

2016/17 REVIEW OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY'S EFFECTIVENESS

On 17 January 2017, Members of the FRA held a facilitated discussion on the review of the FRA's effectiveness in 2016/17, based upon a revised questionnaire and review procedure agreed by the Audit and Standards Committee on 7 September 2016.

The questionnaire covered a wide range of the FRA's performance and sought comment on Members development requirements.

In addition, the FRA's three Policy and Challenge Groups, and the Audit and Standards Committee, each conducted a review of their own effectiveness against their Terms of Reference.

They were asked to consider 3 overarching questions:

Does the Group consider they have been effective and discharged their responsibility in regard to the Group's terms of reference?

Considering the Group's terms of reference are there any area that have not been considered and should be addressed?

Does the Group consider any training and development would assist them with the areas of work of the Group?

The following was found during consideration of the above questions:

Service Delivery Policy and Challenge Group – 1 December 2016

- a. The Group was satisfied with their Terms of Reference and considered that, over the past year, they had reviewed and monitored:
 - Terms of Reference
 - Performance and Programmes
 - Audit and Governance Action Monitoring
 - Corporate Risk Register
 - Annual Service Delivery Performance Indicators and Targets for the next financial year
 - Customer Satisfaction
 - Operational Decision Making Procedures – Exception Report
 - Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)
 - Attendance Standards – Update on Performance Figures
 - Police and Ambulance Collaboration
 - Review of the Fire Authority's Effectiveness
- b. Other points highlighted were:

- Members noted the difficulty of self-assessment, but agreed that meetings of the Group were informative and useful.
- The Group provided a considerable level of challenge to the Officers, an example of this was the questioning of the performance figures relating to the attendance standards
- The performance targets that had been set by Members for 2016/17 were considered stretching for the Service.
- The work of the Fire Special Operations Team, could be placed under greater scrutiny.
- Members see the Service as very effective and professional.
- There were no requests for further training or development

Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group – 6 December 2016

- a. The Group was satisfied with their Terms of Reference and considered that, over the past year, they had reviewed and monitored:
 - Terms of Reference
 - Performance and Programmes
 - Audit and Governance Action Monitoring
 - Corporate Risk Register
 - Annual Corporate Services Performance Indicators and Targets for the next financial year
 - New Internal Audits including Key Financial Controls, IT Shared Service and Governance
 - Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring
 - 2016/17 Treasury Management Strategy and Practices
 - Treasury Management Annual Report
 - Treasury Management Mid-Year Review Report
 - Asset Management Policy and Plans – ICT, Property and Fleet
 - Annual Review of the Operations of ICT Shared Service Agreement
 - Community Facilities Charges at Stations
 - Utility Usage
 - Review of the Fire Authority's Effectiveness
- b. Other points highlighted were:
 - The Service Efficiency Plan is an area that would benefit from greater Member scrutiny
 - Members should be more proactive in initiating reviews and requesting additional reports, examples of this included charging for use of community facilities and utility usage at the Service Fire Stations
 - The Group agreed that Members should receive refresher training on treasury management.

Audit and Standards Committee – 8 December 2016

- a. The Committee was satisfied with their Terms of Reference and considered that, over the past year, they had reviewed and monitored:
- Review of Terms of Reference*
 - External Audit Plan for 2015/16
 - Annual Audit Fees
 - External Audit Progress Reports
 - Audit Results Report
 - Annual Audit Letter for Year ended 31 March 2016
 - 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement
 - Draft Summary of Statement of Accounts
 - 2015/16 Statement of Accounts and Letter of Representation
 - New Internal Audit Reports
 - Internal Audit Progress
 - Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/16
 - Internal Audit Strategy 2016/17
 - Audit and Governance Action Monitoring Corporate Risk Register (each meeting)
 - Annual Review of the Fire Authority's Effectiveness and revised proposals for 2016/17
 - Annual Review of Monitored Policies
 - Review of Consolidated Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures update Standing Orders relating to Contract be replaced.
 - Report on Standards
- * Following a discussion it was agreed that "to consider the Authority's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls" under the regulatory framework section in the Committee's terms of reference could be removed as it was covered by other points within the Committee's terms of reference.
- This was agreed by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 9 February 2017 and the Terms of Reference for Audit and Standards Committee has been updated.
- b. Other points highlighted were:
- Members expressed the view that they had been discharging their responsibilities under the Committee's term of reference.
 - In addition to specific training on the Statement of Accounts, wider training on audit and governance, particularly in relation to the role of an Audit Committee, would be a good topic to include on a Member Development day.

