

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority  
Audit and Standards Committee  
25 September 2018  
Item No. 9

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**REPORT AUTHOR:** ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER (HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY'S EFFECTIVENESS 2018/19

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Background Papers: None

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Implications (tick ✓):

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|-----------------|-------|---|------------------------|---|
| LEGAL           |       |   | FINANCIAL              |   |
| HUMAN RESOURCES |       |   | EQUALITY IMPACT        |   |
| ENVIRONMENTAL   |       |   | POLICY                 | ✓ |
| CORPORATE RISK  | Known | ✓ | OTHER (please specify) |   |
|                 | New   |   |                        |   |

*Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.*

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## **PURPOSE:**

To consider proposals for the review of the Fire and Rescue Authority's effectiveness in 2018/19.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

For the Audit and Standards committee to make any recommendations to change the process of reviewing the Authority's effectiveness.

If the process is to remain the same as last year, for the committee to apply the timelines namely:

- a. For Policy and Challenge Groups and Committees to review their effectiveness by considering the three overarching questions to feed into the FRA Review of Effectiveness (this year Corporate Services on 27 November 2018, Service Delivery on 29 November 2018, Audit and Standards on 6 December 2018 and Human Resources on 10 January 2019 and then programmed yearly thereafter);
  - b. All FRA Members to complete the questionnaire for discussion at the budget workshop (for 2018/19 on 17 January 2019 and then programmed yearly thereafter); and
  - c. The 2018/19 Review of the FRAs Effectiveness and Action Plan for 2019/20 be considered by the Audit and Standards Committee on 14 March 2019, for report to the FRA on 28 March 2019 and inclusion in the FRAs Annual Governance Statement.
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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At their meeting on 9 September 2010 the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) agreed a recommendation of the Audit Committee that it undertake and publish an Annual Review of the FRA's Effectiveness and Record of Member Attendance.
- 1.2 Following the RSM Tenon audit recommendation in 2012 that proposed each Policy and Challenge Group considered its own effectiveness before the full FRA effectiveness review a Form has previously been used by each Policy and Challenge Group and the Audit and Standards Committee.
- 1.3 At its meeting of 24 September 2015 Members of the Audit and Standards Committee requested the use of the questionnaire used in previous years be reviewed and streamlined for future years.

- 1.4 A Form of Review Questionnaire was agreed and completed by Members at a facilitated meeting on 27 January 2016. On 17 March 2016, the Audit and Standards Committee considered the outcome of the Review, including any identified areas for improvement, and agreed performance objectives for the coming year.
- 1.5 The 2017/18 Review of the FRA's Effectiveness and Action Plan for 2018/19 was considered by the Audit and Standards Committee on 20 March 2018 for report to the FRA on 26 April 2018 and inclusion in the FRA's Annual Governance Statement, which formed part of the 2017/18 Statement of Accounts.
- 1.6 Members used the revised Form of Review Questionnaire at Appendix A for the 2017/18 Review of Effectiveness which, together with the general feedback from the FRA's Committee/Groups, was completed by Members for consideration at a programmed facilitated meeting following the Budget Workshop on 18 January 2018.

## 2. 2018/19 Review of Effectiveness

- 2.1 On 18 January 2018, Members of the FRA attended a facilitated meeting on the review of the FRA's effectiveness based upon a questionnaire and review procedure agreed by the FRA's Audit and Standards Committee on 28 September 2017

The questionnaire covered a wide range of the FRA's performance and sought comment on what development Members considered should be undertaken to achieve an improved outcome.

- 2.2 In the light of the Review undertaken on 18 January 2018, the Action Plan for 2018/19 at Appendix B was agreed by the FRA on 26 April 2018.

The same process as last year is provided for consideration; this will consist of:

- (1) A short report provided to each of the Policy and Challenge Groups and Audit and Standards Committee to enable a review of the Group/Committee's effectiveness against their Terms of Reference. (Discussion)

Members to consider the following questions when reviewing the Groups'/Committee's effectiveness during their meetings Service Delivery Policy and Challenge Group on 29 November, Corporate Services Policy and Challenge

Group on 27 November, Audit and Standards Committee on 6 December 2018 and Human Resources Policy and Challenge Group on 10 January 2019:

- i. Does the Group/Committee consider they have been effective and discharged their responsibility in regard to the Group's/Committee's terms of reference?
- ii. Considering the Group's/committee's terms of reference are there any areas that have not been considered and should be addressed?
- iii. Does the Group/Committee consider any Training and Development would assist them with the areas of work of Group/Committee?

