

**ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**  
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



**Cultural Review Sub-Group**

<b>10:00</b>	<b>Thursday, 10 December 2015</b>	<b>ECFRS Headquarters, Kelvedon Park,</b>
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**Quorum: 2**

**Membership**

Councillor A Holland  
Councillor B Aspinell  
Councillor A Erskine  
Councillor C Guglielmi  
Councillor C Kent

**For information about the meeting please ask for:  
Judith Dignum (Committee Services Manager, Essex County Council)  
03330134579 / [judith.dignum@essex.gov.uk](mailto:judith.dignum@essex.gov.uk)**

## **Essex Fire Authority and Committees Information**

Meetings of the Authority and its committees are open to the press and public, although they can be excluded if confidential information is likely to be considered.

Meetings are held at Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Kelvedon Park, Rivenhall, Witham, CM8 3HB. A map can be found on the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's website ([www.essex-fire.gov.uk](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk)); from the Home Page, click on 'Contact Us'.

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Please report to Reception when you arrive. The meeting rooms are located on the ground and first floors of the building and are accessible by lift where required.

If you have a need for documents in an alternative format, in alternative languages or in easy read please contact the Committee Services Manager (contact details on the front page) before the meeting takes place. If you have specific access requirements please inform the Committee Services Manager before the meeting takes place.

The agenda is also available on the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service website, ([www.essex-fire.gov.uk](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk)). From the Home Page, click on 'Essex Fire Authority', then scroll down the page and select the relevant documents.

## **Part 1**

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

### **Pages**

- 1 Election of Chairman**  
To elect a Chairman of the Sub-Group for the remainder of the current municipal year.
- 2 Apologies for Absence**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**  
To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct
- 4 Membership and Terms of Reference**  
To note the membership of the Sub-Group (as shown on the front page to the agenda), together with the terms of reference as set out below:
  1. To provide the governance, oversight and scrutiny to the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.
  2. In consultation with the Finance and Director and Treasurer, to negotiate contractual terms with the core members of the external Expert Advisory Panel appointed as an outcome from the Independent Cultural Review, together with any appropriate expert advisors and logistical support.
  3. To report and make recommendations to the Principal Officers Human Resources Committee as appropriate.

### **Decision Items**

- 5 Proposed governance arrangements to be adopted for the Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's culture change programme** **7 - 28**  
To consider a report by the Acting Chief Fire Officer (EFA/109/15)

### **Information Items**

**6 Progress Report on the Cultural Review** **29 - 36**  
To receive a report by the Acting Chief Fire Officer  
(EFA/110/15)

**7 Progress Report on the Management Review**  
To receive a report by the Acting Chief Fire Officer  
(EFA/111/15) - *to follow*

**8 Independent Cultural Review Action Plan**  
To receive a report by the Acting Chief Fire Officer  
(EFA/112/15) - *to follow*

Please note that copies of the report and the Action Plan will be available at the meeting

**9 Dates of Future Meetings**  
To note that future meetings of the Sub-Group will take place at 10.00am on the following dates:

- Thursday 7 January 2016
- Wednesday 10 February 2016
- Thursday 10 March 2016
- Tuesday 5 April 2016

**10 Urgent Business**  
To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

### **Exempt Items**

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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**Urgent Exempt Business**

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.



# ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

## Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



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MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

**Cultural Review Sub-Group**

(Principal Officers Human  
Resources Committee)

**5**

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MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

10 December 2015

**EFA/109/15**

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SUBJECT

**Proposed governance arrangements to be adopted for  
Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire & Rescue Service's  
Culture Change Programme**

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REPORT BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

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PRESENTED BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

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### SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to provide Members of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee with a proposal for the governance arrangements to be adopted for the Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's culture change programme. In doing so, this paper seeks agreement for both the proposed governance model and a set of Terms of Reference for the Expert Advisory Panel which support the proposed governance arrangements.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee are asked to:

1. Consider the contents of **Appendix A** which provides a proposal from the Chairman of the Expert Advisory Panel for the governance arrangements to be adopted for the Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's culture change programme.
2. Agree to adopt the three dimensional model set out in **Appendix A** as the governance arrangements to be adopted for the Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's culture change programme.
3. Consider the contents of **Appendix B** which provides a set of Terms of Reference for the Expert Advisory Panel which supports the proposed governance arrangements.

4. Agree the Terms of Reference for the Expert Advisory Panel set out in **Appendix B** which support the proposed governance arrangements.

## **BACKGROUND**

At its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 Essex Fire Authority accepted, in full, the 35 recommendations made within the report of the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (conducted by Irene Lucas CBE). The report itself was received by the Authority on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015.

The key recommendation made within the report was that:

*'An external Expert Advisory Panel with a range of skills and backgrounds, and accountable to the FRA, should be appointed as soon as possible to provide strategic advice to the organisation for the next 24 months. The Panel will comprise senior people, experienced in addressing challenging organisations who will provide strategic advice to the FRA and senior officers on the leadership and change now needed'.*

In addition to accepting the recommendations a number of other resolutions were reached at the 7<sup>th</sup> October meeting, amongst which was that Essex Fire Authority:

4. Accepts the recommendations made by Irene Lucas for the core membership of the external Expert Advisory Panel.
5. Agrees that authority is delegated to the Principal Officer Human Resources Committee of the Essex Fire Authority to act upon the advice of the Chairman of the external Expert Advisory Panel to appoint the following:
  - Appropriate experts in their field on an ad-hoc basis as and when required.
  - Logistical support as required to support the work of the external Expert Advisory Panel.
6. Agrees to establish a small group of EFA Members drawn from the Principal Officer Human Resources Committee who will provide the governance oversight and scrutiny to the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.
8. Agrees that authority is delegated to the Principal Officer Human Resources Committee of the Essex Fire Authority to act upon the advice of the Chairman of the external Expert Advisory Panel for the discharge of executive powers to address two specific recommendations, namely:
  - Recommendation 11 – 'An external organisational development expert on the panel, with support from all trade unions and staff representatives needs to lead a review of the organisation's hierarchical structure to remove management layers, redesign roles away from rank and improve spans of control from the current 1.7 FTE per manager.
  - Recommendation 19 – 'To address the perceived inconsistency and unfairness, all disciplinary action should be overseen by a sub-group of the Expert Advisory Panel (subject to statutory constraints) over the next 24 months. Any intimidation against



individuals, and/or inappropriate use of equipment or property needs to be considered by the Expert Advisory Panel taking advice from representatives of Essex Police. The subgroup will have a specific role in ensuring elected Members are aware of matters without cutting across the existing process. This approach will take effect in respect of all new cases.

