

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date 15th January 2013

Report Title Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Public Consultation Summary

Recommendation

That the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee support the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2013/17 Public Consultation exercise and make any comments that they wish to be considered by Cabinet in light of consultation responses received by the date of its meeting.

1.0 Key Issues

Background

- 1.1 Open and honest public consultation is a requirement placed on the Fire Authority when developing its IRMP, feedback from the community, our staff and other public bodies help the service to develop its plans to keep the public and our firefighters safe.
- 1.2 Since April 2003 every Fire and Rescue Authority has been subject to a statutory requirement to produce a local IRMP that sets out the Fire Authority's strategy, in collaboration with other agencies, for:
 - Reducing the number and severity of fires, road traffic accidents and other emergency incidents occurring in the area for which it is responsible;
 - Reducing the severity of injuries in fires, road traffic accidents and other emergency incidents;
 - Reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents;
 - Safeguarding the environment and heritage (both built and natural);
 - Providing value for money.
- 1.3 Responsibility for preparing the IRMP 2013/2017 rests with the Fire Authority. A cross party member working group, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, was set up to shape the proposals with professional advice provided by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

- 1.4 There is no legal standard definition of public consultation, but the Service bases its IRMP consultation exercise on the guidance provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the local voluntary sector Compact agreement and accepted good practice.
- 1.5 This IRMP consultation plan was informed by the 2009/10 Improvement Plan consultation exercise and has involved deliberative meetings with the public and business leaders, our attendance at community forums and one to one meetings with key stakeholders.
- 1.6 The consultation exercise began in May 2012 at the early “formative” stages of IRMP policy development with two meetings that involved the public, and a third that involved local businesses. These meetings were convened and managed by Opinion Research Services to ensure an impartial and unbiased beginning to the development of IRMP policy. A copy of the report is attached.
- 1.7 There were a total of 40 members of the public at the meetings that were held in Leamington Spa and Nuneaton, and included a broad range of attendees who reflected the diversity of the community.
- 1.8 The IRMP consultation was launched with a press release and publication of the IRMP on the Fire and Rescue Service section of the Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Website.
- 1.9 An introduction and link to the IRMP consultation web pages was sent to all Town and Parish Councils, our neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services and all WFRS personnel via email.
- 1.10 As of 14th December 2012 there had been a range of respondents to the IRMP consultation including members of the public, other Fire and Rescue Services and Parish Councils. There were no objections to the proposals contained within the IRMP and all comments were positive in nature. There were a few requests for further information.
- 1.11 In order to meet the internal O&S committee deadlines all consultation responses that have been received are included in Appendix 1. As agreed with the Chair of the O&S Committee, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer will provide a copy of any further response received between the 15th of December 2012 and 14th January 2012 at the O&S meeting.
- 1.12 The Deputy Chief Fire Officer held IRMP briefings with the Fire Brigades Union and the Retained Fire Brigades Union. Responses from both the FBU and RFU have been requested and will be presented at the O&S meeting in January
- 1.13 This IRMP has been developed jointly with Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service and includes a shared statement regarding the Strategic Alliance.

2.0 Outstanding Issues from the IRMP 2010 - 13

- 2.1 Work has been progressing in order to relocate Leamington Fire Station, Service Headquarters, Fire Control and to provide a purpose built training centre.
- 2.2 Leamington Spa fire station site also houses the fire service command and control room which deals with emergency call handling and major incidents within the County. This facility could be located on any new fire station site.
- 2.3 The Fire and Rescue Service HQ function is also located at Leamington Spa which amounts to 65 staff carrying out roles to support fire and community safety, in addition accommodation within the HQ site provides for storage of kit and equipment essential for operational response. This facility could be relocated to existing County Council accommodation and in addition officers are exploring the potential of sharing HQ provision with Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of the Strategic Alliance.
- 2.4 A number of options ensued from the original proposal and estimates suggested a total cost of up to £17m, which is 4 times the value anticipated for the sale of the current Leamington Fire Station site.
- 2.5 The 2010/13 IRMP also proposed a new purpose built training facility. In order to improve training facilities there is a requirement for facilities of some considerable technical capability in order to meet modern fire service standards. The training functions, which would serve the entire County, would not need to be located with any new fire station.
- 2.6 In early 2012 Resources Group agreed with Portfolio Holders to produce a thorough business case exploring the possible options. This business case would form the basis of a budget bid for the 2013/14 budget. This funding is crucial to deliver the new fire station. A bid of £4.2m was made to the DCLG for funding of the training facility, but was unsuccessful.

