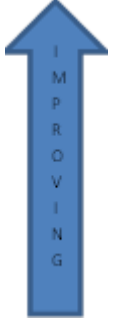| REPORT REFERENCE NO.	APRC/17/3
MEETING	AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	18 JANUARY 2017
SUBJECT OF REPORT	PEER REVIEW UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	AREA MANAGER – ORGANISATIONAL ASSURANCE
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the report be noted.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	This report provides the Committee with a more detailed update on progress made in respect of the Peer Review actions. It builds on the information provided to the Authority on previous occasions.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Nil.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	N/A
APPENDICES	A. Peer Review Challenge - Areas to Explore
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Peer Review Challenge Final Report. Report APRC/16/08 - Peer Review Update

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Peer Review is part of the Local Government Association's approach to sector-led challenge and improvement. It aims to help councils and fire and rescue authorities strengthen local accountability, evaluate and improve services.

1.2. Fire Peer Challenge is a voluntary process managed and delivered by the sector, for the sector. It is a mechanism to provide fire authorities and chief officers with information that allows them to challenge their operational service delivery to ensure it is efficient, effective and robust. Peers are at the heart of the Peer Challenge process. They help services with their improvement and learning by providing a 'practitioner perspective' and 'critical friend' challenge.

1.3. Operationally, the peer review focused on firefighter safety arrangements including the Key Areas for Assessment (KAA) of community risk management, response and training and development. In addition, the review also covered the following three areas:

- How effective is the leadership and governance? Looking at the Authority's committee structure and how the structure adds value to both Member engagement and informed challenge/decision making.

- How effective is the organisational capacity to meet current requirements and future needs? Looking at the arrangements in place with respect to partnership working with others, notably Police, Ambulance Service, Local Authority and Emergency Planning arrangements.

- How well are outcomes for local citizens being achieved? Looking at performance management.

1.4. The peer review challenge team produced its final report in September 2014. The report highlighted 5 key areas where the Service was working well, a number of 'Strengths', together with a number of 'Areas to Explore' with the potential for improvement in each of the areas covered by the review. The Service has been working to address the 'Areas to Explore' as identified. This report now sets out a more detailed progress report as shown in Appendix A overleaf.

1.5. As there is likely to be some form of Home Office inspectorate in quarter three of 2017, and, in addition to the peer review, the Service will be undertaking its own performs self-assessment, EFQM and Annual Statement of Assurance reviews with results triangulated and monitored by the Corporate Governance group.
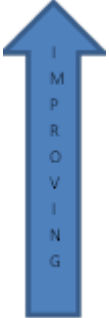
2. PROGRESS

2.1 Since the last peer review update in April 2016, this Service is better placed in preparation to respond to the anticipated inspection regime as outlined in paragraph 1.5 above.

2.2 The Committee is asked to note the report.

NICK MANNING
Area Manager – Organisational Assurance

LEADERSHIP and GOVERNANCE		
Areas to Explore	**Direction of Travel**	**Actions Taken**
1. **Future proof Officer/Member decision making structures** 2. **Number of Committees potentially to be streamlined and more aligned to IRMP decision making process** 3. **Continue to drive combination** 4. **Members to continue to be fully involved in ongoing development of future plans and the IRMP**	I M P R O V I N G ↑	• At the commencement of the current (2015-16) financial year, the Authority considered (at a Members Forum meeting) its existing Committee structure and indicated that, with the exception of commercial governance, it remained fit for purpose, effectively utilising Member skills and talents, providing relevant engagement opportunities and assisting them in discharging their responsibilities. • Members understand that integrated risk management planning is embedded, organisationally, and captured in "Our Plan", which represents the Service's approach to delivering its prevention, protection and response services by aligning resources to risk. "Our Plan" is subject to annual refresh to take account of a changing financial envelope and to ensure adherence to the three main strategic priorities of public safety, staff safety and organisational efficiency and effectiveness. "Our Plan" is also monitored in-year via the committee structure, with Members actively engaged in this process as well as our 2016-2020 Efficiency Plan. • Members are fully involved in determining the 2016-2020 Efficiency Plan. • The Executive Board and Service Leadership Team meet together as an Extended Leadership Team, to improve and assist with decision making. • The Executive Board has been strengthened by the addition of a further ACFO post, to ensure direction and compliance. New posts are Director of Service Improvement and Director of Service Delivery. • Within the Organisation we now have the Corporate Governance Group to monitor the compliance for public sector governance, which meets quarterly. • Introduction of Middle Manager Talent Pool to support career progression: organisational workforce planning and enabling us to identify our future leaders.