Upon reading the Lucas report what is clear is that there is not too much detail in the Report in relation to what was foreseen when making this recommendation. Therefore, in the eight weeks that have elapsed since the meeting of Essex Fire Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> October, the Acting Chief Fire Officer and members of the Strategic Management Board have met with members of the Expert Advisory Panel on numerous occasions and progressed discussions with the Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel and new members of the Expert Advisory Panel on the relationship that should exist between Essex Fire Authority, the Service Management team and the Expert Advisory Panel.

As a result of these discussions the Chairman on the Expert Advisory Panel, Steve McGuirk, CBE, has set out in **Appendix A**, a proposal for the governance arrangements to be adopted for the Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's culture change programme.

In addition, and in support of the discussions around the proposed governance model, a set of Terms of Reference have been defined for Expert Advisory Panel which have been drafted to support the existing governance arrangements for the Authority's 2020 Programme.

Members of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee are asked to consider the contents of **Appendices A and B** and then subsequently to adopt the three dimensional model set out in **Appendix A** as the governance arrangements to be adopted for the Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's culture change programme, **and** to agree the Terms of Reference for the Expert Advisory Panel set out in **Appendix B** which support the proposed governance arrangements.

## **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 Appendix A supports the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The costs over a 24 month period for the Expert Advisory Panel to support this work are estimated to total £400k. Around £100k of this is expected to fall in the current financial year.

This information has previously been presented to Members at the meeting of Essex Fire Authority held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 when it was resolved that Essex Fire Authority

9. Agrees to set aside a budget of up to £400k over the next 24 months to fund the processes required to support the implement the recommendations of the report.

This report presents the progress that has been reported by the Chairman of the Expert Advisory Panel and does not alter the financial implications already presented.

## LEGAL 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 recommendations set out in this report support 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 action plan and address the associated recommendations could result in the Service failing to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

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

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report

<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</b>	
<b>List of appendices attached to this paper:</b> Appendix A – Progress Report by the Expert Advisory Panel	
<b>List of background documents (not attached):</b> Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, EFA/081/15, EFA/082/15, EFA/096/15, EFA/097/15, EFA/098/15 and EFA/099/15.	
Proper Officer:	<b>Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley</b>
Contact Officer:	<b>Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley</b> Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: <a href="mailto:adam.eckley@essex-fire.gov.uk">adam.eckley@essex-fire.gov.uk</a>

**Proposed governance arrangements to be adopted for**  
**Expert Advisory Panel supporting Essex County Fire & Rescue Service**  
**Culture Change Programme**

**INTRODUCTION**

As a consequence of a number of factors, coming together in mid-2015, a decision was taken to invite an Independent Review of the culture of the Fire and Rescue Service in Essex. Irene Lucas CBE, a former senior civil servant and local authority CEO with extensive experience, was asked to undertake the Review and she reported her findings early in September 2015.

Her report was never going to be positive, and although she did acknowledge that everything wasn't bad and some good things were happening, the tone and content of the Report surprised many in terms of the amount and depth of concern and criticism she expressed.

It is inevitable, and a natural reaction when reading a commentary of this nature, that different stakeholders may interpret the content to be more critical of others than themselves. But any objective evaluation reveals all parties are at fault - in particular, those in leadership positions. Whether that is the professional leadership, the political leadership or, indeed, the leadership of staff (staff representatives) – everyone must accept some responsibility for the situation that Irene reported.

Subsequently, Irene made thirty five recommendations– all of which were accepted by the Fire Authority (October 2015).

However, her level of concern at the apparent absence of a concerted and congruent guiding mind, able to steer a proper course, was of such an order of magnitude that, within her recommendations, she also included the idea of appointing an **Expert Advisory Panel (EAP)** for steering the future direction and future change.

It is fair to say that there is not too much detail in the Report in relation to what was foreseen when making this recommendation. Rather, it appears as much an anxiety and underlying shortfall of confidence in the collective leadership of the Service/ Authority to go forward, based upon the findings of the Review, as it is a clearly expressed role going forward.

There are benefits to this absence of detail, as it means that there is considerable latitude to design a new model and a proposition that will not only assist Essex, but may be helpful and transferrable to other FRS', maybe other sectors. Because, for all this work has singled out Essex (not least as Essex invited and commissioned the work) there is good evidence that other Services face similar challenges around culture change (see Adrian Thomas Review, 2015).

There are also risks, though, and these are considered later in this paper.

I was approached by Irene to Chair the Panel in September 2015 and I have been undertaking that role since early October, when her recommendation and my appointment was ratified by the Fire Authority. I have been supported in this first phase by Natasha Edmunds, an OD and HR Expert, and I recently secured agreement from Elected Members to two, other Panel Members, Linda Dickens and Jim Barbour (discussed below), as well as some assistance to support the work of the Panel.

### **INITIAL ACTIVITY**

Initially, and for the last few weeks, I have been seeking to get a good understanding of the Report's findings. I have undertaken extensive desktop research and I have also sought to triangulate that with personal experience by meeting people on the ground in order to establish a baseline.

So, I have already made a number of visits to Essex and met people across the organisation and the Authority (including its statutory officers).

I have been accompanied in this by Natasha Edmunds.

I have spoken to many, key stakeholders and I have communicated via correspondence with many others, including corresponding with all staff and local MPs (who obviously have a keen interest, given the media impact of the Report when it was published). This approach to correspondence is not seen as a perfect form of communications by any means, but I felt it important to establish at least some form of early communication and establish some clarity for the personnel of the organisation who were - and to a degree still are - very unsettled.

The first few weeks of the life of the Panel have entailed significant effort in trying to "stabilise" a difficult situation, and manage the high expectations for action quickly. It has been turbulent, with both confusion and frustration for all parties (including for myself and Panel colleagues, trying to make sense of what has happened but, as well as this reflection, trying to figure out how to construct the best architecture for the future).

