

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



Meeting of Essex Fire Authority

10:00	Wednesday, 02 December 2015	Service Headquarters, Kelvedon Park,
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Quorum: At least one third of the total membership (9), to include a representative from each of the three constituent Councils

Membership

Councillor Barry Aspinell
Councillor Alan Bayley
Councillor Graham Butland
Councillor Jenny Chandler
Councillor Mark Coxshall
Councillor Michael Danvers
Councillor Andrew Erskine
Councillor Carlo Guglielmi
Councillor Anthony Hedley
Councillor Ivan Henderson
Councillor Ann Holland
Councillor Paul Honeywood
Councillor Michael Hoy
Councillor John Jowers
Councillor Catherine Kent
Councillor John Knapman
Councillor Maggie McEwen
Councillor James Moyies
Councillor Ann Naylor
Councillor Lady Patricia Newton
Councillor Pierre Oxley
Councillor Colin Seagers
Councillor Anne Turrell
Councillor Julian Ware-Lane
Councillor Andy Wood

For information about the meeting please ask for:
Judith Dignum (Committee Services Manager, Essex County Council)
03330134579 / 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); from the Home Page, click on 'Contact Us'.

There is ramped access to the building for wheelchair users and people with mobility disabilities.

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). 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	Apologies for Absence	
2	Declarations of Interest To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct	
3	Minutes - Essex Fire Authority To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Authority's meeting held on 7 October 2015.	7 - 16
4a	Minutes - Policy and Strategy Committee: 23 September 2015 To receive the minutes of the Policy and Strategy Committee held on 23 September 2015	17 - 26
4b	Minutes - Policy and Strategy Committee: 4 November 2015 To receive the minutes of the Policy and Strategy Committee held on 4 November 2015	27 - 30
5	Minutes - Audit, Governance and Review Committee To receive the minutes of the Audit, Governance and Review Committee held on 7 October 2015	31 - 36
6	Minutes - Principal Officers Human Resources Committee To receive the public minutes of the Principal Officers Human Resources Committee held on 17 November 2015	37 - 42
7	Chairmans Announcements	43 - 44

Decision Items

8	Progress report on the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within Essex County Fire and Rescue Service To receive a report by the Acting Chief Fire Officer (EFA/099/15)	45 - 54
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9	Organisational Change To consider a report and receive a presentation by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (EFA/100/15)	55 - 68
10	Statement of Assurance 2014/15 To consider a report by the Acting Chief Fire Officer (EFA/101/15)	69 - 80
11	Rural Fair Share Campaign To consider a report by the Finance Director and Treasurer (EFA/102/15)	81 - 82

Information Items

12	Essex County Fire and Resue Service and Essex County Council Flood and Water Management Alliance To receive a report by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Safer and Resilient Communities (EFA/103/15)	83 - 88
13	Report to Constituent Authorities To receive a report by the Committee Secretary (EFA/104/15)	89 - 90
14	Date of Next Meeting To note that the next meeting of the Authority will take place on Wednesday 13 January 2016 at 10.00am. The Policy and Strategy Committee also scheduled for 13 January will meet on the rising of that meeting.	
15	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.

16 Minutes - Principal Officers Human Resources Committee (confidential)

- Information relating to any individual;
- Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the Authority or a Minister...

17 Fleet Workshops Redevelopment

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

18 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



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2015 AT 10.00AM

Present:

Chairman: Councillor A Hedley
Vice-Chairman: Councillor A Holland

Councillors:

A Bayley	C Kent
G Butland	J Knapman
J Chandler	M McEwen
M Danvers	J Moyies
A Erskine	Lady P Newton
C Guglielmi	C Seagers
I Henderson	A Turrell
P Honeywood	J Whitehouse (substitute for B Aspinell)
M Hoy	A Wood
J Jowers	

The following Officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Adam Eckley	Acting Chief Fire Officer
Dave Bill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Operations
Paul Hill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Safer and Resilient Communities
Mike Clayton	Finance Director and Treasurer
Roy Carter	Service Solicitor
Lindsey Stafford-Scott	Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Philip Thomson	Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority
Judith Dignum	Committee Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Aspinell (for whom J Whitehouse substituted), A Naylor, P Oxley and J Ware-Lane.

1. Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Enabling Closer Working Between the Emergency Services), minute 6 below refers:

- Councillor J Jowers, in that he is the Chairman of Essex Police and Crime Panel

- Councillors G Butland and A Hedley in that they are members of Essex Police and Crime Panel

2. Minutes – Essex Fire Authority

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The Authority considered report EFA/081/15 by the Acting Chief Fire Officer which provided an opportunity to respond formally to the findings and the recommendations made within the report of the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service which had been received by the Authority at its last meeting on 2 September 2015.

The report also allowed the Authority to respond formally to subsequent recommendations made by Irene Lucas (who carried out the Review) in relation to the structure and make-up of the external Expert Advisory Panel, which is one of the principal recommendations made in her report.

In considering their response to the Review, Members highlighted the importance for the Authority to take responsibility for implementing its recommendations. In view of this, a revised set of recommendations was proposed by Councillor Butland.

The following comments and questions arose during consideration of the report:

- In response to concern expressed by some members, the need and the intention to keep all members updated on progress, whether or not they formed part of a political group on the Authority, was acknowledged. Cllr Holland undertook to liaise with all the Southend Borough Council representatives on the Authority.
- The Acting Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the appointment of the core members of the Expert Advisory Panel was subject to agreement by the Authority at this meeting. The letter addressed to one of those concerned, and seen by some members of the Authority, had been in draft form.
- Councillor Holland, as Chairman of the Principal Officers Human Resources Committee, agreed to provide regular updates to Councillor Knapman as Chairman of the Audit, Governance and Review Committee, in response to his concerns regarding the potential overlap between the issues to be considered by the proposed small group of members drawn from the Principal Officers Human Resources Committee and the responsibilities of his committee.
- In response to concern expressed by Councillor Whitehouse, it was clarified that the second of the revised recommendations (set out at Resolution 2 below) was in no way intended to fetter the autonomy of the

Expert Advisory Panel. It was noted that the Advisory Panel would report direct to the Authority.

The revised recommendations circulated at the meeting were moved by Councillor Butland and seconded by Councillor Holland. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared to be carried and accordingly it was

Resolved:

That the Essex Fire Authority:

1. Accepts in full the 35 recommendations made by Irene Lucas in her report 'Independent Culture Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service' published on 2nd September 2015.
2. Instructs the Acting Chief Fire Officer to produce an Implementation Action Plan as a matter of priority for consideration by the Authority. The plan to set target dates for completion of each recommendation and to identify those recommendations requiring input from the Expert Advisory Panel.
3. Instructs the Acting Chief Fire Officer to report progress to every meeting of Essex Fire Authority for a minimum of 24 months.
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.
7. Delegates to the Finance Director and Treasurer in consultation with the group of EFA Members providing the governance oversight, authority to negotiate contractual terms with the members recommended by Irene Lucas for the core membership of the external Expert Advisory Panel and any expert advisors and logistical support as deemed appropriate.
8. Agrees that authority is delegated to the Principal Officers 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.
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.

4. Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service – Initial Response

The Authority considered report EFA/082/15 by the Acting Chief Fire Officer, which provided an initial response to the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. The report did not seek to provide a detailed action plan which, in the spirit of openness and inclusivity, would be developed jointly with employees, their representative bodies and with the advice of the external Expert Advisory Panel.

The Chairman thanked Irene Lucas for the work on the Independent Culture Review. Referring to Appendix A to report EFA/082/15, which detailed the Service’s response to Ms Lucas regarding matters of accuracy in her report, he advised that any factual errors could be explained by his agreement with Ms Lucas that no one from the Authority should have sight of the report before its circulation at the 2 September meeting.

Reiterating their view that the Authority as a whole must accept responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the Cultural Review, Members did not support the proposal within the recommendations to report EFA/082/15 to delegate authority to the Policy and Strategy Committee to make decisions on permanent reductions in establishment and early exit options. An alternative proposal to allow the Committee to consider the issues and make recommendations to the Authority was also rejected on the grounds that it would delay the decision-making process. It was acknowledged that the implication of a

requirement for decisions on these matters to be taken by the Authority was likely to be an increase in the number of extraordinary meetings.

Resolved

1. That the response to the Report of the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and the recommendations contained within it be noted.
2. That the initial plan to respond to the findings of the Report and associated recommendations be approved.
3. That the content of the detail of the Services' response to Irene Lucas with regard to matters of accuracy in the Report (set out as Appendix A to report EFA/082/15.
4. That decisions on permanent reductions in establishment and early exit options be taken by Essex Fire Authority.

5. Results of First Stage IRMP Consultation

In considering this item, members of the Authority took account of information which had been provided in a presentation given immediately prior to the meeting by Riccardo la Torre, Essex FBU Brigade Chair

The Authority considered report EFA/083/15 which presented the results of the first consultation undertaken as part of Programme 2020. This was the first of a two-stage consultation process which would ultimately lead to the development and approval by the Fire Authority of an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), Service Strategy and Change Programme for Essex Fire Authority for the period 2016 – 2021. This approach would support a service redesign to enable the Authority to meet the challenges it faced in the years ahead.

The main outcomes from the consultation were highlighted in a presentation by Ben Pilkington, Project Manager.

The following comments arose from Members' consideration of the report:

- Although some reservations were expressed regarding the implications of certain of the proposals to be included within the next stage of the consultation, Members noted that on this occasion they were being asked to determine the issues that should be consulted upon. Decisions regarding the Service's future strategy would be sought at the extraordinary meeting of the Authority scheduled for 15 January 2016, by which time more information would be available.
- Members commended the Authority's consultative approach to developing its future strategy, in contrast with that being adopted by some other public services.

- There was some disappointment at the relatively low response rate, and at the mixed, and in some cases, contradictory, nature of the responses which made it difficult to identify strong support for any particular course of action.
- The Chairman confirmed that the consultation questions had been designed in association with The Consultation Institute and had not been intended to elicit any particular response. This would also be the case with the next stage of the consultation.
- It was noted that, while the possibility of increased income generation would be investigated, this would not of itself be sufficient to close the funding gap, and difficult decisions lay ahead.

Resolved

1. That the results of the consultation be noted.
2. That the following specific proposals be included to deliver the following activities through the next IRMP:
 - a. Delivery of safety messages to every school child in Essex
 - b. Ensure there is a working smoke alarm in 100% of households
 - c. Working with partner agencies in meeting the social needs of the vulnerable members of our communities
 - d. Supporting the installation of systems such as sprinklers for the protection of buildings and occupants.
 - e. Working with drivers and riders to reduce the number of people killed or injured on the roads.
3. That the following actions be taken in the light of the views expressed through the consultation:
 - a. The IRMP include specific proposals for investment in new technology to support the response to fires and other emergencies.
 - b. The proposed response standard for potentially life threatening incidents be adopted in the IRMP and used to develop the proposals for the next consultation exercise.
 - c. The proposed response standard for all incidents be adopted in the IRMP and used to develop the proposals for the next consultation exercise.
 - d. The Service bring forward proposals for changes which result in a reduction in operational resources.

- e. The options criteria be used to develop the proposals for the next consultation exercise.

6. Enabling Closer Working Between the Emergency Services

Councillors Butland, Hedley and Jowers declared a personal interest in this item (minute 1 above refers).

The Authority considered report EFA/084/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which brought forward a draft response to the consultation by the government on proposals to enable closer working between emergency services and to allow for Police and Crime Commissioners to take over responsibility for the fire and rescue service.

Members noted that the proposal to enable the emergency services to work more closely together and to develop the role of Police and Crime Commissioners had been included in the Conservative Party manifesto for the May 2015 general election. They expressed their commitment to the principle of increased collaboration and acknowledged the range of joint activities already in place in Essex. Members commented that, in pursuing closer collaboration, account needed be taken of the complementary, yet distinct, roles of the respective services.

The Authority was concerned for a number of reasons at the possibility of enabling Police and Crime Commissioners to take on the duties and responsibilities of fire and rescue authorities in certain circumstances. Members believed that the discontinuation of fire and rescue authorities would result in a loss of local accountability, and would lead to the creation of organisations that were too large to be effective. In addition, there was concern at the level of financial savings currently affecting the police service and the potential impact of this on a merged service.

The Authority wished to canvass the views of stakeholders on the possibility of a merged service, and it was agreed to include this as part of the next stage of the consultation on the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

Members expressed their support for the Authority's draft response to the consultation, attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The Chairman reminded Members that, in addition to the Authority's response, they could also respond to the consultation in an individual capacity or on behalf of their respective political groups.

Resolved:

1. That the draft response attached as Appendix 1 to report EFA/084/15, together with the comments made at the meeting as set out above, form the Authority's response to the government consultation on proposals to enable closer working between emergency services.

2. That authority be delegated to the Finance Director and Treasurer to submit the response on behalf of the Authority.
3. That the views of stakeholders on the possibility of a merged service be sought as part of the next stage of consultation on the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

7. Report to Constituent Authorities

The Authority considered report EFA/085/15 by the Committee Secretary proposing issues for inclusion in the report to be circulated to the Constituent Authorities.

Resolved:

That the following items comprise the report to the Constituent Authorities:

1. Essex Fire Authority Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
2. Results of First Stage IRMP Consultation
3. Enabling Closer Working Between the Emergency Services

8. Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Authority would take place on Wednesday 2 December 2015 at 10.00am.

9. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved:

That having reached the view that the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraphs 1 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. Urgent Exempt Business

The Chairman agreed to consideration of the following item of urgent business on the grounds that there was a need to update the Authority on the latest position with regard to the Chief Fire Officer, in the light of recommendations contained within the report of the Independent Cultural Review.

