

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee

Item: 10

22 October 2013

Report on the progress of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee working group on the 'Facing the Future' report

Report by the Chief Officer

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1 Summary

- 1.1 At the meeting of this Committee in July 2013, three Members volunteered to form a working group to examine the report that had been written by Sir Ken Knight entitled 'Facing the Future – Findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England'. It was agreed that this work would potentially lead to a wider Member discussion of its contents and implications at a later date.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the progress of the sub group.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the progress of the working group on the 'Facing the Future' report be endorsed.

3 Introduction and background

- 3.1 At the last meeting in July 2013, it was proposed that two or three members undertake a scrutiny activity for the Committee and convene to formulate a draft scrutiny plan with an initial focus on the recent efficiency report by Sir Ken Knight. Councillors Pearce, Simpson, and Chadd volunteered to form the group.
- 3.2 It was also agreed that the Service would provide a summary of the efficiency report to the full HFRA meeting with the recommendation that any comments or input that other Members wanted to make would go through the working group. This report was presented to the Authority on 26 September 2013.

4 Meetings held by the working group

- 4.1 The group met for the first time on 5 September 2013 and discussed the following items.

Setting the terms of reference for future scrutiny groups and potential areas of scrutiny:

- 4.2 The group recognised that this would potentially be the first of a number of scrutiny working groups. It felt that it did not have the authority to suggest future scrutiny topics. It felt that all of the Committees could help to shape scrutiny work possibly via the respective Chairmen

The efficiency report:

- 4.3 The background to the report and the Authority's response to it, is explained in the report by the Chief Officer that was presented to Authority on 26 September 2013.
- 4.4 A discussion on a number of graphs which had been prepared to illustrate the position of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service against those published in the report. It was noted that the Authority's spend is in the bottom quartile, and its performance was good.
- 4.5 The group debated the main points in the first three chapters of the report. This is a brief summary of the discussions:

Chapter one: What is efficiency and how efficient is the delivery of fire and rescue services in England?

The group discussed:

- Whether there was likelihood that if resources spent on prevention and protection were reduced, we would see a rise in incident rates.
- Whether we should see a reduction in expenditure along with incident rates.

Chapter two: Deploying resources

The group discussed:

- The work that the Service continues to do in deploying different resources and crewing models according to risk; for example small fire vehicles and efficient and flexible crewing.
- The group felt that they did not feel comments in the report around protectionist approach to jobs were reflected in the culture in Hampshire.
- There was general acceptance of the point raised in the report about the limitations that the Grey Book can impose.

Chapter three: Collaborating for efficiency

The group discussed:

- The number of frameworks and collaboration that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service participate in.
- The co-responder scheme and the colocation work with Hampshire Constabulary and South Central Ambulance Service.

5 Next steps

- 5.1 The group will be meeting on 15 October 2013 to discuss chapters four and five – 'Driving efficiency' and 'What is the future for the fire and rescue service?'. It will then determine which areas to focus on in more detail. It will also gather views expressed by other Members. The outcome of the work is expected to be a wider

debate on the implications, risks, and opportunities arising from the report and subsequent changes on a national and or local basis.

5.2 The working group will give an oral update on this meeting to the Committee.

6 Supporting our corporate aims and priorities

6.1 Depending upon the Minister's response, the implications of this report may have significant impacts on:

- the future priorities and aims of the Service,
- the future governance of the Service, including the role of the Fire and Rescue Authority, and
- the national organisation of fire and rescue services.

7 Risk analysis

7.1 Risks and opportunities will be identified and assessed as the report and its findings are considered and developed. The work of the sub group is particularly important in that it is likely to highlight risk and opportunities to be considered further and provide valuable horizon scanning to inform our planning for the future.

8 People impact assessment

8.1 The proposals in this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the equality and human rights legislation.

9 Environmental and sustainability impact assessment

9.1 There are no environmental or sustainability impacts from this report.

10 Resource implications

10.1 There are no human, physical, information and communications technology or financial resource requirements in the work of the working group itself, except the time that Members devote to the work. Support from the Director of Corporate Services and the Performance Review Manager is absorbed into their normal business.

11 Consultation

11.1 Corporate Management Team and Service Management Team have been consulted on the Facing the Future report. The report to the Fire and Rescue Authority that is mentioned in paragraph 4.3 has asked for all Members to contribute to the work of the working group by giving comments to them.

12 Conclusion

- 12.1 The Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee working group on the 'Facing the Future' report has made good progress and will keep the Committee informed in the future. It also plans to instigate a wider debate on the implications of the report with Members.

13 Background papers

- 13.1 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:

Facing The Future: findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England, Sir Ken Knight CBE QFSM FIFireE, May 2013. This can be found at the following link: [Facing the future - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

Minutes of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee meeting dated 2 July 2013

Facing the Future: findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England, Report by the Chief Officer to the Authority 26 September 2013

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