

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Transformation Working Group

The process for establishing a Working Group is as follows:

1. The Select Committee identifies a topic that requires detailed consideration and examination.
2. The Select Committee Chairman and Democratic Services Officer (DSO) complete the scoping template.
3. The Corporate Overview Select Committee reviews the scoping document
4. The Select Committee agrees membership of the Working Group.

Review Topic: Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Transformation
Select Committee: Environment Select Committee
Relevant background: <p>On 9 October 2018, County Council endorsed a new shared Community Vision for Surrey in 2030¹. The Community Vision for Surrey includes a number of ambitions for people and place. Significantly the Vision recognises the need to transform the way the council delivers its services and outcomes for residents. To support the Community Vision, Surrey County Council will embark on a journey of transformation which focuses on reforming the way outcomes are delivered and changes the way we work to ensure we are doing the very best we can for our residents. A transformation programme with a number of business cases, focused on the following six themes: Service Transformation, Partnership and Integration, New Ways of Working, Commissioning, Investment & Income and Technology and Digital Innovation, was approved by Council in November 2018².</p> <p>On 5 December 2018, the Environment Select Committee was briefed on the performance of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). At this meeting, the SFRS transformation Business Case was also presented to Members for scrutiny³. The Committee were made aware that a number of transformational changes would be required for the service to improve current performance standards. The Committee raised concerns around the performance of SFRS and agreed that a working group be set-up to support and scrutinise the service as it embarks on its transformation journey. On 20 December 2018, HMICFRS (Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services) released results of its annual assessment (effectiveness, efficiency and people) of SFRS⁴. Inspectors raised concerns around the performance of SFRS in keeping people safe and secure. In particular, there were serious concerns about the service's effectiveness and efficiency.</p> <p>Work themes include, supporting the development of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), scrutinising community protection activity, reviewing partnership working arrangements and improving and developing the culture within the Fire Service.</p> <p>The group's role will be to ensure that ambitions set out in the Vision for Surrey in 2030 are embedded into the SFRS. The working group will act as a 'critical friend' to the</p>

¹<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s51123/Item%2011%2020180927%20Report%20for%20Council%20on%209%20October%202018%20Council%20vision%20partnership%20commitment%20and%20deal.pdf>

² <https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s51906/Item%209%20-%20Council%20report%2013%20November%202018-%20organisation%20strategy%20PFS%20transformation%20and%20people%20stra.pdf>

³ <https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=712&MId=6539&Ver=4>

⁴ <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/surrey-fire-and-rescue-service-report-2018-19.pdf>

service and will support the service throughout its journey of transformation. Recommendations from the group will be submitted to the Environment Select Committee and Cabinet where necessary.

Why this is a scrutiny item

SFRS is a universal service which impacts all residents. The nature of the work carried out by the service means the service is critical to Surrey's most vulnerable residents. As a result, residents support the SFRS and value the role they play in protecting the public.

Staff Feedback

The Surrey Residents' Survey found that between 2016/17, over 78% of residents were very satisfied/ fairly satisfied with the fire and rescue service⁵. On the other hand, only 40% of staff within the service responded to the staff survey, the lowest response rate amongst the major areas of the Council. There were a number of negative responses received within each of the eight key areas of the survey including concerns with senior leadership and limited opportunities to grow within the service. As a service which impacts so many different people, it is critical that scrutiny is undertaken to help drive improvements in the service which will in turn promote community well-being and improve the quality of life for residents.

Service Performance

The HMICFRS annual inspection report states, *"We have concerns about the performance of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure. In particular, we have serious concerns about the service's effectiveness and efficiency.... the service is inefficient at keeping people safe from fires and other risks. This is particularly so in how it uses its resources. But the service should also be more affordable..... the service needs to improve how it looks after its people"*. A number of concerns around the performance of SFRS have been raised in the HMICFRS annual inspection. It is clear, that scrutiny of SFRS from the Select Committee has been ineffective with Members not providing constructive and purposeful challenge to the service in recent years. The Working Group now has the opportunity to actively engage in the scrutiny process and drive improvements with SFRS. A number of key concerns highlighted in the report will be investigated by the Working Group as part of its proposed work plan. The services response to addressing HMICFRS concerns will be vigorously examined to ensure concerns are being addressed by the service at a swift pace.