Chief Fire Officer – Latest Position

(Exempt under paragraphs 1 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, information relating to any individual and information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter)

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer gave a brief update on the process surrounding the situation with regard to the Chief Fire Officer, together with the likely next steps.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm

Signed.....

Chairman
2 December 2015



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 10:00 AM

Present:

Councillor A Hedley	Chairman
Councillor B Aspinell	
Councillor J Chandler	
Councillor A Erskine	
Councillor A Holland	Vice-Chairman
Councillor J Jowers	
Councillor C Kent	
Councillor A Naylor	
Councillor Lady P Newton	

With:

Debbie Hanson and Martina Lee from Ernst & Young LLP (External Auditors)

The following Officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Adam Eckley	Acting Chief Fire Officer
Dave Bill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Operations
Roy Carter	Service Solicitor
Mike Clayton	Finance Director and Treasurer
Paul Hill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Safer and Resilient Communities
Lindsey Stafford-Scott	Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Shirley Jarlett	Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Fiona Lancaster	Committee Officer (Essex County Council)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Oxley.

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Holland declared a personal interest in that she is a Director of EFA (Trading) Ltd, and Councillor J Jowers declared a personal interest in agenda items 6 (Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-20) and 7 (Fleet Workshops Redevelopment) in that he is the Chairman of the Essex Police and Crime Panel

(minutes 5 and 6 below refer). Councillor Lady P Newton declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Fleet Workshops Redevelopment) in that she is the Cabinet Member at Braintree District Council with responsibility for planning (minute 6 below refers).

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. 2014/15 Accounts and Annual Governance Statement

By general consent, the Committee agreed that agenda item 9 (Auditors' Report on Accounts, EFA/079/15) would be considered as part of this item. Copies of the report, which had been marked 'to follow' on the agenda, were circulated at the meeting.

The Committee considered report EFA/074/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer providing a summary of the key issues from the audit of the accounts for 2014/15. The Committee also reviewed a revised Statement of Accounts which had been amended to include reference to a cultural review of the Authority undertaken by Irene Lucas CBE, and a Letter of Representation provided by the External Auditors.

The following points arose from consideration of the reports:

- The Committee noted that the draft accounts had been amended following the outcome of the case of Milne vs the Government Actuary's Department (GAD), and the government's acceptance to fund the liability for increased lump sum payments to firefighters who retired between 2001 and 2006. A note of explanation had been included in the accounts, but there was no financial impact on these.
- Councillor Aspinell was advised that any proposal for the Expert Advisory Panel (the appointment of which was one of the recommendations contained within the Independent Cultural Review) to conduct or commission a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme would be a matter for consideration by the full Fire Authority.
- The Committee noted that the External Auditors had overall found no significant issues of concern.
- Members noted that following changes to national guidelines on financial resilience the External Auditors had identified a budget gap. There were sufficient funds in the reserves to enable the Authority to implement its plans to achieve savings, but the detailed plans were not yet available.

- The External Auditors explained that in the light of the cultural review the note on governance arrangements (page 17 of the Auditor's Report on

Accounts) had been amended to 'adequate', recognising the positive steps already being taken to address the findings.

- The Acting Chief Fire Officer drew attention to the assurance given by the Internal Auditor's in respect of Programme 2020, thereby demonstrating that the Authority's approach to achieving financial savings was sound.
- The Chairman on behalf of the Committee and the Authority thanked the Finance Director and Treasurer and his team for their effective management of the Authority's finances.

Resolved:

1. That the Auditors' Report attached as an appendix to report EFA/079/15 be noted;
2. That, following the review at the meeting, the revised Annual Governance Statement be agreed;
3. That, following the review at the meeting, it be noted that no unadjusted audit errors had been identified;
4. That the Statement of Accounts be agreed;
5. That the Letter of Representation be agreed and the Chairman authorised to sign it on the Committee's behalf;
6. That the Chairman and the Acting Chief Fire Officer be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement.

4. Budget Review - August 2015

The Committee considered report EFA/075/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which reviewed expenditure against budget as at 31 August 2015 and identified major variances to the budget for the period.

The Committee gave detailed consideration to issues relating to the significant underspend on firefighters pension costs due to a reduction in employer contributions to the pension scheme, the additional resilience costs relating to industrial action, the factors reflected in the forecast which required three budget virements, and capital expenditure.

Resolved:

1. That the review of income and expenditure against the budget be noted;
2. That the forecast position for 2015/16 be noted;

3. That the budget virements summarised in report EFA/075/15 be agreed;
4. That the actual position with capital expenditure be noted.

5. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-20

Councillor J Jowers declared a personal interest in this item (minute 1 above refers).

The Committee considered report EFA/076/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which provided an initial assessment of the financial position of the Authority for the next four years.

The following points arose from consideration of the report:

- Members acknowledged the difficulty in trying to predict what might happen, and the speed of change, in relation to the projected loss of government funding over the next four years.
- The Committee noted that the 2016/17 budget may need to be revised in June 2016 as a result of the 2020 programme.
- The Committee considered the possibility of the Authority seeking an increase in Council Tax contributions. Members expressed the view that the Authority should continue to drive for efficiencies and remain a low tax organisation.
- Members expressed the view that the Authority should consider ways to generate income.
- The Committee indicated that it was content to support planning for an increase in the budget at this stage, and agreed the recommendations, subject to Recommendation 2 being amended to reflect the discussion on the potential level of Council Tax increase.

Resolved:

1. That the range of options for the projected loss in government funding from 2016/17 to 2019/20 be noted;
2. That future funding plans should reflect increases in the level of Council Tax of up to 1.5% per annual be agreed;
3. That Service planning for 2019/20 should reflect a complete loss of revenue support grant funding from the government;

4. That the initial 2016/17 budget should be prepared based on a funded total of £69.145m.

6. Fleet Workshops Redevelopment

Councillors J Jowers and Lady P Newton declared a personal interest in this item (minute 1 above refers).

The Committee considered report EFA/077/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer on the requirement for a new Fleet Services facility, seeking funding to initiate a project to design and tender for the construction of a new facility to replace the vehicle workshop at Lexden.

The following points arose from consideration of the report:

- The Committee noted that a suitable site had not yet been identified.
- Members indicated that they felt unable to agree to the proposals outlined in the report at this stage, and questioned why the workshop could not be moved to the Kelvedon Park site and whether the Authority had explored collaboration opportunities with other services.
- The Committee expressed the view that the Fleet issue should be included in the 2020 programme.
- The Committee indicated that further background information was required on the potential value of the Lexden site, and on other sites available in North Colchester. In addition, the future development of the A12 and A120 roadways needed to be taken into account and early pre-planning application discussions with relevant District/Borough Councils were advised.
- The Acting Chief Fire Officer explained that, although the potential relocation of the workshop to Kelvedon Park site had been excluded from the original business case for the site, the option to include it had been considered at a later stage, but dismissed by the Fire Authority. He also confirmed that opportunities to work in partnership had been explored, but there was no appetite from other services to find a solution. Outsourcing of the facility had been considered, but was not recommended as it would not deliver any additional benefits.

Following discussion, during which Members expressed some disquiet on the proposed recommendations, the Chairman proposed a new recommendation which was seconded by Councillor B Aspinell, as follows:

Resolved:

That a revised report on Fleet Workshops Redevelopment issues should be submitted to the December 2015 meeting of the Essex Fire Authority.

7. Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Committee considered report EFA/078/15 by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development providing an update from the Workforce Transformation Programme project on Employee Health and Wellbeing on the development by employees of a core statement and action plan to improve and safeguard mental health and wellbeing for all Authority employees.

The following points arose from consideration of the report:

- The Committee noted that the action plan had been employee led and had been commended by Mind.
- An event to sign and show commitment to the Mind Blue Light Pledge would be held on 23 October 2015.
- Members welcomed the initiatives and indicated their support.
- The Committee noted that help was available for care support providers, and were reminded of the role carried out by the Fire Fighters Charity.

Resolved:

1. That the Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing core statement and action plan be supported.
2. That Essex Fire Authority be recommended to sign the Mind Blue Light Pledge for Emergency Services.

8. Auditors' Report on Accounts

This report was considered in conjunction with agenda item 4 (2014/15 and Annual Governance Statement) – minute 3 above refers.

9. Invest to Save Proposal – Installation of Solar Panels – Closure Report

The Committee considered report EFA/080/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which provided a closure report for the Solar Panels project implemented across the Authority's property portfolio.

The following points arose from consideration of the report:

- The Committee noted the underspend of the final project cost being £1.287m, and the new estimated payback period of 13 years, compared to the 10 years originally predicted.
- The Authority will continue to monitor the benefits and savings achieved.
- Members noted that there had been some complications with the Rayleigh Weir Fire Station installation in relation to the new geothermal heating system and solar thermal water heating, but were reassured that emerging issues arising from the new technology were being resolved.
- The Committee questioned whether there was an opportunity for income generation in relation to the disused property (cottage) on the Kelvedon Park site. The Acting Chief Fire Officer stated that this property would remain in situ until a decision had been made on future planning prospects.
- It was noted that there were solar panel installations on the Pump House and on the new extension at Kelvedon Park.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

10. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 4 November 2015 at 10.00 am.

11. Exclusion of the press and public

Resolved:

That, having reached the view that the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

12. Investigation Report

(Exempt under paragraphs 1 and 2 – information relating to any individual or which is likely to reveal the identity of any individual).

The Committee considered report EFA/081/15 by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development which provided an update on an investigation.

Resolved:

The Committee **noted** the report.

Closing Remarks

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, asked for thanks to be recorded to the Senior Management Board for the way in which they had undertaken their work during the past 18 months.

There being no further exempt business the meeting closed at 11:50 am.

Chairman
4 November 2015



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 10:00 AM

Present:

Councillor A Hedley	Chairman
Councillor J Chandler	
Councillor A Erskine	
Councillor A Holland	Vice-Chairman
Councillor J Jowers	
Councillor C Kent	
Councillor A Naylor	

The following Officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Dave Bill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Operations
Mike Clayton	Finance Director and Treasurer
Paul Hill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Safer and Resilient Communities
Lindsey Stafford-Scott	Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Judith Dignum	Committee Services Manager (Essex County Council)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Aspinell, Lady P Newton and P Oxley, and also from Adam Eckley, Acting Chief Fire Officer.

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Holland declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (Commercial Report) in that she is a Director of EFA (Trading) Ltd (minute 7 below refers).

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Budget Review - September 2015

The Committee considered report EFA/093/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which reviewed expenditure against budget as at 30 September 2015 and identified major variances to the budget for the period. The report also reviewed the forecast outturn for 2015/16.

The following points arose from the Committee's consideration of the report:

- Support was expressed for the virement of £301k of planned spend on thermal imaging cameras to be brought forward to the current year, due to the benefits that the equipment would bring to firefighters.
- The current situation with regard to the implementation of mixed crewing was noted. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Operations advised that he was due to meet later in the week with a member of the Expert Advisory Panel (Natasha Edmunds) to discuss how this could be progressed, bearing in mind the Cultural Review recommendation regarding the need for a sensitive approach. He undertook to update the Chairman on progress following the meeting. The FBU's opposition at a national level to the introduction of mixed crewing, due to the potential loss of whole-time firefighter posts, was noted.
- It was difficult to assess whether other Fire and Rescue services had implemented mixed crewing as the term was defined differently across services.
- It was noted that the overspend on casual and temporary support staff could be met from within existing budgets. Numbers of such staff were expected to reduce in due course, as some posts had been retained to cover roles unfilled pending the outcome of the planned staffing review. However, Members acknowledged that numbers may increase initially due to the work associated with service transformation. In the long term, it was possible that the ratio of support staff to operational staff may increase.
- Savings had been achieved by the installation of Solar Panels, but these had not been as high as anticipated.
- The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Operations provided an update on the control project, which was proposed to go live early next year. He advised of the commitment to a review after 12 months (January 2016), although the nature of this would be limited to the shift pattern due to the incomplete implementation of the new system. The process for agreeing the remit and conduct of the review was currently under consideration, and engagement from the trades unions would be sought. Changes to the process for providing regular project updates were noted, and it was agreed that Fire Authority members should be included in the circulation of the weekly bulletin to staff.

- The proposed launch of a new staff e-newsletter was noted.

Resolved:

1. That the review of income and expenditure against the budget, as set out in report EFA/093/15, be noted;
2. That the forecast position for 2015/16 be noted;
3. That the virement of £301k of planned spend on thermal imaging cameras be brought forward to the current year;
4. That the actual position with regard to capital expenditure be noted.

4. Insurance Pooling

The Committee considered report EFA/094/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which provided an update on the establishment of pooling arrangements to provide cover for losses previously covered by insurance. Members were advised that the Authority is a member of the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Ltd (FRIC) which provides discretionary cover for these losses. The new arrangement had commenced on 1 November.

The following points arose from consideration of the report:

- Following a procurement process, Regis Mutual Management Ltd had been appointed as the manager of the insurance pool. The sum which would have formed the insurance premium under the previous arrangement would be invested by Regis until required to meet claims. The mutual was British-based and regulated.
- When the establishment of the Pool had first been agreed in January 2014, the intention had been for it to become operational with effect from 1 November that year if possible. The timescale was subsequently amended, with a revised implementation date of 1 November 2015.
- The first £500k of each motor claim would be met by the pooling company, with claims above that amount being met by the underlying insurer. The relatively low level of retention by the pooling company reflected the fact that, due to the type of claims concerned, the cost of underlying insurance for claims above £500k was almost identical to that for claims above £1 million.

