

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	
	POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE	
date	4 August 2006	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SHIFT CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION TASK & FINISH GROUP

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the outcomes of the first meeting of the Shift Change Implementation Task & Finish Group.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting on 28 April 2006, the Nottinghamshire & City of Nottingham Fire & Rescue Authority gave consideration to a number of recommendations contained within a report regarding Future Service Delivery Arrangements. In relation to shift change implementation, it was resolved by the Authority that the establishment of a task and finish group be approved in order to monitor shift change implementation and report progress to the Policy and Strategy Committee. It was further resolved that the Policy and Strategy Committee establish membership of this task and finish group, to include the lead opposition spokesperson, co-opted Members, Officers of the Authority and Trade Unions.

2.2 The Policy and Strategy Committee subsequently met on 22 May 2006 and considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer which brought forward the recommendation of the Authority. The Committee resolved that :

- Membership of the task and finish group include Councillor Cottee, as lead opposition spokesperson, and Councillor Grocock ;
- Officer representation comprise the Chief Fire Officer and Area Manager Safety Services, and that the Fire Brigades Union be invited to nominate two Trade Union representatives ;
- That regular meetings of the task and finish group be arranged and report to the Policy and Strategy Committee.

3. REPORT

The draft minutes from the meeting held on 4 July 2006 are attached as Appendix A to this report. Of particular note for Members of this Committee are the following items :

3.1 The Strategic Management Team (SMT) reviewed the project plan for shift change implementation, the milestone issues and the risks associated with each of them. As a result, SMT agreed that the implementation date should be put back to January

2007. That outcome was discussed with the Fire Brigades Union and agreed. The Collective Agreement has therefore been amended to incorporate that decision. Having assessed the most appropriate date for the transition to the new arrangements, it is agreed that 0700 hours on 3 January 2007 will mark the commencement of the new pattern. This has been conveyed to all personnel.

- 3.2 Work is ongoing to identify personnel to work in the new Community Safety Team. To date, in spite of an extension to the closing date, there are insufficient volunteers to populate the team. Further briefings have been offered to stations in an attempt to avoid the need for compulsory transfers.
- 3.3 A decision has been reached to identify transfer requirements as part of the re-structure as soon as possible in order to provide for a longer migration period and to accommodate as many voluntary transfers as possible. This will ease transition and allow assist the leave plotting process for 2007.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A initial impact assessment has revealed no specific equality issues arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The implementation of new working patterns and practices is a core component of the Authority's Community Plan, providing substantial additional capacity within the Service for community engagement and safety. Failure to deliver the proposal will put the Community Plan objectives at serious risk.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION

- Collective Agreement ;
- Community Plan (IRMP).

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CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

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SHIFT CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION TASK & FINISH GROUP

Tuesday 4 July 2006

Conference Room

Present :	Councillor John Cottee Paul Woods John Buckley Phil Coates Mark Healy	Chair Chief Fire Officer Area Manager Fire Brigades Union Industrial Relations Officer
Apologies :	Steve Ainley Councillor Brian Grocock	Fire Brigades Union Fire & Rescue Authority
In Attendance :	Lea-Anne Abbiss	Notes

Action

John Cottee opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the group and outlining that the deliberations of the group would be reported back to the next meeting of the Policy & Strategy Committee on 4 August 2006

1 SMT DECISION

SMT had discussed the issue of putting back the implementation date of shift change to 3 January 2007, and this had also subsequently been discussed with Steve Ainley, and the decision was therefore before the group today for ratification. Given that a risk assessment had been undertaken to inform this decision, along with examination of timescales and issues to be addressed, the group were in agreement with the decision to put back to 3 January 2007. John Buckley additionally updated that this had enabled the issue of leave to be dealt with, whilst acknowledging that floating leave is yet to be addressed, given the need to confirm courses before doing so. The decision will be reported to the Fire & Rescue Authority in due course.

2 POSITION (STATUS) REPORT

John Buckley provided an overview to the group of the main headlines arising from the document circulated to the group :

- Project Team – this is now in place.
- Crewing – paper regarding posts has been submitted to the HR Committee, job descriptions/person specifications have been completed, and the posts advertised. Appointments will be made on a temporary basis, prior to formal approval by the Fire & Rescue Authority. Appointments will hopefully be made by September, to enable the post-holders to get up to speed with the crewing system prior to implementation.
- IT – AssetCo are able to upgrade the current system and are on track to deliver phase one by 7 August. The second phase is scheduled for October.

