

# ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

## Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING	AGENDA ITEM
<b>Essex Fire Authority Policy and Strategy Committee</b>	<b>6</b>
MEETING DATE	REPORT NUMBER
18 <sup>th</sup> March 2015	<b>EFA/030/15</b>
SUBJECT	
Programme 2020	
REPORT BY	
Adam Eckley, Acting Chief Fire Officer	
PRESENTED BY	
Adam Eckley, Acting Chief Fire Officer	

### SUMMARY

This paper provides Members with an overview of the programme of work to investigate, develop and engage stakeholders in preparing a plan to design a Fire & Rescue Service for Essex, Southend and Thurrock that can improve community safety, meet future strategic challenges, provide value for money and remain fit for purpose in 2020 and beyond.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Essex Fire Authority Policy Strategy Group are asked to:

1. Note the content of the paper.
2. Approve the proposals for additional (or extra-ordinary) meetings of Essex Fire Authority on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015.
3. Provide direction as appropriate.

### BACKGROUND

The inescapable realities of the future strategic challenges facing ECFRS can be identified as:

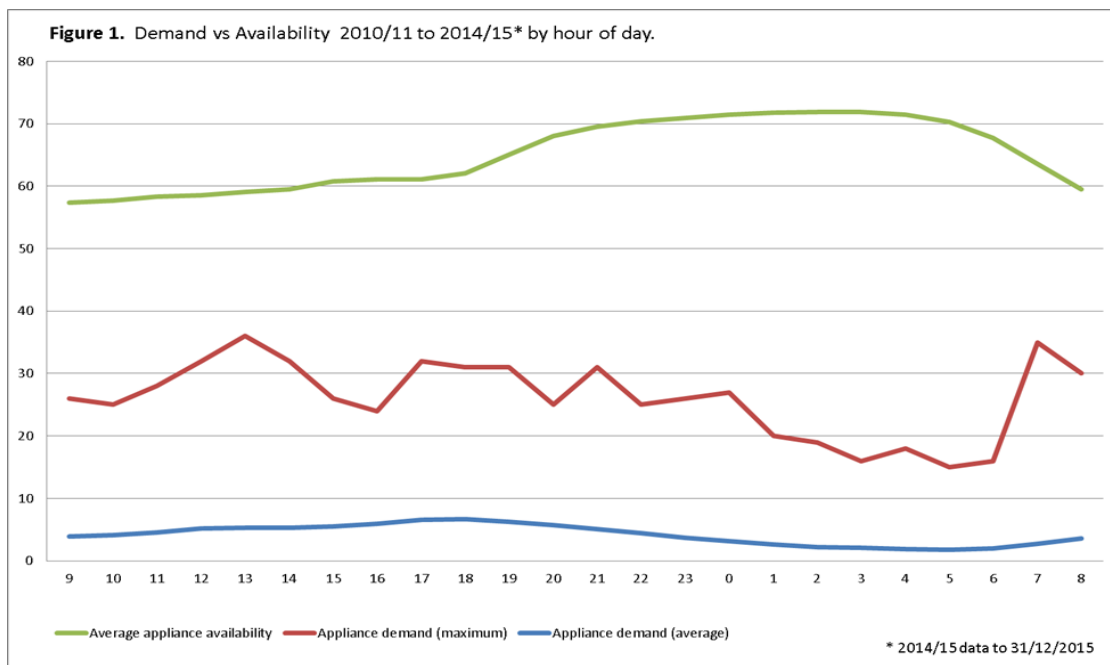
1. Almost fifteen years ago the UK Fire and Rescue Service began to focus resources on fire prevention and, as a result, the number of incidents the

Service is required to attend in Essex fell by 50% between 2004 and 2014 and are expected to reduce further.

2. Existing Response Services are hugely under-utilised.
3. The scale of under-utilisation is visible to commentators external to ECFRS (DCLG, AACE).
4. Options for structural changes to the UK FRS is being considered by some political parties.
5. Traditional ways of working limit opportunities for change in Essex.
6. Lack of free movement of staff across duty systems.
7. Under-utilisation of the Retained Duty System.
8. An organisational culture that does not support the changes required to be more open, supportive and inclusive.

Service Managers have been very open with all of our people and external stakeholders that the Fire and Rescue Service faces a challenging future against a backdrop of decreased funding, along with a significant reduction in operational calls. However the Service is well positioned to meet these challenges and Service Managers are confident that Essex Fire Authority is well placed to develop the Service to meet these strategic challenges.

To provide an overview of our recent response activity levels the diagram below demonstrates the average and peak demand for our response services against appliance availability over the course of an average 24 hour period, to contextualise this.