Resolved:

That the current position regarding the arrangements for insurance pooling, as set out in report EFA/094/15, be noted.

5. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 13 January 2016 at 11.00 am or on the rising of the extraordinary meeting of Essex Fire Authority also to be held that morning, whichever is the later.

6. Exclusion of the press and public

Resolved:

That, having reached the view that the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

7. Commercial Report

(Exempt under paragraph 3 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

The Committee considered report EFA/095/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which concerned the ending of a teaming agreement with a commercial partner, entered into in November 2015.

Resolved:

1. That the ending of the commercial agreement, as set out in report EFA/095/15, be noted.
2. That the lessons learned be noted.
3. That the development of potential future collaboration opportunities be supported.

The meeting closed at 10.40 am.

Chairman
13 January 2016

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND REVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2015 AT 12.45 PM

Present:

Councillor J Knapman	Chairman
Councillor A Bayley	
Councillor G Butland	
Councillor C Guglielmi	
Councillor I Henderson	
Councillor P Honeywood	
Councillor M Hoy	
Councillor M McEwen	
Councillor J Moyies	
Councillor C Seagers	
Councillor A Turrell	
Councillor A Wood	

The following Officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Dave Bill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Operations
Paul Hill	Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Safer and Resilient Communities
Mike Clayton	Finance Director and Treasurer
Lindsey Stafford-Scott	Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Shirley Jarlett	Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Daniel Harris	Baker Tilly (Internal Auditors)
Fiona Lancaster	Committee Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Ware-Lane, M Coxshall, M Danvers, and Debbie Hanson and Martina Lee of Ernst & Young LLP (External Auditors).

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman reminded Members that they should declare any interests at this point or during consideration of the appropriate agenda item.

3. Audit Recommendation – Report on Progress Against Action Plans

The Committee considered report EFA/086/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer, which provided an update on progress against the action plans developed by the Service in response to audit reports. Items marked as completed in the previous quarter's report had been deleted from the table included with the report.

In presenting the report, the Finance Director and Treasurer advised that progress was being made in relation to getting signed agreement for each of the eight agreements on the Service's Partnership register, and that the outstanding work regarding employee taxes was now being pursued. He also reported that Andy Allsopp, Head of Communications and Marketing, Essex County Council, was currently overseeing the Fire Authority's work and helping to review the future requirements of the corporate team in the absence of a permanent Head of Corporate Communications.

Members noted that Business Continuity testing was ongoing and dates for future exercises would be incorporated into individual department Business Plans. A Risk Management review meeting was planned for later in the month to ensure progress against all internal audit recommendations was on track.

Resolved:

1. That the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development would provide a further update on the recruitment plans for a new Head of Corporate Communications at the next meeting of the Committee on 20 January 2016.
2. That the progress made against the action plans developed by the Service in response to audit reports be noted.

4. Auditors Report on Accounts

The Committee considered report EFA/087/15 by Finance Director and Treasurer, which provided a summary of the findings from the 2014/15 audit, prepared by the External Auditors, Ernst and Young LLP.

Members noted the proposal to issue a qualified value for money conclusion in light of the weaknesses in arrangements for promoting and demonstrating the principles and values of good governance identified as part of the independent cultural review.

The report was otherwise noted.

5. Internal Audit Progress Report 2015

The Committee considered report EFA/088/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer, which provided an update on progress against the internal audit action plan.

In commenting on the report, Daniel Harris of Baker Tilly advised that as a result of three audits being delayed following requests by management for changes to fieldwork dates, the reports on ICT, Workforce Planning/Utilisation and Data Retention would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on 20 January 2016.

Members noted that no issues of concern had been identified from the fieldwork carried out to date which were likely to result in a qualified or negative annual opinion.

The report was otherwise noted.

6. Investment Policy and Use of Reserves

The Committee considered a report EFA/089/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer on the Authority's cash and reserves position, and on the policy in respect of investment, cash holdings and reserves.

In considering the report, Members noted:

- That the rules concerning borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) meant that there would be no financial benefit for early repayments on loans, as the full amount of interest due until the end of the loan period would have to be paid. Interest rates were set on the date loans were taken out.
- No new loans had been entered into since March 2010 as the Authority had sufficient cash balances to fund its level of capital expenditure.
- That the CCLA Property Fund could be used for longer term investments.
- That the Authority was still waiting for a decision by central government in respect of amounts due to the government for pension injury payments. A provision of £13.3m had been made for this. The Authority did not anticipate being charged interest costs as a result of the government's delay of a decision.
- It was forecast that £2.7m of cash would be needed to fund the planned level of capital spending in the current year.
- There would be a repayment of £4m of PWLB loans in January 2016.
- The forecast cash position had been reduced to £3.5m by the year end.
- Proposals for the 2020 programme might need to be financed by cash, in which case it was likely that the Authority would need to borrow money to fund the capital programme.
- There was no specific reserve allocated for redundancy costs as the Authority's policy (adopted in 2010) was not to make compulsory redundancies.

The Committee thanked the Finance Director and Treasurer for answering the questions raised previously regarding the treatment of investment, cash holdings and reserves. In the light of the information provided, it was agreed that the existing policy should remain unchanged for the time being.

Resolved:

That no changes be made to the Authority's policy in respect of investment, cash holdings and reserves.

7. Budget Review – August 2015

The Committee considered report EFA/090/15 by the Finance Director and Treasurer which reported on expenditure against budget as at 31 August 2015, and which reviewed the forecast outturn for 2015/16 and reported on the approval of some significant budget virements.

In introducing the report, the Finance Director and Treasurer highlighted the underspend for whole time fire-fighter employment costs due to the reduction in employer contributions to the pension scheme. Payments for on-call firefighters were over budget, and the industrial action in June and August accounted for the additional resilience costs.

In considering the report, Members noted:

- That the current forecast projected a small underspend of £28k for the year, although continuing industrial action was likely to prevent this being achieved.
- That the Policy and Strategy Committee had formally approved the budget virements on 23 September 2015.
- That capital expenditure was on target and new appliances were now being delivered.
- That improvements had been made to the on-call firefighter's recruitment process.
- That there were accepted mechanisms in place for proper consultations with staff and Unions, and channels existed to allow for challenges to data.

Resolved:

1. That the review of income and expenditure against the budget be noted.
2. That the forecast position for 2015/16 be noted.
3. That the budget virements summarised in the paper be noted.
4. That the actual position with capital expenditure be noted.
5. That further details regarding the overspend on Support Staff (refer page 2 of report EAF/090/15) be provided in future reports.

8. Organisational Performance Reporting

The Committee considered report EFA/091/15 by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development which provided an update on the Service's Performance for the period September 2014 to August 2015.

The Members noted the annual measures which were not included in the update, as well as those measures still under development and subject to the confirmation of the 2020 programme.

The following information was provided in response to Members' questions and comments:

- The Committee discussed the current position with regard to the mobilising system, including the impact on the morale and productivity of Control Room staff. It was noted that a review of the 12 hour shift pattern would be carried out in January 2016, and it was anticipated that the new mobilising system would also go 'live' in that month, the exact date to be determined based on feedback from staff, following a period of testing.

- Members noted that as a result of the summer holiday peak leave period and industrial action days, total appliance availability was below target.
- The Committee noted that all managers had been reminded to complete annual staff appraisals by the end of October. Although the process was not onerous, feedback had indicated that more simplicity was needed for the electronic forms. Ongoing appraisal training was available so that there could be a move away from focusing on quantity completed rather than quality.
- Sickness levels were benchmarked against a range of other fire authorities and targets set accordingly. A new attendance policy was due to be implemented, and it was hoped that a move to a less punitive approach would improve the experience for staff, with an associated positive impact on attendance rates. Members noted that opportunities to work differently and to undertake modified duties were available to those who were temporarily unable to perform their usual roles.
- In considering the Performance Summary on page 3 of Appendix 1 to the report, Members noted that performance was not currently being measured against 'Family'.

Following lengthy discussion on the reasons for the below target performance levels and how improvements could be made, the report was noted.

9. Safer and Resilient Communities Update

The Committee considered report EFA/092/15 by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Safer and Resilient Communities, Paul Hill, which provided a detailed update on the Authority's Safer and Resilient Community activity in 2014/15.

During a presentation of the highlights, the Members noted that additional funding had been awarded in relation to Firebreak courses as a result of the positive outcomes achieved, and that the Authority had been selected to be the National Centre of Excellence for Duke of Edinburgh Awards for the Fire Service nationally.

The following information was provided in response to Members' questions and comments:

- The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Safer and Resilient Communities has responsibility for safeguarding matters, and regularly delivers presentations and briefings. Self-assessments and investigations were being carried out, although the Authority did not have a statutory obligation to do this.
- There was evidence to suggest that overnight charging of e-cigarettes could cause fires.
- The Authority works with Age UK Essex, local authorities, and private companies to offer fire safety courses, as well as providing more practical support to those residents aged 65 years and over. Budget pools with these organisations could be beneficial.

Members commended ACFO Paul Hill and his team for the wide range of activities and achievements of the past year, helping to reduce the level of incidents across the county.

The report was noted.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 20 January 2016 at 10.00 am.

The meeting closed at 2.30 pm.

Signed.....

Chairman
20 January 2016



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Principal Officers Human Resources
Committee held on Tuesday 17 November 2015 at 10.30am**

Present:

Councillor A Holland	Chairman
Councillor B Aspinell	
Councillor A Erskine	
Councillor C Guglielmi	
Councillor A Hedley	
Councillor C Kent	
Councillor M McEwen	
Councillor P Oxley	
Councillor A Wood	

The following Officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Adam Eckley	Acting Chief Fire Officer
Mike Clayton	Finance Director and Treasurer
Lindsey Stafford-Scott	Director of HR and Organisational Development
Andy Allsopp	Head of Communications and Marketing (ECC)
Philip Thomson	Clerk and Monitoring Officer to Essex Fire Authority
Judith Dignum	Secretary to the Committee

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lady P Newton.

1. Minutes (Part 1)

The public minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the deletion of Councillor A Hedley from the list of those present.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman reminded Members that they should declare any interests at this point or during consideration of the appropriate agenda item.

3. Establishing a sub-group of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee to provide the governance, oversight and scrutiny to the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS

The Committee considered report EFA/096/15 by the Acting Chief Fire Officer regarding the establishment of a sub-group to provide the governance, oversight and

scrutiny to the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS. This was in line with the authority delegated by Essex Fire Authority at its meeting on 7 October. The Committee noted that a report elsewhere on the agenda explored the relationship between the sub-group and the external Expert Advisory Panel appointed as a recommendation of the Independent Cultural Review (minute 4 below refers).

Resolved:

1. That a Cultural Review Sub-Group comprising five members of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee (Councillors Aspinell, Erskine, Holland, Guglielmi and Kent) be established to provide the governance, oversight and scrutiny to the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.

2. That future meetings of the Cultural Review Sub-Group take place as follows:

- Thursday 10 December 2015 (10am)
- Thursday 7 January 2016 (10am)
- February 2016 (date tbc)
- Thursday 10 March 2016 (10am)
- Tuesday 5 April 2016 (10am)

4. The appointment of nominated 'experts in their field' and a 'project officer' to support the work of the Expert Advisory Panel

The Committee considered report EFA/097/15 by the Acting Chief Fire Officer which presented the early views of the Expert Advisory Panel, including details of the roles which the Panel believed it could fulfil (and those it could not). The report also sought support to act upon the advice of the Chairman of the external Expert Advisory Panel with regard to the appointment of a number of experts in their field to support the Panel's work. In addition, the report sought formal approval for the appointment of a project officer and logistical support for the work of the Expert Advisory Panel, as well as further support for the Committee, in order to enable them to address their additional requirements.

In considering the appointment of experts to support the work of the Expert Advisory Panel, Members noted the concerns of one of the representative bodies regarding one of the proposed appointments. They acknowledged the need for clarity regarding all Panel member roles, and noted the right of the Panel Chairman to terminate the appointment of any Panel member who was found not to be performing their role properly.

With regard to the proposed secondment of a Member Services Officer, Members noted that the purpose of the role included a responsibility to liaise between the Expert Advisory Panel and the Authority's political structure, to ensure that information was widely shared with all members, and to provide support to the Principal Officers Human Resources Committee and the Cultural Review Sub-Group. In agreeing the establishment of such a role, the Committee requested that the Clerk and Monitoring Officer approach the Essex district, borough and city councils in the first instance to seek a suitable candidate, with the Constituent Authorities to be approached subsequently if the initial approach proved unsuccessful.

The Committee noted that financial provision in respect of all the roles referred to in the report had been included within the budget to fund the processes required to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Cultural Review report, agreed by Essex Fire Authority at its meeting on 7 October.

Resolved:

1. That the four roles of the external Expert Advisory Panel, as detailed within report EFA/097/15, together with their use as a benchmark to evaluate success going forward, be agreed.
2. That, upon the advice of the Panel Chairman, the following be appointed to support the work of the external Expert Advisory Panel:
 - Sir Ken Knight
 - Linda Dickens
 - Jim Barbour
3. That, upon the advice of the Panel Chairman, Jim Owen be appointed as project officer and logistical support to the work of the external Expert Advisory Panel.
4. That the secondment of a Member Services Officer to support the work of the Committee and the Cultural Review Sub-Group be sought from the Essex district, borough and city Councils in the first instance, and subsequently from the Constituent Authorities.

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

The Committee received report EFA/098/15 by the Acting Chief Fire Officer which provided a progress update on the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS. The report was submitted in support of the decisions taken by Essex Fire Authority at its meeting on 7 October 2015.

In considering the report, Members noted that its content would form the basis of a further report to Essex Fire Authority on 2 December.

