

## **PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the  
PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE held  
in the Fire Authority Rooms, Fire and Rescue  
Service Headquarters, Nissan Way, Barmston  
Mere, Sunderland on MONDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup>  
NOVEMBER, 2006 at 11.30 a.m.

### **Present:**

Councillor R. Heron in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Cooney and Renton.

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gibson and Huscroft.

### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **Minutes**

4. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Performance Review Committee held on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2006 be confirmed and signed as correct record.

## **Statutory Audit Report on 2006 Best Value Performance Plan**

The Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk to the Authority, the Finance Officer and the Personnel Advisor submitted a report (circulated) regarding the recent audit the Authority underwent on the 2006 Best Value Performance Plan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chief Fire Officer outlined the report to Members advising it was a positive report as the Auditor did not identify any matters and had no recommendations to make on procedures in relation to the plan for the Authority.

Having given consideration to the report it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be endorsed and noted.

## **Introduction of Performance Manual**

The Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk to the Authority and the Finance Officer submitted a report (copy circulated) proposing the issuing to Members of a Performance Manual to provide comprehensive performance management information and to enable enhanced reporting and management of the performance of the Authority.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chief Fire Officer distributed the manual to Members and Chris Maude, Performance and Information Officer, provided an outline to Members.

Members were informed that the manual contained performance from the last six quarters and would be updated after each further quarter. Members were advised that after each quarter a performance report would be made available and an additional copy would be provided at each Performance Review Committee meeting for insertion into the Performance Manual. It was stated that it was the responsibility of each Member to ensure they brought their manuals along to each meeting and to ensure that they were kept up to date.

Councillor Bell stated that the manual would prove to be a very useful tool for Members as it would be helpful at other meetings when issues relating to the Authority were raised, as Members would now have all the information needed to hand. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the manual was the most viable way to ensure that performance was moving forward and invited Members to request any further information they thought might be relevant.

Following a query from Councillor Renton a discussion ensued regarding whether the reports should be printed in colour. It was agreed that the different options would be considered and a decision would be made next year.

The Chief Fire Officer proceeded to outline the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 Performance Indicators that were contained in the report, paying particular attention to the following categories:-

**Number of Accidental Fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings [BV142iii]**

Due to a slight improvement in Quarter 2 and with continued improvement the target would be achieved. Communication of community safety and holistic fire safety messages via home Risk Assessments would continue to be used in an attempt to improve the figures.

**Number of deliberate secondary fires (excluding deliberate secondary fires in vehicles) per 10,000 population [BV206iii]**

Members were advised that events over the bonfire weekend combined with the increase detailed in the report meant that the target was in danger of not being achieved. It was hoped the figure would improve over the winter and also through the number of 'wheelie bin uplift' initiatives that were in place with Local Authorities.

**Number of deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population [BV206IV]**

Work was ongoing with Local Authorities to remove abandoned vehicles in an attempt to achieve target.

**Number of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population [BV143i]**

A media campaign was about to begin on ITV attempting to reduce the number of deaths through chip pan fires with hard hitting advertisements. Councillor Cooney advised that he had recently seen an advertisement which was broadcast around 11.00 p.m. which he thought was the ideal time for it to be shown. The Chief Fire Officer stated that he anticipated the performance to improve further in this area as it had done consistently for the past ten years.

**Number of malicious false alarm calls not attended per 1,000 population (BV146i)**

Although currently short of the target, it was expected through the continued implementation of 'call challenge' that the figure would reduce and the target would be achieved.

**Number of false alarms due to automatic fire detection in non-domestic properties per 1,000 properties [BV149i]**

The Chief Fire Officer advised that the worst offenders were being targeted and high level meetings were being sought. He advised that this would take time for improvement but was a step in the right direction. A robust process to address the situation was being looked at as an increase would have an impact on not only the Authority's resources but also on meeting other targets.

Having given consideration to the report it was:-

6. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the introduction of the Performance Manual be considered and approved;
- (ii) the Committee endorsed the content and received regular updates at each meeting; and
- (iii) the performance outcomes detailed in the appendices to this report be considered and comments provided accordingly.

### **Best Value Review 2006/7**

The Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk to the Authority and the Finance Officer submitted a report (copy circulated) outlining the Authority's current approach to service review and updating Members regarding progress made to date against the current Best Value Review Programme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chief Fire Officer outlined the report to Members advising that there was no longer a statutory requirement to carry out reviews over a five year rolling programme but there was still a requirement to carry out Best Value Reviews. In formulating the CPA Improvement Plan the Authority agreed to undertake Best Value Reviews in three areas: Internal and External Communications, Diversity in the Workforce and Knowledge Management.

It was stated that although the reviews were not formal the recommendations as implemented would bring about significant improvements in each of the three review areas. Any further reviews would be determined by the CPA or other audit processes. The focus of those reviews would be based upon areas that were reported as weaknesses or priorities and the aim of the subsequent reviews would be to improve performance and Value for Money in those areas.

Having given consideration to the report it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the outcomes and actions taken in respect of the management reviews detailed in the report be endorsed; and
- (ii) further reports be received as appropriate.

(Signed) R. HERON,  
Chairman.