



MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE held on 30 November 2011 at Lecture Theatre, Fire Service HQ, at 10:00.

PRESENT: Councillors, K Musgrave, S Nelson, M Simon (Chair), J Weatherill and Independent Member W Ravenscroft

PART 1 – MATTERS CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Biggin, J Kerr Brown and A Tate.

B DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Members interests.

C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That

the minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 5 October 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

The following observation was noted:

Change to the Forward Word Programme, further update on Home Safety Assessment delivery to be deferred to April 2012.

D MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

The meeting scheduled for 16 November 2011 was cancelled.

ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION

2 REVIEW OF FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Monitoring Officer presented Members with an update on the Performance and Overview Committee's forward work programme, and provided details of the agenda items that had been deferred to future meetings in 2012.

Members were informed by the Chair that further suggestions may be identified and noted during the meeting.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the content of the forward work programme be noted.

3 Q2 – MID YEAR FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2011 – 12

The Head of Corporate Communications introduced the report which gave a summary view of each department's financial and service performance. Reports included key corporate projects and progress against them. He referred to the Service's performance against Headline Indicators.

The Head of Finance summarised the financial position detailed within the report. One issue that had been identified was treatment of firefighter injury pensions which had been previously charged to the pension fund and should have been funded by the Fire Authority. This would need to be included in the base budget. He also advised that within future financial reports, previously identified efficiencies and progress towards realising them would be reported.

Members queried whether there was any risk to the Authority that it would have to pay back historic pension payments. The Head of Finance confirmed this was a possibility and the Service were consulting with the Department of Communities and Local Government to look at how this risk could be mitigated.

The Head of Corporate Communications explained that the Service needed to be prepared for the challenging times ahead and would need to consider a broad range of options. One area that may merit further debate was the profile of retirements and potential for voluntary redundancy. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer suggested that a report could be provided for the Committee at a future meeting.

Members questioned whether the Community Safety Department's anticipated savings highlighted in the report would have an impact on the quality of service provided, as this should be the Service's first priority. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed this continued to be the Service's first priority and the savings had been managed within the Value for Money Review being carried out for the department to ensure the quality of service delivery was maintained.

RESOLVED: That

the mid year progress report was considered by Members and the following items were identified for further reports to the Performance and Overview Committee:

- 1. The profile for retirement and potential for voluntary redundancies; and**
- 2. The position in relation to the historic pension payments.**

4 STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY 2011

The Head of Corporate Communications introduced the report which included a draft action plan of the key issues to be addressed over the next year and would be used as a monitoring tool for Members.

Members reflected that the positive results were encouraging, and noted the areas where there was a decline in satisfaction. These areas included accessibility to the Intranet which Members stated was a cause for concern in the organisation that they continued to be aware of.

Members discussed the 50% response rate and queried if the Service could carry out any further research to understand why some staff had not responded. The Head of Corporate Communications replied that the Service had achieved a consistent response over the last 3 surveys. The Service had continued to challenge this and aimed to increase responses. The response rate had been discussed at the focus groups and the feedback included concern about the confidentiality of responses. This had resulted in the Service's decision to engage an external company to carry out the survey to ensure confidentiality. The Services' Communications team had continued to work with the representative bodies to convey a positive message to aim to achieve a higher response rate in the next survey in 2013.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the action plan be used by the Performance and Overview Committee to monitor progress on the projects identified, with update reports being submitted to future meetings.**

5 SERVICE VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEWS

The Head of Corporate Communications presented Members with a summary of the programme of Value for Money Reviews which had encompassed all areas of the Service. He provided an update on the outcome of the Corporate Admin Review to date, which provided a series of recommendations which were being worked through. Some recurring themes were identified across the Service which included ICT issues, and resulted in a lack of co-ordination of systems and data. A more consistent approach to processes was required and actions had been planned across the ICT programme of change. Specific departmental issues had been fed into individuals departmental reviews and progressed locally.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the content of the report be noted; and**
- [2] further reports be submitted to the Performance and Overview Committee which contain a high level summary of changes and progress on the Service's Value For Money reviews.**

6 HSA TARGETING

The Head of Community Safety introduced the report to Members which summarised changes agreed by the Authority for delivery of the new methodology for Home Safety Assessments (HSAs). The Service's Corporate Intelligence Unit used data provided from outside partners, to define the top 20,000 high risk households. The Service had underestimated the difficulties which would be experienced in accessing some of these high risk households to ensure a HSA was carried out. The Service continued to develop new systems and processes to identify the high risk households and was looking at ways to overcome the challenge of successfully gaining entry to these premises.

An Officer from the Corporate Intelligence Unit provided Members with a presentation on the data provided and methodology used to target the high risk households.

Members suggested the Service could work with Registered Social Landlords (as they were required to carry out gas inspections) to gain access to high risk households. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer agreed this was an area that the Service could explore further.

Members queried whether the number of fire injuries and deaths included people identified in the high risk category. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer responded that each case was discussed following the incident and confirmed that a high percentage of the fire injuries and deaths were from high risk households. The Service would continue to work with partners to gain data on these vulnerable households to target them for delivery of a HSA.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the content of the paper be noted.**