The Committee gave detailed consideration to the draft action plan prepared by officers which included target dates for completion of each of the recommendations made by the Cultural Review. While acknowledging the need to demonstrate progress, this was balanced against the risks associated with early publication of an incomplete plan which required further work. It was agreed that, rather than being shared at the current early draft stage, the plan should be presented in a more developed form as part of a report to the January 2016 meeting of the Fire Authority. In the meantime, it was agreed that the Head of Communications and Marketing would develop some guidance for Members on responding to media enquiries concerning the Cultural Review, balancing openness and transparency with the need for sensitivity around certain aspects.

Members noted that the timescale for implementation of the Review's recommendations was an anticipated 12-24 months. A clear understanding of the criteria for success would be an essential factor in determining at what stage it would be appropriate to reduce and ultimately cease the input of the Expert Advisory Panel. The Cultural Review work was one of a number of work streams relating to future planning for the Service, and a higher level timescale would illustrate how these fitted together and would be implemented over a three to five year period.

The Committee noted that the first phase of the proposed Service management review would affect the upper three tiers of staff, with the aim of completion by 31 March 2016. The second phase, affecting the remaining tiers of staff, would then follow.

Resolved:

1. That report EFA/098/15 and its appendix (a progress report provided by the Chairman of the Expert Advisory Panel) be noted.
2. That report EFA/098/15, amended to take account of comments made at this meeting, form the basis of a report to Essex Fire Authority on 2 December.

6. Management Review

The Committee received a verbal update by the Acting Chief Fire Officer and the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development on the proposed review of the Service's management.

Members noted that it was a priority for the organisation to have in place the correct structure and operating model in order to move forward. Preparation for the review was in its early stages, with work in progress to establish the design principles which would apply at all levels. Care would be taken to ensure that the review was conducted with sensitivity, bearing in mind its impact on staff and their families. The review would be conducted in three phases, focusing on the top team and upper tiers first, with the aim of completing that phase by the end of March 2016. Reports would be submitted to Essex Fire Authority on 2 December 2015 and 15 January 2016.

The Committee acknowledged that the structure of the organisation could not be considered in isolation from other matters with a potential bearing on the Authority's future, in particular the potential for more shared working with other emergency services, and the Government's proposal for Police and Crime Commissioners to assume responsibility for the management of Fire and Rescue Services in certain circumstances. Members discussed this issue at some length, acknowledging the need to be open-minded and to seek to influence future developments.

In response to a question, the Committee was advised that the topics covered at a senior management workshop on the management review had included priorities for the future, vision, horizon scanning and development of the overriding principles.

The progress update was **noted**.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved:

That having reached the view that, in each case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraphs 1 and 4 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

8. Minutes (Part II)

(Exempt under paragraphs 1 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Information relating to any individual and information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or any contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter)

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the deletion of Cllr A Hedley from the list of those present.

Arising from consideration of the minutes, the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority updated the Committee on the current situation with regard to the Chief Fire Officer.

(Please note that a fuller record is set out in the confidential minutes of the meeting.)

The meeting closed at midday.

Signed.....

Chairman

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

Essex Fire Authority

AGENDA ITEM

7

MEETING DATE

2 December 2015

SUBJECT

Chairman's Announcements

(for period 1 September – 30 November 2015)

1. **FireBreak Pass Out Parades at:**
None held.
2. **Firebreak Squads at:**
Havens Hospice Fun Day – 5th September
YMCA, Southend – 9th October
Colchester CBH – 6th November
3. **Fire Station Open Days attended:**
19th September - Canvey Fire Station
19th September - Weeley Fire Station
19th September - Wickford Fire Station
3rd October – Loughton Fire Station

The Chairman politely reminds all Councillors of attending their local Station open days and others around the County to show support. Please contact Louise Kotze (louise.kotze@essex-fire.gov.uk) for further dates or visit the website.

4. The Chairman attended a 2020 and Trade Union Workshop at Kelvedon Park on 21st September.
5. Chairman attended RFU Committee Meeting at Wickford Fire Station on 21st September.
6. On 22nd September the Chairman attended a Fire Safety Under the New Government Conference in London.
7. Chairman attended 2020 Programme – Castlefirth Vision Workshop at Kelvedon Park on 25th September.

8. The Chairman attended a conference on Facing the Future Together – Fire/Health Collaborative Emergency Response at the Weston Homes Community Stadium, Colchester on 28th September.
9. On 29th September the Chairman, together with joint stakeholders, attended a Cultural Review Meeting at Kelvedon Park to discuss the Fire Authority Report.
10. The Chairman attended an urgent Cultural Review with EFA members at Kelvedon Park on 30th September.
11. On 8th October the Chairman met with Mr Steve McGuirk – Chair of the Independent Advisory Panel at Kelvedon Park.
12. The Chairman attended a mock rescue exercise by the UK Rescue Organisation at Ford Dunton Technical Centre on 12th October.
13. The Chairman attended a meeting of the Fire Commission at Westminster on 20th October.
14. The Chairman attended a 2020 Board Meeting at Kelvedon Park on 21st October.
15. On 22nd October the Chairman attended a Combined Fire Authorities Conference at Wyboston Lakes, Bedfordshire and delivered a presentation on 2020.
16. The Chairman attended the launch of Positive Approach to Mental Wellbeing initiative at Kelvedon Park on 23rd October.
17. The Chairman met with Mr Steve McGuirk – Chair of the Independent Advisory Panel at Kelvedon Park on 23rd October.
18. On 27th October the Chairman attended a 2020 and Trade Union Workshop at Kelvedon Park.
19. The Chairman attended an MP's 2020 Briefing at Portcullis House, London on 28th October.
20. On 4th November at Kelvedon Park the Chairman met with Mr Jim Owen a member of the Expert Advisory Panel.
21. On 5th November the Chairman attended a Blue Light Innovation Conference – Improving Service Delivery at QEII Centre, London.
22. On 6th November the Chairman met with with A/CFO Adam Eckley & Mr S McGuirk at Kelvedon Park.
23. The Chairman attended a meeting with Mr P Thomson and Councillor Finch at Essex County Council on 10th November.

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

Essex Fire Authority

AGENDA ITEM

8

MEETING DATE

2 December 2015

REPORT NUMBER

EFA/099/15

SUBJECT

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

REPORT BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

PRESENTED BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to provide Members of Essex Fire Authority 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 7th October 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of Essex Fire Authority 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 7th 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 2nd September 2015.

In addition to accepting the recommendations a number of other resolutions were reached at the 7th 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 seven weeks that have elapsed since the meeting of Essex Fire Authority on 7th 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:

- Developed a clearer understanding of the current operating context within the Service and the relationship between the Lucas report, its findings and recommendations and the work already being undertaken as part of the Authority's Programme 2020.
- Determined a range of immediate priorities for the Service which includes an urgent review of the Service's management structure. This has now commenced with the first stage will be complete by Christmas 2015 and formerly reported to the EFA early in the New Year.
- Discussed in detail the strategic challenges facing the Authority and the Service in the years ahead and how the Service strategy should be developed to ensure an appropriate and timely response to those challenges.
- Established a formal governance arrangement to ensure the wishes of the Essex Fire Authority are enacted, through a sub group of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee. The POHR committee met on 17th November 2015 and Members resolved:
 1. That a Cultural Review Sub-Group comprising five members of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee (Councillors Aspinell, Erskine, Holland, Guglielmi and Kent) be established to provide the governance, oversight and scrutiny to the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within ECFRS.
 2. That future meetings of the Cultural Review Sub-Group take place as follows:
 - Thursday 10 December 2015 (10am)
 - Thursday 7 January 2016 (10am)
 - February 2016 (date tbc)
 - Thursday 10 March 2016 (10am)
 - Tuesday 5 April 2016 (10am)
 3. That the four roles of the external Expert Advisory Panel, as detailed within report EFA/097/15, together with their use as a benchmark to evaluate success going forward, be agreed.
 4. That, upon the advice of the Panel Chairman, the following be appointed to support the work of the external Expert Advisory Panel:
 - Sir Ken Knight
 - Linda Dickens
 - Jim Barbour

5. That, upon the advice of the Panel Chairman, Jim Owen be appointed as project officer and logistical support to the work of the external Expert Advisory Panel.
 6. That the secondment of a Member Services Officer to support the work of the Committee and the Cultural Review Sub-Group be sought from the Essex district, borough and city Councils in the first instance, and subsequently from the Constituent Authorities.
- Commenced and refined the work required to develop a detailed Implementation Action Plan for consideration by the Authority. A draft plan has been prepared and will now be considered in detail by the Expert Advisory Panel. Therefore, given that the POHR committee on 17th November agreed to widen the membership of the panel to include Linda Dickens and Jim Barbour, and that the first meeting of this wider panel will not take place until 27th November 2015, and there is a need to engage a wider group of stakeholders in the development of key elements the plan (including the new members of the Expert Advisory Panel), it is expected that the Implementation Action Plan will be formerly reported to the EFA early in the New Year.
 - Established an initial understanding of the relationship that should exists between Essex Fire Authority, the Service Management team and the Expert Advisory Panel. This will evolve further in the weeks ahead once a sub group of the Principal Officers' Human Resources Committee has been appointed and regular meeting dates established.
 - Commenced the work to establish a number of employee engagement groups. An invitation has been sent to all staff to seek expressions of interest to join 'Your Voice' (the Service's staff engagement group) and a Culture Change Employee panel to support the work of the Expert Advisory Panel through staff engagement.

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 Essex Fire Authority.

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 7th 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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: Appendix A – Progress Report by the Expert Advisory Panel	
List of background documents (not attached): Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, EFA/081/15, EFA/082/15, EFA/096/15 and EFA/097/15.	
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

PROGRESS REPORT – EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL

This is the first progress report from me as Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel, initiated following the publication of Irene Lucas' Independent Cultural Review, received by the Fire Authority in September 2015.

It should be stressed from the outset that the decision to invite independent scrutiny in this manner was not directed externally or forced on the Authority in any way, rather it was a decision taken by the local, political and professional leadership of Essex.

Consequently, in this first report, I would like to express the view that not only was this a timely decision, but also a courageous one, and proper credit should be given for taking that decision.

Notwithstanding the origin of the work, though, it remains fair to say that the initial reaction to the Report of many observers and key stakeholders, and indeed the Authority and the Service, was one of shock.

Because, whilst in commissioning the review it was assumed that the outcome was not going to be positive in any way, the significance of the findings did surprise many. The headline grabbing phrase of “*toxic and corrosive culture*” also - and understandably - had the effect of catapulting the Authority and the Organisation in to the public eye and placing it under intense public (media) and political scrutiny.

Once that initial shock wore off, however, it was clear that decisive action needed to be taken. And, whilst there was an expectation of a sense of urgency, given the nature of the findings, it was always important to acknowledge the long term nature of the change that was going to be required.

And it was always going to be necessary to put in place an enduring approach to making the necessary change avoiding, as far as possible, knee-jerk responses (though at the same time recognising legitimate public and political concern and a need to respond positively and assertively).

The first step, therefore, was for the Report to be given thorough consideration by the Authority, and proper time taken to assimilate the findings and so, at its meeting on 7th October 2015, Essex Fire Authority accepted in full the 35 recommendations made within the report of the Independent Cultural Review.

In accepting the Report, however, members called for a comprehensive action plan to be produced to address the findings of the Review. Furthermore, it was also clear to Members that a lot of parallel activity will need to take place in the coming months against this plan, and it will require a sense of focus, pace and momentum. Thus, it was considered impractical for the full Fire Authority - twenty five members - to oversee the delivery of that programme of change (alongside the many and other major challenges facing the Authority). Whilst it was, and it remains important to

demonstrate political leadership, it is also important to be realistic about a work programme.

It was decided, therefore, that a sub group of Authority was necessary and the **Principal Officer Human Resources Committee** (POHRC) considered the most appropriate vehicle to provide the required governance, oversight and scrutiny to the delivery of the programme.

The POHRC has already met to consider important papers. (See comments on other Panel members and support arrangements below).

It has also been given sufficient delegated authority to meet regularly in future and to make progress. But, the group is clear about the limits of its authority and the need to act with the full wishes of the Fire Authority, and report back and seek appropriate approval where necessary for key strategic decisions.

For the avoidance of doubt, the full Authority retains overall responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the recommendations made in the Lucas report and has in no way delegated that responsibility or their desire to be seen to lead change. The approach simply represents a practical method to handling the reality of making change happen at pace and supporting the Action Plan called for in accepting the recommendations.

LUCAS RECOMMENDATIONS/ PROGRESS:

A key recommendation of the Lucas Report involved the creation of an Expert Advisory Panel that would support the development of an action plan and oversee the implementation of the other recommendations.

It is understood that this is the first time such a Panel has been recommended for a Fire Authority, and so there was no ready-made “model” to lift off a shelf, with clear parameters and boundaries and a way of working already identified and well established. In fact, there are few examples of an Authority inviting a review of the nature of the Lucas work - elsewhere it would have been imposed externally - and so, correspondingly, there is no precedent for what “turnaround oversight” might look like in such circumstances.

Irene subsequently recommended a Chair of the Panel (Steve McGuirk, CBE, DL) and an OD Expert (Natasha Edmunds) as initial appointees - a recommendation accepted by the Authority – and supported the idea of giving latitude to the Panel to work with the Authority to shape the panel more widely and to establish a workable solution for the practical arrangements going forward.

The Panel was established in early October.

Additional Panel Members and their roles, as well as support for the Panel and the Committee - and also the role of Sir Ken Knight – were agreed by POHRC on 17th October 2015.

