

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

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Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority plan 2013 to 2018: proposed corporate priorities and aims

Report by the Chief Officer

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1 Summary

- 1.1 On 19 September 2012 the Authority agreed to consult stakeholders on six draft strategic proposals for the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority plan (entitled – Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service plan). These proposals were operationally focussed, designed under the theme ‘Making life safer’. The Authority was also informed of internally focused proposals for ‘Making our Service stronger’. Following analysis of the feedback received the proposals have been amended where appropriate.
- 1.2 We have refreshed our approach to service planning following the introduction of the new National Framework for fire and rescue services and our own strategic assessment. This has led to the development of the plan moving from a three year rolling plan to a five year fixed plan.
- 1.3 We have also adapted the approach to delivering the plan, including the underpinning actions, and the plan’s presentation.
- 1.4 The Authority is invited to agree the priorities for the next five years.

2 Recommendations

The Authority is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the summary of feedback from consultation (Appendix A)
- 2.2 Approve the proposed priorities and aims under the themes of ‘Making life safer’ and ‘Making our Service stronger’ for inclusion in the 2013 to 2018 plan. (Appendix B)

3 Introduction and background

- 3.1 The plan incorporates our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which each fire and rescue service is required to produce under the National Framework. This “identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community including those of a cross border, multi authority, and/or national nature”.

4 Service planning

- 4.1 The Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2012 considered a revised approach to service planning in the light of the new National Framework. The planning was based on an overall Strategic Assessment which had been prepared.
- 4.2 Six strategic proposals, identified from our Strategic Assessment, were presented to the Authority on 19 September 2012. These were approved for consultation with stakeholders. These proposals, grouped under the theme of ‘Making life safer’ need to be read alongside the more internally focused proposals designed to ‘Make our Service stronger’.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The service ran a 12 week consultation period with staff and stakeholders to gain their views and feedback on the draft strategic proposals. This consultation was extremely successful, engaging face-to-face with 250 people over 19 events. A summarised account of the feedback we received for each proposal can be found in Appendix A of this report.
- 5.2 In addition to the consultation events we also circulated details of the strategic proposals to targeted groups, for example businesses and parish councils. We would have welcomed more feedback from the business community and so we will continue to develop ways to communicate more effectively with this group, starting with a ‘business breakfast’ which was held at Service HQ on 7 February 2013. Even though the formal consultation period has finished we want to encourage feedback throughout the year.
- 5.3 All feedback received was documented and published on the service intranet for all staff to review.
- 5.4 Previously the Service has consulted stakeholders for 12 weeks each year on new or revised corporate objectives. The Cabinet Office has released new ‘consultation principles’. These remove the requirement for a 12 week consultation period; instead they advise that the timeframe should be ‘proportionate and realistic’ to what is being proposed. This could vary from having no consultation period, if it is something which is non-contentious or familiar to stakeholders, up to the full 12 weeks for potentially contentious items.

- 5.5 In the future we want to achieve a more dynamic approach to consultation. We will run consultation events as and when necessary with staff and stakeholders, where actions are being considered. This will make a significant change to our planning as we will not need to wait for the yearly cycle to come around.

6 Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service plan 2013 to 2018

- 6.1 The proposed priorities and aims for the plan are:

Making life safer - Priorities and aims:

Responding to incidents

- Improving the way we respond to and support incidents

Fires in the home

- Targeting our efforts to reduce accidental fires in the home

Business fire safety

- Increasing community safety with sprinklers
- Improving economic sustainability through effective business support

Community incidents

- Improving how our communities are able to respond to and support incidents (community resilience)

Safer road users

- Working with partners to create safer road users in Hampshire

Making our Service stronger - Priorities and aims:

Our people

- Help people develop so they are able to respond to the changing needs of the Service

Communications and engagement

- Develop targeted communications and engagement opportunities with key stakeholders to our improve services

Working with partners

- Work with partner organisations to exploit development opportunities for the Service

Leadership

- To support elected members managers in the Service to provide the best possible leadership and management

Information and technology

- Strengthen our use of information in decision making, taking advantage of the opportunities technology offers

Assets and money

- To improve the return on our physical assets and use medium term financial planning to ensure we effectively prioritise our resources

Full details of the proposals can be found in Appendix B of this report.

- 6.2 The current plan is a three year rolling plan, refreshed annually with new 'objectives'. The National Framework document states that each fire and rescue service's IRMP must "cover at least a three year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as is necessary".
- 6.3 We are proposing to change the period covered by the revised plan to cover five years. By introducing five year priorities, we believe it will be easier for staff and the public to see what our priorities are and allow appropriate service improvement plans to be developed to underpin the priorities.
- 6.4 We are preparing to publish the new plan at the beginning of April 2013. This plan will include a new vision statement looking ahead to 2020. There will be descriptions of each priority, detailing why we feel this needs to be a focus for us in the coming years. Each priority will have an aim giving more details of what we intend to achieve.
- 6.5 In addition to a printed version of the plan, we will have a more dynamic approach on our website which will detail all of the aims and actions we will be undertaking to address each of the priorities.
- 6.6 The style of the new plan has been reviewed as it was felt the style of the current format was too formal. The new format has been drafted more like a 'story', to make it more accessible to the public, leading them through the process of first identifying the risks and then how we address them.
- 6.7 There are a number of objectives in the current version of the plan which we need to report on as these will not feature in the new plan. We will be submitting a report to Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee on 26 February 2013 giving an overview of the previous objectives and seeking approval to close them where appropriate. Those objectives which are still current will be placed into the action plans of the corresponding priority and aims in the new format.

7 Supporting our corporate aims and objectives

- 7.1 The plan is a key document for the Authority for the development of the Service. It will set the priorities for the Authority over the next five years, which the Service will address. The recently developed strategic assessment has provided the basis for the priorities and aims.
- 7.2 The plan should be read alongside the Service's medium term financial plan and annual budget.

8 Risk Analysis

- 8.1 Failure to produce a Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority plan (including the statutory requirement to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan) would pose a significant risk because the Authority would be failing to meet a statutory obligation as set out by the government. It would also mean that we may not focus resources in the most appropriate areas to reduce risk.

9 Resource Implications

- 9.1 The costs related to implementing the plan will be met from within the annual budget and medium term financial plan.
- 9.2 We will continue to give careful consideration to the resource implications of both sets of proposals, as well as our capacity to deliver them. Over the five year period of the plan we will need to take account of the current and forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Reviews and any other issues which might arise, for example from Joint Working in Hampshire.

10 People Impact Assessment

- 10.1 An initial 'people impact assessment' has been completed for the plan. There are no significant issues arising from this.
- 10.2 The proposals in this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the equality and human rights legislation.

Background Information (Section 100D of Local Government Act 1972)

The following documents disclose the facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of the report:

None

Note: The list excludes: (1) published works; and (2) documents that disclose exempt or confidential information defined in the Act.

Appendix A - Summary of feedback from consultation

Appendix B - Proposed corporate priorities and aims