3.0 Proposals for the future

The IRMP member working group have shaped the following proposals.

- 3.1 Review our emergency response standards so that we can offer the best response across the whole county.
- 3.2 Increase training, support and leadership for Retained Duty System Firefighters so that they can respond effectively to operational incidents in rural areas.
- 3.3 Introduce a core spine of wholetime operational Incident Commanders, particularly across rural areas, to respond to emergencies immediately so that an enhanced level of supervision and specialist knowledge is available.

- 3.4 Deploy wholetime Firefighters to do jobs that make the best use of their skills and working time, whilst maintaining a quick and safe response to operational incidents across the county.
- 3.5 Develop the role of our Fire Control Operating teams to maximise their contribution and make best use of their skills and working time, so that they can provide vital information to operational crews.
- 3.6 Develop the partnership with Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service and others so that we can increase capacity and make efficiency savings where possible.
- 3.7 Increase our water rescue capability to flooding / fast flowing water incidents so that we can respond to a wider range of incidents with a well-equipped and better trained team.
- 3.8 Develop our specialist rescue capability so that we can provide a response to incidents with the right skills, knowledge and equipment.
- 3.9 Review our preventative work to reduce the number and impact of emergency incidents.

4.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4.1 Guidance has been produced to assist fire authorities in consulting and producing and publishing IRMP's and on that basis the proposed timescales are as follows:-
 - (i) The Fire and Rescue Authority to formally consider the outcome of consultation, commission any revisions and to formally adopt the IRMP by the end of March 2013.
 - (ii) Begin to develop the work plans associated with the delivery of the proposals outlined in the draft IRMP by the end of May 2013

Background papers

- 1. Draft IRMP 2013/17
- 2. ORS IRMP Consultation Report June 2012

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Appendix 1

Proposers Details	Date Received	Page Number Paragraph	Current Text / Comment (<u>please note this column contains verbatim quotes from the respondent</u>)	Suggested Text / Answer
Andy Parker QPM Chief Constable Warwickshire Police	12/11/2012	N/A	Thanks for the sight of your IRMP which looks very comprehensive. I have asked Martin McNevin to have a detailed look and provide any feedback to the IRMP team.	Confirmation of approval and support of Plan.
Member of the public "Support from other Fire and Rescue Services"	09/11/2012	Page 17	Telephone Conversation – A good document, easy to read. One Question regarding the partnership with Northamptonshire FRS, does WFRS have the same sort of support arrangements in place with Leicestershire FRS	Yes, we have mutual aid agreements in place with Leicestershire whereby we provide support to each other if requested.
Member of the public "Consultation Questions"	08/11/12	Page 26	<p>Consultation Indicate which groups represented the public please?</p> <p>I am particularly interested to know the locations of such groups.</p> <p>Was this random selection that took place across Warwickshire inclusive of remote rural areas, how can I be assured that rural areas were consulted?</p> <p>Although I would not expect individual names of respondents, do you hold the locations, not address specific?</p> <p>What was the take up rate of the random telephone calls? How many residents</p>	<p>A random sample of members of the public was selected to help with the formulation of the IRMP proposals.</p> <p>Two meetings for the public were held one was in Leamington Spa and the other was in Nuneaton.</p> <p>This consultation was at the formative stages of the development of the proposals. The groups included a broad representation of the public. The current public consultation exercise is open to every member of the public to respond.</p> <p>No we do not have address details of the attendees. All respondents were given the option of attending either of the meetings.</p> <p>We do not know what the take up rate was. There were approximately 20 attendees at</p>

			<p>attended these sessions? Was the ratio of male and female equal? What questions were asked?</p>	<p>each meeting and there was an equal share of male and female people at each meeting. The sessions began with background information regarding the fire service including what we do, how we do it and how we manage risk to the community and our staff.</p> <p>Questions included; what should we prioritise: prevention, protection or response? How many people are killed and injured in fire related incidents? What is an appropriate response time?</p>
Member of the public "budget/finance questions"	08/11/12	Page 22	Can you also indicate what the likely budget for WF&RS is to be for this year please?	£22.3 million
	09/11/12	Page 22	Thanks for the details re the budget, is this less, more, or at the same level as you currently have? Was this figure decided upon by the county or what WF&RS have calculated as your requirements? Eleven pence a day was the figure that was quoted way back when the consultation took place to close the fire stations, in real terms why has this not increased or is it because there are more people in Warwickshire?	The Fire and Rescue budget for 2012/13 is the same as 2011/12. The Governments Comprehensive Spending review is due for publication in December 2012 when further information about our future budget will be known.
	09/11/12	Page 22	Is it true that funding for WF&RS is based on per head of population? How then are visitors or motorists passing through taken into the equation?	Funding is based on Grants made to the County Council for the provision of a Fire and Rescue Service and through local taxation. The WCC Cabinet makes the decision on the level of funding for the Fire Service.
Member of the public "governance question"	08/11/12	N/A	Has the new government suggested that F&RS should be treated the same as the police and set their own budget, rather than be tied to the County Council yet?	No the Government has not suggested that Fire and Rescue Services should be governed in the same way as the Police.