It's fair to say that getting the best fit in terms of these other panel members has involved considerable work and consideration - and consumed considerable time - in the last few weeks to ensure the right skills and knowledge match, but also to ensure the right cultural fit.

The Panel has now started its work and set out below - in bullet point format (in the interests of brevity) - is a summary of the activity undertaken and progress made in the last three/ four weeks:

- ***Three visits made to the Service by the Panel– but more by individual members - with a wide ranging programme of meeting senior management, elected members, staff and their representatives (including fire station visits) - not just to gauge reaction to the Lucas Report but also to start to get people thinking about practical next steps.***
- ***The commencement of the management review recommended in the Report. (Extensive desk top review undertaken - and 1 to 1 and staff group interviews commenced).***
- ***Discussion has taken place, and agreement reached, around the work within the Service that was “stalled” as a consequence of the Cultural Review (for example promotions, work on Programme 2020, etc.). Note: The former issue will be frustrating for staff, some of whom were on the cusp of promotion and will now be uncertain in relation to what the future structure will be.***
- ***In support of creating the Panel all staff have been written to individually with an introduction and explanation about the role of the Panel - and a supporting and confidential electronic communications channel to the Panel established***
- ***All Essex MPs and other stakeholders have also been written to by the Chair of the Panel, including the Fire Minister - with the offer of further open communication made. (It is proposed this progress report is also shared with key stakeholders.)***
- ***There has been extensive interaction with CLG Officials and the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser - because whilst there no direct locus here (though one may be constructed) there is an obvious and understandable interest from CLG and the Minister as a key stakeholder (as well as being a local MP).***
- ***Outside the visits to the Service there has been engagement with staff representatives to build constructive relationships and in order to secure as much buy in as possible to the Panel Membership. Extensive desktop reviews of key policies and strategies to ensure future strategies dovetail - as far as possible - in to work already planned. There is a need for some honesty in this respect that, whilst there is a lot of good work going on and programmed - and the Lucas Report does reflect this - everything cannot proceed as if nothing has happened, and nothing needs to change.***

LOOK FORWARD:

It is felt helpful in this progress report to provide a brief look forward to the activity scheduled to take place before the next progress report. In doing so, it is also worth acknowledging the appetite to make rapid progress but equally to stress, as has already been indicated, that this is a long term change and getting the foundations right is a crucial first step:

- ***Work with senior management and key elected members to take the management review forward - projected conclusion of analysis by Christmas 2015, with feedback to Members on a proposed new structure and the phasing of the approach also by Christmas.***
- ***Work with senior management to develop the Independent Review Action Plan required by the Authority – but in doing so, ensure the “custodianship” and sign off by the Expert Advisory Panel as recommended by Irene Lucas. In other words, this needs to be a “shared plan”. (It is suggested this will be drafted by early December and shared for discussion with Members at their workshop in December. From that point the plan can be finalised, signed off and properly published early in the New Year).***
- ***Develop a clear proposal for discussion and agreement on how the design of the Panel will work going forward, and how it will interact and integrate with the existing work - specifically Programme 2020.***
- ***Set up a meeting with the whole panel and clarify roles and responsibilities of the Panel members - and communicate to all (but also see comment above about Paper on “design of the Panel”).***
- ***Establish a “working principles” agreement between the Panel and the Senior Managers (agreed by the Sub Committee) to avoid any confusion and ambiguity within the Service and wider governance***
- ***From this, establish a more regular “visit” programme – in to 2016 - but also consider other interaction such as teleconferencing, member development activity - and ensure key milestones around recommendations are taken account of in the coming months (but also see comment above about Paper/ Proposal on “Design of the Panel”).***
- ***Establish the support arrangements for both the Panel and Committee (agreed by last POHRC).***
- ***Meet the full Fire Authority (1 December identified).***
- ***Understand implications of CSR 2015 and its relationship to the Service/ Authority 2020 Programme but particularly in the context of culture change and direction of travel for the Service.***
- ***Continue to interact formally and informally with key stakeholders to build trust and confidence.***

CONCLUDING COMMENT:

It has been mentioned already that there is no precedent in the Fire and Rescue Service for an Expert Advisory Panel of this nature and there is a real risk of ambiguity between core business and culture change, and where the role of Officers and Members interact with the role of the Panel.

Some work has taken place and there was a paper on the POHRC agenda that set out some broad roles as a starting point.

However, more work and detail is required.

In the next phase, therefore, it is intended to develop a comprehensive document (the design document mentioned above) that spells this out in an unequivocal way.

It's vital that all parties are clear about governance and where the Expert Advisory Panel fits in to the working arrangements of the Service and the Authority. In developing this design it is important that the significance of the role of the Panel and the external and independent perspective is not unduly privileged as it has identified already there is a big agenda to deal with. But nor should the role of the Panel be understated or diluted.

This will be a tricky balance to strike and will require some deep thinking and sensitive – but purposeful – negotiation to achieve an outcome that fulfils the important role for the Expert Advisory Panel identified in the Lucas report.

STEVE McGUIRK CBE, DL

Essex Fire Authority

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING	AGENDA ITEM
Essex Fire Authority	9
MEETING DATE	REPORT NUMBER
2 December 2015	EFA/100/15
SUBJECT	
Organisational Change	
REPORT BY	
Lindsey Stafford-Scott, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development	
PRESENTED BY	
Lindsey Stafford-Scott, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the approach to the management of organisational change within the Service. It covers:

1. The key principles which will underpin the Authority's approach to Organisational Change and the employee support options proposed;
2. How the process of Organisational Change will be applied to ensure the Authority can ensure compliance with legislation, employee rights and good practice to support employee wellbeing;
3. Amendment to the Organisational Change policy of the Authority to incorporate a revised redundancy payment calculation for Firefighters to mirror the existing provision that is given to Support staff;
4. The proposal of the option for the offer of early retirement of eligible operational employees in 2015/2016 as part of the change process; and
5. Approval for the funding implications in 2015/16 in relation to the early retirement option

Please note - A presentation will be given to Members of the Fire Authority to provide an overview of key information within this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Essex Fire Authority are asked to:

1. Agree the principles of Organisational Change to be applied to the process;
2. Approve the option for the early retirement of eligible employees.
3. To agree that the redundancy provision for Firefighters should mirror that of Support Staff;
4. To delegate to the (Acting) Chief Fire Officer authority to determine which groups of employees may be offered the option for early retirement; and
5. To agree that funding provision of £1m, drawn from reserves, should be made in 2015/16 to support the initial costs of organisational change.

BACKGROUND

There are two activities that will drive organisational change in 2016. Firstly the Management Review that is being conducted in response to a recommendation in the Lucas report. Secondly, proposals in the 2020 programme are also expected to require organisational change to implement. One aspect of organisational change will be to manage a reduction in employee numbers and this paper sets out the proposed approach to this.

Every redundancy situation, no matter how large or small, involves individuals.

Individual experiences – whether they involve the threat of someone losing their job, of an employee having to dismiss someone, or seeing colleagues leave while others continue to work – need to be carefully managed.

PRINCIPLES

In considering the important issue of the well-being of the workforce, the following statement is proposed as follows:

‘The Service will endeavour to ensure that the well-being of our employees is taken into account at all stages of the process.’

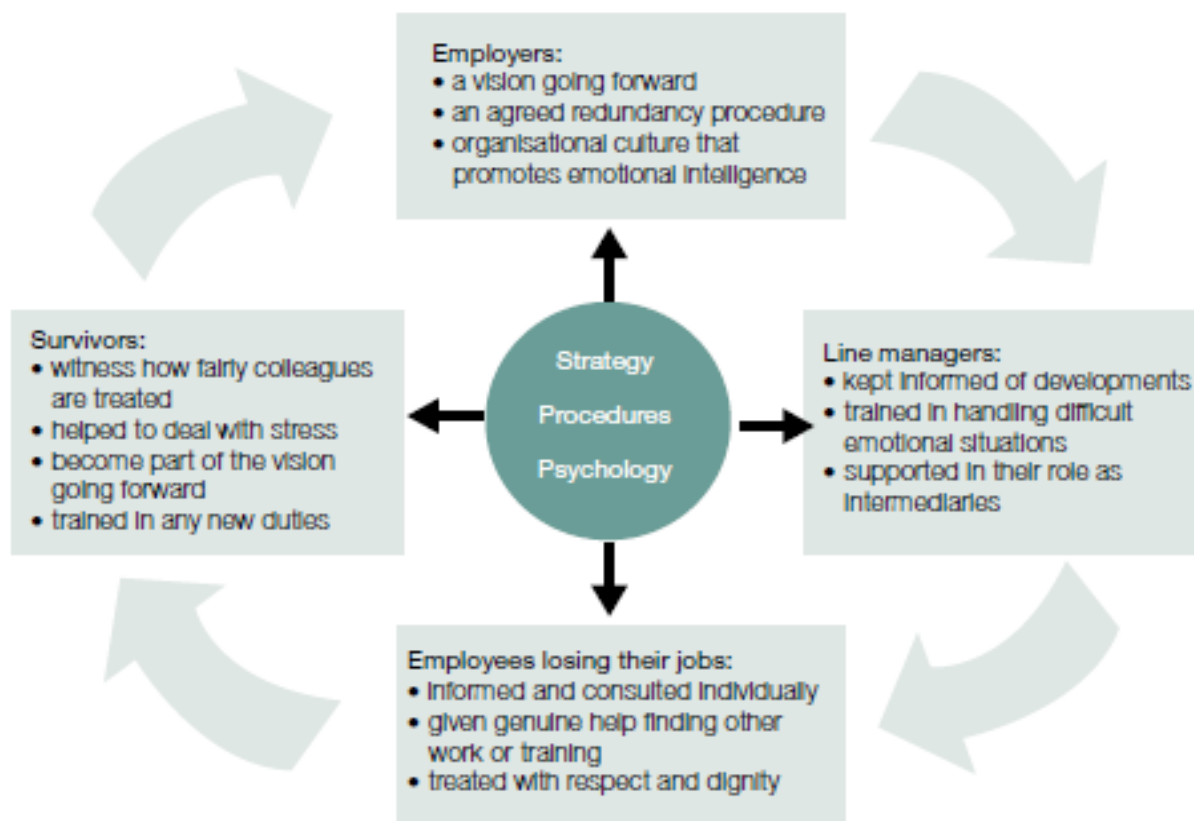
In addition the Authority proposes the following Organisational Change principles which would underpin any organisational change process:

1. Where there is a need to make changes to the organisational structure which puts one or more employees at risk of redundancy, the Authority is committed to manage such changes in a fair, consistent and transparent manner while communicating in an open and honest way.
2. The Authority will make every effort to minimise the number of compulsory redundancies.
3. Wherever possible the Authority will seek to achieve reductions in employee numbers through the following means:

- natural wastage,
 - a managed approach to recruitment,
 - deletion of vacant posts,
 - the reduction in use of agency workers,
 - voluntary redundancy,
 - early and flexible retirements; and
 - redeployment.
4. The recognised trade unions will have full involvement throughout the procedure and employees may be accompanied by their trade union representative or work colleague at any stage of the procedure.
5. The Authority will ensure that all employees affected by organisational change are consulted, including those on maternity, adoption, paternity, caring or shared parental leave, secondment or sickness absence

The following ACAS diagram illustrates the importance of employee wellbeing during an Organisational Change process:

Looking after employee wellbeing in redundancy situations



Employee support

The Authority has not been subject to much organisational change which has resulted in redundancy. The change processes which have led to redundancy have largely been to support staff roles that have access to enhanced redundancy terms. Changes to the numbers of operational employees to date have been achieved through natural wastage.

In addition to supporting employees in seeking suitable alternative employment within the Service, wider emotional and practical support will also be available.

It is recognised that the support required or considered appropriate for individuals will depend upon the impact of the organisational change process and individual need. Therefore the Service will seek, as far as is reasonable, to tailor such support provided as appropriate.

In addition to the day to day support for employees (including from line managers, HR team and the Occupational Health team) other support will be considered (financial advice, career advice, skills training and broader employee assistance programmes).

Employees affected by change will be advised what support is available to them during the organisational change process.

Employees who have been given notice of redundancy will be entitled to a reasonable amount of paid time off to look for alternative work and attend interviews.

THE PROCESS AND STAGED APPROACH TO ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

The Authority will share with Union representatives the proposed timescale for Organisational Change once the implementation date and scale of change is known through the programme of Management Review and Programme 2020. This timescale will be published to the workforce so that all employees will know key dates in the process.

We have commenced the consultation process on the revised Organisational Change policy with the recognised Unions as the existing policy is in need of a review although the change process applied within the Authority is compliant with the statutory position.

It is proposed that the change process is undertaken in stages. This will be for the purpose of managing the process effectively on a staged basis whilst achieving the requirements of the Management Review and Programme 2020 objectives.

Avoid, reduce and mitigate the impact of redundancies

Before a compulsory redundancy situation arises there are a number of steps that an organisation can take to avoid, reduce or mitigate the impact of redundancies within the workforce. These are given within the principles of change section within this report but provided again below for ease of reference:

- natural wastage,
- a managed approach to recruitment,
- deletion of vacant posts,
- the reduction in use of agency workers,
- voluntary redundancy,
- early and flexible retirements; and

- redeployment.

Information on the early retirement and voluntary redundancy options is given below

Early retirement

By virtue of the pension provision within the Authority there is an opportunity to mitigate the effects of compulsory redundancy on the workforce and achieve some of the recommendations of the Cultural Review. The Authority could consider the opportunity to enable the early retirement of eligible employees through the exercise of discretions available with pension provision. This option would give employees the opportunity to access their accrued pension, either on an enhanced basis for FPS1992 members, or to access unreduced benefits for members of the FPS2006 or the LGPS.

