

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 11.00 am on 18 May 2015 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Date Not Specified.

Elected Members:

- Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos (Chairman)
- * Mr Chris Norman (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Mike Bennison
- Mrs Yvonna Lay
- Mrs Jan Mason
- * Mr John Orrick
- * Mr Saj Hussain
- * Mrs Mary Lewis
- Mr Chris Pitt
- * Ms Barbara Thomson
- * Mr Alan Young
- * Mr Robert Evans

Ex officio Members:

Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Chairman of the County Council
Mr David Munro

Co-opted Members:

Substitute Members:

Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos
Mrs Yvonna Lay
Mrs Jan Mason
Mr Chris Pitt

In attendance

21/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Jan Mason, Denise Saliagopoulos, Yvonna Lay and Chris Pitt.

22/15 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 18 MAY 2015 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

23/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

24/15 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

None received.

25/15 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

No responses to report.

26/15 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Committee noted the Recommendations Tracker and Forward Work Programme.

27/15 EMERGENCY SERVICES COLLABORATION PROGRAMME [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Ian Thomson, Area Commander, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
Russell Pearson, Chief Fire Officer, Surrey Fire and Rescue
Kay Hammond, Cabinet Associate for Community Safety Services

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Area Commander (AC) updated the Committee on the progress of the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme (ESCP) advising Members that the scope of the programme includes all emergency services operating in Surrey and Sussex as well as South East Coast Ambulance Service's (SECamb) operations in Kent. It was highlighted that the ESCP encompasses a number of initiatives designed to join up the work of the emergency services and reduce instances of duplication to save resources and includes the Blue Light Collaboration project. Members were informed that Surrey emergency services have received over £9 million from central government and

Surrey County Council (SCC) in order to put in place the systems and infrastructure to support the delivery of the ESCP.

2. Further detail was provided on efforts to integrate Surrey and Sussex emergency services contact, control and dispatch functions including a reduction in the number of contact centres operated by the six partner agencies involved in the collaboration project. On the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) specifically, it was highlighted that a Direct Electronic Information Transfer system (DEIT) has been implemented which will reduce the amount of time it takes to dispatch the SFRS when reports about a fire come through to another emergency service. In addition work has also been done to improve the flow of information about a fire to SFRS when reported to another agency so that firefighters take the correct equipment to tackle the fire.
3. The possibility of also linking Telecare with the new DEIT system was suggested by the Committee as a way of further improving the performance of control and dispatch services. The Cabinet Associate for Community Safety Services confirmed that discussions are taking place with the Strategic Director of Adult Social Care and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to explore how SFRS can better support the work of Adult Social Care services.
4. The Committee was also updated on the progress of the ongoing Blue Light Collaboration project and Members were advised that a plot of land has been purchased in Crawley as a site for the co-location of emergency services across Surrey and Sussex. It was advised that construction is currently underway on the development of the building that SECamb will be moving into and that discussions are taking place with Surrey and Sussex Police Forces as well as with Sussex Fire and Rescue to explore the possibilities of also locating the control and dispatch of these agencies at the Crawley site. More information was requested on the decision to purchase this site and how the capital costs of acquiring the land were met. The AC stated that the land was purchased speculatively by SCC after being identified as a potential site for the Blue Light Collaboration project. The Cabinet Associate highlighted that this was a good deal for Surrey as there was no way of losing money on purchasing the site. It was further confirmed that approval for providing the money to purchase this site was given by the Cabinet.
5. Information was provided on work being undertaken to give firefighters the skills and resources to provide emergency medical care at the scene of accidents. Over half of all firefighters in Surrey have now been given this training and it is already being put to use to save lives. This training was seen as particularly important due to the fact that firefighters often arrive first at the scene of accidents they are required to attend and so the ability of firefighters to provide effective

emergency medical care could be critical. It was highlighted that if there is any ambiguity about the most appropriate type of medical care for a patient then this will be left to paramedics. The Committee asked how the introduction of emergency medical care training had been received by firefighters, the AC highlighted that it has been widely welcomed by firefighters who want to have the skills and resources required to provide immediate medical care to victims of accidents.

