and Targets 2016/17

DCFO Ranger presented the proposed Service Delivery indicators and targets for the 2016/17 performance year. The targets had been set at a level that should be both challenging and achievable. A number of changes to prefixes and numbering were also being proposed to improve consistency.

5% reductions were being proposed for PI01 (primary fires), PI03 (fire injuries), PI05 (accidental dwelling fires), PI06 (number of deliberate building fires) and PI18 (number of hoax calls mobilised to).

The baseline for PI05 included a projection taking into account the population growth in the County, with an increase in the number of individuals from vulnerable groups.

No change was proposed to the targets for PI02 (fire fatalities) and the indicators measuring call attendance. The targets relating to call attendance may be revised following the implementation of the replacement mobilising system. The new system would allow the Service to scrutinise in more detail the type of call received so emergency calls could be easily identified from the calls where an immediate response/mobilisation was not required.

A 3% reduction target was proposed for PI04 (deliberate (arson) fires) as it was felt that the Service may be approaching a 'ceiling' level of performance against the indicator.

5% improvements in performance in the percentage of False Alarm Malicious (FAM) and hoax calls not attended (PI19), number of calls to False Alarm Good Intent (FAGI) (PI20) and non-domestic fires (PI27) were also proposed.

The proposed target for PI24 which measured the percentage of Building Regulation consultations completed within the prescribed timescale had been set at 95%.

The proposed target for PI25 (total number of fire safety audits/inspections completed) had been set as 1900 and was a combination of annual inspections and visits undertaken by operational crews.

The baseline for PI26 (total number of fire safety audits carried out on very high and high risk premises) had been proposed as 224 as the Service currently had 222 high risk and 2 very high risk premises in the County.

In relation to PI28 (Automatic Fire Detection False Alarms/non domestic properties), a 20% reduction was being proposed. It was recognised by Members that this target would not be achieved unless there was a change in the Automatic False Alarm (AFA) mobilising policy. Any significant change in policy would have to be agreed by the Authority.

It was noted that if resources were committed to a hoax call or false alarm, they were not available for deployment to genuine incidents as well as causing disruption to training, fire safety and prevention activities.

Four indicators were proposed to be presented to the Policy and Challenge Group for information only. These would be numbered Inf01-Inf04 and measured the number of RTCs attended, water related deaths, water related injuries and people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

It was hoped that the proposed changes to the targets would further drive forward performance.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed suite of Service Delivery performance indicators and targets for 2016/17 be endorsed.

15-16/SD/043 Customer Satisfaction Report Quarter 3 2015/16

SOC Jeffery submitted the results of the customer satisfaction surveys conducted between 1 October - 31 December 2015. The surveys covered four areas: after the incident (domestic), after the incident (non-domestic), home fire safety check follow up surveys and fire safety audits.

There had been no complaints received via the customer satisfaction process and 100% of respondents across all four survey areas stated that they were fairly or very satisfied with the overall service received.

In response to a question, DCFO Ranger confirmed that there were individuals who left some of the survey questions blank and this accounted for the variations in the number of responses to some of the questions when compared to the number of surveys returned.

SOC Jeffery advised that he would be working with the Service's Press Officer to improve the layout of the report. It was suggested that future reports should also include the number of people who did not respond to particular questions.

RESOLVED:

That the high levels of customer satisfaction achieved during Quarter 3 be acknowledged and that Members' satisfaction with these high levels be recorded.

15-16/SD/044 Community Risk Management Plan

SOC Jeffery advised that a leaflet was being produced which would provide partners and the general public with information on how the Service was progressing against the stated aims and objectives set out in the Community Risk Management Plan 2015-19. The leaflet, when completed, would be available in hard copy and on the Service website.

A draft would be circulated to Members as soon as it was available.

RESOLVED:

That the current position in relation to the Community Risk Management Plan be acknowledged.

15-16/SD/045 Operational Decision Making Procedures – Exception Report

SOC Evans advised that there were no incidents to report.

15-16/SD/046 Complaints – Driving and Parking of Service Vehicles

SOC Evans submitted his report on the findings of investigations into external complaints received about the driving and parking of Service vehicles, arising from a resolution made by the Audit and Standards Committee at its meeting on 10 December 2015.

The Policy and Challenge Group was advised that when a complaint was received, this was brought to the attention of the relevant functional head who would allocate a manager to investigate the complaint and aim to respond within 10 working days. The majority of operational vehicles were fitted with CCTV cameras. Where this was available, the footage was viewed by Service Driving Instructors who would then issue a report setting out their professional opinion on the standard of driving. Where this footage was unavailable it was more difficult to determine whether an appeal should be upheld.

The complaints detailed in the report were received from 1 April 2014 – 31 October 2015. Fifteen complaints on driving and parking of Service vehicles were received within this period. Six had been upheld and one was inconclusive. Of the upheld complaints, one related to the inappropriate non-operational parking of Service vehicles, two related to the driving causing member of the public driver to take evasive action to avoid a collision (the majority of these complaints related to vehicles on blue lights), one inappropriate normal road use whilst driving (eating and drinking whilst driving) and two related to unnecessary use of sirens disturbing local residents. When complaints were upheld, drivers received written warnings or additional training as required.

It was noted that drivers of fire appliances were trained to avoid forcing other road users to take evasive action. Drivers were also advised not to use sirens and horns when this was not necessary.

The report included guidance from the Highway Code on Emergency and Incident Support vehicles. The behaviour of other road users when confronted with emergency vehicles on blue lights was discussed and it was suggested that the Service could consider issuing a press release to remind members of the public of the guidance for drivers in relation to emergency vehicles.

It was noted that the majority of complaints were not upheld and that the complaints received must be considered in the context of the Service responding to approximately 7000 incidents per year.

RESOLVED:

That the report be acknowledged.

15-16/SD/047 Corporate Risk Register

DCFO Ranger introduced the review of the Corporate Risk Register in relation to Service Delivery. There were no changes to individual risks in the Register.

There were a number of updates relating to CRR01: If we do not plan properly for major operational incidents then we may not be able to resolve the incident appropriately and thus adversely effect our service delivery provision. These included the audit of the Service's fire special operations team, new mobilising arrangements for water incident management officers and continuing joint exercises organised through the Local Resilience Forum.

RESOLVED:

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

15-16/SD/048 Work Programme

The Group received its updated Work Programme for 2015/16. It was noted that the annual review of performance would be conducted at the Policy and Challenge Group's next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme for 2015/16 and the 'cyclical' agenda items for each meeting in 2015/16 be acknowledged.

The meeting finished at 11.45am.