



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

Report of the Chair of the Policy and Strategy Committee

Agenda No:

Date: 14 December 2012

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members the business and actions of the Policy and Strategy Committee meetings of Friday 02 November 2012.

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1. BACKGROUND

As part of the revised Governance arrangements the Authority has delegated key responsibilities for policy and strategy to the Policy and Strategy Committee. As part of those delegated responsibilities, the Chair of the Policy and Strategy Committee and the Management lead report to the Authority on its business and actions as agreed at Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 1 June 2007.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The minutes of the Policy and Strategy Committee meeting of Friday 02 November 2012 are attached to this report at Appendix A.
- 2.2 The Committee was firstly asked to consider a report which proposed a Member led task and finish group to establish a 'Consultation Framework' for the forthcoming IRMP process and future Fire Authority consultations. It was resolved that a group be established comprising two Labour members, two Conservative members, a Lib-Dem member and the Independent member. It was further resolved that the task and finish group report back to the Committee.
- 2.3 Two further reports presented to the Committee advised on current consultations regarding:
 - The protocol on government intervention action on fire and rescue authorities in England, and
 - Guidance on statements of assurance for fire and rescue authorities in England.

Proposed, draft responses were also included within the body of the reports for the consideration of the Committee. It was resolved that the current consultations be noted and responses forwarded on behalf of the Authority (which included a slight re-wording in relation to the response on the consultation regarding statements of assurance).

- 2.4 Finally, the Committee considered a report updating on the publication of a document by the Chief Fire Officers Association entitled 'Fighting Fires or Firefighting'. It was resolved that publication of this document be noted, as was the Chief Fire Officer's strategy for circulating the document amongst Councillors and MPs throughout Nottinghamshire.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial implications were considered as part of the original reports submitted to the Policy and Strategy Committee.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

All human resources and learning and development implications were considered as part of the original reports submitted to the Policy and Strategy Committee.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this report is not associated with a policy, function or service. Its purpose is to update the Fire Authority on the outcomes of Committee business.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Service's performance in relation to matters addressed through Policy and Strategy Committee is scrutinised through a range of audit processes. The Service needs to continue to perform well in these areas as external scrutiny through Comprehensive Performance Assessment and auditors' judgement is key to future Service delivery.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report and the business undertaken by the Policy and Strategy Committee.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Councillor Darrell Pulk
CHAIR OF POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of meeting held on **2 NOVEMBER 2012** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge from 10.00 am to 10.35 am.

Membership

- Councillor D Pulk (Chair)
^ Councillor J Collins
Councillor B Grocock
Councillor E Kerry
Councillor K Rigby
Councillor G Wheeler
Councillor A Norris (as substitute for Councillor Collins)

Members absent are marked ^

8 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Collins.

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

10 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2012, copies of which had been circulated at the meeting, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

11 CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, proposing a Member led task and finish group to establish a 'Consultation Framework' for the forthcoming integrated risk management plan

(IRMP) process and in relation to future Fire Authority consultations generally. The report was introduced by John Buckley, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, who explained the specific requirement to consult in relation to the Fire Authority's IRMP. In addition to this, the Service would have to consult the public on other specific aspects of changes to service delivery in future years. It was therefore, considered prudent for Members to agree a consultation framework with which Officers could operate to ensure all expectations were met.

In 2010, the Service had undertaken comprehensive consultation in relation to the Fire Cover Review as detailed in section 2.1 of the report. Despite this, and the engagement of professional support, the responses from the community were considered by the Fire Authority to be low. As a consequence, it was proposed that a small working group be formed to establish key priorities for consultation in a Framework that the Service could employ. It was proposed that the working group be supported by officers and some external expertise to offer advice on the Service's previous consultation and its effectiveness.

Formal consultation on the IRMP would need to commence in early spring 2013 in order for the new plan to be ready by January 2014.

RESOLVED

- (1) that a member led task and finish group be set up to establish a consultation framework. The group to include two Labour Members, two Conservative members, a Lib-Dem Member and the Independent Member;**
- (2) that the task and finish group report back to this Committee.**

12 CONSULTATION ON THE PROTOCOL ON GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION ACTION ON FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, advising the Committee on the current consultation to the Protocol on Government Intervention on Fire and Rescue Authorities in England and to agree a response on behalf of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority. The report was introduced by John Buckley, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, who explained that the protocol set out the Government's expectations on the fire and rescue sector, indicating what circumstances might lead to intervention being considered and what might happen in the event of statutory intervention. To assist in the consultation, the document asked three key questions of consultees. A draft response to the consultation document was attached at Appendix B to the report for approval and/or amendment as required by the Committee.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the current consultation on the intervention protocol be noted; and**
- (2) that the proposed response on behalf of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority attached to the report be approved.**

13 CONSULTATION ON GUIDANCE ON STATEMENTS OF ASSURANCE FOR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, advising the Committee on the current consultation on guidance on statements of assurance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England and to agree a response on behalf of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority. The report was introduced by John Buckley, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, who explained that this was a new requirement on Fire and Rescue Authorities and hence the reason why the Government was providing guidance on the nature of the assurance statements. The report outlined the key areas that the Government would see as part of any statement; finance; governance; operational and compliance with framework. A draft response to the consultation document was attached at Appendix B to the report for approval and/or amendment as required by the Committee.

Councillors felt that the response to Question 3 should be amended to give the message to the Government that other layers of bureaucracy should be being removed not added to. The Chair agreed that he would meet with the Chief Fire Officer to amend the response to question 3 and agreed to advise members in writing of the revised wording.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the current consultation on the annual statement of assurance be noted; and**
- (2) that the proposed response on behalf of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority attached to the report be approved save for the response to question 3 which the Chair was tasked with re-wording in conjunction with the Chief Fire Officer to request the Government to reduce levels of bureaucracy.**

14 CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION; FIGHTING FIRES OR FIREFIGHTING

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, to update the Committee on the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) publication and its contents. The report was introduced by John Buckley, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, who explained that on Thursday 20 September 2012, CFOA at its annual general meeting had released the publication 'Fighting Fires or Firefighting: The Impact of Austerity on English Fire and Rescue Services' The document was in response to the impact that grant reductions were having on the ability of fire and rescue services to continue to deliver service. The Chief Fire Officer believed that the document should be widely distributed to elected members of the City and County Councils, District Councils and local MP's.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the content of the Chief Fire Officers Association publication be noted; and**
- (2) the Chief Fire Officers strategy for circulating the document amongst Councillors and MP's throughout Nottinghamshire be noted.**

FOR NOTE