



MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE held on 2 DECEMBER 2009 at Lecture Theatre, FSHQ at 10:00.

PRESENT: Councillors D Bateman, K Musgrave, A Needham, S Nelson, C Oliver, M Simon, N Wright and Independent Members Mr W Ravenscroft.

APOLOGIES: None

PART 1 – MATTERS CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Members' Interests

RESOLVED: That

[1] the minutes of the Meeting of the Performance and Overview Committee held on 7 October 2009 be approved.

MAJOR ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION / DECISION

2 FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented Members with the forward work plan for the Performance and Overview Committee. Members were advised that the headline targets had been incorporated into the revised work plan and if approved would form the basis for the agenda of the Performance and Overview Committee throughout the remainder of the year.

Members queried how a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads of Cheshire by 2010 could be achieved. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the service was working with Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership to achieve the target and that it was based upon a baseline established between 1994-1998. He also stated that the Service performance was likely to hit the target. It was further advised by a Member that the reduction in economic activity meant that fewer miles were being driven and engineering work was taking place to improve accident black spots.

Methods of creating awareness such as impact days were proving to be successful and once the target had been achieved, the next stage of the

process needed to be considered. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the Cheshire Safer Road Partnership was already considering the next stage of the process and targets for upcoming years.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the revised work plan be approved.

3 PROCUREMENT OF THREE MIDI FIRE APPLIANCES

The Head of Policy, Planning and Resilience presented Members with a paper on the procurement of three Midi Fire Appliances. It was noted that the Authority had previously approved the purchase of 3 additional Targeted Response Vehicles (TVR's) / Midi appliances to supplement the current provision. The additional appliances would be located at Wilmslow, Northwich and Congleton in line with the fleet rotation policy. Furthermore it was noted that the appliances had now been received and the radio equipment would now be installed by January 2010.

Members expressed interest in the number of incidents the appliances would deal with and the environmental aspects. It was highlighted by the Head of Policy, Planning and Resilience that the Midi appliances would have the capacity to deal with the majority of incidents. Additionally the initial cost of the appliance was lower and as the appliances were fuel efficient, this would reduce environmental impact.

Members felt that the positive impact on the environment could be used in the promotion of the appliances and PR. It was suggested that there should be Member involvement at the launch of the vehicles and that this should include an official handover of the appliances.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the report be noted and a further update on the progress be provided to the Performance and Overview Committee in 6 – 12 months;

[2] there be Member involvement at the launch and induction of the appliances; and

[3] the PR aspect of the project be considered.

4 UPDATE: INTRODUCING 12 HOUR SHIFTS

The Head of Unitary Performance presented Members with an update on the introduction of 12 hour shifts on Wholetime Duty Fire Stations. It was noted that the initial research had been completed and a draft business case and implementation plan had been compiled. The research had shown that the introduction of a 12 hour shift pattern would provide a number of improvements to the Service including significant non-cashable efficiencies.

Furthermore, it was noted that the original target date of 2010 had been ambitious. This would be moved back to allow for a more careful and in-depth

consultation period.

Members questioned the industrial relations issues that had been raised. The Head of Unitary Performance explained that some officers considered the 12 hour shift system not to be family friendly. Members felt that any change needed to be carefully examined as a rigid shift system could cause future problems if further changes to shift systems were required. Members felt that a system was needed where a balance could be achieved between the needs of the Service in managing local risks and its desire to operate a family friendly working pattern.

The Head of Unitary Performance advised that representatives of the Fire Brigade Union were on the project group. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reiterated that negotiations with the Unions were in progress.

Members suggested that self rostering could be an alternative as it would enable the service to meet the working time regulations and also achieve the efficiency savings. Members agreed that although the 12 hour system would be efficient to the service there could be a loss to family hours during the proposed 12 hour day. It was felt that negotiations in watches could allow for variation with the 12 hour shift as standard, there would be an option in possible cases to allow 8 or 6 hour shifts.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members they were open to suggestions for change however the Fire Brigade Union was unlikely to support the idea of self rostering.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the report be noted and a further report be presented at the next meeting of the Performance and Overview Committee in February 2010;
- [2] the target date be reviewed to ensure its achievability; and
- [3] other options for rostering / alternative shift patterns be explored by the service

5 MID YEAR REVIEW OF FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE 2009 - 10

The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning presented Members with the Mid Year Review of Finance and Performance 2009-10. An additional paper giving further information was circulated to Members at the meeting. In addition to the financial position and performance of the service, the report included a risk and sensitivity analysis which identified how the activity levels might affect the final outturn position.

Members questioned the investment of funds and the effects of the current economic climate. The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning advised that the security of investments was imperative and investments ranged from overnight transactions to long term investments. However, funds needed to be available to make payments. At present the Service had no long term

investments and future long term investments would reflect changes in interest rates.

Members also questioned the scrutiny of the risk register as there were a number of references made to it in the paper provided. It was suggested that this should be included in the work plan for scrutiny purposes and a report provided to the full Authority for information.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning advised Members that a Risk Management Board meets quarterly. The board consists of Officers and two Member champions who look at and scrutinise the risk register in detail. The details for the Risk Management Board were reported to Policy Committee. It was felt by Members the risk register should be seen by the whole Authority.

Furthermore it was noted that no report had been received on the achievement of savings following the latest pay deal. The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning advised that a progress against modernisation report would be provided to the Authority. Information to monitor cashable savings against spending is monitored at the Service's Budget Management Board. Nonetheless Members felt that there should be Member involvement and such information should be presented to the Performance and Overview Committee.

Members asked for some assurances that there were contingency plans which modelled different funding scenarios reflecting the economic climate. Members were informed that the Service had approximately 15-20 scenarios which identified options to address changes in Government funding and other financial impacts. It was noted that further discussion would take place at the Members away day in January.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Service's Risk Register be brought to the Performance and Overview Committee for scrutiny;
- [2] the scrutiny of the risk register by the Performance and Overview Committee be noted at a future Fire Authority Meeting; and
- [3] a further report be provided to the July 2010 meeting of the Performance and Overview Committee on the spend against the budget and cashable efficiencies, including the progress of modernisation.

6 ANNUAL ENVIRONMENT REPORT

The Manager of Property presented Members with the Annual Environment Report. For a number of years the Government has encouraged organisations to publish an annual report of environmental performance, whilst this is not a legal requirement it is seen as best practice.

The report reviews the environmental management and highlights the areas where progress has been made during the year and reviews progress against the targets set for the year and sets out proposed targets for the coming year.

Members commented that some good work had been achieved in a relatively short space of time however they concluded that not all the work involved was fully reflected in the report. Members therefore requested that a more detailed report, including a summary of data available as well as outcomes should be brought to this Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the report be noted; and
- [2] the report be accepted as evidence that Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service is managing its corporate responsibility for the environment.
- [3] a further report, detailing outcomes and summarising all the data available be brought back to the Performance and Overview Committee.

PART 2 – BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE

None