Many people have asked to see "quick wins" which will almost be impossible to deliver, as it has taken many years to get in to this situation and, similarly, it will take time to get out of it. But the sense of anxiety is understandable, as the publication of the Report did entail considerable "drama" - it was rightly and understandably "big news" - and there remains considerable political focus and media attention and high expectation.

Additionally, the Report itself really exposes or curates people's personal and individual experiences over many years of turbulence and industrial unrest. So, there are people who feel wounded and damaged, even bitter and angry, and this will unavoidably take time to work through. Indeed, it's likely some people will never see a change big enough or dramatic enough to satisfy their personal sense of frustration, and their personal memories of the difficulties they have faced in their careers and illustrated in the Lucas work.

And, on top of this, the situation isn't helped by the ongoing context within which consideration of the Report is taking place.

For example, the impending Comprehensive Spending Review will entail major funding cuts and massive organisational change. There is also uncertainty around governance changes (the possible shift of responsibility for Fire to Police and Crime Commissioners) and there is the backdrop of a long standing and difficult industrial relations environment in Essex that, hitherto, has struggled to manage change without resort to industrial action.

It is worth a word, here, about industrial relations in Essex, as the comments above could appear pointed.

To be clear, there is no intention to blame one side or another for the legacy of industrial unrest - but neither should we shirk from stating the obvious that Essex has been different to the vast majority of other fire and rescue services (not to mention the wider public sector). There is little that is obvious and that would easily explain this difference. So, the reality is that this now needs to be addressed, because more and bigger change is coming, and both the Essex community and the staff of the Service deserve much better than confrontational industrial relations. And there is no doubt that these key relationships both shape and are shaped by the organisational culture; so are very much embraced by the Review.

The final thing to say, by way of introduction, is that whilst the role of the Panel was seen as needing to transcend an extended period - 24 months are mentioned in the Report – it was always seen to be “part time”. It could never replace or circumvent the political or professional management and administration of the organisation, nor should it.

**For the avoidance of doubt, the solution, here, must be developed by and from within the Organisation - it cannot be “done to it”.**

However, if it were that easy, it would have been done before or already – hence Irene's recommendation for ongoing help and support; but also to put something of an “edge” or inject a sense of pace and momentum to taking things forward.

And so, in these first few weeks (in amongst trying to establish good knowledge and relationships) I have genuinely taken care to state this reality in different ways and in a number of settings. This is not just to build positive momentum, manage expectations and inject a sense of realism; but it is also to allay the understandable fears and concerns of Officers and Members about where the mandate for the Panel comes from, and where to draw the boundaries.

In accepting the Report's recommendations in full the Authority has made a major financial and political investment and given huge latitude and privilege to the Expert Advisory Panel. Great care must be taken not to abuse that latitude. I have tried to mitigate the negative possibility already by spelling out a number of roles for the Panel and also by laying out in Fire Authority papers what the Panel cannot and should not do. As much as anything, though, this has been a “first pass”.

Because, now, the “honeymoon” period is over. And, as people start to grapple and come to terms with action planning to deliver the Independent Review recommendations, as well as grapple with the wider organisation change agenda required of all FRS’, they want greater certainty about the role of the Panel.

They also want to know how, in practical terms, they will be expected to manage the workload and requirements of the Panel and what accountabilities there will be going forward - where does management start and finish and where does political leadership start and finish?

Before explaining more about how a sustainable model and structure that enables this clarity may be achieved, it’s felt that there is value in mapping out a number of the risks associated with the unfolding situation.

If it achieves nothing else - hopefully it will achieve much more - the proposed model (described below) should at least minimise and manage these risks - and secure value for money for the Essex tax payer who, after all, is committing hundreds of thousands of pounds to supporting this work.

## **RISKS**

As discussed in the introduction, there are a number of benefits arising from the opportunity to shape the role of the Expert Advisory Panel and the blank sheet of paper, but there are also a number of risks and these should be considered and dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

The points below are not intended to represent a complete risk register, or to indicate that a scientific, quantitative matrix has been established to develop these risks. Rather, they are qualitative, headline risks that - if they are appropriate - should immediately be recognisable as relevant and valid and “feel right” to any informed observer:

- ***There is a risk of ambiguity around the legal mandate to act and who holds the legal authority to take decisions (against the requirements of the FRS Act, the National Framework and the Civil Contingencies Act, as well as a plethora of other, relevant legislation)?***
- ***There is a risk of ambiguity in terms of whose role it is to set the strategy of the Service and develop the policies of the Fire Authority. In other words, from where does the Authority - legally - take its professional advice (given there are already a number of statutory officers).***
- ***There is a risk of the actions arising from the Culture Review being seen as pre-eminent and treated in isolation - at the expense of the programme of work already in train in support of Programme 2020.***
- ***Consequently, there is a risk of delay in delivering key actions necessary to provide for setting a legal, balanced budget.***
- ***Conversely, there is also a risk of just seeing the Culture Review recommendations in isolation, and subsequently failing to weave culture change as a thread through the wider change programme that must now move forward.***

- ***There is a risk of seeing all the recommendations in the Report as being permanent or embedded, without some form of Independent and Assured process to modify any recommendations in light of a changing world. It needs to be recognised that rarely is every recommendation from a report of this nature implemented without any modification or adaptation. It is vital, though, that any changes made are governed and overseen independently, so the thrust and body of the original report and recommendations is not lost.***
- ***There is a risk of both external and internal stakeholders enlisting the support of the Panel - potentially “hijacking” the approach - in order to pursue single issues or special or vested interests – either unintentionally or, on occasions, intentionally.***
- ***There is a risk of past culture re-establishing itself, and “this” culture change programme running out of energy and pace - and so there is a need for continued, external independent challenge and scrutiny.***
- ***There is a risk of the Expert Advisory Panel overstepping the latitude they have been given by the adoption of the Culture Review recommendations in totality and straying in to executive decision making.***
- ***Following on from this, and conversely, there is a risk of the Panel being utilised too heavily creating both an unmanageable workload, but also shifting perspective and introducing the risk of too much micromanagement by the Panel.***

