

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1 SEPTEMBER 2014

1. **AN ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS OF CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AGAINST 'THE PLAN' – QUARTER ONE 2014/2015**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee notes the performance against its performance indicators in the first quarter for 2014/15 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 THAT the Committee approves the approach to adopting an exception type style to reporting corporate performance.
- 1.3 In support of 1.2 above that the Committee approves the approach to communicating performance information using a more transparent info-graphic approach supported by headline statements in respect of the performance of each indicator.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to provide the Committee with an analysis of the organisation's performance against 'The Plan' for the first quarter of 2014/2015.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The first quarterly Corporate Performance Review meeting of 2014/2015 took place on 6th August 2014.

This quarterly meeting which is attended by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Board and Strategic Managers provides a joined up method of managing performance and for providing assurance around the ongoing performance and delivery of priorities, strategic objectives and outcomes set out in The Plan.

- 3.2 This meeting was the first meeting since Fire Authority approved at its meeting on 21 July the refocus of The Plan and in particular the re-alignment of the strategic objectives to the Service's three core delivery functions of Prevention, Protection and Response. This approach provides clarity and confirms the Service's commitment to its delivery model and recognises the importance of service delivery in enabling our vision of 'Making West Midlands Safer'.
- 3.3 The achievement of our five strategic objectives in The Plan will be enabled by compact and high quality support services, with their contribution and performance being measured through supporting strategies and their contribution to enabling the delivery of the strategic objectives .
- 3.4 The Service's performance Indicators (PI) and targets were developed by senior officers and the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and discussed at Policy Planning Forum in January 2014. In considering the target, a three year average was determined for each indicator and internal and external strategic influences considered. The Performance Indicators were approved by Executive Committee on 24 March 2014.
- 3.5 Appendix 1 provides evidence of the Service's performance against each of its PIs for the first quarter of 2014/15. The Service seeks to operate in an environment that promotes trust, empowerment, accountability and transparency. However, there is also requirement to provide robust assurance of strategic performance in supporting the delivery of The Plan. In balancing these requirements the Service has moved towards a less tactical approach in its performance reporting and no longer requires the submission and discussion around the detailed delivery of actions at its strategic performance meeting. Tactical discussions and the appropriate performance reporting framework are already in place and embedded at a Departmental and Command level.

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- 3.6 Whilst the Service does consider carefully the performance against all of its indicators at its Corporate Performance Review meeting, it is important that the time available is maximised to enable for sufficient strategic discussion and challenge around performance exceptions by the Service's senior managers. This enables for the identification of good and poor performance with a view to developing an understanding as to why performance levels are what they are, initiating corrective activity where required or promoting good practice where required.
- 3.7 In support of this approach and the Service's renewed focus on service delivery the Service's PI performance against its Prevention, Protection and Response, level 2 action plans is provided in Appendix 1. This information is provided using an info-graphic approach, which provides transparency enabling our performance to be clearly understood. The info-graphic is accompanied by headline statements in support of the performance for each indicator. In order to provide a balanced organisational view of performance, the Service has in place other PIs, predominantly around Human Resources and Safety, Health and the Environment against which it is standard practice to monitor performance. These are also detailed in Appendix 1 and provide Members with an all round organisational performance picture for quarter one of 2014/15.

Programmes and Projects

- 3.8 The Service is currently engaging stakeholders in order to inform its user requirements and user specification for a new business system. As part of the development of this system, consideration will be given to the appropriate performance reporting structures and governance frameworks required to enable for the effective performance management of programmes and projects.

Corporate Risk

- 3.9 Corporate risks are those risks that if realised would compromise the Service's ability to deliver the priorities and objectives set out in The Plan. A report on the progress of managing our Corporate Risks is reported quarterly to Audit Committee.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The matters contained in this report will not lead to a policy change.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The course of action recommended in this report does not raise issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The level of response, protection and prevention resources required to achieve the targets for the operational indicators shown in Appendix 1 were considered as part of the Authority's 2014/2015 budget setting process which established a total budget requirement of £103.017 million. As at the end of June 2014 actual expenditure was £26.4 million compared to a profiled budget of £26.7 million resulting in a £0.3 million underspend. Based on Best Value Accounting Code of Practice the estimated cost of staff engaged in prevention work, including an element for watch based firefighters for 2014/2015 is £14.4 million.
- 6.2 The cost of delivering services which contribute to the performance achievements comprise goods such as smoke alarms and staff time. The staff time includes those who are solely engaged in prevention work and watch based staff that provide emergency response as well as prevention services.
- 6.3 The full year budget for smoke alarms and other supporting materials in 2014/2015 is £343,500. Actual expenditure as at the end of June 2014 was £58,000. Expenditure for the first quarter is in line with the profiled budget.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Fire Authority Meeting 21 July 2014 - The Plan, Strategic Objectives – Level 2 Action Plans.

Fire Authority Meeting 17 February 2014 - 2014/2015 Budget Setting Authority Paper.

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CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

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