A summary of the pension provision related to this option is given within the Legal Implications section of this report.

The use of early retirement provisions would serve to achieve the following objectives:

1. To achieve greater flexibility of staffing arrangements within the organisation before the commencement of a structural review;
2. To mitigate the impact of any future organisational change;
3. To help achieve the recommendations from the cultural review regarding hierarchical change and remove management layers and improve spans of control ratios;
4. To enable those in the organisation who are nearing a potential retirement age, and looking to their future outside of the service, to exit the organisation earlier than otherwise enabled by pension scheme provisions - should they wish to do so;
5. To potentially enable internal and external recruitment opportunities; and
6. To enable the achievement of a more engaged workforce.

It is intended that the early release exercise would enable an employee to exit their post, but that the post would still remain within the staffing structure of the Authority, pending the management/service review outcome. Changes to the establishment of posts will be brought forward for Authority approval once each stage of the Management Review has been completed or as part of the 2020 Programme.

In 2015/16 it is proposed that the early retirement option is offered to operational middle managers. This group has been identified as it is believed that it offers the maximum opportunity to achieve the benefits described above within a limited budget provision. Decisions on individual applications will be made by Officers. In addition, where applicants are within a short period of retirement the option of extended leave will be considered if this provides a lower cost alternative.

The approval process will be via a robust business case using set criteria and will ensure that, in addition to meeting one or more the objectives above, the Section/Department has demonstrated the following:

- Continuity of Service provision to our customers and community by the potential re-allocation of work activities within the team or by internal temporary promotion/acting up arrangements or by short term external recruitment
- That the impact on remaining staff has been considered and mitigated
- That skill transfer can be managed with a smooth handover of duties and responsibilities

An example of the application of the early retirement option for a member of the FPS1992 is given within the Financial Implications section of this report.

Volunteers for redundancy

Once the Organisational Change process commences another measure to mitigate compulsory redundancies might include the option of asking for volunteers for redundancy.

Even if agreed on a voluntary basis such an option would mean that the role is redundant and would not therefore be available to the service for future recruitment.

Before this option could be used the following would need to be concluded first:

- The service redesign and the identification of redundancies
- The legislative consultation process
- The approval of the Fire Authority to permanently decrease the Authority establishment

Eligible employees would be entitled to the release of pension benefits as well as a redundancy payment (the same as employees who are compulsory redundant)

The offer of the release on voluntary redundancy terms would mitigate an argument that may be advanced that the early exit arrangements under the pension scheme provisions are age discriminatory in that younger employees do not have the option for an early exit under such arrangements.

Once Organisational Change is commenced the offer of voluntary redundancy is a useful tool to mitigate the need for compulsory redundancy and is an option which is likely to be valued by employees.

Therefore it is proposed that a broad 3 stage approach to the Organisational Change process is followed at each identified phase of the change process:

1. Early release under pension provisions*
2. Voluntary redundancy
3. Compulsory redundancy after all other mitigations are exhausted e.g. a review of all fixed term contracts, use of agency and temporary workers, overtime arrangements etc.

*this could also be offered at stage 2 or 3 if the employee is not at risk of redundancy

Therefore, whilst the option for voluntary redundancy is not one that can be offered to the workforce at this stage, the principle of offering voluntary redundancy could be agreed. This would become part of the staged process to Organisational Change that is aligned to the phases of the Organisational Change process identified through the Management Review process and Programme 2020.

REDUNDANCY TERMS

Employees who leave employment following dismissal due to redundancy are entitled to a redundancy payment if they have two years continuous service as at the date their employment ends.

Employees Eligible to Join the Firefighter Pension Schemes

Employees eligible to join the Firefighter Pension Scheme are all grey book employees, excluding Control.

For this group, it is current Authority policy for payments to be applied at statutory rates, as defined within the Employment Rights Act 1996. This limit to statutory payments has been in accordance with previous interpretation by Fire Authorities of the provisions in the Fire Services Compensation Regulations 1974. The terms available are as given below:

Statutory Compensation Payments:

½ a week's pay for each full year worked when the employee is under 22

1 week's pay for each full year worked when the employee is between 22 and 41

1 ½ week's pay for each full year worked when the employee is 41 or older

A week's pay for the purpose of calculating statutory compensation payments is capped in line with the statutory amount (which is £475 as at 6th April 2015) and a maximum of 20 years' service, in line with legislation.

Employees Eligible to Join the Local Government Pension Scheme [LGPS]

Employees eligible to join the LGPS Scheme are all 'green book employees' and 'grey book employees' within Control.

Regulations allow Fire Authorities to offer redundancy payments above the statutory minimum for employees eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It is Authority policy to award employees within this group a discretionary compensation payment of 1½ times the statutory entitlement, up to a maximum of 45 weeks' pay.

Discretionary Compensation Payments:

¾ a week's pay for each full year worked when the employee is under 22

1 ½ week's pay for each full year worked when the employee is between 22 and 41

2 ¼ week's pay for each full year worked when the employee is 41 or older

A week's pay for the purpose of calculating discretionary payments will be based on an employee's contractual weekly pay (rather than the statutory maximum of £475). The calculation will remain subject to a maximum of 20 years' service in line with legislation.

As with other Fire Authorities, Essex Fire Authority has recently received Counsel's opinion which confirms that the Authority is legally able to apply enhancement above the statutory rates to firefighters on grey book terms.

This now allows the opportunity to apply the same redundancy terms to both support employees and operational employees and it is proposed that the provisions for support employees are mirrored for operational employees.

Equalising the redundancy terms for all employee groups would avoid the risk of claims on the basis of less favourable treatment and direct and indirect discrimination related to protected characteristics.

The effect of this enhancement is shown in the example provided under the Financial Implications section of this report.

In putting forward the proposals in this report, Members are also asked to note that severance packages for members of the Principal Officer team are considered by the Principal Officers Human Resource Committee and approved by the full Authority.

Members are asked to note the legal implications section of this report which outlines relevant proposed legislative change with regard to public sector exit payments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The following example is provided to illustrate the impact of the option for early retirement provision and enhanced voluntary redundancy as outlined in this report.

Example: FPS1992 member eligible to access pension benefits

Option 1 – applying the discretion regarding commutation to enhance the pension benefits payable to the employee, no redundancy payment

Option 2 – statutory redundancy payment with release of accrued pension benefits

Option 3 – enhanced redundancy payment with release of accrued pension benefits.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 51 • 26 years pensionable Service Salary of £35,000		
Reason for leaving	Cost to the Fire Authority (one off lump sum)	Impact on Pension Lump Sum available to employee
Option1 Early retirement without redundancy	£53,000 (cost of applying the discretion to enhance commutation)	Pension benefits released with commutation up to a max of 25% which equals £95,000 lump sum payment
Option 2 Redundancy (paid at statutory rate)	£11,875 (25 weeks x £475 per week)	Pension benefits released but commutation capped at 2.25 times the pension before commutation which equals £42,000.00 lump sum payment
Option 3 Redundancy (paid at enhanced discretionary rate)	£25,200 (37.5 weeks x £671.23 per week)	Pension benefits released but commutation capped at 2.25 times the pension before commutation which equals £42,000.00 lump sum payment.

On average the cost of the early retirement offer to firefighters is more than twice the costs of the proposed enhanced redundancy costs. The payback, in terms of the individual salary saved is 15 months.

In acknowledging this significant cost, Members are asked to consider the proposed overall aim of the Organisational Change process 'the Service will endeavour to ensure that the well-being of our employees is taken into account at all stages of the process'.

There is big difference to the emotional well-being of employees in being able to exit the organisation at a time of their choosing rather than going through a change process which may result in a compulsory redundancy. The option for an early release of some employees will enable the organisation to plan for an organisational structure which has fewer employees who will be impacted.

It is recognised that if widely applied the costs may not be affordable – the total cost of early retirement for all eligible firefighters is some £4.7m. It is therefore proposed to limit the option to operational middle managers and cap the cost at £1m in 2015/16. If agreed the change would be advertised immediately with leaving dates prior to 31 March 2016.

Some of the roles vacated may be able to be offered for release through the change management process thereby achieving a direct saving.

The option for early retirement for eligible employees will enable the Authority to avoid making some younger employees' redundant without the ability to access their pension provision. Having a pension put in deferment would arguably have a far greater effect on those contributors to the 1992 Fire Pension Scheme who could potentially lose their double accrual provision in the final years of their employment – which for some could equate to half their pension benefits.

For staff that are not eligible to receive pension benefits at the time of their redundancy, this would have the effect of putting their pension benefits into deferment as follows:

- FPS 1992 – age 60
- FPS 2006 – age 65
- Modified 2006 – age 60
- FPS 2015 – State Pension Age
- LGPS - State Pension Age

There is no budget provision for this cost which would have to be funded from reserves. Clearly at this time the Authority is not able to determine the costs of change associated with the 2020 programme and the requirements to use reserves to support the whole of the change process. Useable reserves stood at £13.6m at 31 March 2015 and are expected to increase to significantly over £20m by March 2016 with the sale of the former headquarters site at Hutton. In addition there is the option to apply for approval to capitalise future redundancy costs.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The legislation related to Organisational Change

The law applies where organisational change meets the legal definition of redundancy. In essence this would apply in the following circumstances:

- The organisation has ceased (or intends to cease) carrying on the business for the purposes of which you employ someone;
- The organisation has ceased (or intends to cease) to carry on the business in the location you employ someone;
- The organisation doesn't require employees to carry out work of a particular kind anymore; or
- The organisation doesn't require employees to carry out work of a particular kind in a specific location any more.

It is likely that an Organisational Change process within the Fire Authority would meet the definition of collective redundancy which is as follows:

- At least 30 days before the first dismissal takes effect if 20 to 99 employees are to be made redundant at one establishment over a period of 90 days or less
- At least 45 days before the first dismissal take effect if 100 or more employees are to be made redundant at one establishment over a period of 90 days or less

Even where a reorganisation does not result in 20 or more employees being made redundant, it is still ECFRS practice for full and effective consultation to take place with employees and their trade union representatives.

The law states that when proposing to make redundant 20 or more employees at one establishment within 90 days an employer must:

1. Consult with any recognised trade union or with other elected employee representatives. There is also a requirement to consult with each individual affected
2. Start consultation in good time - at least 30 or 45 days before the first dismissal takes effect depending on the number of proposed redundancies.
3. No dismissals can take effect until consultation is complete and the minimum period of 30 or 45 days has elapsed
4. Consultation must be meaningful and with a view to reaching agreement with appropriate representatives on these issues
5. The consultation should be on the ways to avoid dismissals, reducing the numbers to be made redundant and mitigating the effect of dismissals

There are also specified notification requirements which must be complied with:

1. Disclose in writing to the appropriate representatives certain information concerning the proposed dismissals (Section 188 letter)
2. Notify the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills at least 30 – 45 days in advance of the first dismissal taking effect, depending on the number of proposed redundancies (Form HR1)

PENDING LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

The Public Sector Exit Payment Cap

This consultation concluded on the 27th August 2015 and the Government provided a response to the consultation in September. The proposal is for legislation to be created to introduce a £95,000 cap on the total value of exit payments made to an individual in relation to their exit from public sector employment. Such a cap intends to ensure the taxpayer is not paying out large sums in exit payments and specifically to end the payment of six figure sums to public sector workers.

The consultation proposes to cover payments in relation to leaving employment including:

- Voluntary and compulsory exits
- Other voluntary exits with compensation packages
- Employer costs of providing early unreduced access to pension.

Where a number of payments are made they will be aggregated together to be measured against the cap.

It is proposed that the following will not be in scope:

- Compensation payments in respect of death or injury attributable to the employment, serious ill health and ill health retirement and certain fitness related requirements
- Payments made following litigation for breach of contract or unfair dismissal

The date for the legislation to enable this change is not known at present.

PENSION REGULATION

Summary of early retirement pension provision for the FPS1992, FPS2006 and the LGPS

Pension Scheme	Normal retirement provisions	Early retirement provisions
LGPS	State pension age (minimum age 65) for benefits accrued from 1 April 2014 Benefits accrued before 31 March 2014 – age 65 Member may have protection under the '85 year rule' if they have membership before 1 October 2006	Can be paid early on a voluntary basis from age 55 but will be subject to a reduction for the early payment. The reduction is based on the number of years early from normal pension age but may be this may waived in exceptional circumstances. Business efficiency or redundancy would trigger the payment of unreduced pension benefits if the employee is aged 55 or over
FPS 1992	Age 55 Or Between age 50-55 if member has 30 years membership.	Can be paid early between ages 50-55 if employee has between 25-30 years membership. However, in this circumstance the lump sum is restricted to 2.25 times the pension unless the Fire Authority applies discretion to remove the commutation restriction and enables commutation of 25% of the pension Business efficiency or redundancy would trigger the payment of pension benefits if the employee is aged over 50 and has over 25 years of pension membership
FPS 2006	Age 60	For Authority initiated retirements, the firefighter would receive immediate payment of pension. Accrued benefits can be paid early from age 55 providing the employee has not reached age 60. There would be no reduction of the pension benefits payable to take account of the fact it is being paid early.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The process of organisational change needs to be planned for and well managed. A phased approach to organisational change will enable the risks to be managed and ensure service delivery to our customers and the community.

The offer of early exit options will achieve the Service aim of ensuring the well-being of employees which will have the benefit of improving trust and cultural change.

USE OF RESOURCES

The financial resources are noted within the report. The human resources to assist in the delivery of the organisational change process will be considered once Programme 2020 and the scope of the management review is known.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications of the proposals within the report

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

All policies and procedures which support organisational change will be equality assessed and action taken to mitigate any identified effect.

