

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
held on 27 February 2019**

**Present:**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors Parminder Singh Birdi (Vice-Chair), Sarah Boad, John Cooke, Judy Falp, Pete Gilbert, Andy Jenns, Maggie O'Rourke, Bill Olnor, Bob Stevens and Heather Timms (Chair)

**Other County Councillors:**

Richard Chattaway – Leader of the Labour Group  
Andy Crump - Portfolio Holder for Fire & Community Safety  
Kam Kaur – Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation

**Officers:**

Helen Barnsley	Democratic Services Officer
Vanessa Belton	Performance and Improvement Business Partner
Andy Hickmott	Chief Fire Officer
Rose Holme	Performance and Improvement Service Lead
Allison Lehky	Workforce Strategy and OD Manager
Rob Moyney	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Dave Pemberton	Area Commander
Jane Pollard	Legal Services Manager
Mark Ryder	Strategic Director
Nichola Vine	Legal Services Manager

**1. General**

**(1) Apologies**

Councillor Peter Butlin - Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property

**(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None

**(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018**

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018 were approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

**2. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions received or presented at the meeting.

### **3. Questions to the Portfolio Holders relevant to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Following a question from Councillor Maggie O'Rourke regarding how much bad debt has been written off by Warwickshire County Council it was agreed that a briefing note will be provided to the Committee.

Following a question from Councillor Andy Jenns in relation to residents who park across fire hydrants and what can be done to tackle the issue, Councillor Andy Crump, Portfolio Holder for Fire & Community Safety confirmed that the police are unable to help if the car is parked legally, albeit across a hydrant. Chief Fire Officer Andy Hickmott confirmed that the Fire Service has no legal power in this matter but can physically move vehicles to gain access if needed.

### **4. Work Programme 2019-20**

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the following items would be discussed at the next Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC Chair and Group Spokes Meeting on Thursday, 25 April 2019 @ 10am. Once details have been confirmed the items will be added to the work programme for 2019/20

- Capital Investment Strategy
- Update on Library Services – to include visitor numbers. This item was considered timely due to WCC's current Digital Transformation programme.

### **Resolved**

That the Committee agrees the updated 2019-20 Work Programme, as set out in the report and notes the scheduled future meeting dates.

### **5. One Organisational Plan Quarterly Progress Report: April to September 2018**

Andy Hickmott, Chief Fire Officer presented the report to the Committee. The full report was presented to Cabinet and the information presented to the Committee was relevant just to their remit.

With reference to the performance of the Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service, Councillor Sarah Boad raised concerns relating to the attendance times for first appliances reaching an incident. In view of the performance figures the question was raised as to whether the current targets are realistic and achievable? Councillor Judy Falp noted that the motorway network in Warwickshire undoubtedly had an impact on this target; in some areas timely access to motorways depends on the area of carriage way affected.

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke asked if Warwickshire Fire Service set targets and response times after reviewing neighbouring and similar sized fire services; and if so, how does the performance compare?

Councillor Andy Crump, Portfolio Holder for Fire & Community Safety confirmed that the Fire Service is aware of the performance issues raised by the Committee.

It was acknowledged that the work carried out by the fire service includes prevention and protection work as well as rescue. The demographics in Warwickshire are always changing and the fire service needs to look at where incidents are happening and what type of incidents are happening. It was noted by the Committee that if the performance for attendance to road traffic accidents was presented separately to the performance for attendance to fire related incidents then the view would be different. Moving forward consideration will be given to how fire service performance is presented.

Councillor Sarah Boad questioned whether targets were necessary; are the current targets unrealistic and do they need updating, Andy Hickmott confirmed that they are a fundamental part of monitoring performance. The performance figures for the attendance of second appliances at incidents has been impacted by staffing issues, in particular the recruitment and retention of day duty retained fire officers.

Councillor O'Rourke requested that future target setting should be inclusive with all relevant stakeholders and that she would like to see a robust methodology behind the process.

Councillor Kam Kaur, Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation thanked the Committee for their comments about the setting of realistic and achievable targets; stating that it the discussion would lead to the performance team introducing a check and challenge approach.

Rob Moyney, Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the increase in the number of incidents attended was reflected nationally. For Warwickshire, the increase in incidents is in part as a result of the increase in mobilisation to incidents; this provides a better service to the community.

Councillor Bill Olnier asked whether developing technologies such as drones could be used in the future to tackle issues such as false alarms and fires not involving people or vehicles? It was confirmed that as part of the work by the Blue Light Collaboration Board there were discussions about sharing drones and how effective they might be. It was acknowledged that other fire services are already using this technology and that WFS would embrace new technology and saw a lot of potential. Mention was given to the 999eye smartphone system which allows emergency control rooms to view live footage of an incident.

## **Resolved**

That the Committee considers and comments on the progress of the delivery of the One Organisational Plan 2020 for the period as contained in the report.

## **6. Inspection of Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services**

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Rob Moyney presented the report to the Committee confirming that the inspection had taken place in July 2018 and the final report was published in December 2018.

There were three areas that the service was judged on; effectiveness, efficiency and people. There were 11 diagnostics within the three areas; Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service scored 'good' in eight and 'requires improvement' in three. However, the report was largely positive and complementary and some of the areas where the service was recorded as needing improvement were reflected in other fire services nationally.

With reference to the areas identified as needing improvement it was noted by the Committee that work will take place with officers across Warwickshire County Council and not just within the fire service. The 19-point improvement plan will be used not only for the areas of improvement but also for maintaining the areas recorded as 'good'.

The Committee raised concerns that one of the areas recorded as needing improvement was in relation to diversity within the fire service. It was confirmed that this was a key area of focus and that the inspection has highlighted this but it was an area fire officers were already aware of.

Councillor Bob Stevens requested that the recommendation was amended to remove the word "periodically" – it was felt that there needed to be a more structured time frame for monitoring the action plan.

### **Resolved**

That the Committee:

- 1) Notes the formal inspection report published on 20 December 2018; and
- 2) Monitors the resultant action plan and related improvements.

## **7. Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Task & Finish Group Report**

Dave Pemberton, Area Commander presented the report to the Committee which notes progress made by the service against the 2019/20 IRMP. The action plan sets out five key objectives.

It was also noted by the Committee that the plan reflects the changes in risk to the residents of Warwickshire as a result of new developments, changing demographics etc. There are also links to the Warwickshire County Council asset management plan in relation to station locations.

Concerns were raised by the Committee in relation to Single Fire Control. Andy Hickmott, Chief Fire Officer acknowledged that there are still details to be confirmed and that a meeting has been scheduled for March 2019. Single Fire Control is still a credible proposal and the Committee will be kept up to date.

The Chair thanked the fire officers for the presentation and details about the report which responds to the growth of Warwickshire. The Chair confirmed that regular reports will be brought back to the Committee and that all stakeholders will be engaged in the process to ensure full transparency.

### **Resolved**

That the Committee receive and note the work undertaken by the IRMP Task & Finish Group.

### **8. Urgent Matters**

None

### **9. Any Other Business**

The Chair announced that both Andy Hickmott, Chief Fire Office and Rob Moyney, Deputy Chief Fire Officer would be retiring in March 2019 and that this was the last Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee that they would be attending.

The Chair thanked both officers for all their hard work and dedication to the Fire Service. The work undertaken in supporting both Warwickshire and the Committee were greatly appreciated by officers and elected members on the Committee.

The meeting rose at 3.21p.m.

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Chair