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY TO MEET NEEDS		
Areas to Explore	**Direction of Travel**	**Actions Taken**
5. Leadership Team to clarify change agenda messages **6. Continue development for empowerment, management, coaching and succession planning** **7. Evaluate and prioritise partnerships to ensure consistent of approach.** **8. Embed project management capacity**	IMPROVING ↑	• The Organisational Structure has been reviewed and refined to ensure there is sufficient resource to meet capacity needs. • Senior Management has established Focus Point as a key communication mechanism. All Service areas are represented, attendees are provided with up to date information to cascade to their respective teams. • The Service has reviewed the forecasts of potential whole-time leavers over the next few years, therefore, a recruitment process for whole-time firefighters is commencing in January 2017. • The service is continuing to develop a positive action plan to help increase the numbers of female firefighters, as well as in management positions and other senior roles across the service. • A Coaching Policy has been formed and approved, with the support of South West Councils, Coaches have been identified and trained; this work will be adopted by the Organisational Development team. The aim is to ensure we continue organisational development, disseminate our core values, and develop our culture. • The Middle Manager Talent Pool selection process is complete, with successful candidates being equipped for future career opportunities. • The first cohort of staff to undertake the Open University, 2-year 'Systems Thinking' course are now on their final module. The second cohort are now on their second module. To help strengthen their learning they are supporting Service project work. • The Community Safety Partnership Framework has been refreshed to help the organisation promote consistency by providing guidance and clarity within the roles and partnerships. • Service Delivery staff continue to be consulted on all key projects.

		• The Director of Corporate Services chairs the Programme Board. The board consists of the combined Service Leadership Team and the Executive Board. Its role is to ensure that the wide range of cross-cutting projects are prioritised and resources allocated, subject to needs and capacity.
		• Major projects are overseen by project boards as part of the project management framework.
		• The 'Improvement Framework' is currently under review to ensure all staff's new ideas for suggestions and improvement are captured and managed appropriately.
		• Project Lead Officers have successfully completed accredited Project Management training.
	→	• A lack of fixed term or longer term contracts has resulted in a number of project managers leaving the Service. The Programme Board is managing the risk and 1 x FTE project manager joined DSFRS in November 2016, which leaves one vacant post (Corporate Risk Register).

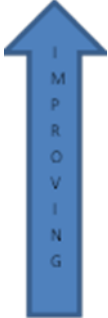| **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT and OUTCOMES FOR LOCAL CITIZENS**		
Areas to Explore	**Direction of Travel**	**Actions Taken**
9. **Adopt a consistent approach to smarter working and do not forget the people** 10. **Focus, prioritise and progress planned IT and performance management improvements** 11. **Continue to build the relationships between support and uniformed staff**	↑ IMPROVING	• To support the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) demands and opportunities the Service has introduced the following posts: ICT Manager, ICT Data Architect Manager, ICT Service Development Manager and Information Technology Security Officer. • A revised ICT Strategy is being rolled out, which will move the Service to a sustainable service-driven approach. The latest highlight reports confirm that this is currently on course in respect of time, cost and quality in both Service Delivery and Service Development to meet the timescales outlined in the strategy. • An internal team led by Human Resources is reviewing the organisation's Personal Performance and Development process. The process will be revised and ready for implementation in 2017/2018.

Areas to Explore	Direction of Travel	Actions Taken
12. Ensuring combination does not impact on outcomes for communities		• The Organisational Development team will consider the Staff Survey and Support Services Review information, which will assist them to identify and improve organisational culture. • Support and Uniformed staff continue to work together: on change boards, in project groups, within discussion forums, attending courses together and satellite working at Group Support Team locations. • Proposals around Whole-time Duty System working (both station based and officer) along with On Call staff availability continuing to be explored supporting smarter working. • The Networked Fire Control Service Project went live in April 2016. The system will enhance resilience, during spate conditions partner control rooms will have the ability to answer our 999 calls and mobilise our resources to emergencies.

RESPONSE, COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Areas to Explore	Direction of Travel	Actions Taken
13. Consistent approach within Operational Assurance networks **14. Continue using risk demand model to support community risk** **15. Improve recording of operational competence** **16. Clarify Watch based staff's future role in community safety**	↑ I M P R O V I N G	• The Organisational Assurance team's strategy is in development. • An Operational Assurance Practitioners forum has been established. Their work includes: ensuring a consistent application of Operational Assurance systems, to discuss and debate emerging issues and trends, and to communicate experiences and best practice. • Currently Operational Assurance monitoring is carried out by Flexible Duty Officers. This helps to ensure: safety measures are in place, workplace competency is being reviewed and best practice is recognised and shared. • The Resource and Asset Modelling tool has been designed to help inform decision making around daily Integrated Risk Management Planning. • It is envisaged the tool will be utilised by Operational support staff, working alongside Control room staff, with the aim of improving operational resource management.

