

Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

1 October 2021 – At a virtual meeting of the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee held at 10.30 am Virtual meeting with restricted public access.

Present: Cllr Boram (Chairman)

Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Charles, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Milne and Cllr Turley

Apologies were received from Cllr Richardson

Also in attendance: Cllr Crow

11. Declarations of Interest

11.1 No declarations were made.

12. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

12.1 Resolved – that the Committee agrees the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2021.

13. End of June 2021 (Quarter 1) Quarterly Performance and Resources Report

13.1 The Committee considered the end of June (Quarter 1) Quarterly Performance and Resources Report (copy appended to the signed minutes).

13.2 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- The increase in the cost for building the Horsham Fire Station and Training Centre might possibly cause minor changes to what is planned and delay completion slightly, but not significantly
- The target for fire safety inspections of business premises has risen from 936 to 1,750 to provide a stretch target which is 5% of the service's overall risk-based inspection programme and include the highest risk premises (such as care homes)
- The service uses the latest technology to locate accidents including the app 'What Three Words' and a system that provides photographs from the scene
- Referrals for safe and well visits to houses occupied by vulnerable people are often made by fire service partners such as social services
- The service works with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership that breaks down accidents by type of vehicle – this could be made available to the Committee

13.3 Resolved – that the Committee is provided with further data relating to Key Performance Indicator 41 (killed and seriously injured casualties per billion vehicle miles) with a breakdown of the types of accidents.

14. Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 1

14.1 The Committee considered the Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Performance Report Quarter 1 (copy appended to the signed minutes).

14.2 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- Carers were given fire safety training
- The contingency plan for a system breakdown in the Joint Fire Control Centre worked when called upon recently
- Calls that are not answered within seven seconds are usually multiple calls for the same incident and are usually answered within a second or two more
- Calls that aren't answered within seven seconds are investigated and counted in the overall targets which are being met
- The Committee thought a Task & Finish Group might be needed if call response times continued to miss targets
- The Committee wished to see target times as well as percentages for first appliance attendance
- One reason the availability of retained fire fighters increased in recent quarters was that they were working from home during lockdowns

14.3 Resolved – that the Committee asks: -

- i. For the service to provide previous quarters information for comparison as part of the core measures
- ii. For numbers as well as percentages for Core Measure 21
- iii. Democratic Services to work with the Fire and Rescue Service to provide an updated report on the Joint Fire Control Centre at its meeting in March 2022 following the Task & Finish Group in January 2021
- iv. The service to check the data contained in the table for Core Measure 19 for accuracy
- v. To monitor responses times, and consider whether a Task & Finish Group may be required if this Core Measure 16 remains red

15. Priority Programme Update

15.1 The Committee considered a report on the Priority Programme Update.

15.2 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- The Committee was interested in timescales for the Operational Assurance Project
- The shadow Board has been running for several months and helped with decision-making
- Diversity champions were raising awareness of equality and diversity issues within the service
- Targeted activity had resulted in a significant increase in applications from under-represented groups, however the aim was still to appoint based on quality

15.3 Resolved – that the Committee asks the Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that timescales for the Operational Assurance Project are included in future reports

16. Work Programme

16.1 The Committee considered its work programme and made the following changes: -

- Call response times to be monitored
- The service's covid recovery plan to be added
- The inspection preparedness report to be taken off as the inspection had already taken place

17. Date of Next Meeting

17.1 The next meeting of the Committee will take place on 23 November 2021.

The meeting ended at 12.02 pm

Chairman