

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 5

MEETING: 17 NOVEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT PEER CHALLENGE 2014 – INITIAL
FEEDBACK**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the initial feedback received from the team who undertook the Operational Assessment Peer Challenge from September 30th to October 3rd 2014.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Operational Assessment (OpA) is a sector led approach to assessing operational effectiveness, designed by the Chief Fire Officers' Association. It is a voluntary process that is managed by and delivered for the sector. It is a mechanism to provide FRAs and CFOs with information that allows them to challenge their operational service delivery to ensure it is efficient, effective and robust.
- 2.2 The 2014 Operational Assessment was the first time TWFRS had undergone such a process since 2010.

3 OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 3.1 The process consisted of a self-assessment against seven Key Assessment Areas (KAAs), and an on-site peer review. The process is rigorous and has been accepted by the Audit Commission as evidence of organisational effectiveness. The process is aimed to help FRS' develop self-awareness, understanding of achievements and areas for improvement.

3.2 The KAAs for OpA are:

- Community Risk Management
- Prevention
- Protection
- Response
- Health and Safety
- Training and Development
- Call Management and Incident Support.

3.3 The OpA peer review focused on specific areas identified from the self-assessment. The areas of focus were on the following KAAs:

3.3.1 Protection – with a particular focus on how the FRS engages partners and stakeholders effectively in its protection activities. How does TWFRS support and enforce?

3.3.2 Response – with a particular focus on the assurance of operational effectiveness and improving performance to ensure fire fighter safety and improve operational response.

3.3.3 Training and Development – looking at the way that TWFRS delivers its whole organisational training including organisational development, leadership and succession planning.

3.4 The OpA also covered all the other KAAs but not in as much depth as the KAAs identified in 3.3.

3.5 In addition to the areas of focus the peer team also considered three core questions under the theme of Leadership and Corporate Capacity:

3.5.1 How well are outcomes for local citizens being achieved?

3.5.2 How effective is the leadership and governance?

3.5.3 How effective is the organisational capacity to meet current requirements and future needs?

4 INITIAL FEEDBACK

4.1 At the completion of the on site visit the peer challenge team provided initial feedback on their findings. A full report on TWFRS' Operational Assessment will follow in due course and will be the subject of a future Authority paper.

4.2 The initial feedback on TWFRS in 2014 can be summarised as follows:

4.2.1 A proud organisation that is well placed to continue to deliver its commitments to its people.

- 4.2.2 A determined service that remains focused on achieving positive outcomes for its public and business communities.
- 4.2.3 Well regarded by a wide range of partners as a highly performing organisation utilising a risk based, intelligence-led approach.
- 4.2.4 Challenges facing the Service will require continued strong political and professional leadership.
- 4.2.5 TWFRS remains well placed to adapt and respond to the continued uncertain financial climate and social change.
- 4.2.6 The team were confident that TWFRS can continue to manage performance whilst identifying and achieving efficiencies.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The OpA is delivered by the sector at no cost to the receiving authority, although there is recognition that this comes at an opportunity cost to FRAs in the provision of peers.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of this report and;
- b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge Toolkit
- TWFRS: OpA Self-Assessment 2014