17. Member inductions with a focus on recognising emerging issues in the IRMP **18. Improve approach to succession planning across the organisation**		• The use of alternative appliances such as Rapid Intervention Units, may allow for greater flexibility to demands in risk, assist with crewing availability and alternating skills levels. • The training records replacement system, Profile, is now live. Profile records and reports on the Maintenance of Skills for all levels of Operational Staff (firefighters to Chief Fire Officer). • Profile requirements encourage staff to frequently train at Site Specific Risk sites, as identified as part of the Operational Risk Information System. • The Operational Licence is in its second year. The licence ensures all uniformed staff are able to carry out their duties at fires, rescues and other emergencies. The Licence's training products are role specific and cover 5 key elements: Breathing Apparatus, Extrication, Incident Command System, Driving and First Person on Scene. • The training is delivered using a blended approach of practical skills and E learning, where possible through the use of local training hubs. • The Academy team won the 'Best blended learning project - public & non-profit sector' category in the Learning Technologies awards 2016. Firefighters now have permanent 24/7 access to learning material which can be accessed from home, their primary employment or even their mobile devices whilst being operationally available. • The Community Safety team recognises the need to balance the impact of utilising Watch-based staff to deliver its prevention activities. • It uses Advocate staff to deliver its primary activities: such as carrying out Home Fire Safety Visits, attending School visits, creating and maintaining partnerships and Fire Safety Checks. • Watch-based staff continue to support localism, whilst maintaining their training needs, their requirements to collect risk information and to carry out Fire Safety Checks. • The Authority has a well-established Induction process for new Members, who receive bespoke, proportionate induction, based on the regional model. The induction process highlights the Service's approach of embedded integrated risk management planning in its overall strategy as part of 'Our Plan'. • The Organisational Development team will be taking career progression forward.

PREVENTION and BUSINESS SAFETY		
Areas to Explore	**Direction of Travel**	**Actions Taken**
19. Ensure Watch based staff have a balance between prevention/protection and response **20. Share prevention and protection ideas to the wider community/ stakeholders / partners** **21. Fully utilise existing data to inform and drive further prevention activities**	IMPROVING (arrow)	• The 2015-2020 Community Safety strategy is currently under review, and will be considered in conjunction with the new structure and the service's statutory duties. • The presence of operational personnel and appliances have a strong impact when supporting public safety events. This is considered when balancing their response needs against their involvement in Prevention and Business Safety activities. • Staff are involved in varying degrees of joint agency engagement. This includes: Local Resilience Forum work, attending Responders' Forums and advising local events through Safety Advisory Groups. • The Service supports businesses at a national level through the Chief Fire Officers Association communities networks. This work helps to develop and support the consistency of Protection activities for the business community. • The Service supports the Primary Authority Scheme. The scheme seeks to ensure businesses with a presence in more than one Authority area get the same advice and consistent application of Regulation. • The Service works with local regulators and businesses across Devon and Somerset. The aim is to develop a co-ordinated and consistent approach to assisting businesses in meeting fire safety needs. • The Service works with other regulators and businesses, sitting on the steering group and is a partner of the Devon and Somerset 'Better Business for All' scheme. The scheme has been established to develop a co-ordinated and consistent approach to assisting businesses in meeting their regulatory requirements, promoting consistency and reducing bureaucracy. • The Service takes opportunities to publicise protection activities, including details of prosecutions under the Fire Safety Order.

		- The Communities business plan encourages Local Resilience Forum partner working. The Service is committed to this plan and continues to, raise awareness and increase community resilience through running campaigns and events. - The Community Safety team will continue to build on existing community partner work, it will apply a consistent approach from the centre, and promote the sharing of existing effective practices. - Innovations such as the creation of a combined role, the 'On Call Firefighter/Police Community Support Officer' pilot is driving partner working, and strengthening localism and community engagement. - There have been improvements in the Service's software. Web based versions of Community Fire Risk Management Information System and Community Map system improve functionality and data access for service targeting. - The ICT Data Architect & Manager was appointed in March 2015 to improve data architecture and integration. An enhanced target architecture is now being incorporated into new service-development work, whilst legacy data services are being moved into the target architecture in a planned approach over a longer period to minimise service impact. - This role is enhancing our approach to data management, moving the Service closer to industry best practices, and leading a strategic approach to data integration. - The Fire Sector Federation is a not for profit non-government organisation, established to act as a forum for fire related issues. The forum brings together representatives from a range of stakeholders that make up the UK fire sector. The Chief Fire Officer has been asked to lead a piece of work, reviewing the future of Fire Safety on behalf of the forum.