(2) Members may wish to use the revised Form of Review Questionnaire at Appendix A for the 2018/19 Review of Effectiveness which, together with the general feedback from the FRA's Committees/Groups, could be completed by Members for consideration at a programmed facilitated meeting following the Budget Workshop on the 17 January 2019.

2.3 The 2018/19 Review of the FRA's Effectiveness and Action Plan for 2019/20 to be considered by the Audit and Standards Committee on 14 March 2019 for report to the FRA on 28 March 2019 and inclusion in the FRA's Annual Governance Statement, which will form part of the 2018/19 Statement of Accounts.

**ZOE EVANS**

**ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER (HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

2018/19 REVIEW OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY'S EFFECTIVENESS

|   |   |   |
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| 3 = Satisfied (please comment as necessary) | 2 = Satisfied but feel more needs to be done (state what) | 1 = Not Satisfied (state why and what needs to be done) |
|---|---|---|

|   | 3                        | 2                        | 1                        | Comments |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <b>Understanding of Core Business</b>   |                          |                          |                          |          |
| 1. The Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) helps to shape the organisation and steers it towards its future, taking responsibility for the organisation's long-term success of failure.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| 2. All FRA Members have a good knowledge of organisational objectives and major functions of the Authority.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| <b>Understanding of Key financial issues</b>  |                          |                          |                          |          |
| 3. The Fire Authority Members have a good understanding of the financial standards that must be produced and of the ongoing and future financial issues facing FRA funding and expenditure. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| <b>Effective Monitoring</b>   |                          |                          |                          |          |
| 4. The FRA effectively considers risk and determines the critical/key issues facing the organisation.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| 5. The FRA effectively considers financial performance, including revenue and capital expenditure, against budget.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |

**Effective Monitoring Continued**

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|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 |
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| <b>Comments</b> |
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6. The FRA effectively considers operational and service performance against targets.

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7. The FRA looks at trends over time, considers and agrees actions to improve performance that are below expectations and compares performance against peers and other benchmarks.

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8. Recommendations contained in external audit reports, the management letter and internal audit reports are scrutinised and recommendations monitored to ensure Action Plans are adhered to.

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**Meetings**

9. Meetings of the FRA, Audit and Standards Committee and Policy and Challenge Groups are appropriate with regard to:

(a) Frequency

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(b) Duration

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**Meetings Continued**

|   | 3                        | 2                        | 1                        | Comments |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| (c) Agenda  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| (d) Timelines for circulation of papers   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| (e) Quality of information provided   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| (f) Support from senior officers  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| (g) FRA meetings have the right information for Members to fulfil their responsibilities                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |
| (h) The FRA run efficient and effective meetings and Members are able to express views and discuss issues | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |

**Meetings Continued**

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|

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| <b>Comments</b> |
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(i) Minutes are accurate and timely

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**Development**

10. Members are well informed about the organisation, their role, responsibilities and performance and understand the organisation, its values, culture and philosophy.

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**Future Training and Development**

11. Do Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority require any further support in their roles?

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12. Do Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority have any specific requirements for personal development on either an individual or group basis, in 2018/19?

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NAME: .....

DATE: .....



**REVIEW OF THE FRA’s EFFECTIVENESS**

On 9 September 2010 the FRA agreed to undertake and publish an annual Review of the FRA’s Effectiveness and Record of Members’ Attendance. At the FRA meeting on 27 April 2017 it was agreed that the key for Member attendances being amended to identify absences as being either notified (N), notified – constituent council commitment (N-C) or un-notified (U).

Reviews of the FRA’s Effectiveness and their associated Action Plans are included in the FRA’s Annual Governance Statement, which forms part of the FRA’s Statement of Accounts.

