



TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 7

MEETING:

SUBJECT: OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT PEER CHALLENGE 2014

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the Operational Assessment Peer Challenge programmed for 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 Previously in 2010, TWFRS undertook an OpA. The process has since been reviewed and updated, including taking into account 'Taking the Lead', the LGAs approach to self-regulation and improvement which aims to help councils and FRAs strengthen local accountability and revolutionise the way they evaluate and improve services.

3 OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 3.1 The process consists of a self-assessment against seven Key Assessment Areas (KAAs), followed by an on-site peer review. The process is rigorous and has been accepted by the Audit Commission as evidence of organisational effectiveness. The process of completing OpA is a useful exercise in 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 TWFRSs OpA Self-Assessment against the KAAs has been completed and each Member has been issued with a personal copy.

3.4 The OpA peer review will focus on specific areas identified from the self-assessment. The areas of focus will be on the following KAAs:

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

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

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

3.5 The OpA will also cover all the other KAAs but will not provide as much in depth analysis of these areas as the KAAs identified in 3.4.

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

3.6.1 How well are outcomes for local citizens being achieved?

3.6.2 How effective is the leadership and governance?

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

3.7 ACFO Chris Lowther is the TWFRS lead for the process and the Lead Chief Fire Officer Peer is CFO Simon Pilling, West Yorkshire FRS.

4 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 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.

Creating the Safest Community

5 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

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

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

7 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

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