<p>Member of the public "response time question"</p>	<p>09/11/12</p>	<p>Page 10</p>	<p>As this would seem an ideal opportunity to improve response times, what is your proposed revised target?</p>	<p>We are proposing to review our current response times and standards as part of the IRMP 2013 – 17. We do not have a revised response target.</p>
<p>Member of the public "RDS availability question"</p>	<p>09/11/12</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>I note that the retained are to supply you with duty availability in advance, how will this work in real terms?</p> <p>For example if you have indicated that you will be available for a shift on return from work, reasonably 5.30pm and then they are delayed either by having to stay late or traffic, what happens if they can't make it?</p> <p>Would you not agree that this is too restrictive?</p> <p>How far in advance are they expected to predict their availability?</p> <p>Given the large and useful range of retained personnel, I can envisage problems with this proposal, what do the retained feel about this and have they been canvassed for their opinion? If so how has this been received and how many were asked?</p>	<p>We need to be able to plan for availability and have the right number of firefighters available to respond to the public needs us most. If RDS firefighters can let us know when they are available and when they are not we will be in a better position to plan. RDS firefighters will be asked to provide details of their availability in advanced.</p> <p>This would be managed locally and we would aim to have enough flexibility in the system to make it work for both our firefighters and the service, this would include having enough firefighters available to deal with crewing deficiencies.</p> <p>The key is getting the right balance to have enough information available to be able to plan to have the right number of Firefighters available to respond when we are needed.</p> <p>Probably 3 months?</p> <p>All proposals are discussed with the relevant representative bodies.</p>

			Whereby I can see this suggestion would have obvious benefits for management, I don't feel that the same could be said for the retained duty.	The key is getting the right balance to have enough information available to be able to plan to have the right number of Firefighters available to respond when they are needed.
Member of the public "RDS recruitment question"	09/11/12	N/A	Recruitment for retained stations still seems patchy; can you not incorporate a rolling programme of recruitment so that more people can be encouraged to come forward? How will you be seeking to improve this aspect?	Recruitment of RDS firefighters is limited by the fact that the need to live or work within 5 minutes of their station. This means that we have a small number of people to recruit from in the first place. We are looking at extending the travel time to increase the "pool" of people that could be included. We are also looking at changing elements of the recruitment and selection process to provide additional support to potential RDS firefighters.
Group Manager West Mids Fire Service IRMP Manager.	07/12/2012		<p>With reference to the WFRS draft IRMP for the forthcoming period, on behalf of WMFS, I would thank you for including us in your consultation process and comment as follows:</p> <p>Overall, WMFS does not see any significant impacts on our service, arising from the issues outlined in the draft IRMP</p> <p>More specifically, only the following point would appear to have the potential to impact on the West Midlands service, or communities:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review our emergency response standards so that we can offer the best response across the whole county. <p>WMFS would request to be kept informed of the details relating to any proposed changes to emergency response cover across Warwickshire and in particular, any changes that could impact upon our</p>	Agreed to share proposals regarding the outcomes of the review of response standards as soon as it is practicable to do so.

			common border areas and the working relations that we currently experience in those areas	
Budbrooke Parish Council	14/12/12		<p>The Parish Council would like to congratulate Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service on the achievements and improvements made so far, as detailed in the plan.</p> <p>Councillors have the following questions:</p> <p>What is the proposed response time for outlying areas, such as Budbrooke?</p> <p>Is the Head Quarters to be relocated and, if so, will the engines be moved and what will the effect be on response times?</p>	<p>There are no proposed response standards, a review of operational response standards will be completed as per IRMP option one.</p> <p>A decision regarding the location of Head Quarters has not been made and the impact on response standards will not be known until the location of the fire engines is available.</p>