

Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee

05 September 2022

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Dehar (Chair), Councillor Hussain (Vice-Chair), Councillor Iqbal, Councillor Hogarth.

Virtual: Councillor Miks, Prof Simon Brake, APCC Wasim Ali

Officers: Mike Griffiths, Pete Wilson, Andrea Simmonds, Kash Singh Tom Embury, Kirsty Tuffin.

10/22 **To receive apologies for absence (if any)**

Apologies for absence were received from the Chief Fire Officer, Phil Loach and Councillor Ian Kettle.

11/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

12/22 **Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 18 July 2022**

Resolved:

1. That the Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 18 July 2022 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

13/22 **Fire Reform White Paper - Consultation Responses**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority presented the Fire Reform White Paper - Consultation Responses Report that provided an overview of the local and national responses to the Fire Reform White Paper.

The Committee were advised that following its approval at the last Collaboration and Transformation Committee, that took place on Monday 18 July 2022, the Authority had submitted their response on Tuesday 26 July 2022. A

response had been submitted on behalf of the operational leadership of the service, as per appendix A of the report, and had focused upon the operational perspective.

The Local Government Association (LGA) had been a similar to that of the Authorities supporting local decision making and the NJC. The LGA had raised concerns that had not been covered within the White Paper in their response, as outlined within the report. As with the LGA, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) who represented Senior Officers, welcomed the intent of the White Paper and the importance of a Sector led Fit for the Future Project. They strongly supported the need for increased flexibility and a reform of the current pay negotiation processes.

The Committee were advised that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) had opposed most of the proposals within the White Paper and had expressed disappointment with the proposal for increased powers to the Chief Fire Officer.

The response from Andy Street, West Midlands Mayor, had provided support for a single elected official having responsibility for the governance of the service and supported operational independence of the Chief Fire Officer. The full response had been attached as appendix B to the report.

Councillor Hogarth expressed that the majority of the responses both locally and nationally had overall agreement on the views expressed in their responses to the proposals. He acknowledged that some changes were needed but not to the scope in which the White Paper had proposed.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Fire Reform White Paper Consultation Responses from other key stakeholders be noted.

14/22

Progress Update Reducing Health Inequalities CRMP Project

Pete Wilson, Strategic Lead – Prevention, presented the Reducing Health Inequalities Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Project report that outlined the progress made in delivering the tasks and intended outcomes of the Reducing Health Inequalities CRMP project.

The Committee were advised that following the CRMP, reducing health inequalities had been one of six projects. The project had included several activities with a long-term approach to be taken. The four main areas of focus had been people, digital, data and partnerships and collaboration.

The Committee were advised that surveys had/would be circulated to those who have had a Safe and Well (SAW) visit to question their experience via letters and digitally. So far, the responses had been positive and indicated that the SAW had improved people's health, wellbeing, quality of life and therefore, reducing their vulnerability to fires. Some of the key data from the surveys highlighted were:

- 95% of those who smoked from the 2,278 respondents said they had a greater understanding of the risks of smoking
- Of those that smoked, 145 were referred to stop smoking services, with 60 (41%) of those referred stopped smoking.

The Committee were advised that the service had developed membership arrangements for SAW to support a collaborative approach to data sharing and two-way referrals between the service and its partners. 5 partners had signed up and would assist in identifying the most vulnerable in the community.

Following questions on the use of the new online home fire safety check, that would be available on the services website, Kash Singh, Strategic Enabler of ICT Digital and Data, advised the Committee that the website had the option to change the language via a drop-down list. The

involvement of Cllrs involvement in these projects would be hugely beneficial and provided a link into the local authority's/their chief executives. Following queries on the engagement of 3rd sector organisations, Pete Wilson advised the Committee that a vital piece of the work had been to work with groups such as religious groups and build partnerships where possible. He advised that if Members had any groups that they wished the services to make contact with them to let him know. It was agreed that S41 Members would highlight this with their Local Authorities.

Resolved:

1. That the progress being made in delivering the reducing health inequalities CRMP project, be noted.
2. That it be agreed that S41 Members would highlight the partnership work of SAW with their Local Authorities.