It is acknowledged that the provisions within the pension scheme for early release of pension are linked to age. The discretion of the Fire Authority to allow early retirement will potentially be a benefit to younger employees as it would serve to potentially protect their position within the organisation by mitigating the potential for compulsory redundancy.

The offer of voluntary redundancy to all employees later in the process, should this be deemed necessary, will enable younger employees to access an early release option.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: n/a	
List of background documents (not attached):	
Proper Officer:	Lindsey Stafford-Scott, Director of HR and OD
Contact Officer:	Lindsey Stafford-Scott, Director of HR and OD Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail:

Essex Fire Authority

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service



MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

Essex Fire Authority

10

MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

2 December 2015

EFA/101/14

SUBJECT

Statement Of Assurance 2014/15

REPORT BY

The Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley

PRESENTED BY

The Acting Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley

SUMMARY

The 'Fire and Rescue National Framework' for England includes the requirement for the Authority to approve an annual Statement of Assurance. Attached to this paper is the Statement of Assurance for Essex Fire Authority for 2014/15

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

1. Review the Statement of Assurance;
2. Authorise the Chairman to sign the Statement on behalf of the Authority

BACKGROUND

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to publish Statements of Assurance.

'Fire and rescue authorities must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in the Framework.'

One of the principal aims of the Statement of Assurance is to deliver an assessment of the fire and rescue authority's performance. The Statement of Assurance will also be used as a source of information on which to base the Secretary of State's biennial report under section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Act 2004.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The risk to the Authority of not providing a Statement of Assurance in that they will fail to comply with requirements of the National Framework.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The fire and rescue authority must hold their Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to account for the delivery of the fire and rescue service. If the Authority fails to ensure compliance with the National Framework there is a risk that the Secretary of State may use powers under Section 22 of the 2004 Fire and Rescue Services Act.

USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

The Statement of Assurance has been developed utilising internal resources and will be distributed electronically to minimise costs and resource usage.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

To reduce paper usage and unnecessary meeting arrangements the consultation and distribution of this Statement of Assurance will be managed electronically where possible.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The Service must comply with the requirements of the general and specific duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 in all of their functions, both as an employer and service provider.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: Appendix 1 - Statement of Assurance	
List of background documents (not attached):	
Proper Officer:	Mike Clayton, Finance Director and Treasurer
Contact Officer:	Mike Clayton Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: mike.clayton@essex-fire.gov.uk

Statement of Assurance 2014/15

2 December 2015

BACKGROUND

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England¹ sets a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to publish Statements of Assurance.

‘Fire and rescue authorities must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their integrated risk management plan and the requirements included in the Framework.

To provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual Statement of Assurance. One of the principal aims of the Statement of Assurance is to deliver an assessment of the fire and rescue authority’s performance. The Statement of Assurance will also be used as a source of information on which to base the Secretary of State’s biennial report under section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

FINANCIAL ASSURANCE

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The statement of accounts includes an Annual Governance Statement that sets out a review of the key financial controls. The statement was reviewed by the Authority’s Audit, Governance and Review Committee in July 2015 and subsequently approved by the Members of the Policy and Strategy Committee. The Authority published in September 2015 the Statement of Accounts² for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2015.

The governance arrangements include an independent internal audit function, delivered under contract by Baker Tilly LLP. The Internal Audit work plan for 2014/15 was agreed by the Audit, Governance and Review Committee who also received all internal Audit Reports. The Internal Audit of key financial controls concluded that they provided substantial assurance.

Prior to approval of the statement of accounts Members received a report from the external auditors, Ernst and Young LLP, setting out the results of their audit. In addition to their audit certificate Ernst and Young LLP report on their conclusion on the Authority’s arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

Ernst and Young LLP issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. In respect of the arrangements for securing the securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources they issued a qualified opinion. The reason for the qualification was derived from a report, commissioned by the Authority after a cultural review by Irene Lucas CBE. Her report was published on 2 September. The report made ten recommendations

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5904/nationalframework.pdf

² http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/_img/pics/pdf_1443442755.pdf

to strengthen the Authority's governance arrangements and the findings are disclosed further in the Authority's Annual Governance Statement. Ernst and Young LLP stated that they took this report into account in considering the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness. As a result of the findings in the report, they were unable to conclude that the Authority's arrangements for promoting and demonstrating the principles and values of good governance during 2014/15 were adequate.

GOVERNANCE

The Authority has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA /SOLACE³ framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. The Code of Corporate Governance⁴ describes the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Authority is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community.

It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services. Governance is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The Authority is made up of 25 Members appointed by the three constituent authorities. The Authority operates with the following key committees:

- Policy and Strategy Committee
- Audit, Governance and Review Committee; and
- The Principal Officers HR Committee;

Terms of reference⁵ for the Authority and each of these committees have been approved and published. In addition the Authority appoints "Lead Members" to work with Officers on key areas including risk management, health and safety, environment, safer communities and equal opportunities.

The Authority publishes all third party expenditure data on a monthly basis⁶, whilst annually details of senior officers' remuneration and Members' allowances and expenses are published. The pay policy statement⁷ was approved by the Authority in February 2015. There is also reporting of expenditure on procurement cards and purchase orders. The

³ CIPFA – Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, SOLACE – Society of Local Authority Chief Executives

⁴ http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1375439825.pdf

⁵ http://www.old.essex-fire.gov.uk/images/pics/Constitution_-_5_6_13.pdf

⁶ <http://www.transparency.essex-fire.gov.uk/invoices/>

⁷ http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1398700437.pdf

Authority's contracts are detailed on the East of England Local Government Association contract database⁸.

The report by Irene Lucas CBE included a number of recommendations around the governance arrangements for the Authority. In October 2015 the Authority accepted the recommendations in full and tasked the Acting Chief Fire Officer to draw up an action plan to address the recommendations. They also accepted the nominations from Irene Lucas for the membership of an Expert Advisory Panel to give advice and guidance to the Authority and senior officers.

OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE

Essex's Resilience Forum, for which the Acting Chief Fire officer is the Chair, produces a Community Risk Register⁹ to look at the likelihood and impact of a range of hazards occurring in Essex. The Resilience Forum uses its own professional judgement along with guidance from the national version of this document ([National Risk Register](#)¹⁰), to put together its Community Risk Register. The national register is produced by the Government using historical and scientific data, and the professional judgements of experts to analyse the risks to the UK as a whole.

Essex's Community Risk Register helps identify the emergency issues and also situations where a risk may be increasing or decreasing in our County. It helps highlight any gaps in organisations' ability to respond to an emergency and indicates what response is required.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service use these two Registers to support the production of a Service specific Strategic Assessment of Risk, which brings together historical data, known risks and includes appropriate horizon scanning.

On an annual basis, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service produces a Corporate Plan¹¹ and a Strategic Assessment of Risk. The Corporate Plan promotes development of the Service's strategy and achieving excellence. Where changes to resources allocated to prevention, protection or response are proposed and where the Service seeks to balance and match its resources to the level of community risk the Authority consults with its communities through the Integrated Risk Management Plan¹².

In addition to and complementing the Corporate Plan, the Service develops Directorate and Community Plans. Each plan is unique to the function or area and contains the actions that they will take to support the prevention, protection and response functions to reduce risk and improve community safety.

The involvement of stakeholders and partners in developing future plans is important as it is recognised that their involvement help to shape the Service's delivery models to meet their needs. Stakeholders are invited to comment on the proposed changes included in the Draft Corporate Plan.

⁸ <http://contracts.eelga.gov.uk/>

⁹ <http://www.essexprepared.co.uk/know-the-risks/community-risk-register>

¹⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419549/20150331_2015-NRR-WA_Final.pdf

¹¹ http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/documents/Business_Plans/Corporate_Plans_and_Strategies/

¹² http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1374159080.pdf

The Authority has formal mutual aid agreements for incidents close to the County's boundaries with the Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority, Hertfordshire and Suffolk County Councils and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY ARRANGEMENTS

Business continuity plans to maintain firefighting activities during periods of industrial action or severe staff shortages are in place. The plans provide for the deployment of appliances from a number of turnout locations that are independent of the Authority's fire stations. This provides greater flexibility as it means that the plans can be implemented on any occasion that fire stations are unavailable. The business continuity plans provide for around 20 appliances to be crewed, together with specialist appliances such as aerial ladder platforms. Some capabilities, including heavy rescue and water rescue are provided under contract. In addition, during periods of strike action by the Fire Brigades Union, up to 14 appliances crewed by on-call firefighters are available. The total availability of up to 34 appliances compares to the current deployment of 74 appliances. The arrangements were utilised effectively during some 41 periods of discontinuous industrial action by the Fire Brigades Union during the year to March 2015.

COLLABORATION

There are a number of established collaborative arrangements within Essex across the blue light services.

■ Property Sharing

The Authority is a willing partner in allowing the wider use of its fire stations by other blue light services. At present the Police Service uses four stations as base offices for Police Community Support Officers, and the Ambulance Service uses seven locations as dynamic mobilising access points. In addition, the Coastguard uses one fire station as a base location.

■ Safer Essex Road Partnership

The partnership includes a co-located team (currently based at a fire station), data sharing arrangements, road traffic collision reduction courses and many other joint activities.

■ Parish safety volunteers;

The Fire Service and Essex Police are working towards supporting two safety volunteers in every Parish in Essex (over 300 parishes). The volunteers will be trained by both services and will complete home safety and crime prevention checks.

■ Arson Prevention

The Fire Service is working with police scene of crime officers to support the investigation of arson incidents and for joint area visits to prevent further occurrences.

■ Domestic Violence – joint home safety visits

Notification of persons and households at risk helps the Fire Service to triangulate intelligence and to ensure that home safety checks are completed to support the most vulnerable members of our community in an appropriate priority order. There are occasions, such as these, where it is appropriate to complete those checks with partner services.

■ Operation Insight

We are an accepted attendee of regular Police briefings that share intelligence of criminal and unsafe activity in our communities. The information from these briefings helps to direct Fire safety and Fire prevention activity locally. The information is also shared with Operational teams if it might impact on risk or safety.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

In order to make sure we are delivering an excellent service we have a set of measures that enable us to track our performance against previous years and compare ourselves against other fire and rescue services throughout the UK. These measures also give the public the opportunity to see how the Service is performing. A summary of this performance is provided in an Annual Report¹³ whilst Quarterly Operational Performance reports are produced, discussed and challenged at the Audit, Governance and Review Committee.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Fire and rescue authorities function within a clearly defined statutory and policy framework. The key documents setting this out are:

- the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004;
- the Civil Contingencies Act 2004;
- Contingency Planning Regulations 2005;
- the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- the Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007;
- the Localism Act 2011; and
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

INTERNAL ASSURANCE AND ASSESSMENT

Risk management, control and governance comprise the policies, procedures and operations that have been established to ensure the achievement of objectives. Operational Assurance and Assessment assess the compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and guidance, and best practice; moreover, it also assesses compliance with the behavioural and ethical standards set for the organisation. Through a structured process the Operational Assurance and Assessment Team focus on key issues in two ways. Firstly, by producing an annual plan of the fire station assessments to be conducted

¹³ http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1374159276.pdf

during the year. Secondly, by undertaking additional reviews of specific areas of the organisation due to an emerging risk.

Key stakeholders within Operations, Health and Safety and Learning and Development are brought together through the Operational Assurance Group to review the findings of the Operational Assurance and Assessment Team. This ensures the arrangements in place for monitoring and measuring health, safety and welfare performance against predetermined plans and standards includes learning from incidents by using the information to improve operational performance and safe systems of work.

The Operational Assurance and Assessment Team set out the process of how assessments will be undertaken in terms of its scope, individual responsibilities, operating framework, quality assurance and a code of conduct. The Operational Assurance and Assessment Team add value to the organisation by providing a reliable opinion in terms of the management systems and processes by measuring actual performance against defined policies and standards and to identify areas for improvement through recommendations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Authority recognises and accepts the responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and undertakes to protect people, assets and the communities in which we work. To achieve this, the Authority meets all relevant requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 (together with all other statutory provisions associated with it) and supports staff in meeting their obligations under the Act.

Detailed health, safety and welfare specific arrangements based on the Health and Safety Executives methodology, are set out in the Health and Safety Framework and associated policies, these policies have been developed to take account of relevant legislation, guidance and industry best practice. The policies provide employees with relevant and comprehensive information on the risks they face and the preventative and protective measures required to control them.

There is a shared common understanding of the organisation's vision, values and beliefs and a positive health and safety culture is fostered by the visible and active leadership of Senior Managers. The Health and Safety department continually develops and improves systems for actively monitoring and improving the effectiveness of the organisations Health and Safety Management Systems. These processes include peer Health and Safety Audits carried out to the standard set by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents on a rolling 3 year programme of sample audits of selected premises and departments.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Learning and Development Policy is designed to ensure that all employees receive the highest standard of training and development necessary to enable them to perform their roles in a safe and competent manner at all times. Our firefighters receive training in the operational aspects of their roles through a structured workbook which is monitored for completion. We also deliver a wide range of technical and managerial training to all relevant staff. As part of the management of training, the Service operates an annual

Training Needs Analysis process designed to capture the organisational training and the role development needs of all staff.

EXTERNAL ASSURANCE

During the year the Authority commissioned Irene Lucas CBE to undertake a cultural review of the Authority. Her report was presented to Members on 2 September 2015 and subsequently in October 2015 the Authority agreed to accept all of the 35 recommendations made.

