

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

18 June 2008

Present:-

Councillors Dyke, Foggin, Fry, S Hughes, Leaves, Phillips and Tully.

***CSCP/1. Election of Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Fry be appointed Chair of the Committee until its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2009.

***CSCP/2. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2008 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

***CSCP/3. Declarations of Interest**

Members of the Committee were invited to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interests they may have in any item(s) to be considered at the current meeting in accordance with the Authority's approved Code of Conduct.

No interests were declared.

***CSCP/4. Election of Vice Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor S Hughes be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee until its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2009.

***CSCP/5. Operations and Resilience Department Plan**

The Committee received for information a copy of the Operations and Resilience Department Plan for 2008/09 together with a presentation given by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations). The presentation covered the following areas:

- Implementation of Emergency Response Standards
- Distribution of Emergency Response Resources – Review
- Review Working Practices at Station Level
- Review Staffing Arrangements in Support of Community Safety and Training Activity
- Review and Harmonise Provision of Operational Risk Information Systems
- Co-Responder Update.

Reference was made in particular to the position in respect of Co-Responder. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) reported that combination had provided the opportunity to review the arrangements. The service was now implementing the use of light vehicles instead of a fire appliance at seven stations undertaking Co-Responder, with crewing restricted to 5 to be alerted and 2 to ride at any time. Discussions with the South West Ambulance Trust regarding additional support for the scheme was proving successful and the new initiative would create an improved level of service whilst reducing the associated costs.

***CSCP/6. Community Safety Department Plan**

RESOLVED that this item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting.

***CSCP/7. Retained Duty System Review**

The Committee received for information a presentation given by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) in respect of the Retained Duty System (RDS) Review. The main objectives of the review had been to decide how the service would resource and deliver the service in rural areas, the range of work that RDS employees would undertake within the community or in specialist roles and how RDS stations would be managed and supported, along with improvements to recruitment and retention.

The Review had entailed undertaking work via an employee and partner questionnaire (ORS), retained salary scheme questionnaire, discussion groups, data and information gathering.

The findings included the need to address

- Recruitment and retention
- Training
- Help and support
- Work life balance
- Working time and pay
- Contractual arrangements
- Integration of Wholetime and RDS arrangements
- Use of RDS employees in specialist roles
- Additional activities to achieve the Service Plan.

A more detailed report on the proposed way forward would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

Reference was made at this point to the perspective of the employer of RDS staff and whether any consideration had been given to promoting the scheme to employers. Councillor S Hughes commented that in Devon, the service used to instigate evenings for employers to come along to learn more about the RDS and he moved (and was seconded by Councillor Tully) that these be reinstated and that arrangements be made as appropriate..

RESOLVED

- (a) that the evenings for employers to learn more about the RDS be reinstated;
- (b) that, subject to (a) above, the presentation be received and noted.

***CSCP/8.**

Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Structures and Roles

The Committee received for information a presentation given by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) that set out a background to Local Resilience Forums and their structures. The presentation covered the provisions in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which took effect from 1st April 2005. The Act imposes a series of duties on local bodies in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the overall objective being to modernise outdated Civil Defence legislation from 1948. The main change entailed the division of bodies into two groups, namely Category 1 and Category 2 responders. The presentation covered service's responsibilities as a category 1 responder as follows:

- The need to have Local Resilience Forum (LRF) structures in place to enhance co-ordination and working effectively to address multi-agency planning;
- To have co-operation and information sharing mechanisms in place between Category 1 and 2 responders;
- To develop and have Business Continuity Management plans in place;
- To assess the risk of emergencies occurring, producing a Community Risk Register and using the information to inform contingency planning as appropriate;
- Emergency plans to be in place and published as appropriate;
- To put in place agreed arrangements for public awareness and informing;
- Advice and assistance to the commercial sector and voluntary organisations.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations), in response to a question, stated that there was a fire and rescue national co-ordination centre in the event of flooding and that local/regional resources were available to meet this developing risk. He added that there had been a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes to deal with the terrorist threat and in addition, work was ongoing in respect of the Regional Control Centre and Firelink projects.

*** DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The meeting started at 14.15hours and concluded at 15.50hours.