

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of the SCRUTINY & AUDIT PANEL held at County Hall, St. Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex at 10:00 hours on Thursday, 1 November 2018.

Members Present: Councillors Galley (Chairman), Lambert, Osborne, Peltzer Dunn and Sheppard.

Also Present: M O'Brien (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), M Andrews (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), D Savage (Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer), L Ridley (Assistant Director Planning and Improvement), H Scott-Youlton (Assistant Director Training & Assurance), M Matthews (Assistant Director Safer Communities), L Woodley (Deputy Monitoring Officer), S Milner (Planning & Intelligence Manager), M Whiting (Planning & Intelligence Analyst), W Tricker (Finance Manager), Z Downton (Democratic Services Officer), E Simpkin (Democratic Services Officer), Councillor Barnes.

Other: One member of the public.

188 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

188.1 It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, no participating Member had any interest disclosable in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct for Members.

189 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

189.1 There were none.

190 URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

190.1 The Chairman invited the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer (ADR/T) to provide an update to Members in respect of the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA). The ADR/T explained that PSAA (whose role included the appointment of Ernst & Young as external auditor to the Authority) was currently consulting on the level of auditor fees for 2019/2020. The proposal was that the fees would remain the same. The Panel consented to the ADR/T's suggestion for him to reply to the consultation on behalf of the Authority in support of the fees not changing for next year.

191 NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY & AUDIT PANEL MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

191.1 **RESOLVED** – That the non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel held on 13 September 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (*Copy in Minute Book*)

192 CALLOVER

192.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:

193 2018/19 Corporate Risk Register Review – Quarter 2

194 2018/19 Performance Report – Quarter 2

195 2018/19 Safety Events Statistics Report – Quarter 2

196 2018/19 Corporate Plan Progress Monitoring – Quarter 2

193 2018/19 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER REVIEW – QUARTER 2

193.1 The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer (ADR/T) which provided Members with the latest quarterly review (Quarter 2, 2018/19) of Corporate Risk. (*Copy in Minute Book*)

193.2 The Authority had in place established procedures for ensuring that risks were identified and managed for all corporate projects. Risks were scored against a 4x4 scoring matrix, as shown under Appendix A. The updated position for each risk was shown under Appendix B.

193.4 The Panel raised concern over the *'lack of buy in from Management'*, under Risk 2, and how that was being addressed. The Assistant Director Training & Assurance (ADT&A) responded that Risk 2 should not have been included in the Risk Management Mitigation Plans (Appendix B) as considerable work had been undertaken over the last two years around Health & Safety; such as re-instigating workplace Health and Safety representatives who met regularly to share findings, issues and discuss with Management how to resolve them. Those meetings had been developed by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and now provided meaningful communication. She explained that because of those measures staff now had the assurance that issues were being heard and that Management was acting on those concerns.

193.5 In response to a Member's query, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) confirmed that the context around Risk 5 was the Grenfell Tower Block fire and the independent review by Dame Judith Hackitt. The Panel suggested that the wording of that risk be amended to elaborate further on the context.

193.6 The Panel questioned why it was difficult to recruit into professional services and what actions the Service would be taking to mitigate that (under Risk 6). The ADT&A explained that the Authority struggled to recruit to IT and Programme Management posts and that was in part linked to salary scales. She informed the Panel that the Authority had been using benchmarking services, as well as considering a policy around market supplements and developing job descriptions to attract the right people for the roles.

193.7 A discussion took place around whether the mitigated risk score for Risk 8 should be so high. The DCFO explained that consideration of the risk score would be made, adding that to mobilise effectively was a statutory duty and would always be reflected in the report.

193.8 The Panel requested that a corporate risk on collaboration, as had been previously agreed, be considered for inclusion in future reporting. The DCFO responded that it would be considered for the Quarter 3 Report. The DCFO added that the Authority's framework for collaboration would be presented to the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority on 6 December 2018, with the aim of reporting on collaboration at future Scrutiny & Audit Panel meetings on a quarterly basis.

