

AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

27 July 2011

Present:-

Councillors Burridge-Clayton, Dyke, Healey (vice Gribble), Mills, Radford, Way and Woodman (vice Drean).

Apologies:-

Councillors Drean and Gribble.

***APRC/1. Election of Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Dyke be elected Chair of the Committee until the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting of the Authority in 2012.

***APRC/2. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2011 be signed as a correct record.

***APRC/3. Declarations of Interest**

Members of the Committee 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/4. Election of Vice Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Way be elected Vice Chair of the Committee until the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting of the Authority in 2012.

***APRC/5. Performance Report: April to May 2011**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (APRC/11/7) that set out a summary of the Service's performance for the period April to May 2011 compared against the new Corporate Measures and Strategic Principles as contained within the Corporate Plan for 2011/12 to 2013/14.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer referred to the new measures and commented that these had been instigated to make the performance data easier to understand.

- **Strategic Principle 1: Work with people, communities and businesses to make Devon and Somerset a safer place to live, work and visit:**
 - Measure 1: Deaths which occur as a result of fire in the places where people live ;

- Measure 2: Injuries which occur as a result of fire in the places where people live;
- Measure 3: Incidents which occur as a result of fire in the places where people live;
- Measure 4: Deaths which occur as a result of fire in the places where people work and visit;
- Measure 5: Injuries which occur as a result of fire in the places where people work and visit;
- Measure 6: Incidents which occur as a result of fire in the places where people work and visit.
- **Strategic Principle 2: Respond to local, regional & national emergencies with the appropriate skills & resources**
 - Measure 7: Occasions where our response standards are met – 1st attendance in 10 minutes for dwelling fires;
 - Measure 8: Occasions where our response standards are met – 1st attendance in 15 minutes for RTCs;
 - Measure 9: a publicly available and current Local Community Plan for each station.
- **Strategic Principle 3: Work hard to be an excellent organisation**
 - Measure 10: EFQM assessment score;
 - Measure 11: Staff survey results.

The Data Analyst responsible for performance advised the Committee that the emphasis on the performance measures had been changed to simplify the reporting process although the statistics in terms of the number of incidents per 10,000 of population would continue to be used for comparative purposes with other fire and rescue services. In view of the fact that this was the first meeting of the Committee since the new measures had been introduced, a full overview of the position was given for the benefit of Members.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer commented that the progress made to date in 2011 had been pleasing but it was still early in the year. There had been notable examples of good performance, however, in areas such as the measures in terms of places in which people lived, where a downward trend in fire deaths was being maintained and the number of incidents overall had decreased year on year since April 2007. The Committee noted that further reports would be submitted to the Committee at regular intervals.

***APRC/6. Audit & Review Progress Report 2011/12 - Quarter 1**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (APRC/11/8) that set out the progress made against the approved Audit & Review Plan for 2011/12.

The Audit and Review Manager reported that, although 3 audits had been undertaken to date, namely Health & Safety (HSE expectations), Hydrant Management and Democratic Services, the reports and the assurance statements had not been completed as yet. Reference was made to additional work that had been undertaken by the Audit & Review team including, amongst others, the assessment for the Operational Assessment for the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and work involved in preparation for the European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM) assessment.

The Committee noted that the Team had undertaken a follow up audit in respect of Sickness Absence Management and that as a result, the 2011/12 assurance statement for this had been upgraded to “good standard”.

***APRC/7. Audit Progress Report**

The Committee received for information an Audit Progress Summary (to 13 July 2011), as prepared by the Audit Commission. The summary report gave an overview of the work being carried out by the Audit Commission, including:

- Interim audit 2010/11;
- Value for money conclusion work 2010/11;
- Financial statements audit 2010/11.

***APRC/8. Draft Statement of Accounts 2010/11**

The Committee received for information a report of the Treasurer (APRC/11/9) that set out details of the significant changes that had been required in respect of the new International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) both to the structure and contents of the Authority’s Statement of Accounts for 2010/11. The Committee also received a copy of the draft Statement of Accounts for 2010/11 that took account of the changes made to comply with the new standards.

The Treasurer advised that an externally recruited IFRS specialist had been released from the project in June 2011 following performance failures relating to compliance with agreed deadlines. This had resulted in significant pressure on the Authority’s Finance Team during June 2011 to recover the position and to ensure the provision of a draft set of Accounts within the deadline of 30 June 2011. This had been achieved and was commended by the Committee. The Audit Commission had advised the Authority that their initial audit work had already identified some errors or omissions to the Accounts which would need to be amended before the final Statement of Accounts for 2010/11 was approved by the Committee in September 2011.

The Treasurer gave a presentation to the Committee in respect of the significant changes made, which involved the inclusion of statements in respect of:

- Employee Benefits;
- Capital Grant Receipts;
- Leases, and:
- Private Finance Initiative(s) (PFI).

The Committee noted that, in previous years, the relevant Regulations required that draft accounts had to be approved by 30 June, with final audited accounts approved by 30 September. The Regulations had changed this year, however, and now only require approval of the final, audited accounts by 30 September. This was of particular significance in 2011/12 given the introduction of IFRS and the problems that had been experienced as outlined above.

The Treasurer advised that the Accounts would be audited prior to approval by the Committee at its meeting in September 2011 in conjunction with an Annual Governance Statement.

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

The meeting started at 11.00 hours and finished at 12.45hours