

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

Essex Fire Authority

AGENDA ITEM

9

MEETING DATE

13 April 2016

REPORT NUMBER

EFA/050/16

SUBJECT

2016-17 Work Programme

REPORT BY

The Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley

PRESENTED BY

Service Solicitor, Roy Carter

SUMMARY

This paper reviews the work programme for the Authority and its main committees for 2016/17 and brings forward recommendations for Members of the Essex Fire Authority to consider.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

1. Agree the proposed work plan for regular report in 2016/17.

BACKGROUND

This report brings forward a planned work programme for 2016/17.

The focus of this paper is to review those items that the Authority, the Policy & Strategy Committee and the Audit, Governance and Review Committee should receive on a regular basis. For the Audit, Governance and Review Committee it also proposes a subject area that could be considered for review. Finally the paper reviews those items that have been approved by the Authority or the Policy & Strategy Committee in the last few years where either progress or closing reports are required.

The sections below consider the various categories of items that should come forward and reviews the proposals for 2016/17.

STATUTORY ITEMS REQUIRING APPROVAL

This group includes matters that are required by law to be agreed by the Authority on an annual basis. These are matters such as the Statement of Assurance, the Budget, the Annual Accounts and Governance Statement, Capital Financing & Treasury Management indicators, the Pay Policy Statement, and Charges. There are also some information items associated with some of these areas, such as the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.

There are also items that require Authority approval, but not on an annual basis, including matters such as the Integrated Risk Management Plan, Members Allowances and Principal Officer Pay.

ASSURANCE

There are a range of regular reports covering Performance, Budget Review, Capital Financing & Treasury Management, Internal Audit, Governance, Trades Union Facilities, Partnerships, Risk Register, EFA (Trading), and the Workforce Report that support Members in their oversight of the governance of the Authority. These reports are designed to provide assurance to Members and the opportunity for scrutiny of the discharge of statutory duties. For 2016/17 an additional report on the exercise of delegated decisions will be included.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

For this area some amendment and clarification of the items requiring approval are proposed. The Overall Corporate strategy is a matter for the full Authority, the current strategy was approved in December 2014. Beneath this there are a number of lower level strategies that will be brought to the Policy & Strategy Committee either on an annual basis, or when changes are required. These are:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- Community Safety Strategy; and
- Response Strategy.

Reviews of the detailed activities in support of these strategies are considered as part of the annual work-plan agreed by the Authority for the Audit, Governance and Review Committee.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

The final group of papers are those where the specific approval of the Authority or the Policy & Strategy Committee is required for a project, planned activity or change. This includes the initiation of high value projects this includes those with a costs greater than £300k for ICT projects, and greater than £1m for all other projects. It also includes major decisions around fire cover, crewing systems etc. The exact nature of these and the timing of decisions means that these items cannot easily be set down in a forward plan.

After all such decisions there will be a competitive procurement process for any planned third party expenditure before contracts are agreed. Variations in the planned expenditure compared to that authorised are brought back for approval.

In addition, there is a secondary area where a report back at the conclusion of a project is required. The third stage that may apply to some decisions is a follow up review of the decisions, the benefits realisation or the impact of the change. These third stage reviews will be considered by the Audit, Governance and Review Committee and agreed as part of their work plan on an annual basis.

The current on-going projects or decision items where either a progress or closure report has been included in the work plan are:

Fire Authority

- Fire Control (Closure Report); and

- Essex Strategic Flood and Water Management Alliance (Annual Report).

Policy & Strategy Committee

- Insurance Pooling (Progress Report); and
- New Service Workshops (Progress Report).

AUDIT, GOVERNANCE & REVIEW COMMITTEE WORKPLAN FOR 2016/17

In addition to the items listed above, matters to be reviewed by the Audit, Governance and Review Committee need to be included in the work plan or referred to it by the full Authority or the Policy & Strategy Committee. For 2016/17 it is proposed that this Committee continues to receive progress reports on the 2020 Programme to provide a more detailed level of scrutiny and review on behalf of the Authority.

FINANCIAL AND USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

The work plan proposed attempts to balance the requirements for transparency, accountability, oversight and governance with the resources required to prepare and review reports and data.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

By bringing forward a planned programme of work provision is made for the incorporation of the resource requirements into departmental and officer work plans. This mitigates against the risk that timely reviews will not be carried out.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct equalities implications from the proposed work plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with the content of this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper:	
Appendix 1 – Essex Fire Authority 2016/17 Work plan	
List of background documents (not attached):	
Proper Officer:	The Finance Director & Treasurer
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Appendix 1

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Meetings	EFA			EFA			EFA		EFA		EFA	
	P&S			P&S		P&S		P&S		P&S		
		AG&R			AG&R			AG&R			AG&R	
Statutory Items	Approve Accounts & Governance Statement			Auditor's Report on Accounts	Auditor's Report on Accounts		Statement of Assurance	Draft Budget and Council Tax Proposal	2015/16 Budget & Capital Financing & Charges		Review Governance Statement	
Statutory Items	Integrated Risk Management Plan			Approve Audited Accounts				Draft Budget Review	Pay Policy Statement			
Regular Reviews	Performance Report - Annual & Target Setting	Performance Report		Cultural Review - 6 Monthly Independent Progress Review	Performance Report		2020 Programme - 6 monthly review	Performance Report	Cultural Review - 6 Monthly Independent Progress Review		Performance Report	
Regular Reviews	Budget Review			Budget Review	Capital Finance & Treasury Management Review	Budget Review		Budget Review	Workforce Report	Budget Review	Delegations Review	
Regular Reviews	Annual Report	Budget Review			Budget Review			Budget Review	Risk Register		Budget Review	
Regular Reviews	EFA (Trading) Report	Audit Reports & Progress			Audit Reports & Progress			Audit Reports & Progress			Audit Reports & Progress Annual Plans	
Regular Reviews		Internal Audit Progress Report		Risk Register	Internal Audit Progress Report			Internal Audit Progress Report			Internal Audit Progress Report	
Strategic Issues	Corporate Strategy			Integated Risk Management Plan		Insurance Pooling Progress Report		Corporate Strategy Review				
Strategic Issues	2020 Programme Proposals	2020 Programme Review		Medium Term Financial Strategy	2020 Programme Review	New Service Workshops Progress Report		2020 Programme Review			2020 Programme Review	
Strategic Issues				Fire Control Closure Report			Essex Strategic Flood Alliance Annual Report					