- Organisational Re-structure – to form the pool and Community Safety Team a re-structure may be required. Work has been underway with watches regarding volunteers to join the team, but due to a lack of expressions of interest, the deadline has been extended. It is felt this relates to lack of information, which is being addressed.
- Establishment/Ridership – by 31 July this will be 12 under and is currently 6 under, with 6 further leavers expected. Training courses are plotted to accommodate 24 employees. This will leave a potential over-establishment of 2 above in January. Further trainee courses are planned from April onwards next year. Additionally, an advert has gone out for transferees from other Authorities, with four expressions received to date. Deadline for responses is 10 July.
- Community Safety Team – work on the team is underway, job descriptions and person specifications have been completed. Watch Managers have been identified for secondment from the Community Safety Department to up-skill the rest of the volunteers. Six briefing sessions have already taken place around the county (spread over days/evenings/weekends) and several staff briefing papers produced (a further one is due to come out) to ensure everyone is aware of how the team will operate. It has been made clear at the briefings that the FBU are in support of this, and John Buckley will be discussing with the FBU outside of this meeting, further ways to take forward this matter and offer more information to people, to seek volunteers and avoid the need for compulsory transfers
- Existing Time Owing Leave – will be collated during July/August and will be paid off. A new system is to be introduced in September, to ensure no overtime is accrued for in the future.
- Brigade Orders/Policies – Steve Ainley has undertaken a lot of work in this area and will continue to do so on his return from leave. Some areas are near completion, but this is still a large body of work that the rest of the project team will be involved in during the implementation process.
- Performance Management – Information Services are in the process of preparing a new Working Practices Framework and associated targets (see later item).
- Communication – supervisory manager briefings are being undertaken in each district on how the implementation will take place, how the shifts will operate and what their role will be in terms of future delivery expectations. Updates are being provided to SMT and PaCT weekly and Safety Services Managers are briefed regularly. Regular staff briefing papers and PowerPoint presentations are also being issued to keep the rest of the Service updated on progress.

3 BRIEFING VISITS

This issue was largely covered in discussion around item two above. Work has taken place (and will continue) with Group, Station and Watch Managers, reinforcing the issues around change.

4 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This was an issue raised during the risk assessment undertaken in relation to the change of implementation date. It is essential to ensure project management is in place regarding delivery and John Buckley is working with Information Services to produce a project plan to hit the deadline.

5 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

At the briefings that have been held there has been discussion around expectations regarding performance management. In the long-term this is about impact on outcomes (ie: death/injury reduction). This links in to discussion on the next agenda item, as in the medium term performance management centres around the Working Practices Framework – what is currently being done and what can be done to achieve more. The Framework is anticipated as guidance and not to be prescriptive, but will give clear direction about delivery.

6 WORKING PRACTICES FRAMEWORK

The Working Practices Framework is already in place, but is in need of review. The Framework supports performance management and the ethos is that during the daytime as much community engagement as possible will be done, with the evening mopping up what couldn't be done during the daytime. The collective agreement identified a number of activities that can be done during these periods. PB Views will be utilised, though some time will be required in embedding the system, as well as the organisational shift which will be needed. All Watch Managers will be given access to PB Views to allow those at Watch Manager level to work together and share practice. The Framework should additionally give more autonomy at a lower level in the management structure.

7 FA REPORTING

The mechanism for dealing with the outcome of this meeting will be through the next meeting of the Policy & Strategy Committee taking place on 4 August 2006. The outcomes from this meeting will form the basis of a report to the Committee.

		Action
8	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>It was agreed that the future meeting dates already scheduled (in August and October) were no longer appropriate given the change in implementation date. A further meeting will therefore be arranged for September and all parties notified.</p>	JC/PW
9	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p>	
9.1	<p><u>Compensatory Rest Periods</u> – Phil Coates raised the issue of compensatory rest periods and expressed his hope there would be leeway on nights after fire calls. Mark Healy updated that training had been given to managers on this issue. Additionally, John Buckley outlined that it had also been reiterated at the briefing sessions. Whilst management would not be ‘snooping’ around at night, they would be looking at inputs and outputs, with individual watches being measured on those. Therefore if poor performance or lack of productivity is identified, this would need to be addressed via the management structure. This issue will also be covered in the Working Practices Framework. Phil Coates additionally raised that no research had been done on body clocks and the Service is not paying shift allowance.</p> <p>Paul Woods reiterated to the group that a collective agreement for a wakeful night shift (with a meal break) had been agreed, that there will be autonomy at a local level and that managers will be briefed further on compensatory rest to ensure there is no ambiguity – given the duty of care for managers to ensure this is in place.</p>	
10	<p>CLOSING REMARKS</p> <p>In closing the meeting, John Cottee confirmed with all present that they were happy with a similar agenda for future meetings, though it was acknowledged the items to be discussed would change as the implementation date grew closer.</p>	