

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

31 January 2013

Present:-

Councillors Radford (Chair), Burridge-Clayton, Gribble, Mills, J Smith and Way

Apologies:-

Councillor Dyke

**\*APRC/53. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2012 be signed as a correct record.

**\*APRC/54. Audit for the Year Ended 31 March 2013**

The Committee received for information a letter from Grant Thornton, together with a verbal briefing from David Bray (Grant Thornton), on the proposed workplan for external audit for the year ended 31 March 2013. Both Grant Thornton and the Service acknowledged that the transition from the Audit Commission had, to date, been seamless and the new arrangements should secure cost savings of approximately 40% for the Authority, largely as a result of the removal of certain overheads (e.g. previous national research work undertaken by the Audit Commission).

The audit of the Authority's 2012-13 financial statements would again be conducted in accordance with the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice and would feature three main elements:

- an opinion on the Authority's financial statements;
- a conclusion on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Authority's use of resources (the value for money conclusion); and
- a review of the whole of government accounts return.

Following agreement with the Service, this work would commence in July 2013 with the intention of reporting the findings back to this Committee prior to the statutory deadline of 30 September 2013.

**\*APRC/55. Audit & Review 2012-13 Third Quarter Progress Report**

The Committee received for information a report of the Audit and Review Manager (APRC/13/01) setting out progress as at the third quarter of 2012-13 of internal audit work against the approved plan for the year. All work was on track for completion, at least to draft report stage, by the end of the year. The report provided assurance statements for completed audits together with key/high risk findings from the recently completed audits of:

- the Operational Risk Information System (ORIS);
- Home Safety initiatives; and
- Road Safety initiatives.

The report also detailed additional work completed either by the Audit & Review Team or the Devon Audit Partnership and not included in the original plan.

\*APRC/56.

**Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Performance Report April to November 2012**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (APRC/13/02) on performance by the Service during April to November 2012 against those measures contained in the approved Corporate Plan. The following issues in particular were discussed:

***Measure 1 (fire deaths where people live):*** There had been a higher number of deaths when compared to the same period last year, albeit that the numbers involved were very small. Work was in hand to seek to identify any underlying trends and to quantify the potential impact of societal/welfare changes;

***Measure 2 (fire injuries where people live):*** Although performance was not to target (to secure a downward trend), there was an improvement in performance when compared to the same period last year;

***Measure 3 (fire incidents where people live):*** There had been a slight increase in the number of incidents when compared to the same period last year albeit that overall the target to achieve a downward trend was being achieved;

***Measures 4 (fire deaths where people visit), 5 (fire injuries where people visit) and 6 (fire incidents where people visit):*** Performance was largely as reported to the previous meetings, on target and with improved performance when compared to the same period last year for Measures 5 and 6; with improved performance against the same period last year but a neutral trend for Measure 4;

***Measures 7 (dwelling emergency response standard) and 8 (road traffic collision [RTC] emergency response standard):*** Efforts were ongoing to fully understand and address shortfalls in performance against the published emergency response standards and this continued to be a significant priority for the Service. Difficulties associated with rurality were highlighted as was the fact that for the vast majority of incidents actual attendance was only a matter of seconds outside the published standards. Also, it was again stressed that performance against the published response standards had no correlation whatsoever to the incidents, injuries and deaths recorded.

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

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