The Authority has engaged an external firm (Baker Tilly) to provide internal audit services. The Audit Sub-Committee agrees the annual audit plan of functional audits. These are completed and any recommendations generate actions plans that are monitored by the Audit, Governance and Review Committee until completed.

FRAMEWORK REQUIREMENTS

The Essex Fire Authority is satisfied that the systems and processes that are in place across the organisation fulfil the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. This review was agreed by the Authority on 2 December 2015 and signed on behalf of the Authority by the Chairman, Councillor Anthony Hedley.

Councillor Anthony Hedley
Chairman of Essex Fire Authority

2 December 2015

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

Essex Fire Authority

AGENDA ITEM

11

MEETING DATE

2 December 2015

REPORT NUMBER

EFA/102/15

SUBJECT

Rural Fair Share Campaign

REPORT BY

Finance Director & Treasurer

PRESENTED BY

Finance Director & Treasurer, Mike Clayton

SUMMARY

The Authority has been asked whether it wishes to join and support the Rural Fair Share Campaign. The campaign seeks to increase funding for local authorities and service providers to offset the higher cost of service delivery in rural areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members determine whether to support the campaign.

BACKGROUND

The Rural Services Network comprises around 150 Local Authorities and 100 non Local Authority service providers. Its primary aim is to ensure that the additional cost of provision for many services across the countryside is reflected in the funding formula applied by the government when allocating funding. Within Essex the network is supported by district Authorities such as Uttlesford and Braintree district councils and by Essex County Council.

The network seeks to establish best practice across the spectrum of rural service provision with representation from all major service providers. The network also campaigns for additional funding for local authorities in rural areas and an increase in the "sparsity" grant offered to rural local authorities.

Within the overall network there is a grouping of 12 rural Fire and Rescue Authorities. They are Cumbria, Devon and Somerset, Dorset, Hereford and Worcester, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northants, Shropshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, West Sussex and Wiltshire. They seek to meet twice yearly and Northants and Norfolk are the current respective Chair and Vice Chairs.

The Government introduced a stand-alone Rural Service Delivery Grant (worth £15.5M a year across 94 organisations in 2015/16), only 5 combined Fire and Rescue Services benefit. The Rural Fair Share Campaign Group seeks an additional £114.5 million per annum. This would be top-sliced from Revenue Support Grant and delivered through a revised distribution methodology.

The impact of this on this Authority of the additional funding being sought is estimated to be £110k per annum – although this would be offset by a reduction in Revenue Support Grant from the top-slicing methodology.

The Fire Services in the Network are seeing to expand membership to include services such as Essex. The Fire Authority would be asked to contribute £495 per annum if it wanted to support the Network.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These are set out in the report.

RISK MANAGEMENT, LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, USE OF RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no other material implications from this decision.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of background documents	
Proper Officer:	Finance Director & Treasurer, Mike Clayton
Contact Officer:	Finance Director & Treasurer, Mike Clayton, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, Kelvedon, CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: mike.clayton@essex-fire.gov.uk

ESSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

Essex Fire Authority

12

MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

2 December 2015

EFA/103/15

SUBJECT

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex County Council Flood and Water Management Alliance

REPORT BY

Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Safer and Resilient Communities, Paul Hill

PRESENTED BY

Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Safer and Resilient Communities, Paul Hill

SUMMARY

In January 2014 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) started working in partnership with the Essex County Council (ECC) Flood & Water Management Team. The purpose of the work was to design and deliver a number of flood risk and water management initiatives that benefit both organisations. The work also contributes towards better relationships with the Unitary Authorities of Southend and Thurrock. These initiatives and work streams continue to materialise and develop; delivering real improvements in the way potential flooding and flood incidents are effectively managed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Essex Fire Authority are asked to:

1. Note the excellent work described in this paper.

BACKGROUND

In January 2014 the ECFRS Senior Management Board directed that the Service should play a much more pro-active role in flood prevention and flood risk management. As part of this work Assistant Divisional Officer Farrant was appointed as an embedded Liaison Officer in the ECC Flood and Surface Water Management Team. The main objectives of this partnership were to explore joint working initiatives and to find ways of maximising the information and resources for the benefit all stakeholders, particularly our Communities. The work identified significant areas of shared responsibility and opportunity for flood prevention and flood impact mitigation activity. In December 2014 the 'Flood Alleviation' workstream moved from the ECC Flood and Surface Water Management Team to ECFRS Technical Fire Safety. Station Officer Lewis is now the nominated contact with the ECC Flood and Surface Water Management Team.

Current and on-going projects include –

- 17 flood alleviation schemes delivered across the County with three more programmed in 2015. Programming work for 2016 is ongoing.
- A dedicated flood risk management vehicle (to support the above activities).
- Support for ECFRS 'Critical Incident Room'.
- Operational crew involvement in flood alleviation.
- Surface water drainage information for operational crews.
- Dedicated flood website.
- Mobile device flood reporting 'App'.
- Automated warning signs at known highway flood sites.
- Countywide watercourse mapping exercise.
- Develop / maximise the impact of existing public interactions.
- Canvey Island task and finish group
- Local interventions in schools and homes

Since the formation of the Alliance, the following work streams have been developed and delivered.

Flood alleviation schemes – Using information from the ECC Flood and Surface Water Management Team, the local Flood Authority leads of Southend and Thurrock, supplemented by data generated by the Fire Incident Register, and involvement from local residents, parish and district councillors, areas of open watercourse that have been neglected or overgrown that have caused floods, or have the potential to cause floods, have been identified.

These are cleared by Fire Service personnel, volunteers and other willing public services, organisations and individuals. The Alliance has not only prevented floods but has improved relationships between involved organisations and promotes a 'can do' culture. The main benefactors of this work are the residents at risk from property flooding and blue light services from a reduction in responses to flood incidents. The work focuses on vulnerable residents that have difficulty (due to age or illness) with complying or understanding their riparian responsibilities.

We are also working with other Lead Local Flood Authorities, Voluntary, Community and Public Sector agencies that support the delivery of these schemes. In particular we have become involved with the Ministry of Justices Reparation Board (community service) to assist us with the volunteer work. We are hoping to work with the substance misuse clients from the Heath Authorities and ECC mental health wellbeing organisations to assist with the volunteer programmes.

The small scale alleviation projects have the impact of breaking the corrosive cycle that people who have been affected by flooding tend to find themselves. When our volunteer and multiagency task forces deal with these issues, the victims of flooding feel that they are being listened to and taken seriously.

Provision of a purpose designed (non-emergency) Flood Risk Management Vehicle – ECFRS have invested in a flood risk management vehicle, which is in the process of being equipped and prepared so it can be used Countywide by volunteers and Fire personnel for the clearance of neglected watercourses and culverts. The vehicle will carry everything needed for such initiatives. It can also act as a focal point at events where public education on flooding issues would be beneficial. This is not a new vehicle but a change of use of an existing Safer Communities transit van, maximising the efficient use of resources.

Support for ECFRS Critical Incident Team – For significant events and during spate conditions the Fire Service Critical Incident Team (CIT) will be activated, managing the resources of the

Service. The reliance on accurate and timely information is crucial to the team's operational success. The Alliance is working to identify a supplier of flood prediction software to support this function. Currently ECC and the two Unitary Authorities of Southend and Thurrock work with a computer programme called 'Wateride'. Essex Fire and the Emergency Planning department are looking to follow suit to ensure a County wide cohesive and common approach where information can be shared effectively. Whilst this project is still moving forward, it has reduced in priority due to current resourcing issues.

Operational Crews Support – Work is currently underway to provide local flood risk information to Fire Stations, on receipt of severe weather and rainfall warnings crews can check preventable causes of floods in their area (e.g. Pinch points such as trash screens and piped underways). Once checked, minor works could be undertaken locally to clear the problem, or reported to the relevant Authority for further action. Local 'at risk' properties could also be visited and the occupants informed. This may mean crews are available for less preventable emergencies. We are continuing to explore opportunities for operational crews, including assisting the clearance of remotely monitored water assets and so preventing flooding.

Surface Water Drainage information – We are working with water utility companies in order they can provide electronic information on all of their assets and surface water drainage systems countywide. This will enable Incident Commanders at flood incidents to make calculated and informed decisions regarding direction and destination of pumped flood water. This information, which will be available on scene via the mobile data terminals on fire appliances, could prevent escalations of the flood further downstream, or supercharging of the drainage system causing further flooding elsewhere.

Dedicated Website / Reporting 'App' / Automated Flood Warning Signs – The work on these projects are currently paused as a result of competing demand for resources in partner agencies. If these projects are re-prioritised then they will require a resource injection from ECFRS / ECC alongside some external partners.

Countywide Watercourse Mapping – This project is continuing to recruit volunteers to map all of the watercourses in the County. By mapping all of the watercourses and assets we will assist all organisations in planning to prevent floods in the future. The work is started and is spreading across the County as resources allow.

Maximising Face to Face Interactions – Planned and targeted interactions with members of the public to check and discuss fire safety in the home are currently taking place. These are delivered by Operational Crews, Community Safety personnel and Volunteers meeting the public during house to house visits, community events and specific campaigns. We plan to maximise the benefits of these interactions and to supply flood information and advice to those properties at risk of flooding.

Canvey Island Task and Finish Group – This multiagency group has been working together for approximately a year; it recently delivered its findings at Castle Point Borough Council. The partnership working and joint approach has been recognised as an excellent model and one that could be copied in other high risk areas across the Country. The group is moving into "soft delivery" phase with much of the hard infrastructure reviewed, discussions are now taking place with local residents regarding the best way forward. This will be specifically focus on the 'What If' programme from emergency planning or the 'Yellow Fish' programme from the Environment Agency

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Weather and tidal patterns are unpredictable; other than they constantly change. Building new and refurbishing old property, their services and water run-off are also impacting on potential floods and flooding.

The work of the ECFRS and ECC Flood and Water Management Alliance helps to support sustainable development, maintenance of existing and new flood management schemes and the closer working relationship between all stakeholders.

The work delivered by ECFRS, described in this paper prevents flooding. If the work is discontinued those areas that we would work in to prevent floods are very likely to flood.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no specific funding ring-fenced for the work described in this paper. ECFRS and ECC Flood and Water Management Alliance has been met within existing budgets. Whilst it is always impossible to accurately disaggregate shared resources used for a wide variety of projects an approximation of the annual costs are:

- £10k - ¼ of a Station Officer
- £5k - equipment cost (capital costs, depreciation not taken into account)
- £2k - van costs (purchase costs - 15 year life)
- £2k - van running costs (service, fuel, tax insurance)
- £1 - volunteer costs

The average cost to the householder of a flood is £30k plus another £15k to prevent re-occurrence (<http://www.building.co.uk/average-cost-of-repairing-flood-hit-home-as-high-as-%C2%A330k/5067762.article>). If each of the 17 flood alleviation schemes have protected an average of 5 houses from a single flood, £765k has been saved. This calculation assumes houses flood once and our schemes are usually delivered where there is a history of multiple flood events. The calculation also does not include the cost to the emergency services responding, the local authority fixing the issue and managing the event and recovery. The savings in real terms and when considering every party are well over £1,000,000.00 for a cost of £20,000 or £50 for every £1 spent.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 gives upper tier Local Authorities in England responsibility for preparing and putting in place strategies for managing flood risks from ground water, surface water and ordinary watercourses in their areas. Section 6 of this act defines risk management Authorities, and introduces the concept of 'Lead Local Flood Authorities' of whom ECC, and the Unitary Authorities of Southend and Thurrock are identified as adopting this role.

Section 19 of this act requires the Lead Local Flood Authority to carry out formal investigations into certain flood incidents that meet criteria set by the Authority. The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 makes provision in Part 2 (sec 11 & 12) for powers to respond to other eventualities, and as such will work with the ECC, and the Unitary Authorities of Southend and Thurrock to achieve this.

Legal consideration of our involvement with flood alleviation schemes is routinely checked and risk assessed prior to any work being undertaken, utilising the specialist knowledge available from ECC and the ECFRS legal team.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are specific areas of work in this workstream that are not be suitable for everyone (for example physical limitations for watercourse clearance work), there are however no equality implications for the formation and development of the Alliance or partnership.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The prevention or mitigation of the impact of floods has a positive effect on the environment. Any watercourse clearance is carried out under the guidance and expertise of the relevant Authorities such as the Environment Agency, Wildlife Trust and other appropriate organisations.

Having access to more accurate and timely information at incidents will assist operational crews to make better decisions about floods and flood waters. Reducing the number and duration of flood related incidents will reduce the environmental impact of the Fire Service.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper:	
List of background documents (not attached):	
Proper Officer:	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Safer and Resilient Communities
Contact Officer:	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Paul Hill Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: paul.hill@essex-fire.gov.uk

Essex Fire Authority

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

Essex Fire Authority

13

MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

2 December 2015

EFA/104/15

SUBJECT

Report to Constituent Authorities

REPORT BY

Committee Secretary, Judith Dignum

PRESENTED BY

Committee Secretary, Judith Dignum

SUMMARY

To invite Members to determine which items should be included in the report to be prepared for circulation to the Constituent Authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the following items comprise the report to the Constituent Authorities:

1. Progress report on the delivery of the work programme required to improve the culture within Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
2. Organisational change
3. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex County Council Flood and Water Management Alliance
4. Fleet Workshops Redevelopment (excluding any confidential information)

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL AND USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial or use of resources implications arising from this report.

LEGAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal, environmental or equality implications associated with this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper: None	
List of background documents (not attached): None	
Proper Officer:	Roy Carter, Service Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Judith Dignum, Committee Services Manager c/o Service Solicitor, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB Tel: 01376 576000 E-mail: roy.carter@essex-fire.gov.uk