We recognise that our people have, for some time, been facing considerable uncertainty over the future and that this impacts on morale and causes anxiety. Unfortunately, we will not know for certain what lies ahead fully until some months after the General Election in May 2015. However, Essex Fire Authority does need to be planning now to ensure that the Service is strong and sustainable for the

future. We know that we have been very successful in our prevention and protection work and our communities are safer as a result.

As a direct outcome of the changes made in previous years, the Authority has a balanced budget for 2015/16, so any potential changes will not begin to take effect until at the earliest April 2016. That gives us time to consider all potential options before making any further decisions. The key driver is to address the apparent over provision in our response capability so that the overall range of services provided through prevention, protection and response best meet the needs of our communities.

We expect that the Authority will face future funding reductions which could be in the region of £5 to £15 million between 2016 and 2020 and that the design of the Fire and Rescue Service in the future will be a key factor in helping us build a sustainably funded Fire and Rescue Service. We also know we have a need to develop a more open, supportive and inclusive culture in the Service to engender a positive working environment for our people. All of these factors will need to be considered as we start a programme to review options for changes to our Prevention, Protection and Response delivery model.

Appendix 'A' is a briefing paper which sets out the context for change which provides more information by way of an initial consultation and engagement document, to help set the scene for a range of internal and external stakeholders. This will be used to initiate awareness of the need for change in the pre-consultation phase of Programme 2020.

Importantly change needs to be designed, planned, and consulted upon with the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders. To support the Authority's obligations in this area, Service Managers have secured the services of the 'Consultation Institute' to provide advice on consultation and to quality assure our arrangements against their established compliance assessment methodology to ensure it meets good or best practice standards.

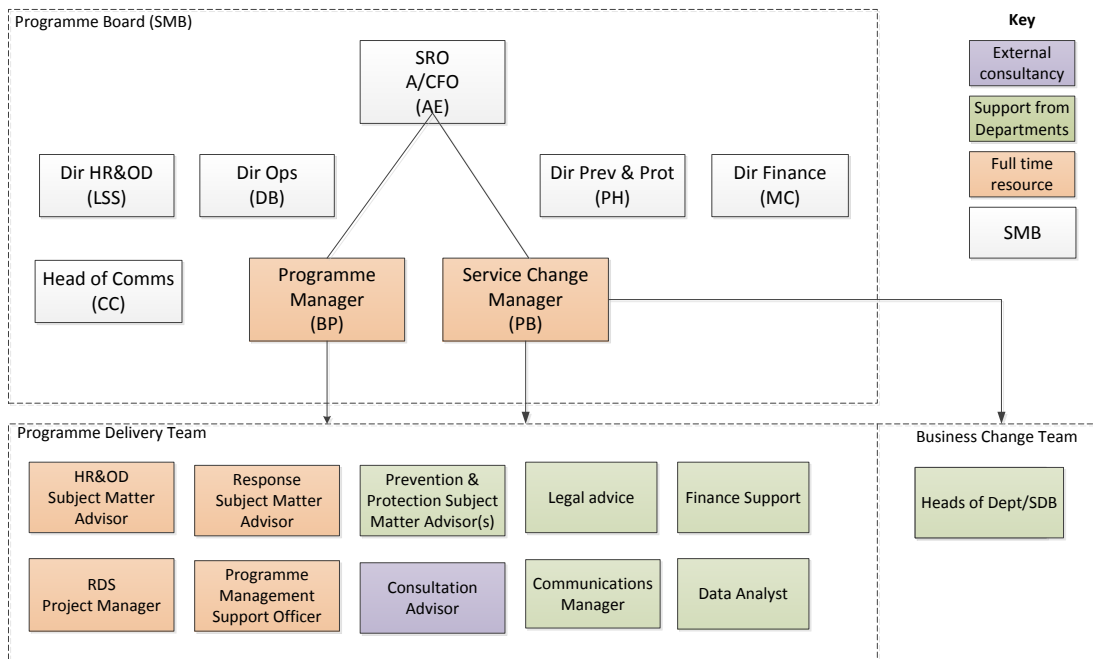
Under the direction of the Acting Chief Fire Officer, the Strategic Management Board are currently establishing a Programme Board to consider a broad range of options to meet the future strategic challenges the Authority faces and the opportunities these present. We are however, very clear that all future strategic proposals must ensure that we redesign an organisation that will be:

- ✓ *Service Led,*
- ✓ *Community Focussed,*
- ✓ *Values Driven,*
- ✓ *Financially Sustainable.*

The schematic below describes the make-up of the Programme Board, with the Acting CFO as the Senior Responsible Owner. The governance arrangements are in the process of being defined and produced; with Members of the Fire Authority being engaged throughout this process. Whilst this is a generational opportunity, we are very aware of the importance of stakeholder engagement and

communication. The support of Lead Members in the development of the programme will be important, as was demonstrated with the Kelvedon Park Programme Board.

