

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Executive Committee
24 March 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER and SECRETARY/MONITORING OFFICER

SUBJECT: GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

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Background Papers:

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (please specify)	
	New	CORE BRIEF	

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

PURPOSE:

To review the future governance arrangements of the FRA, in particular the role and responsibilities of members of the Executive Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. Each member of the Executive be allocated a special area of responsibility as shown in Appendix A;
 2. The terms of reference of the Executive Committee be revised and adopted as shown in Appendix B.
 3. No changes be made to the Scheme of Member Allowances at this time but that this be reviewed in December 2020.
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 On 19 July 2019 the FRA made a number of changes to its governance arrangements in response to a governance review that had taken place. The decisions made by the FRA were as follows:
- That the Policy and Challenge Groups be suspended;
 - That two additional FRA meetings be added to the 2019/20 calendar – 4 September 2019 and 6 November 2019 and the updated calendar of meetings be approved;
 - That the interim Executive Committee elected at the Annual Meeting remain in place with the remaining seven members being members of the Audit and Standards Committee;
 - That FRA Meetings continue to be held at Dunstable Community Fire Station, when possible, with the Annual Meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters;
 - That the terms of reference of the Executive Committee be amended to include the management of the employment relationship between the FRA and the Chief Fire Officer; and
 - That the decision to suspend the Policy and Challenge Groups for a trial period be reviewed in the next Member Development Day in October 2019.

1.2 Further discussions took place at the Members' Development Day in October 2019 and also at the Budget Workshop held in January 2020. At that workshop the Chairman made some suggestions about the way in which the role of Executive Member might be enhanced and it was decided to refer the Chairman's proposal for consideration by the Executive Committee.

2. The Chairman's Proposals

2.1 The Chairman has attended a number of national and regional meetings since he was elected in June 2019. The experience that he has gained since then has led him to the conclusion that the Bedfordshire FRA is at a disadvantage because of a lack of continuity. He proposes to address this by asking each member of the Executive to accept responsibility for a discreet area of the FRAs business (portfolio). Members would attend regional and national meetings that related to their portfolio and, in this way, would gain experience and knowledge that they could bring back to their work within the FRA.

2.2 The diagram attached as Appendix A shows how these arrangements would be organised and Appendix B sets out revised terms of reference for the Executive Committee including the portfolio arrangements.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances

3.1 Executive Members currently receive an SRA based on an assessment that their additional responsibilities will spend 6 days undertaking their special responsibilities. It is difficult to say at this stage how the adoption of portfolios will affect this assessment and so it is suggested that no change be made to the FRAs Scheme of Member Allowances at this stage and that this should be reviewed in December 2020.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the proposals set out in this report and the appendices and to recommend to the FRA that they be adopted.

PAUL FULLER
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