

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee

7 October 2019 at 13:30 p.m.
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham
B7 4HW

Present: Councillor Spence (Chair)
Councillors Barlow, Barrie, Dehar, Gill, and Young
S Middleton

Apologies: Councillor Jenkins

Observer: Nil

35/19 Declarations of Interest in contracts or other matters

There were no declarations of interest.

36/19 Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 3 September 2019

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2019 be approved as a correct record.

37/19 Scrutiny Reviews

Sarah Warnes, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, provided an overview of the report.

The report outlined the four themes that had been put forward by Members for the Committee to review, as a result of a scrutiny workshop held at the Policy Planning Forum on 17 September 2019.

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Members were asked to consider the themes for review by the Committee, and to include any agreed review into the Committee's work programme. The themes were:

- Business Continuity Arrangements
 - To review the recommendations made by the Chief Fire Officer to meet the Fire Authority's responsibility for sufficient business continuity and resilience arrangements for the delivery of response services.
 - The Committee had already agreed to the review of this item and the review was being progressed.
- Prevention – Safe and Well:
 - To review the performance management of prevention activities, in particular the delivery of Safe and Well visits including a focus on the quantity versus quality of Safe and Well visits undertaken.
- Operational training and effectiveness
 - To review the approach to operational training and effectiveness within the Service.
- Discipline policy:
 - To review the reasons for the level of discipline cases undertaken within the Service and to consider the route and rationale for gross misconduct versus misconduct.

Members were asked to consider if the themes, in particular operational training and effectiveness, and discipline policy, were to constitute a review or to form the basis of a Member awareness session.

Resolved that the Committee approved the reviews of:

- Business Continuity Arrangements
- Prevention – Safe and Well

Resolved that the Committee agreed that the themes of operational training and effectiveness, and discipline policy, would be the subject of a Members awareness session.

Resolved that the Committee approved the addition of the reviews and member awareness session to the Committee's work programme.

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It was agreed that the Members awareness session would be scheduled during early 2020 and that the review of Safe and Well would be scheduled following the completion of the review of Business Continuity Arrangements.

38/19 **Update on the Review of Safeguarding**

Sarah Warnes, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, provided an update on the review of safeguarding:

The Safeguarding Policy had been updated as per the following:

- The removal of the requirement for Fire Control to ring the local authority to let them know that a referral is on its way.
- Streamlining of the internal notification of the safeguarding concern process and the use of Office 365 functionality to do this.
- Update to the cross-reference section for WMFS policy and relevant legislation and statutory guidance.
- Requirements about making safeguarding personal and voice of the child in the process/referral.
- Improved guidance for information sharing.
- New guidance on the Care Act 2014 requirements for safeguarding adults.
- Addition of 'Radicalisation' as a category of abuse.
- Update to the list of types and indicators for each category and references to where this information was obtained from.

In terms of timescales, external consultation with local Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards commenced 7 October with internal consultation to follow. The policy would be submitted to the Joint Consultative Panel in November.

A key point of the review had been where safeguarding sat within the Service. It had been agreed that safeguarding would be aligned under the people programme (previously prevention) to ensure the right elements of the action plan were in place.

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In answer to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- Informing staff of the change in approach would be worked through the action plan. Ecademy packages were being reviewed to ensure that staff knew how to issue referrals. Further updates on this would be provided in due course.

The meeting finished at 13:47pm.

Contact Officer: Stephen Timmington
Strategic Hub
West Midlands Fire Service
0121 380 6680