

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No**

**MEETING: 15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

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**SUBJECT: OPERATIONAL RESPONSE TIMES**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY,  
THE FINANCE OFFICER AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the Ministerial response to a Parliamentary question raised by Fraser Kemp MP in respect of fire appliance average attendance times to primary fires for all Fire and Rescue Services in England.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 As Members will be aware the introduction of Integrated Risk Management Planning effectively placed responsibility for identifying local risks and ascertaining the appropriate operational response standards to those with local Fire and Rescue Authorities. This local responsibility has been broadly welcomed and it has enabled this Authority to effectively develop its services to address the requirements identified through the local risk assessment process.
- 2.2 Furthermore, in order to provide a method of determining just how effectively the Authority has managed resources under IRMP, the performance of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has been measured through the use of national Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's), together with locally derived indicators which have enabled the Authority, and others, to monitor performance over time.
- 2.3 The national BVPI's have also enabled the Authority to compare its performance against other Fire and Rescue Services, thereby providing an indication of how well the service has performed nationally against its peers.
- 2.4 Unfortunately, whilst there is an extensive suite of BVPI's in existence there is no BVPI for attendance times to incidents, as this was withdrawn by Government with the introduction of IRMP. This has meant that whilst the service can compare its own the performance over time it is not readily able to compare against other Fire and Rescue Services.

**3 PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANCE FROM FRASER KEMP MP**

- 3.1 Taking the above into account an approach was made to Fraser Kemp MP, the Authority's Honorary Parliamentary Advisor, to ask him if he would raise a Parliamentary question in order to ascertain the average time taken for the first fire appliance to attend primary fires in each of the Fire and Rescue Services in England for the fiscal years 2006 and 2007.

3.2 A response to the question was provided on 15 June 2008, which clearly demonstrated that this service was continuing to provide a first class operational response to incidents. This is based on data for 2006 only as CLG did not have all of the 2007 data available.

3.3 The attached appendix demonstrates that Tyne and Wear had the most rapid response time of all Fire and Rescue Services in England. Furthermore, it should be noted that this excellent standard has been achieved whilst also pursuing a comprehensive community safety programme and also realising significant efficiency savings.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

4.1 The average attendance time data elicited with the assistance of Fraser Kemp MP demonstrates once again that this Authority is continuing to provide an extremely effective operational response in accordance with the IRMP commitments.

#### **5 RISK MANAGEMENT**

5.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The assessment has considered an appropriate balance between risk and control ; the realisation of efficiencies; the most appropriate use of limited resources; and a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits. The risk to the authority has been assessed as low utilising the standard risk matrix based on control measures being in place. The complete risk assessment is available on request from the Chief Fire Officer.

#### **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this specific report.

#### **7 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **8 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **9 RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Note the content of this report
- b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- Response to Parliamentary question dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 2008