6. Members asked whether there is the potential for any legal issues arising from emergency care provided by firefighters and whether there is a protocol in place to respond to legal challenges. The AC highlighted that the firefighters follow SECAMB protocols and so SECAMB will take responsibility for responding to legal challenges arising from emergency medical care delivered by firefighters, as long as it falls within the scope of care that can be delivered by paramedics.
7. The Committee expressed some concern with training being provided to firefighters and whether this would make it more challenging to employ firefighters, particularly retained fire fighters. The AC advised Members that firefighters are already trained to deal with a wide range of situations and that emergency medical training was just one addition to the varied skill set that firefighters have. In relation to retained firefighters, the Committee was informed that they are very supportive of expanding their skill set in order to respond to a wider range of issues.
8. The AC informed Members that contract negotiations are currently underway with retained fire officers in an effort to move them to on-call contracts as a way of mobilising SFRS resources more efficiently. In particular, the aim of the new contract is to more effectively manage the number of firefighters that respond to an incident so that SFRS provides a proportionate response to particular emergencies. The intention is to remove the retaining and disturbance fee for on-call firefighters and replace it by paying officers with a percentage of their hourly rate while on-call which will then move to the full hourly rate when these firefighters are actually responding to an emergency. Members were informed that negotiations around moving retained firefighters to on-call contracts are ongoing and that the Unions are heavily involved in the discussions around these changes.
9. Members were also informed of plans to introduce defibrillators to every fire station in Surrey by the end of 2015. There are currently defibrillators at two fire stations where promotional activities have taken place make people aware that fire stations in Surrey now carry defibrillators. These activities have been well received by residents who have also been given the opportunity to develop resuscitation skills.

10. Further information was also provided on how SFRS is expanding on the support it provides to other emergency services in the county. Thermal imaging cameras owned by SFRS are now being used to help the Police search for missing people and have already helped the Police find missing people more quickly. SFRS are also providing support to SECamb by carrying out forced entries to residential properties in medical emergencies taking some of this workload away from the Police. This initiative began on 1 January 2015 and firefighters are being called out on average twice a week to force entry into a property on behalf of SECamb. Statistics so far indicate that SFRS are able to attend the scene in under 8 minutes on average and cause minimal damage getting into properties.
11. Concern was expressed by Members that the additional responsibilities taken on by SFRS might make it less responsive to incidents of fire. The AC advised that protocols have been agreed which state that responsibility for the new services provided by SFRS will revert back to the Police when the fire service become too busy, to ensure that SFRS can discharge its primary functions. It was further highlighted that SFRS are only looking at areas of overlap between the services that each agency provides to ensure there is a more coordinated response to emergencies, rather than one service supplanting the work of another.
12. The Committee was also apprised of opportunities being considered for the development of an integrated transport function (ITF) across the six partner agencies involved in the integration project. It was highlighted that a key aim of the ITF is to take a more coordinated approach to the maintenance of emergency service vehicles which could save £3 million across the partner agencies, as well as enabling vehicles to be returned more swiftly. Members were also informed that savings have also been achieved through by purchasing fuel collaboratively across the partner agencies and that plans are being developed to rationalise the number of fuel sites used by the emergency services in Surrey in order to reduce fuels costs further.
13. The AC provided information on a pilot programme that is being run by the partner agencies which aims to improve how the emergency services respond to a people with mental health problems. This initiative has involved putting a specialist in call centres to respond to calls from people experiencing a mental health crisis and to provide guidance to the emergency services on the most appropriate way to help the person. The pilot programme was extremely successful and officers are looking to expand the project so that mental health specialists are situated in call centres seven nights a week. Members were further informed that another pilot scheme has also been trialled whereby a mental health specialist drives along with police officers to respond to incidents.