15/22

Digital, Data and Innovation Update

Kash Singh, Strategic Enabler of ICT Digital and Data, presented the Digital, Data and Innovation report that outlined the progress made aligned with the Digital, Data and Innovation Strategy.

The Committee were advised that the Digital, Data and Innovation Strategy had been introduced in December 2021 and steps had been taken to ensure it has been fully embedded within the service including a Digital Leadership Skills course for Middle Managers. The overall strategy had focused upon people first and used technology to improve performance and efficiency and service to the community. Emphasis was given on the need to not exclude members of the community and collaboration inclusion work with the West Midlands Combined Authority had been underway.

The Committee were advised that the West Midlands were 5g and used this as an opportunity to work with partners to gather information to reduce risks. Collaboration work with CCTV, National Police Air Service Cameras and data collection from sensors were examples highlighted.

Work had been underway to ensure that stations had handheld devices to ensure they had the opportunity to go

into the community and be involved/front facing as much as possible. There had been a slight impact with supply due to the part shortages experienced nationally but the service had been on track in its delivery of this. Emphasis was given on the need for cyber security to be incorporated into all aspects of systems therefore, investments had been focused upon this area to ensure the service had the reassurance needed.

Resolved:

1. That the embedding of digital ways of working across the service and acknowledgement of investment in staff to understand and support digital, data and innovation be noted.
2. That the ongoing developments and progress from continued phases of Oracle Cloud, CRMP projects, Digital Transformation on stations be noted. That the introduction of new projects around incident command transformation and legacy systems aligned to the feedback from staff and the next steps outlined in previous Collaboration and Transformation Committee report, be noted.
3. That the emerging opportunities for collaboration with new partner brigades to deliver better, more efficient services to our communities and reduce risk nationally be noted.

16/22

Inclusion and Diversity – Innovation in firefighting equipment

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority provided a verbal update regarding the Inclusion and Diversity – Innovation in firefighting equipment in particular the use of BA equipment and facial hair.

The Committee were advised that further written reports would be provided in future meetings to provide updates to the Committee on this on-going issue. The use of facial hair and BA equipment had still been restricted due to safety requirements and no major companies had developed a mask that passed all the safety test requirements. A future procurement would reflect a want for more research into the development of these masks that would allow staff to have

facial hair. However, in the meantime the service had been looking into the option of facial hair being permitted for non-BA roles within the service from both a policy and a cultural perspective. Although the current policy did not prevent facial hair, the policy needed to be clearer, and staff needed to be informed further. The policy would be looked into and consultation on it would begin the end of the year.

Resolved:

1. That the verbal update on the Inclusion and Diversity – Innovation in firefighting equipment in particular the use of BA equipment and facial hair be noted.

17/22

Draft Collaboration and Transformation Committee Work Programme 2022-2023

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority presented the Draft Collaboration and Transformation Committee Work Programme that outlined the planned agenda items for the Committee 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that the White Paper and the HMICFRS updates had been time dependent upon their publication by Government. Councillors emphasised the need for progress to be made with the Ambulance / Fire Service collaboration.

Resolved:

1. That the draft Collaboration and Transformation Committee Work Programme 2022-2023 be approved.

18/22

Any other business

The Chair of the Committee advised that she wished to help raise money for the Fire Fighters Charity and wished to have an event focusing upon cultural diversity. Councillors raised concerns around using external venues/potential costs associated and it would be beneficial for local authorities to assist with potential venue options. It was agreed that Tom Embury would link Councillor Dehar with the services officer co-ordinating events with the Fire Fighters Charity to assist with potential links to already on-going fund-raising events.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that Tom Embury would link Councillor Dehar with the services officer co-ordinating events with the Fire Fighters Charity to assist with potential links to already on-going fund-raising events.

19/22

Date of the next meeting

Resolved:

1. That the date of the next meeting scheduled to take place on Monday 12 December 2022, be noted.

The meeting finished at 11:23 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906