## **PROPOSED MODEL**

In light of the foregoing consideration of the creation of:

- *The Expert Advisory Panel...*
- *The experience of the needs of the organisation arising from Panel engagement over the last few weeks...and a*
- *Consideration of some of the risks that need to be managed...*

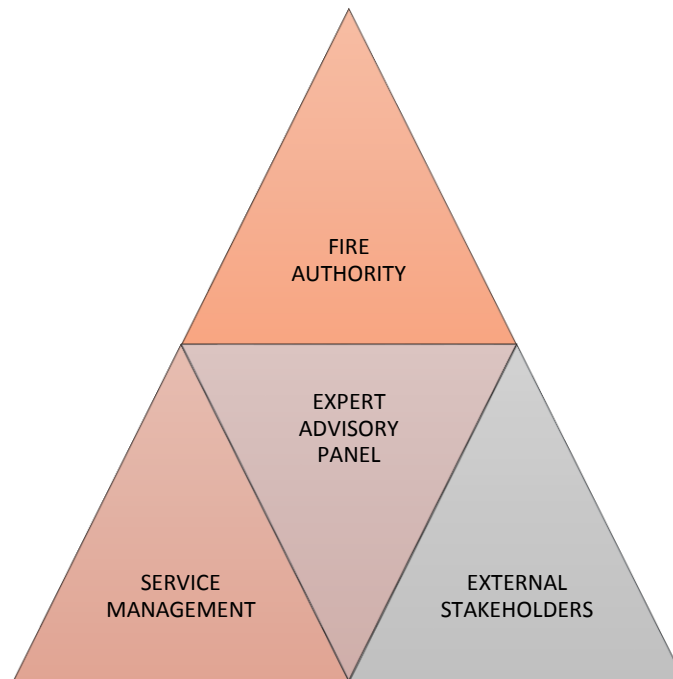
I have set out below a model that I believe offers a sustainable way forward.

I also consider that the suggested approach mitigates or manages many of the risks identified in the previous comments.

## **THE APPROACH**

In setting out a proposal in this way, I have tried constructing the idea of a transferable solution - a sustainable structure – but I have also sought to retain the flexibility a “clean sheet of paper” provides.

The recommended approach has three dimensions - placing the Panel in a central role as illustrated in the diagram below:



The three dimensions that underpin this are that:

- ***The Expert Advisory Panel's role should be to provide governance and reassurance around the necessary challenge and scrutiny that is required to delivery of the Independent Review Action Plan. (This will be complimentary to, but not instead of, the role of the Authority and the PO HR Culture Sub Committee which has delegated authority (though on occasions this aspect of the Panel's role may also require challenge to Elected Members).***
- ***The Expert Advisory Panel's role should be to provide expertise and guidance where appropriate (hence the selection of specialist advisers with specific knowledge required to support Essex' transformation journey).***
- ***The Expert Advisory Panel's role should be to coach and mentor - and support the professional development of key Officers (and also where appropriate Elected Members) to ensure they not only have the necessary skills to deliver the change, but also the necessary resilience and emotional intelligence.***



Each of these roles is discussed and examined more fully below.



## **EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL IN CHALLENGE & SCRUTINY MODE**

In thinking about the original concept of the Panel and, at its essence, the “challenge” role that was envisaged I have struggled to move beyond the idea or concept of a Non-Executive Director (NED) model, now firmly embedded in other sectors.

NEDs play a crucial role in bringing an independent perspective to any boardroom, in addition to any specific knowledge and skills they may have. They provide general counsel and a different perspective on matters of concern. For ease of comparison, though, I think the best comparators may be found within the Health Sector, where NEDs apply similar standards of care, skill and diligence in their role as they would in similar roles elsewhere, but typically at “Trust Board” level (whether that is a Foundation Trust or NHS Trust)<sup>1</sup>.

In these settings, Non-Executive Directors have a particular duty to challenge the Executive (seen as crucial in the aftermath of the Mid-Staffs crisis), and they hold the Executives to account for the performance of the trust. Though, significantly, they are not employees of the Trust, they are appointees, there to provide an unbiased challenge.

Non-Executives, in fact, form the voting majority on the board in most Trusts, so they cannot be over ruled, and this is probably the area where a pure application of the concept is not appropriate.

In Essex, the Fire Authority remains the governing authority and senior managers remain responsible for the management of the Service, a point that has been emphasised already and will be returned to later.

Nevertheless, I think the model remains helpful as a construct to think about how the role of the Expert Advisory Panel can be appropriately defined.

NEDs are expected to focus on board matters and not stray into executive direction, and provide an autonomous view that is removed from day-to-day running.

So, the attributes NEDs should bring encompass the following:

- ***Independence;***
- ***Impartiality;***
- ***Wide Experience;***
- ***Special Knowledge;***
- ***Personal Qualities***

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<sup>1</sup> I should point out and declare at this juncture that one of my roles external to the Expert Panel role in Essex is that of Chairman of a Hospital Foundation Trust and so have some experience of this model.

And the key responsibilities of NEDs would typically include the following:

- ***Constructively challenge the proposed decisions of the Board of Directors (Executive Board) and ensure that appropriate challenge is made in all circumstances to help shape the strategic direction as an ‘outsider/insider’. The typical NED role in strategy formation provides a creative and informed contribution and acts as a constructive critic in looking at the objectives and plans devised by the Chief Executive and their executive team.***
- ***Provide a clearer or wider view of external factors affecting the organisation and its environment than is possible for the Executive Directors - often consumed with operational management.***
- ***Scrutinise the performance of the Executive Management in meeting agreed goals and objectives and delivering against key programmes and priorities (in this case the Independent Review Action Plan);***
- ***Satisfy themselves as to the integrity of financial, operational and other information (the emphasis here being on the integrity of the information - not the information per se);***
- ***Satisfy themselves that financial controls and systems of risk management and governance are sound and that they are being used across the organisation;***
- ***Help to develop proposals on values and standards;***
- ***Exemplify the aspired culture.***

As has been mentioned already, there are a number of aspects of the situation in Essex that impair a straight comparison, or a straight lift of a NED model used in other parts of the public sector. And straight lift is not being suggested.

The Fire Authority retains all its duties and functions, as does the management of the Service, and there are clear boundaries and rules of engagement prescribed and proscribed.