14. Members asked whether the governance structures in place for each of the six partner agencies are the result of legislation or whether these have been set up voluntarily by each organisation. The Cabinet Associate confirmed that the governing bodies in place for each agency are a result of legislation with the accountability structures in place enshrined by law. It was, however, highlighted that a steering board has been set up that reports directly into the governing bodies of each of the partner agencies to ensure that the ECSP is delivered successfully.

Recommendations:

1. The Select Committee notes the work being undertaken within (the) ESCP and endorse the continued engagement with the programme, particularly:
 - a) The Joint Contact, Control and Dispatch project currently supported by Police Innovation funding.
 - b) The Immediate Emergency Care Responder project, including provision of public access defibrillators, supported by the £337,000 grant.
 - c) The development of a potential Integrated Transport Function, supported by the £5.96m grant.
 - d) The governance arrangements for the ESCP and the role of the Political Stakeholders' Steering Board.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. Information requested on 3rd party hub/ training

Committee next steps:

None

28/15 UPDATE FROM THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Russell Pearson, Chief Fire Officer, Surrey County Council

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided an update on some of the recent developments with SFRS. In particular, information was provided on two major fires which have occurred in Surrey since the last meeting of the Communities Select Committee on 19 March 2015. The CFO advised that new training and resources had been used effectively to ensure that firefighters were able to tackle a major wildfire outside of Pirbright efficiently and without any damage to property.
2. The Committee was provided with details of the fire which took place at Clandon Park House and efforts which have been taking place to rescue as much of the interior of the building as possible. It was,

however, advised that damage to the inside of the house is extensive although much of the external structure remains intact. Moreover, SFRS have managed to recover a number of Clandon Park House's most significant artefacts although there is a need to ensure that the structure of the building is intact before any further salvage operations can take place. Members were further informed that the CFO and Cabinet Associate for Community Safety Services have met with the Director General of the National Trust and that they are writing a joint article on the recovery and restoration of historic buildings after a major fire.

- The CFO was asked whether there was any scope to use aircraft to drop water on fires such as that which took place at Clandon Park House. It was highlighted that SFRS doesn't currently have the capability to do this but conversations are taking place with a private company that does provide this service to assess whether SFRS can add this facility to its arsenal. It is, however, extremely expensive and could cost as much as £2 million a year just to have a helicopter and its crew on standby in case of a major fire.
- 3. Information was provided on a host of new equipment purchased by SFRS to provide them with more flexibility in tackling different types of fire. This equipment includes 26 new Landrover Defenders with one situated at each Fire Station in the county. These can be used to respond to different types of incident, have the capability to reach locations that can't be accessed by fire trucks, and can also reach some fires more quickly. This means that they can start tackling the fire, and ensuring the safety of the public, before the truck arrives.
- 4. Attention was also drawn to the refreshed Public Safety Plan being drawn up by SFRS which outlines steps to cut waste in the fire service. Members were told that the aim is to publish a first draft of Public Safety Plan by the autumn. The CFO emphasised the importance of getting the plan right and consulting widely, to ensure that SFRS is able to save money and resources without compromising public safety.

Recommendations:

None

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None

Committee next steps:

None

Lunch break began at 12.45pm.

Committee resumed at 1.30pm.

Witnesses:

Susie Kemp, Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Milton, Head of Cultural Services

Key points raised during the discussions:

Revised budget papers are attached as Appendix 1 to the minutes.

30/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 10]

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at 10.30am on Tuesday 21 July.

31/15 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 11]

32/15 CONFIDENTIAL VERBAL BRIEFING ON MAGNA CARTA EVENT [Item 12]

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS WERE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE BY THE COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE. SET OUT BELOW IS AN OVERVIEW OF THE POINTS DISCUSSED:

The Assistant Chief Executive introduced the report and tabled an updated budget which provided Members details of the costs in association with specific aspects of the event to date. Discussions took place around the set up of the venue, entertainment and the order of service for the event as well as security arrangements.

33/15 PUBLICITY FOR PART 2 ITEMS [Item 13]

Meeting ended at: 2.15 pm

Chairman