**2018/19 Review of the FRA’s EFFECTIVENESS**

On 18 January 2018, Members of the FRA attended a facilitated meeting on the review of the FRA’s effectiveness based upon a questionnaire and review procedure agreed by the FRA’s Audit and Standards Committee on 7 September 2016. A copy of the Form of Review is available from the Service Assurance Manager at Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Southfields Road, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7NR.

The questionnaire covered a wide range of the FRA’s performance and sought comment on what development Members considered should be undertaken to achieve an improved outcome.

In the light of the Review undertaken on 18 January 2018, the following Action Plan for 2018/19 was agreed by the FRA on 26 April 2018.

|   |  | <b>Owner(s)</b>   | <b>Timescale</b>   | <b>Comment</b> |
|---|--|---|--|----------------|
| 1 | At their first meeting each FRA group/Committee to review their Terms of Reference and look forward to the year ahead to agree an annual work programme. | Chief Fire Officer (CFO)<br>Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO)<br>Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) | First Policy and Challenge Group of financial year – June 2018 |                |

**APPENDIX B**

|   |   | <b>Owner(s)</b>                        | <b>Timescale</b>                  | <b>Comment</b> |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 2 | Continue pre-meetings with relevant Chairs of Groups and Committees.  | CFO, DCFO and ACO                      | Ongoing                           |                |
| 3 | Request that post AGM, training needs of Members are re-visited to feed into the two programmed events.   | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | Post Annual Meeting – 31 May 2018 |                |
| 4 | Continue to review Induction material, re-circulate updated content to Members by email or make accessible on line as a reminder and easy access. Provide 1 to 1's for Members that change as a one off.                                  | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | Ongoing                           |                |
| 5 | Continue to include training/awareness on operational matters.  | Head of Service Support                | Ongoing                           |                |
| 6 | Continue Station Visits.  | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | Ongoing                           |                |
| 7 | Written briefings forwarded to FRA members and crews prior to Station Visits.   | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | April 2018 - Ongoing              |                |
| 8 | Members to receive training on understanding the Service's assets, including IT, fleet and property. This can be incorporated in scheduled Station Visits, particularly in stations where specialist equipment and/or teams were located. | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | Ongoing                           |                |

**APPENDIX B**

|    |   | <b>Owner(s)</b>                        | <b>Timescale</b>  | <b>Comment</b> |
|----|---|--|---|----------------|
| 9  | A review be undertaken on how the work of the Audit and Standards Committee is currently recorded and published and that the outcomes be reported to the Committee for further consideration. | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | June 2018   |                |
| 10 | Members to visit to the Fire Services College to observe firefighters on the Foundations Training Course.   | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | Member Development Day – 20 June 2018                                 | COMPLETED      |
| 11 | Continue with the distribution of daily incident logs.  | Head of Response                       | Ongoing   |                |
| 12 | Members should continue to discuss plans to meet the projected budget gap and further strengthen the Authority's financial plans into the future.   | CFO                                    | On-going and Budget Workshops on 15 November 2018 and 17 January 2019 |                |
| 13 | Continue Budget workshops - 15 November 2018 and 17 January 2019.   | Head of Finance and Treasurer          | Booked  |                |
| 14 | Continue Treasury Management and Statement of Accounts training and development.  | Head of Finance and Treasurer          | Oct/Nov 2018  |                |
| 15 | Members will be offered training on effective governance from RSM in November 2018.   | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance | November 2018   |                |

**APPENDIX B**

|    |  | <b>Owner(s)</b>   | <b>Timescale</b>  | <b>Comment</b> |
|----|--|---|---|----------------|
| 16 | Relevant benchmarking data if known is made available when performance targets are being set.  | Owner of each target setting paper to Policy and Challenge Groups | Target setting by Policy and Challenge meetings during March 2019 |                |
| 17 | Advance the use of electronic media and continue to explore the possibility of extending paperless meetings for other FRA Meetings (CSPCG is now established as a paperless meeting) | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance                            | Ongoing   |                |
| 18 | To support paperless meetings, and provide one to one training as required.  | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance                            | Ongoing   |                |
| 19 | RSM to conduct a Governance audit to review the Committee Structure of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority in relation to other Fire and Rescue Authorities                       | Head of Service Delivery and Assurance                            | 31 August 2019  |                |