Further, the risk of confusion and ambiguity has also already been identified and nothing done by the Panel should exacerbate that risk.

So, for example in this respect, the need for the Panel to satisfy itself around financial controls and risk management in Essex is superfluous. The Authority already governs this aspect well through external and internal auditors and its Audit, Governance and Review Committee. So this feature is not seen as suitable for consideration here in Essex.

Nevertheless, it remains obvious from the above that the roles fulfilled in general by NEDs are exactly the roles required here and seen as necessary in the Lucas Report.

Furthermore, approaching the Panel’s role in a “*NED-like*” way makes it easy for others to comprehend and evaluate the value added (and for some public reassurance to be provided through the role of Sir Ken Knight).

It also makes the practical management and administration of workloads sustainable. In particular, it enables a regularisation of a meeting structure between the Panel and the Senior Management Team as well as key, Elected Members (and a transparent process to support that), as well as being capable of being synchronised with meetings of the PO HR Committee Culture Sub Group and full Fire Authority. (Monthly meetings are suggested to offer the right frequency and timing - with other work fitted around this. See comments on 2020 Programme Board shortly).

More work needs to be done to agree the process and precise format of the meetings themselves - assuming there is broad agreement to laying out the Panel role in this way - but it is foreseen that the meetings would be focused on:

- ***Progress chasing the Lucas action plan work. (Excellent work is taking place to construct a comprehensive Action Plan against the Lucas recommendations. Once complete, this plan will form the basis for progress but will be reported against in a number of settings, so it would be of great value to set regular, quality time aside for this to be really tested, scrutinised and challenged from an expert and impartial perspective. To extend the health sector comparison, CQC and Monitor would oversee action planning of turnaround programmes in this way. (If Fire still had a Sector Regulator this is really what they would expect to see happen).***
- ***Testing and challenging how other key programmes and strategies (that don't directly sit within the Lucas report) support culture change - both that they exist and that they are fit for purpose. (Again, see also the comments below on 2020 Programme Board).***
- ***Challenging wider strategy and activity (including performance metrics) to ensure the Service is embedding broader culture change (as well as delivering operational requirements in a tough financial climate).***
- ***Providing feedback (and subsequent action) from any groups/ activities under the custodianship of a Panel Member - for example staff engagement groups - and also encompass any "whistle-blowing" issues or staff feedback/ confidential communications channels issues.***
- ***Ensuring openness, transparency and inclusivity/ engagement in the management approach of the organisation. (In future regular meetings can be opened up to staff to attend and also "web enabled" to provide time and opportunity for people to ask questions as part of the wider staff engagement work).***

## **2020 PROGRAMME BOARD**

It has been identified already that one of the risks of the work of this Panel could be to divert important resources, thinking and energy away from the core agenda of change necessary to address the many and significant challenges being faced beyond the Cultural Review.

This work is already taking place through the Authority's 2020 Programme and has already established a good outline and a good framework for the development of a new organisational strategy, including an inclusive Programme Board to which all the key stakeholders are invited.

In addition, the Service and Authority are assembling a comprehensive employee engagement strategy – "**Make Some Noise**" - to support the progress of this 2020 work.

It would therefore make no sense at all, and indeed would be counterproductive - to have a separate and parallel programme management approach for the action plan of the Cultural Review.

In addition just to the practicalities and managerial arrangements involved, it should also be identified that changing culture is not something that can be drawn out as something separate and distinct from the day to day activity of an organisation. On the contrary, it is changing the whole organisation in a myriad of ways that will lead to culture change - not the other way round.

So "the way" change is thought about and implemented going forward, is as central to culture change as any specific recommendations in the Independent Review Report.

It is therefore proposed that the work and approach of the Expert Advisory Panel is conflated with the work of the 2020 Programme (and Programme Board).

In making this proposal I should inject a note of caution and highlight the risk of being criticised for side-lining the significance of the Culture Review and the risk of the "bigger agenda" overwhelming the Lucas Recommendations.

On the other hand, I believe this approach to consolidating the work here has a number of benefits - and that these outweigh the risks. I also believe, though, that the maturity of the relationships already established with the Authority and Senior Managers and the flexibility shown suggest to me we can adapt the existing arrangements to ensure the EAP can fulfil its Challenge and Scrutiny role in a way that adds real value to the whole organisation.

It would also assist greater definition behind the role of Jim Owen, in supporting the work of Panel members "between meetings", as well as the role of the Member Services Officer being brought in/ seconded to support the PO HR Committee Culture Sub Group. In effect, Jim and this Officer form a small Secretariat/Programme Office on behalf of the Panel and the Authority/Sub Committee – but working with and complimentary to, the 2020 Programme Management arrangements, enabling a congruent approach to planning, delivery and performance management that would be robust and sustainable.

I think the final thing to say about the benefits of the proposed approach is to recognise that whilst the Culture Review was comprehensive and searching – and the recommendations equally comprehensive - it will take time to implement. During this extended period it should also be recognised that the Service will need to go through further change, the like of which has not really been seen before. This

includes the potential for major political governance change (there is a published consultation paper, mentioned already about shifting responsibility for fire and rescue to Police and Crime Commissioners).

It is possible - even likely - therefore that some of the report recommendations may need to be modified.

However, it's important that, in the event this happens, the modifications are made with the goal of retaining the spirit and intent of the original work and not watering down or diluting that intent; so any change must be governed and managed in an open and transparent way.

It is considered that the proposal here achieves that.

### **EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL IN ADVISER MODE**

In asking me to Chair the Panel, Irene Lucas was clear that, as well as an overseeing and Challenge and Scrutiny role, there were also a number of areas where straightforward advice was required - and the Members of the Panel should be able to provide that advice in a "consultancy" role.

I bring a track record of thirty nine years as a Firefighter and Fire Officer - sixteen of those as a Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive - Natasha Edmunds brings extensive experience around HR/OD and change and two additional Panel members have been proposed to bring extensive experience around Employee/Industrial Relations and staff engagement.

Hopefully this experience of what works and what doesn't can assist the Service in accelerating its change and transformation journey avoiding the pitfalls of others.

