



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE held on Wednesday 9 April 2008 at Fire Service Headquarters, Winsford at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillors D T Bateman (Chairman), Mrs N Dolphin, D Maguire, Mrs E Moore Dutton, S Nelson, C Oliver, Mrs L Redhead and Independent Member Mr W Ravenscroft.

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

RESOLVED: That

- [1] The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 February 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

Chairs' Announcements

Members noted that the meeting was the last for both the internal and external auditors and took the opportunity to thank both Jim Dean and Julian Farmer for their years of work and contribution to improvement and modernisation of the Fire and Rescue Service in Cheshire.

2. ANNUAL EXTERNAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER

The external auditors from the Audit Commission presented their Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, which summarised their assessment of the internal processes and governance arrangements of the Authority, based on the Use of Resources and Direction of Travel conclusions.

The Auditors outlined their key findings, which focussed on current improvements being delivered and those expected to be delivered in the next audit period. There were no significant areas of concern raised and the feedback was positive. The auditors highlighted the strong position of the Authority for maintaining strong performance. Members both welcomed and accepted the report.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be noted.

3. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The internal auditor attended and presented the internal audit report. Members considered the issues highlighted in the report and noted the progress made in addressing areas flagged for improvement. Members welcomed the findings and received the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

4. **INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) 4 - PROJECTS PROGRESS UPDDATE**

This paper, presented by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Corporate Services, provided Members with an update of the progress made against a number of key projects initiated under the Service's fourth Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP 4) document, which was published in April 2007.

The Area Manager for Projects and Business Change presented a projects progress update for IRMP 4. Members considered the process for ensuring and maintaining progress on a number of key projects. Members agreed that the process was robust and comprehensive and noted that there were no concerns highlighted on any of the key proposals.

Members accepted the report.

RESOLVED: That

[1] The report be received and the progress be noted

5. **ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

At the previous meeting of the Committee, Members requested that a formal review of the Service attendance management policy be undertaken as part of an ongoing aspiration to foster a culture of attendance and to drive wider cultural change and modernisation. The review was implemented in January 2006.

The paper was presented by the Head of Human Resources and included a review of our current performance against that of our peers. Members noted that the report indicated the need for further improvement of the approach to attendance and the research undertaken suggested that a revision of the current policy should form the next phase of improvement.

The Head of Human Resources outlined the findings of the review. Members commented on the quality of research contained in the paper and raised a number of issues which were discussed in detail. These included procedures for notifying sickness as well as performance measures and triggers.

RESOLVED: That

[1] The contents of this report be noted; and

[2] Members agree to the review of the policy, as outlined in the report, which will be presented to the Fire Authority on 16 April for approval.

6. **REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (CPD)**

The Learning and Development Manager presented a review of the Implementation of CPD Scheme.

The report outlined the learning points and areas for improvement following the implementation of the Continual Professional Development (CPD) scheme for the operational personnel within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS). The report evaluated the various systems and processes needed to support continued development of personnel and recommended where improvements were needed to enhance the effectiveness of the scheme in future years.

The CPD scheme had been designed to recognise and reward experienced uniform employees who were able to demonstrate Continual Professional Development over and above that required at “competent” level, under each of the national standards, through assessment of performance against set criteria. For continued success of the CPD scheme all applicants were required to be fully aware of the criteria and the assessors needed to demonstrate commitment to the process and the scheme by involving themselves in one to one discussions with all applicants.

Members considered the report and noted the challenges faced by the Service during the first year of the implementation of the scheme. Members accepted the report and approved the areas for improvement as indicated in the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] The report be received and the content be noted; and
- [2] The recommendations A to L, set out in paragraph 6 of the report, be agreed.

URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items to discuss under urgent business.