Human Resources Policy and Challenge Group – 5 January 2017

- a. The Group was satisfied with their Terms of Reference and considered that, over the past year, they had reviewed and monitored:
 - Terms of Reference
 - Performance Monitoring and Programmes
 - Audit and Governance Action Monitoring
 - Corporate Risk Register
 - Annual HR Performance Indicators and Targets for the next financial year
 - New Internal Audits including a follow up Audit on Training and Development of Operational Personnel
 - Absence Year End Presentation
 - 2015/16 Corporate Health and Safety Objectives
 - Draft 2016/17 Corporate Health and Safety Objectives
 - Occupational Accidents Year End 2015/16 Report
 - Annual Provision of External Training
 - Equality Duty Report
 - Public Sector Equality Scheme Review
 - Discretions – Fire Pensions Schemes
 - Health and Safety Annual Report
 - Review of the Fire Authority’s Effectiveness
- b. Other points highlighted were:
 - Members agreed that the Group had been effective in discharging its responsibility in regard to its terms of reference and that there were no areas within the terms of reference that had not been considered and should be addressed
 - Given the high performance of the Service, the number of meetings of the Policy and Challenge Groups could be reduced to three times a year.
 - The Group made no requests for additional training and development.

Member Attendance at Meetings 2016/17

A record of Members attendance for year 2016/17 is appended to this report for information at Appendix A.

Action Plan for 2017/18

In light of the review undertaken by Members on 17 January 2017, Members may wish to consider including the following in an Action Plan for 2017/18:

		Owner(s)	Timescale
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. In addition to the current practice of requesting additional reports this to include consideration of a major topic with a longer timescale for implementation as done by the Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group.	Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) Assistant Chief Officer (ACO)	First Policy and Challenge Group of financial year – June 2017
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 Strategic Support	Post Annual Meeting – 25 May 2017
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 Strategic Support	Ongoing
5	For Members to have access to an organisational chart and contact details down to Heads of Service.	Head of Strategic Support	July 2017
6	Continue to include training/awareness on operational matters.	Head of Operations and Head of Training and Development	Ongoing
7	Continue Station Visits.	Head of Strategic Support	Ongoing
8	Continue with the distribution of daily incident logs.	Head of Operations	Ongoing

		Owner(s)	Timescale
9	Members should continue to discuss plans to meet the projected budget gap and strengthen the Authority's financial plans.	Chief Fire Officer	On-going and Budget Workshops on 21 November 2017 and 18 January 2018
10	Continue Budget workshops - 21 November 2017 and 18 January 2018.	Head of Finance and Treasurer	Booked
11	Continue Treasury Management training and development.	Head of Finance and Treasurer	July 2017 (Bi-annual)
12	Provide training and development on the Statement of Accounts and governance particularly in relation to the role of an Audit Committee.	Head of Finance and Treasurer	Member Development Days – 4 July or 1 November 2017
13	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 2018
14	Advance the use of electronic media and to continue to explore, through the Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group, with the aim of maximising existing devices.	Head of Strategic Support	Ongoing
15	To support paperless meetings, and provide one to one training as required.	Head of Strategic Support	Ongoing
16	Review Committee Structures of other Fire and Rescue Authorities		2017/18

RECORD OF MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT MEEINGS 2016/17

Appendix A

COUNCILLOR	Atkins	Ayub	Brown	Castleman	Chapman	Chatterley	Downing	Franks	Headley	McVicar	Mingay	Riaz	Waheed	TOTAL BY MEETING
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY														
June (Annual Meeting)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	U	✓	✓	✓		✓	11/12
July	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	U	✓	✓	✓		✓	11/12
October	✓	✓	✓		F	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	10/11
December	B	✓	✓		✓	F	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10/12
February	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	12/12
April														
BUDGET WORKSHOPS														
November	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	M	✓	✓	✓	11/12
January	✓	U	✓		✓	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	M	✓	9/12
AUDIT AND STANDARDS CTTE														
June		✓	C	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			□	✓	7/8
September		R	✓		✓	✓		H	✓				R	4/7
December		✓	✓		Tr	✓		✓	✓				Tr	5/7
March														
CORPORATE SERVICES P&C GROUP														
June			C	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓				5/6
September			✓	C	✓		✓		✓	H				4/6
December			✓		✓		✓		✓	M		✓		5/6
March														

Cllr Castleman stood down from the FRA on 17/09/15
 Cllr M Riaz appointed to FRA by Luton Borough Council 10/11/15

Note: Attendance noted on a shaded area indicates that the Member was not a Member of that meeting.

COUNCILLOR	Atkins	Ayub	Brown	Castleman	Chapman	Chatterley	Downing	Franks	Headley	McVicar	Mingay	Riaz	Waheed	TOTAL BY MEETING
SERVICE DELIVERY P&C GROUP														
June	✓		C	✓		✓	✓	U			✓			5/7
September	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			7/7
December	✓		C			✓	C	✓			✓			4/6
March														
HUMAN RESOURCES P&C GROUP														
July	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓		✓	6/6
September	✓	✓					✓				✓		TC	4/5
December	B	✓					✓				✓	✓	✓	5/6
March														
DEVELOPMENT DAYS														
July	✓	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	H	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	10/12
November	✓	U	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		M	9/12
Total Attendance	13/15	11/15	14/18	8/9	13/15	14/15	15/18	11/15	15/15	9/12	15/15	5/6	13/15	

Key:

C – Constituent Mtg/Commitments

M – Medical Reasons

Tr – Travel Difficulties

B - Bereavement

TC – Training

Course/Conference

W – Work Commitments

F – Family

U – Unknown

H - Holiday

R – Religious event

Note: Attendance noted on a shaded area indicates that the Member was not a Member of that meeting.