In the event that further expertise is required, or suggested, this will be managed through the PO HR Committee Culture Sub Group and/or Essex Fire Authority as appropriate.

In this mode there will be also be pieces of work (though quite small in number) that the Panel will undertake either individually or collectively, and in line with the recommendations of the Lucas Report (for example the Management Review, oversee staff engagement, review industrial relations frameworks, etc). These will have clear timescales, outcomes and outputs in the form of reports or papers taken through the respective governance arrangements. In the main, this work will go through the meeting structure proposed - but on occasions it may go straight to the Fire Authority.

### **EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL AS COACHES AND MENTORS**

As has already been mentioned, the Culture Review report exposes a culture and a narrative that has shocked and surprised almost everyone who has read the report - and will require major and sustained effort to improve. In many respects - whilst everyone is swept up in the criticism, the way forward is contingent upon clear and effective leadership. This can only come from the Authority and the Service in Essex

– not the Panel. But the difficulty and challenge should not be underestimated - and its impact on the senior leaders and elected members should equally not be underestimated.

Success will require not just the hard mechanics of change - programmes, strategies and action plans - but will also require “softer” (though nonetheless important) dimensions of personal resilience, courage in the face of adversity and emotional intelligence/intuition). These are areas for which there is some “training” but the support here is largely an approach around coaching and mentoring, leaning heavily on the experience and learning of people “who have done it”.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This paper has sought to consider some of the thinking that lay behind the creation of the Expert Advisory Panel brought about to support the Culture Change agenda of Essex Fire and Rescue Service - initiated by the Independent Culture Review of Irene Lucas.

It has sought to identify some of the risks associated with the current - somewhat “loose” - set of parameters and proposed a three dimensional model to address not just the anxieties and concerns for clarity and governance, but also to provide for a sustainable and transferable proposition.

Furthermore, it has sought to propose a transparent and accountable approach that will help evaluate the value added by the work of the Panel but, importantly, justify costs in future. And, finally, it has proposed a way to ensure that “core Service change” and “culture change” are acknowledged as mutually reinforcing and dependent on each other; but need planning, “hard actions” and performance management (with challenge) to deliver the real change on the ground.

It is recommended, therefore, that the paper is considered and the three dimensional model developed with clear working principles and with explicit and agreed terms of reference (approved by the Authority) in support.

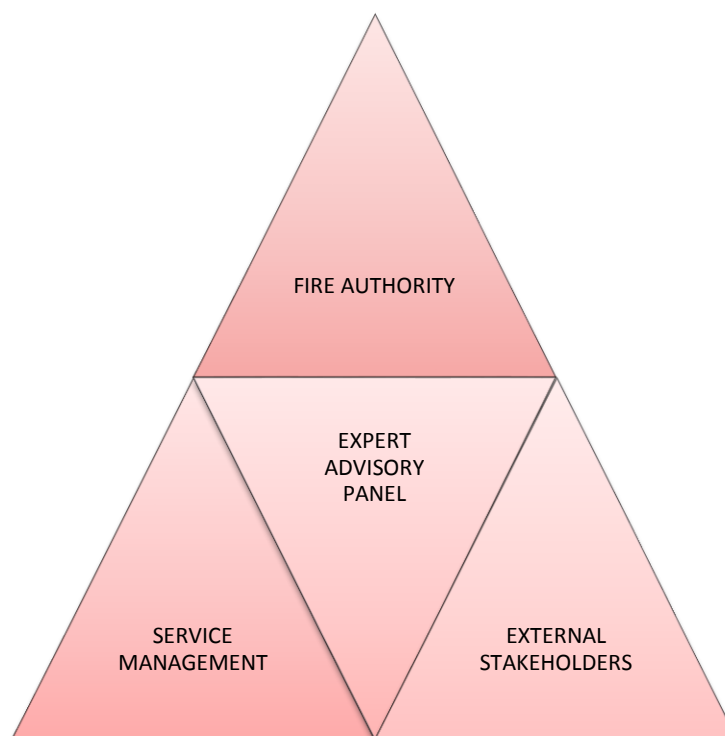
**STEVE MCGUIRK CBE, DL**

**CHAIR – EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL**

## Expert Advisory Panel - Terms of Reference

### Purpose of the Expert Advisory Panel

There are three principal roles of the Expert Advisory Panel which places it in a central relationship between the Fire Authority, Service Managers and a range of external stakeholders, as illustrated in the diagram below:



The three dimensions that underpin this central relationship are that:

- The Expert Advisory Panel's role should be to provide governance and reassurance around the necessary challenge and scrutiny that is required to delivery of the Independent Review Action Plan. (This will be complimentary to, but not instead of, the role of the Authority and the PO HR Culture Sub Committee which has delegated authority (though on occasions this aspect of the Panel's role may also require challenge to Elected Members).
- The Expert Advisory Panel's role should be to provide expertise and guidance where appropriate (hence the selection of specialist advisers with specific knowledge required to support Essex' transformation journey).

- The Expert Advisory Panel's role should be to coach and mentor - and support the professional development of key Officers (and also where appropriate Elected Members) to ensure they not only have the necessary skills to deliver the change, but also the necessary resilience and emotional intelligence.



### 2020 Programme Board Vision Statement

It is recognised that the present structure of the Fire Service in Essex does not provide the optimum balance of resources across the Prevention, Protection and Response capabilities and activities. In addition the Fire Authority faces significant cultural (as reported through the Independent Cultural Review in September 2015) and financial challenges that will need to be addressed over the period to 2020 and beyond.

The vision of the 2020 Programme Board is to **'Lead the Way to a Safer Essex'** by developing a Service Strategy and Change Programme for the Essex Fire Authority for the period from 2016 that is:

- *Service led*
- *Community focused*
- *Values driven*
- *Financially sustainable*

The 'values driven' priority for the Service strategy allows specifically for the delivery of those activities that are necessary to bring about the required culture change for the Service envisioned by the Independent Review of Culture undertaken by Irene Lucas CBE.



### **Terms of Reference of the Expert Advisory Panel**

The terms of reference of the Expert Advisory Panel are to provide governance and reassurance around the necessary challenge and scrutiny that is required to delivery of the Independent Review Action Plan, to provide expertise and guidance where appropriate and to coach, mentor and support the professional development of key Officers (and Members where appropriate).

