

**AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

2 February 2011

Present:-

Councillors Dyke (Chairman), Burridge-Clayton, Drean, Gribble, Radford and Way

Apologies:-

Councillor Mills

**\*APRC/22. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2010 be signed as a correct record.

**\*APRC/23. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any personal/personal and prejudicial interests in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and to declare any such interests at this time.

No interests were declared.

**\*APRC/24. Performance Report: April to November 2010**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (APRC/11/1) that detailed the performance and progress made by the Service as measured by the Corporate Plan goals, activities and targets for the second quarter of the year (April to September 2010). The report highlighted the key issues and areas of focus in terms of performance as determined by the Service Improvement Group (SIG), namely:

- Deliberate fires;
- Fire alarms caused by automatic fire detection;
- Sickness absence;

Each of these areas was considered by the Committee in depth as below:

Deliberate fires

The Committee noted that the target for deliberate primary fires (excluding vehicles) was to achieve a 20% reduction in 2010/11, equating to 77 fires. This was intended to raise performance to the top 25% of fire and rescue services nationally. This target was not being achieved currently as there had been 233 fires to date in 2010/11 against a target of 181. This was an ambitious target for the Service when a reduction of 18% had been achieved in 2009/10.

The 2009/10 figures had been published, however, by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), and using this information for Devon and Somerset had raised the Service into the top 25% of fire and rescue services (FRS) nationally. Although the Service had not met the numerical part of the target, as some other FRSs had been experiencing rises in deliberate fires when a reduction was achieved by Devon and Somerset in 2009/10, the performance was now within the top quartile.

### Fire alarms caused by automatic fire detection

Reference was made to the point that the performance measure for false alarms caused by automatic fire detection looked at the rate of automatic false alarms (AFA) calls in non domestic premises. This had been over recorded previously by DSFRS as the property type was not available from the mobilising system and as a result, calls to domestic and other property types had been included. Since the inception of the new Incident Recording System (IRS), the property type could be determined and was now excluded from the statistics. It was felt that the policy on automatic false alarms was working well as, even with the inclusion of the domestic and other properties in 2009/10, a reduction was shown. In 2010/11 to date, an improvement had been shown on performance in 2009/10 with a reduction of 5%. Nationally, the Service was in the top 25% of FRSs.

### Sickness absence

Whilst the Service was on track to meet the target set for sickness of 9.0 days or shifts lost, there was concern that there had been a large increase in the incidence of non-uniformed absence and specifically, long term absence (1060 days/shifts lost as compared with 492 for the same period in 2009/10).

An analysis had been carried out on the area of musculoskeletal types of sickness to try to identify patterns or trends arising and to identify any areas for improving the levels of absence accordingly. It was noted that only 2.4% of the absence due to musculoskeletal issues was recorded as work related. Further work was to be undertaken in this area as a result.

### **\*APRC/25. Audit Progress Report**

The Committee received for information an Audit Progress Summary (to 25 January 2011) as prepared by the Audit Commission. The summary report detailed the work in progress for the Audit Commission, including:

- An interim audit for 2010/11;
- An ongoing review of authority progress in preparing for the new International Financial reporting Standards (IFRS).

### **\*APRC/26. International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)**

The Committee received for information a report of the Treasurer (APRC/10/9) setting out the progress made in respect of implementation of the new International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

Although considerable work had been completed and progress made towards IFRS compliance, there was still a significant amount of work to be undertaken to complete a satisfactory first set of accounts under IFRS.

### **\*APRC/27. Audit & Review Progress Report - Quarter 3**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (APRC/11/3) on progress made against the approved 2010/11 Audit & Review Plan and which provided assurance statements for the completed audits, together with the key/high risk findings of the Health & Safety – Risk Assessments and Estates – Revenue Budget audit reviews. The report detailed the recommendations made by the Audit and Review Team and the agreed management actions.

**\*APRC/28. Operational Assessment - Self Assessment Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (APRC/11/4) that detailed the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's self assessment against the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) contained within the CLGs Operational Assessment Toolkit.

The Audit & Review Manager reported that a suitable action plan had been set out to enable the organisation to continue to improve and to deliver activities in line with the sector specific performance framework.

**RESOLVED** that the report and Action Plan set out (at Appendix B to report APRC/11/4) therein be endorsed.

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

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 10.50hours.