

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee

24 April 2023

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

Present: Councillor Spence (Chair), Councillor Atwal (Vice-Chair), Councillor Barrie, and Councillor Jalil and Councillor Waters

Virtual: Councillor Dehar, Sarah Middleton, Co-Optee

Officers: Richard Stanton, Sam Burton, Kate Alliss, Tom Embury, Kirsty Tuffin, Kelly Whitmore.

09/23 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Young and Councillor Hussain, substituted by Councillor Jalil.

10/23 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

11/23 **Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 23 January 2023**

Resolved:

1. That the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 23 January 2023 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

12/23 **Fire Control Performance Report Update – Quarter 4 2022-23**

Kelly Whitmore, Group Commander – Fire Control, presented the Fire Control Performance Report – Quarter 4 2022-23, that outlined the operational performance of Fire Control over a three-month period.

The Committee were advised that as per the report, a total of 16,085 emergency calls were received between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2023 across both brigade areas: West Midlands and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services.

12,071 (75%) were the for West Midlands and 3,546 (22%) were for Staffordshire. A total of 3% of calls had been taken on behalf of other services. Of the total number of calls received, Fire Control mobilised to 52% of the incidents for the West Midlands and 51% for Staffordshire. The mobilisation ratio of calls had been dependent upon the following:

- Calls challenging automated fire alarms (AFAs)
- Calls challenging special service calls that were deemed non-emergency
- Repeat 999 calls
- Use of 999eye footage/imagery

During Qtr. 4 the median call handling time by Fire Control had increased to 103 seconds. The increase in time handling over the past three Qtrs. had been a result of the number of new entrants that joined the Fire Control team, the introduction of Vision 4, a new command and control system, and enhanced questioning to support proportionate and appropriate mobilising of resources.

As requested at the last Scrutiny Committee, comparison data available for other Fire Services had been provided, as per the report. Kelly advised that services used different systems and varied approaches across different control rooms so any comparisons had been difficult. Those that provided their data, showed that their control rooms had not been meeting their core times, with some only reaching it 25% of the time on average.

The Committee were advised that the use of 999eye, that assisted Fire Control with intelligence led mobilisation and resource management, had increased to a total of 3,424 times during Qtr. 4, compared to 1954 in Qtr. 3.

Following queries raised, it was agreed that a breakdown of the proportion of calls received by Fire Control be included in the next update. It was agreed that CRMP Officers provide an update on prevention work at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Fire Control performance update for Quarter 4 2022-23, be noted.
2. That it be agreed that a breakdown of the proportion of calls received by Fire Control be included in the next update.
3. That it be agreed that CRMP Officers provide an update on prevention work at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.

13/23

Scrutiny Review of Training and Development

Sam Burton, Head of Development and Inclusion, presented the Scrutiny Review of Training and Development report that outlined the proposed Terms of Reference and timeline for the review.

The Committee were advised that as agreed at the last Scrutiny Committee, the next Scrutiny Review would be focused upon the services training and development functions. Progression and development into leadership and management roles within the service, with specific focus upon underrepresented employees, would also be included.

The Committee were also advised that following the recent publication of the HMICFRS spotlight report on culture and values in the service, the Terms of Reference for the review had been adapted to reflect this. It was emphasised that this would need to be scrutiny member-led and evidence based.

The suggested timeline, as per report, was highlighted to members. It was intended for data collections and case studies to take place before the Fire Authority Annual General meeting, with an additional Scrutiny Committee to be arranged for July to provide an update. It would be the intention for face-to-face focus groups to take place with Scrutiny Committee members and stakeholders throughout August and September. It was highlighted there had been a typo in the report and the final report would be issued to the Committee in October 2023, not October 2024. An update report would be brought back in October 2024.

The Chair of the Committee praised the planned review.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Training and Development Scrutiny Review, including the proposed timeline for the review and reporting, be approved.
2. That it be agreed that members commit to participating in the member-led focus groups with staff to support the delivery of the review.

14/23

Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well

Kate Alliss, Partnerships Manager, presented the Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well Report that outlined the progress made against the learning recommendations from the Scrutiny Review in 2022.

The Committee were advised that as agreed by the Scrutiny Committee in November 2022, 10 recommendations had been agreed and actioned upon to improve Safe and Wells. Updates to the agreed 10 recommendations were highlighted as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – There had been ongoing consultation with the external company to develop the new system. The services IT team were also providing support.
- Recommendation 2 – a quality assurance had been drafted for the internal MESH site and it was the intention to go live in April/May 2023.
- Recommendation 3 – MESH had been updated to provide support whilst awaiting the support documents therein the NFCC Person Centred Framework. Tymly will be adapted accordingly to align with the proposed framework once received.
- Recommendation 4 – To be adapted once NFCC Person Centred Framework has been received.
- Recommendation 5 – completed. Feedback to be obtained.
- Recommendation 6 – work had been conducted to learn from incident reviews, stations and prevention forums.

- Recommendation 7 – completed. Content had been agreed and would be implemented 2023-2024.
- Recommendation 8 – The introduction of the NFCC Person Centred Framework for Home Fire Safety Visits would provide the framework to create the good practice guides and the development plans, once received.
- Recommendation 9 – NFCC guidance video has been shared with workforce. There service were still awaiting the NFCC training package.
- Recommendation 10 – work was underway to work with partners to share information safely and inline with current regulations.

Following queries, it was agreed that that further information be circulated to Cllr Waters on the criteria for a face-to-face Safe and Well visit. It was agreed that Cllr Jalil be contacted regarding participating in a safe and strong visit for businesses with officers.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the progress against the learning recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well be noted.
2. That it be agreed that further information be circulated to Cllr Waters on the criteria for a face-to-face Safe and Well visit.
3. That it be agreed that Cllr Jalil be contacted regarding participating in a safe and well visit for businesses with officers.

15/23

Scrutiny Committee Draft Annual Report

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Draft Annual Report that outlined the Committees work throughout 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that as per the Committees Terms of Reference, an annual report of the Committee must be submitted to Fire Authority to outline the work conducted. The annual report had included standard reports submitted to

the Committee, Scrutiny Reviews Conducted on Business Continuity and Safe and Wells.

No amendments were made.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the draft Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for 2022-2023 be approved.

16/23

Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference Review

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference Report that outlined the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference.

The Committee were advised that all proposed changes outlined therein the report had been highlighted in red for ease of reference and if approved, would be submitted for Fire Authority for approval.

No further amendments were made.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference (Summarised in Appendix A) be approved and submitted to Fire Authority for approval.
2. That it be agreed that further changes or additions to the Terms of Reference that could support the committee to undertake its role to support the Authority to achieve its strategic objectives be considered.

17/23

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022-2023

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that following approval at the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on 26 June 2023, a meeting would be scheduled for 17 July 2023. The proposed items for this meeting were outlined as per report.

Resolved:

1. That the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023, be approved.

The meeting finished at 14:52 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906