The Expert Advisory Panel will assist ECFRS and Essex Fire Authority to access, interpret and understand information and evidence upon which cultural transformation and organisational redesign can be based.

The Expert Advisory Panel will also make judgements regarding the relevance, potential and application of information and evidence. In particular it will:

1. Assess, scrutinize and challenge the development of the Authority's Independent Review Action Plan and assess its relevance in support of the Service Strategy 2016 to 2020.
2. Assess, scrutinize and challenge the delivery of the Authority's Independent Review Action Plan.
3. Assess, scrutinize and challenge the process for stakeholder engagement and consultation.
4. Assess, scrutinize and challenge the process for developing options for change that support organisational redesign ensuring that they support and guide the development of the required culture change for the Service.
5. Assess, scrutinize and challenge the change management capability being built throughout the Service to support the delivery of future change ensuring that it supports and guides the development of the required culture change for the Service.
6. To provide oversight and scrutiny to current disciplinary action to eliminate the perception of inconsistency or unfairness.
7. To provide oversight and scrutiny to allow a clearing house for dealing with un necessary number of vexatious and low grade grievances that are submitted.
8. To provide an independent route for whistle blowing and/or the escalation of incidents of this nature where the individual concerned may be uncomfortable with using existing arrangements.
9. Advise the Fire Authority on the quality, appropriateness, limitations and deliverability of the Independent Review Action Plan, the draft Service Strategy and the options for

change presented during public and stakeholder consultation, specifically as they relate to the potential to support and guide the development of the required culture change for the Service.

10. Prepare decision papers and presentations to support the Fire Authority.
11. Ensure that the Independent Review Action Plan is delivered in line with the directions and expectations of the Essex Fire Authority, taking account of the findings and recommendations of the Independent Cultural Review.

### **Formal meetings of the Expert Advisory Panel**

Formal meetings of the Expert Advisory Panel will be held monthly on the third Tuesday of every month (January to April 2016) and then on the third Friday of every month (May 2016 onwards).

A meeting definition and agenda has been prepared which defines the purpose of the meeting in line with the Terms of Reference set out above. The chairman of Expert Advisory Panel, Steve McGuirk, will act as Chairperson for all formal meetings of the EAP as defined within the meeting definition and agenda below.

The following Officers, EFA Members and Expert Advisory Panel members will be invited to each formal meeting of the Expert Advisory Panel.

### **Expert Advisory Panel**

- Steve McGuirk - Chair of Expert Advisory Panel
- Natasha Edmunds
- Linda Dickens
- Jim Barbour
- Sir Ken Knight (As and when required for formal reviews)
- Jim Owen Project Officer and Logistics: to EAP
- Member Services Seconded for EAP

### **Programme 2020 - Board Members**

- Chair of the Fire Authority – Cllr Hedley
- Vice Chair of the Fire Authority – Cllr Holland
- Spokesperson, Labour Group – Cllr Kent
- Spokesperson, Liberal Democrat Group – Cllr Aspinell
- Spokesperson, UKIP Group – Cllr Erskine

- Senior Responsible Owner - A/CFO Adam Eckley
- Director of Finance and Treasurer - Mike Clayton
- Director of Safer and Resilient Communities - ACFO Paul Hill
- Director of Operations - ACFO Dave Bill
- Director of HR & OD - Lindsey Stafford-Scott
- Interim Corporate Communications Manager - Andy Allsop
- Programme Manager - Ben Pilkington
- Service Change Manager - Paul Bowers

**Expert Advisory Panel – Meeting Definition and Agenda**

<b>Frequency</b>	Monthly on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month (until April 2016) Monthly on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of the Month (from May 2016)
<b>Time &amp; location</b>	11:00hrs at Kelvedon Park (until April 2016) 11:30hrs at Kelvedon Park (from May 2016)
<b>Duration</b>	90 mins
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>There are three principal roles of the Expert Advisory Panel which places it in a central relationship between the Fire Authority, Service Managers and a range of external stakeholders. The Expert Advisory Panel’s role is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide governance and reassurance around the necessary challenge and scrutiny that is required to delivery of the Independent Review Action Plan.</li> <li>• Provide expertise and guidance where appropriate.</li> <li>• Coach, mentor and support the professional development of key Officers (and Members where appropriate)</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Time for Papers</b>	24 hours

<b>Standing Agenda</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apologies</li> <li>2. Minutes</li> <li>3. Actions</li> <li>4. Independent Review Action Plan - Progress Report</li> <li>5. Items For Decision</li> <li>6. Communication &amp; Engagement</li> <li>7. Risk Register</li> <li>8. Issues Register</li> <li>9. Any Other Business</li> </ol>
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**Approved** .....

**Date** .....

# ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

## Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



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MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

**Cultural Review Sub-Group**

Principal Officers' Human  
Resources Committee

**6**

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MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

10 December 2015

**EFA/110/15**

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SUBJECT

**Progress report on the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.**

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REPORT BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

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PRESENTED BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

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### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of the report is to provide Members of the Sub-Group with a progress report on the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS. This supports the resolutions reached by Essex Fire Authority at its meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the Cultural Review Sub-Group are asked to note the contents of this report and the progress report provided by the Chairman of the Expert Advisory Panel attached as Appendix A.

### **BACKGROUND**

At its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 Essex Fire Authority accepted, in full, the 35 recommendations made within the report of the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (conducted by Irene Lucas CBE). The report itself was received by the Authority on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015.

In addition to accepting the recommendations a number of other resolutions were reached at the 7<sup>th</sup> October meeting, amongst which was that Essex Fire Authority:

3. Instructs the Acting Chief Fire Officer to report progress to every meeting of Essex Fire Authority for a minimum of 24 months.

In the eight weeks that have elapsed since the meeting of Essex Fire Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> October, the Acting Chief Fire Officer and members of the Strategic Management Board have met with members of the Expert Advisory Panel on numerous occasions and through a continuous dialogue have:

- Progressed discussions with Natasha Edmunds, the HR & OD Advisor to the Expert Advisory Panel on the Management Review.
- Progressed discussions with the Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel and new members of the Expert Advisory Panel on the relationship that should exist between Essex Fire Authority, the Service Management team and the Expert Advisory Panel. This matter will be considered elsewhere on today's meeting agenda for the PO HR Committee.
- Revised further the detail of the Independent Review Action Plan with members of the Expert Advisory Panel. This, too, will be considered on today's meeting agenda for the PO HR Committee.

