



## ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD Minutes

*10<sup>th</sup> September 2019*

1	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b></p> <p>Attendees: Stephen Mold (PFCC) Nicci Marzec Paul Fell Louise Sheridan</p> <p>Darren Dovey (Chief Fire Officer) Shaun Hallam Paul Greenwood</p> <p>Apologies : Rob Porter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- SM welcomed everyone to the meeting</li></ul>
2	<p><b>Minutes and decisions of previous meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.</li><li>- Relevant updates on any outstanding actions were provided and the Action Log updated.</li><li>- There was a discussion about the new force training facility in Gifford House.</li></ul> <p><b>ACTION - SM to ask Paul Bullen to ensure that the new facility is available/open to Fire.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Following the agreement in principal of the Fleet strategy, SM requested that revisions to the Estates, IT and Equipment strategies are shared by the end of November. They should include a full review of whole-time staffing and the requirements for IT.</li><li>- There was a discussion about a 10 year strategy for Estates with the aim of laying the foundations for a Commercial Estates Strategy that could provide income generation opportunities.</li></ul>
3	<p><b>HMICFRS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- SH provided an update on progress to date.</li><li>- All 21 recommendations and 'causes for concern' have been reviewed and action plans submitted.</li></ul>

- SM asked for reassurance that all of the actions plans are backed up with evidence of mitigation.

**ACTION - SH to include dates and ownership to all action plans**

**ACTION – SH to share revised Service Improvement Plan**

#### Preventing fire and other risks

- There was a discussion about how this work is evaluated.
- DD explained that it is difficult to quantify the amount of time spent on Protection and Prevention work. Qualitative and quantitative data collected but difficult to correlate the two. (Trying to prove a negative)
- It was agreed that a revised strategy would be provided by the end of November 2019. To include what is defined as 'High risk', how effective the service is at inspecting it and how often.

**ACTION Revised strategy by end of November**

#### Responding to fires and other emergencies

- There was a discussion about responding to fires and other emergencies
- DD confident that they have a robust system which HMICFRS did not fully understand at the time. In order to demonstrate going forward, it is now clear that Operational Learning is shared via the Debrief system and Operational Risk via the Management Group
- DD confirmed Operational Guidance update will be released by April 2020
- In addition, SH confirmed he is currently updating the Service Improvement plan and will share when complete.

**ACTION – SH to share revised Service Improvement Plan**

#### Responding to national risks

- DD confirmed staff now aware of how to access this information and receive reminders about cross-border risk.
- It was agreed that SH will provide dates for over-the-border exercises.

**ACTION – SH to add dates to all training exercises referred to in the service exercise framework.**

#### Making best use of resources

- There was a discussion about resourcing and the need to better articulate all of the other things firefighter do other than respond to fires.
- Cultural shift with those newer in service recognising the 'keeping people safer' element of the role
- There was a discussion about the use of overtime and some of the issues around managing it.
- SM agreed to raise with Zoe Billingham when they meet at HMICFRS Fire and Rescue Service Event on Monday 16 September

**ACTION – SM to raise OT issues with Zoe Billingham.**

#### Business continuity

- DD advised that the Policy & Framework document is due to be presented at the November Accountability Board.

	<p><u>People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There was a discussion about whether DD is content that the workforce have the right skills to do their job and appropriate training plans are in place.</li> <li>- DD advised part Paul Greenwood managing plan for better visibility around this and can demonstrate to HMICFRS when they return.</li> <li>- Paul confirmed that recording processes have been improved.</li> <li>- Reviewing 'Red Kite' system and other available software to ensure have the right tools to assist.</li> <li>- If alternative system is required or a better system is available SM is happy to consider the business case.</li> <li>- In summary, SM commended the HMICFRS Inspection Update overall but seeks further clarity regarding ownership of actions and dates</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Performance Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SH presented the balanced scorecard and associated metrics confirming that last year, incidents of fire were historically low and NFRS is not an outlier in family group.</li> <li>- SM raised a concern around levels of whole-time sickness which was showing an upward trend.</li> <li>- SH provided reassurance that it is not an issue along with a satisfactory explanation.</li> <li>- It was agreed that a better metric is needed for Home Safety Checks for example the proportion of home fire safety checks carried out in high risk homes. Last year 3500 visits completed. Target for this year is 5000 of which 90% to those deemed high risk.</li> <li>- There was a discussion on response times to road traffic collisions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A disproportionate number happen in rural areas and therefore more likely to be attended by retained officers.</li> <li>• Response times to RTC's typically longer than to fires as driver may not necessarily know where they are.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- There was a discussion about the App 'what3Words'. DD will review along with opportunity to do an awareness campaign.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION – DD to review What3Words App</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There was a discussion about call handling times.</li> <li>- It was agreed that SH would separate call handle and call turnout times for greater clarity.</li> <li>- Overall, average response times to fire incidents shows decreasing trend which is positive. Although rural stations, covered by retained firefighters are unlikely to meet the 10 minute response time.</li> <li>- It was also agreed that DD would provide response times from different stations.</li> <li>- SM happy to argue for increased funding if necessary. Pump availability and response times most important measure</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DD summarised; 82% of cost is people. Focus on better duty system and move to a model where the service employs more firefighters during the day. Evenings generally has good cover.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION – SH to separate call handling/turnout times</b></p> <p><b>ACTION – DD to provide individual station response times</b></p>
6	<p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Recruitment paper was tabled at the meeting by SH</li> <li>- The purpose of the report was to inform the Commissioner of the Service’s forecasted retirement profile for WDS staff over the next 12/18 months and proposed recruitment profile.</li> <li>- To accommodate the foreseeable retirement profile and any further reduction DD would like to recruit 20 people which includes 12 positions currently being covered by overtime.</li> <li>- Costs for 10 people have already been modelled in MTP and agreed by Helen King</li> <li>- DD requesting an additional 10 to cover projected retirements. This will incur maximum financial risk of £25k as risk is declining as firefighters retire.</li> <li>- DD confirmed paying 10 people a day via OT in order to maintain operational resilience and as it is readily available on weekdays Saturday OT is really difficult to fill.</li> <li>- DD also referred to £300k underspend on retained.</li> <li>- SM asked for costs to be included in the paper so that he could be clear.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION – SH to provide establishment numbers for past three years</b></p> <p><b>ACTION – DD to add costs of proposed recruitment to paper</b></p>
7	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>No further business was raised.</p>

Meeting closed 12:55