



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/09/24
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	28 SEPTEMBER 2009
SUBJECT OF REPORT	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2010/11 TO 2012/13
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>(a) <i>That the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13, as enclosed separately with the agenda for this meeting, be approved in principle;</i></p> <p>(b) <i>That the Draft Corporate Plan be consulted on seeking views from key stakeholders; and</i></p> <p>(c) <i>That the results of the consultation and any recommended changes to the draft Corporate Plan be considered at the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 19 February 2010.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Enclosed with the agenda for this meeting (attached and page numbered separately) is the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13.</p> <p>The draft Corporate Plan sets out how it is proposed to realise the ambition of the Authority by 2014 through identifying clear outcome statements. The Plan also contains proposals to adopt the piloted emergency response standards for road traffic collisions and to pilot new emergency response standards for fires in non-domestic premises and entrapments (excluding road traffic collisions). The Authority is invited to comment and agree the plan for consultation purposes.</p> <p>This report also sets out the recommended approach to consultation on the draft Corporate Plan and precept consultation.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Funding for consultation purposes is already included in the approved Revenue Budget 2009/10.
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	An initial assessment has revealed that there are no equality issues arising from this report.

APPENDICES	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13 (enclosed and page numbered separately with the agenda for this meeting).
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Report DSFRA/09/23 (Emergency Response Standards) elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Enclosed with this agenda (attached and page numbered separately) is the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13. The Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13 sets the scene for future change to ensure the Authority has the right resources in the right place being used efficiently and effectively. The plan includes: an overview of: the Devon and Somerset area; a background to why the service is provided; how the service is tailored for local needs; a summary of performance; and how the service is to be improved.

1.2 The Draft Corporate Plan presents the following as factors for improving the service.

New outcome statements

1.3 When planning improvement it is critical that there is clarity as to what is to be achieved. The plan presents a proposed set of clear outcome statements that a high performing fire and rescue service would be able to demonstrate. These outcome statements are aligned under the current organisational Goals. They enable the gap to be identified between the existing level of performance and that to which we wish to attain by achieving our ambition. This gap reflects the change that is required and will assist in planning the activities required to deliver the change. Each statement is supported by a short explanation of how it will be achieved.

Matching resources to risk

1.4 Matching resources to risk is a key element of improving the service. The adopted approach is to ensure that any recommendations for change are supported with evidence. This approach takes time but is one which provides added confidence to the decision making process. Work has been progressing and a short update is provided.

Adoption of road traffic collision emergency response standards

1.5 During 2009 the emergency response standards for road traffic collisions proposed in last year's corporate plan were piloted. The pilot has now been completed and is reported to the Authority in the paper DSFRA/09/23. The standards to be fully adopted are included in this year's Draft Corporate Plan.

Proposed emergency response standards for non-domestic premises and entrapments

1.6 Work has continued during 2009 on developing our local emergency response standards. The detail behind this work for non-domestic premises and entrapments is presented to the Authority in the paper DSFRA/09/23. The Draft Corporate Plan contains the proposed emergency response standards to be piloted and which will be subject to consultation.

2. **CONSULTATION**

2.1 It is important to seek people's views on our plans for the future and in particular the proposed changes. The need to consult is established in the Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) Guidance Note 2 and the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11. Guidance Note 2 requires fire and rescue services to consult on proposed changes to service delivery and significant changes to the working arrangements of staff. This guidance note offers the guiding principles in deciding how extensively to consult. It states:

'...any person or organisation that might have legitimate interest in the proposals under consideration, or anyone who may be affected by the proposal, should have the opportunity to express their view' and, '...the scope of the consultation you undertake will be proportionate to the nature and extent of any changes proposed.'

- 2.2 The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11 states that:
- 'Each fire and rescue authority must produce a publicly available IRMP covering at least a three year time span which reflects effective consultation during its development and at all review stages with representatives of all sections of the community and stakeholders.'*
- 2.3 In addition to the above documents the HM Government Code of Practice released in July 2008 sets out the consultation code of practice for Central Government and suggest Local Authorities adopt the same standards. The code states:
- 'consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.'*
- 2.4 There are a number of different ways to undertake consultation, none of which are right or wrong, but some methods or a combination of them may be better than others in certain circumstances.
- 2.5 Allowing for the above guidance and considering the scope of the content in the Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13, it is proposed that the consultation strategy will be to invite comments from key stakeholders. This will include MPs, councils, other emergency services, the business community, staff and representative bodies. In addition to this the plan will be promoted to raise awareness amongst the general public. The opportunity to reply will be through our website, telephone, email, fax and by writing to the Consultation Officer at Service Headquarters. If the consultation proposals are agreed by the Authority on 28 September 2009, it is proposed to commence consultation on 5 October 2009 and finish on 4 January 2010. This will provide a 13 week consultation period and allows for an additional week to account for the Christmas period.
- 2.8 It is essential that when considering the Draft Corporate Plan that there is full awareness of the finances available to deliver the Service. At this point in time the levels of revenue budget and council tax have still to be determined. The Authority will set these levels at the budget meeting to be held on 19 February 2010. Results from the consultation on the draft plan will be available to inform the budget setting process.
- 2.9 In addition to this, as a precepting Authority we have a requirement to consult with business on the future level of council tax. Previously this has been undertaken via a telephone survey in mid January whereby the views of approximately 400 people from businesses are sought, stratified across the whole service area. It is proposed to adopt this methodology again this year at a cost of approximately £4,000. The results from this survey will also be presented at the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 19 February 2010.

LEE HOWELL
Chief Fire Officer