In addition to the information set out above, a progress report, prepared by the Chairman of the Expert Advisory Panel, Steve McGuirk CBE, is attached as Appendix A for the consideration of Members of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee.

### **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 Appendix A supports the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The costs over a 24 month period for the Expert Advisory Panel to support this work are estimated to total £400k. Around £100k of this is expected to fall in the current financial year.

This information has previously been presented to Members at the meeting of Essex Fire Authority held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 when it was resolved that Essex Fire Authority

9. Agrees to set aside a budget of up to £400k over the next 24 months to fund the processes required to support the implement the recommendations of the report.

This report presents the progress that has been reported by the Chairman of the Expert Advisory Panel and does not alter the financial implications already presented.

## LEGAL 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 recommendations set out in this report support 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 action plan and address the associated recommendations could result in the Service failing to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

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

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report

<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</b>	
<b>List of appendices attached to this paper:</b> Appendix A – Progress Report by the Expert Advisory Panel	
<b>List of background documents (not attached):</b> Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, EFA/081/15, EFA/082/15, EFA/096/15, EFA/097/15, EFA/098/15 and EFA/099/15.	
Proper Officer:	<b>Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley</b>
Contact Officer:	<b>Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley</b> Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: <a href="mailto:adam.eckley@essex-fire.gov.uk">adam.eckley@essex-fire.gov.uk</a>





**PROGRESS REPORT 2 – EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL**

This is the second progress report of the Expert Advisory Panel appointed to support the change process arising from the Independent Cultural Review (Sept 2015) and reflects the “look forward” of the first report.

An informal briefing was held on 1<sup>st</sup> December which provided the opportunity for Members of the Fire Authority to meet me and receive a presentation on the work of the Panel to date. This report, therefore, builds on that briefing to ensure matters that should be in the public domain are made available.

As before, activities and/or actions are presented in a bullet point format.

**KEY ACTIVITIES:**

- The Panel has now been established for two months - though it has consisted of just two members for most of this period.
- At the last PO HR Committee two additional members of the Panel were agreed - people with a strong industrial relations background and expertise – and the appointment of these individuals has been reported to the full Fire Authority on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.
- The Expert Advisory Panel met for the first time as a complete group on 27<sup>th</sup> November and, on the same day, met members of the Service Management team as well as members of the PO HR Committee.
- Support for the Panel and PO HR Committee has also been agreed.
- An initial - and comprehensive - action plan has been drafted, as directed by the Fire Authority in accepting the Review recommendations, and this has been considered in detail at a joint workshop between myself and members of the Strategic Management team.
- That version will now be circulated to the wider EAP before coming to the Authority Workshop later this month, and then on to a full Fire Authority meeting for ratification and, ultimately, publication as the Authority’s response to the Independent Review of Culture.
- Background work on the role, governance and reassurance approach of the EAP has also been developed and agreed in outline, and this is on today’s agenda for the PO HR Committee for final agreement and endorsement.

- The diagram below illustrates the proposal which - in simple terms - encompasses members of the Panel attending the Authority's 2020 Programme Board. But then, the same group sitting in External Advisory Panel mode to ensure the necessary drive and progress for the specific Independent Review work and its associated action plan.



- In this way the Panel gets to contribute to the whole of the Service and the Authority's agenda, but without cutting across political or professional management. But, at the same time, provide the necessary focus on culture change.
- The 2020 Programme Board has already established monthly meetings and the Panel will fold its work into this approach (on the basis that it is agreed by the PO HR Committee).
- It is also intended that there will be bi-monthly, informal meetings between the EAP and the PO HR Committee Culture sub-group on the same day. The purpose of these is not to cut across proper governance which will continue. Rather, it is to provide a vehicle for free flowing and open discussion on progress and discuss any issues arising with a view to anticipating and avoiding any potential problems in a proactive way.
- A discipline, grievance and whistle blowing "subgroup" of the EAP has also now been established in accordance with the Lucas Report recommendations.
- The first phase of its activity will involve working with staff representatives to clear outstanding issues and to create a new baseline from which to progress a better approach.
- Time has been set aside for this in December and it is hoped to have this complete by Christmas (though dependent upon the volume it may just tip over in the New Year).

- The ongoing approach to regular oversight of these dimensions of culture, foreseen in this facet of the Lucas Report, has also been agreed (see comments on governance).
- So this sub group of the EAP will also meet monthly (following the 2020 Programme Board and EAP meetings) and it should be stressed that this is an oversight group, and does not affect any statutory or Service management arrangements.
- The first phase of the Management Review should be complete in outline approach - and shared for early consideration of Members - also by Christmas.
- As before, I should identify that there is wide recognition and acknowledgement that the conclusion of the Management Review is likely to result in a flatter structure and so, understandably, Officers have some nervousness about this. It's important therefore to get agreement and certainty as soon as possible and equally to agree and then enact any changes that arise from the Review.

## **CONCLUSION**

For the vast majority of the organisation, it may not be readily apparent that a lot of background work has been proceeding in recent weeks, but it is nevertheless important to get the right structures and arrangements in place that will enable more rapid progress after Christmas. Even then, because culture change is intangible in the short term, there may still be a sense of frustration for some time yet.

Nevertheless I feel a lot happier that those proper governance and sustainable management arrangements are now being put into place.

Notwithstanding the continued potential for frustration and long term change, there is other work that will feel very impactful and is about to emerge in the short term – the Management Review, the Discipline/ Grievance work etc. – and there has been a lot of good work done around the Independent Review Action Plan and the key activities necessary to make progress.

There has also been a lot of work done to establish a meaningful reassurance framework as well as a realistic exit strategy for the Expert Advisory Panel, and these are laid out for agreement on this agenda.

Could I take the opportunity to thank Officers and Members who have been very supportive and very engaged in working with the EAP on this important programme of change?

**STEVE McGUIRK CBE, DL**

**CHAIR, INDEPENDENT EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL**

