

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

**Essex Fire Authority – Policy and
Strategy Committee**

8

MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

2 November 2016

EFA/123/16

SUBJECT

**Progressing the Essex Fire Authority specific Lucas Review
Recommendations: SOLACE Development Sessions Phase 2**

REPORT BY

Hannah Cleary, Seconded Member Support

PRESENTED BY

A/CFO Adam Eckley

SUMMARY

At the last meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee on 21 September 2016 it was agreed that a second phase of workshop sessions should be arranged and facilitated by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) during autumn 2016 and spring 2017 in respect of the following:

- i. Roles and Responsibilities
- ii. Scrutiny and appropriate challenge
- iii. Reflection and future steps

The Committee also agreed that the dates and full details of the sessions should be brought to the next meeting as an update report; this report therefore sets out the information requested by the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Policy and Strategy committee are asked to:

1. Note the report including the details of the 6 sessions that have been arranged between November 2016 and January 2017 and the next steps for the progression of the work into 2017; and
2. Formally refer the following element to the Authority's Audit, Governance and Review Committee for progression and resolution:
Review the regular and standing reports that are presented to Fire Authority meetings and Committees with a view to improving the presentation of performance information

against the strategic aims of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, using data from comparable authorities where appropriate.

A presentation on performance reporting was provided at the last meeting of the Audit, Governance and Review Committee on 5 October 2016 and there are plans to arrange Member Workshops to progress this work further.

BACKGROUND

The workshops facilitated by the Society for Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) in February and March 2016 identified four key areas for future improvement all linked to the recommendations in the Lucas Review. The second phase of the SOLACE workshops will seek to address all of the key themes identified at the earlier sessions, as well as the Lucas Review recommendations pertaining specifically to Essex Fire Authority Members.

Invitations to the second phase of the SOLACE sessions were issued to all Essex Fire Authority Members on 4 October 2016 setting out the dates, times and content of the sessions. Each session is being offered twice to ensure that as many Members as possible are able to attend and make meaningful contributions.

These sessions will result in initiatives and work-streams that will address the Lucas Review recommendations that are specific to Essex Fire Authority Members and support those also made by Sir Ken Knight during his recent review of progress. Addressing these recommendations is crucial as the Authority moves into 2017 and prepares for a potential exit review by Sir Ken Knight later next year.

The resulting improvements from these sessions will be presented for agreement to the Fire Authority in early 2017 ready for immediate implementation and will include an ongoing development programme, Essex Fire Authority Member Handbook, and scrutiny toolkit; the contents of which will all be informed by these SOLACE sessions. The LGA have already been approached about the potential for them to contribute to the ongoing development programme that will be put in place for 2017/18.

SOLACE PHASE 2 SESSIONS

All sessions have been arranged at Kelvedon Park HQ and lunch and refreshments will also be provided at each session.

Session 1: Roles and Responsibilities:

**23 November 2016, 10am-2pm OR
30 November 2016, 10am-2pm**

What is Essex Fire Authority and what are its' statutory responsibilities?
How is Essex Fire Authority different to other local government organisations e.g. councils?
What is the role of the LGA Fire Services Management Committee?
What is the role of the Fire Authority Member?
What are Officers' roles?
What is contested space and what strategies can be used to effectively manage this area?
Number of group exercises to highlight Members' roles within relevant situations (e.g. what is an EFA Members' role in a terrorist incident?)

Session 2: Scrutiny and Appropriate Challenge:

12 December 2016, 10am-4pm OR
19 December 2016, 10am-4pm

What is scrutiny?

How can scrutiny be used to best effect at Essex Fire Authority?

Consideration and development of a scrutiny toolkit to support Members to effectively fulfil this element of their role.

Number of group exercises to demonstrate effective scrutiny in action.

Session 3: Reflections and Next Steps:

9 January 2017, 10am-2pm OR
16 January 2017, 1pm-4.30pm

Review the work from the first 2 sessions and consolidate the proposals that will be presented to the Fire Authority for agreement in early 2017.

NEXT STEPS – EARLY 2017

The responses from the sessions will be collated and used to prepare a work package for presentation at either the February or April 2017 EFA meetings. Once these work packages have been approved, actions will be implemented immediately to ensure the new arrangements are in place for the Membership that will be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting in June 2017.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Failure to effectively address the issues identified within the Independent Review of Culture present significant risk to the Service and the Essex Fire Authority not least as the report suggests that without significant change our employees and the communities they serve may be at risk.

The information set out in this report supports the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be costs of approximately £7k to commission the facilitation of the second phase sessions by SOLACE. This will be met from within existing budgets.

Other costs would be covered in those already estimated for the ongoing cultural review work; estimated to total £400k between 2015-2017 (this includes the Expert Advisory Panel costs). Around £200k of this is expected to fall in the current financial year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The information set out in this report sets out the progress made in the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS and therefore serve to lessen any potential litigation presented by the risks identified within the Independent Review of Culture.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Failure to implement the Independent Review Action Plan and address the associated recommendations could result in the Service failing to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: None	
List of background documents (not attached): Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service EFA/086/16 – Policy and Strategy Committee Report – 22 June 2016 Policy and Strategy Committee 22 June 2016 Minutes Sir Ken Knight Independent Cultural Progress Review – September 2016 EFA/111/16 – Policy and Strategy Committee Report – 21 September 2016 Policy and Strategy Committee 21 September 2016 Minutes	
Proper Officer:	Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley
Contact Officer:	Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: adam.eckley@essex-fire.gov.uk