193.9 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel reviewed and agreed the Risk Management Mitigation Plans, as set out in Appendix B of the report, subject to the following;

- i) Acknowledgement that **Risk 2** (on page 11 of the agenda) had already been addressed and mitigated;
- ii) That the wording of **Risk 5** (on page 12 of the agenda) be amended to provide further context;
- iii) That the wording of **Risk 6** (on page 12 of the agenda) be amended to provide more detail on the areas it was difficult to recruit to (e.g. IT and Programme Management roles);
- iv) That consideration be given to reducing the mitigated risk score of **Risk 8** (on page 13 of the agenda); and
- v) That a corporate risk on collaboration be considered for inclusion in future reporting.

194 **2018/19 PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 2**

194.1 The Panel received the report of the Assistant Director Planning & Improvement (ADP&I) which provided Members with a summary of service performance information for the second quarter of 2018/19. (*Copy in Minute Book*)

194.2 The Panel noted the reasons why it had only been possible to include data for 10 out of the 23 performance indicators for 2018/19 (as detailed under section 1 of the report) and the difficulties in analysing the data as a result. The Planning & Intelligence Manager responded that it was anticipated that most of the outstanding information would be included in future reporting.

194.3 The Panel noted the decline in the number of Home Safety Visits (HSV) undertaken (Performance Indicator No. 6) in comparison with the same reporting period in 2017/18, and queried whether anything further could be done to increase the uptake and to embed HSVs into everyday culture. The Assistant Director Safer Communities responded that there had been challenges recently in mobilising Safer Communities & Well Advisors which had impacted the number of visits made. He explained that the provision of new equipment (that was soon to be secured) would resolve those issues. He added that the Authority was working with the NHS to attract more HSV referrals.

194.4 In terms of the reported performance improvement in reducing the number of absences of employees due to sickness (Performance Indicator No. 3) the Panel requested that, aside from long term sickness reductions, it would be useful to see a breakdown of short term sickness figures to see if those were also improving. The Planning & Intelligence Manager responded that those figures would be included in future reporting.

The Panel also requested the consideration of the inclusion of statistics on Road Traffic Collisions to be included in future reporting.

194.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel noted:

1. That of the current indicator set of 23 it was only possible to report against

10 indicators currently (as detailed under section 1 of the report); and

2. That the Strategic HR (Human Resources) Group was developing a suite of indicators to report against, and once that work was completed relevant indicators would be incorporated into the quarterly Performance Reports.

195 2018/19 SAFETY EVENTS STATISTICS REPORT – QUARTER 2

- 195.1 The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Director Training & Assurance (ADT&A) which provided Members with a summary of safety events data and hazard reports, as received by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team, for Quarter 2 of 2018/19, and which also included the Quarter 2 report for the shared 3F Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). (*Copy in Minute Book*)
- 195.2 The ADT&A apologised for the omission of the equality data from the report and reassured the Panel that its request for the collation of such data was being carried out. She advised that the equality data for the reporting period was now available and would be circulated separately to Members after the meeting. (*Copy in Minute Book*).
- 195.3 The ADT&A acknowledged that the statistics within the report were fairly one-dimensional. She explained that development work was ongoing to identify and explore issues behind the data, such as whether a particular group was being adversely affected. The Panel welcomed the work being undertaken.
- 195.4 In response to a Member's query, the ADT&A would check the disparity in the total number of Hazard Reports, as stated under paragraph 3.1 of the report, against the numbers broken down within the pie chart under the same paragraph.
- 195.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel:
- i) Considered the Quarter 2 health and safety statistics for 2018/19 as set out in the report;
 - ii) Continued to monitor and scrutinise performance over the forthcoming year; and
 - iii) Had not identified any areas where Members required further assurance.

196 2018/19 CORPORATE PLAN PROGRESS MONITORING – QUARTER 2

- 196.1 The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Director Planning & Improvement (ADP&I) which contained information on the progress made up to the end of Quarter 2 of 2018/19 on the key actions being undertaken to progress the Service's Corporate Plan.
- 196.2 The Panel congratulated officers on the number of targets achieved. Of concern however were those activities not on target (indicated by red status) relating to Estates and Information Technology Governance (ITG).
- 196.3 In terms of ITG, the Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer (ADR/T) explained that the IT Strategic Board (which now included Councillor Tutt as Lead Member for IT) had considered action by both ITG and Telent to improve the programme management and delivery of IT Strategy Projects. He further explained that the