Appendix 'B' attached details the terms of reference for the Programme Board.



As always in a change process there remains a number of opportunities, namely; -

1. Increased opportunity of partnership working with other agencies as those persons ultimately involved in incidents tend to have interactions with many public organisations.
2. Better use of resources as the effects of an incident are avoided and thus the consequent impacts on the Essex communities are minimised.
3. More effective use of the fire service brand and marketing practices with a greater understanding of the 'path to crisis' and how to effectively intervene.
4. The Service is resource heavy and can be made more efficient.
5. The Service is still in a position to be able to invest in new technology.
6. Possible turnover of staff to support cultural change.
7. More effective collation of data and information including improved arrangements between different agencies.
8. A response model based on community need, to which ECFRS can be held to account.
9. A move away from a culture of entitlement to one of accountability and efficiency.
10. More effective use of and investment in all staffing groups lead to an efficient organisational structure.

Initially the desired outcomes for the Programme are:-

1. The development of the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to include a new response model based on informed response standards.
2. The establishment of an engagement strategy to include formal consultation requirements as well as an effective stakeholder communication strategy.
3. To establish a number of options for change, for presentation and approval of the EFA.
4. The development of a Service Strategy for the period 2016 to 2020 to include the options for organisational redesign approved by Essex Fire Authority.

Attached as Appendix C is a high level timetable for the initial phase of the programme.

A significant part of the programme definition will be to develop and consult on an Integrated Risk Management Plan. This will be a foundation to the development of future options that can be submitted to the Authority detailing what the future Service may look like. Following this the Authority will move into the delivery stage of the Programme, which will take effect from April 2016 onwards.

The development of the IRMP will be a culmination of data and analysis, intelligence, and information. For example the following elements will all influence the final consultation document, albeit this is not exhaustive:

1. Essex Strategic Assessment of Risk
2. National Risk Register
3. Local Community Risk Register
4. Prevention and Protection Activities
5. Risk Based Inspection Programme
6. National Framework Document
7. Fire Services Act
8. Data and Statistics
9. Annual Statement of Assurance

The intention is that the IRMP will set the standards for the Service going forward. This will in turn, lead to an options development process which will evaluate and define potential service delivery options for change. Once developed, the options will be presented to the Fire Authority to determine the strategic direction to 2020 and beyond.

## **FIRE AUTHORITY GOVERNANCE**

It has not been possible to prepare a draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016-2020 for approval of the Fire Authority for the meeting scheduled for April 2015 principally due to a desire of Lead Members to avoid doing so ahead of the General Election in May.

In planning for the development of a Service Strategy for implementation from April 2016 which incorporates all of the options for change agreed by Essex Fire

Authority following a comprehensive consultation exercise, it is felt necessary to plan to hold two additional (or extra-ordinary) meetings of the full Fire Authority in May and October.

Plans had already been developed to hold an EFA Members Workshop on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and therefore it is proposed that this date is used for an extra-ordinary meeting of the Fire Authority to approve the draft IRMP for public consultation.

In addition, the 14<sup>th</sup> October has been identified as a suitable date for the second extra-ordinary meeting of the Fire Authority to approve the Authority's proposals for future changes to the design of the Fire & Rescue Service for public consultation.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Risk management will be in accordance with the Service's Risk Management Strategy, Policy and Guidance and will be recorded and tracked. A risk identification workshop with the programme team is scheduled.

The risk of not being able to respond appropriately to a challenge of the decisions made by EFA as a result of the Programme has already been identified as a key risk by the Board. Gateway reviews have now been included in the programme preparation plan. A programme information management strategy will be produced to ensure that all consultation information is recorded and stored appropriately.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Programme Delivery Team comprises six full time members of staff the total additional cost is £67k.

	<b>Resourced by</b>
Programme Manager	Backfill with ARA
Service Change Manager	Backfill with ARA
RDS Project manager	Redirect existing project
Response SMA	Redirect existing project
HR&OD SMA	Backfill base post
Programme Management Support	Redirect of existing post plus ARA

## Non-staff costs

The Consultation Institute – planning support and quality assurance	<b>£19k</b>
Pre-consultation telephone survey	<b>£14k</b>
IRMP consultation process (document production, Plain English Crystal Mark, printing, 14 public meetings)*	<b>£20k</b>

The estimated cost of the IRMP consultation is £20k the bulk of the cost is the production of the IRMP document and printing of hard copies. The IRMP consultation plan is due to be reviewed with The Consultation Institute and the costs may change as a result.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications as a result of this paper.

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific equality implications as a result of this paper.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific environmental implications as a result of this paper.

<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</b>	
<b>List of appendices attached to this paper:</b>	
<b>List of background documents (not attached):</b>	
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