Financial Challenges

The Council is facing a number of significant financial challenges. The combination of eight years of successive reductions in Central Government funding and rising demand for services have placed unprecedented pressure on the Council's ability to deliver year on year savings. To help support budgetary pressures, a savings target of £4m was assigned to the Fire Service in 2019/20. This will not be achieved. A savings target of £2m for 2020/21 is also unlikely to be achieved. Scrutiny Members have a key role in ensuring that the Council's financial resources are allocated and prioritised accordingly and represent value for taxpayer's money. Members are responsible for scrutinising the Council's budget position and have a detailed understanding of the financial issues facing the council. The financial challenges facing SFRS and the fact that the service has been rated as inadequate when it comes to making the best use of resources, confirms why the service requires detailed financial scrutiny.

The working group will utilise its role as a critical friend to challenge policy-makers and decision-makers and drive service-wide improvements. As independent minded Councillors with close community links, the working group has a unique role in being able to ensure that the voice of everyone impacted by SFRS including staff and local communities is heard.

⁵ <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/surrey-residents-survey-annual-data-satisfaction>

Aim

By acting as a critical friend the Working Group aims to support the SFRS to improve its performance, raise staff morale and achieve its transformation into an efficient and effective Fire and Rescue Service.

What questions are the group aiming to answer?

1. Is the transformation delivery plan fit for purpose and realistic in terms of what can be achieved?
2. How do residents view the SFRS?
3. How are resources managed and prioritised by the service?
4. What prevention activity currently takes place with local communities and how can the service better reflect the local communities it serves?
5. How is the SFRS service and leadership viewed by its staff and why? Are staff clear on the objectives and aims of the service?
6. How is the Service addressing concerns raised within the HMICFRS inspection report?

Aspirations

- Support the delivery of the Fire Service Transformation Programme;
- Ensure the concerns raised in the HMIC inspection report are actively being addressed and as a result, improvements to the service are being made;
- Increase prevention activity undertaken by the service and resident and community participation and engagement with SFRS;
- Understand how staff workforce policies and strategies can support staff wellbeing better;
- Increase and strengthen partnership working arrangements.

Scope (within / out of)**In scope:**

- Plans, policies and changes to service levels as a result of transformation
- SFRS Budgets
- Emergency Management Team in context of wider community safety offer
- Voluntary & Community Services

Out of scope:

- Community Safety Partnerships
- Wider Council Transformation Programme
- Office of the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner
- Surrey Local Resilience Forum

Outcomes for Surrey / Benefits

The Group ensures that SFRS supports the Councils transformation programme and budget position, achieving ambitions within the Vision for Surrey 2030;

The Group ensures that SFRS contributes and utilises partnership working arrangements with other Fire Services and blue light services;

The Group to make certain that SFRS becomes a proactive service which has a good understanding of risk within its local communities and actively engages with residents and businesses;

The Group to make certain that SFRS becomes a service which is well respected amongst all and a service that promotes a supportive culture of inclusion, transparency and respect.

Proposed work plan

The Group will make recommendations after each stage of the proposed work plan.

Stage 1 (IRMP)

Timescale	Task	Responsible
February 2019	Hold meeting with Working Group Members and officers to define scope, work plan and desired outcomes.	DSO
March	Meet with officers to review the draft IRMP out for public consultation.	SFRS
March-May	Group to conduct research on the draft IRMP- including meeting with witnesses and stakeholders.	Working Group
May	Meet with officers to review IRMP public consultation feedback.	DSO/SFRS
June	Hold meeting with Group to identify areas for recommendation.	DSO
June- July	Compile report to Select Committee for consideration.	Working Group
Aug-Sept	IRMP to Cabinet for decision.	SFRS

Potential Witnesses

Cabinet Member for Community Services

Executive Director for Highways, Transport and Environment

Director of Community Protection and Emergencies

Service Users (including residents and businesses)

Surrey Fire Volunteer Service

Surrey Fire and Rescue Staff (including firefighters, on-call firefighters, senior management and back office staff)

Fire Brigades Union (FBU)

National Fire Chiefs Council

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, Chief Fire Officer

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, Chief Fire Officer

Useful Documents

Surrey County Council- A Community Vision for Surrey in 2030

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s51123/Item%2011%2020180927%20Report%20for%20Council%20on%209%20October%202018%20Council%20vision%20partnership%20commitment%20and%20deal.pdf>

Surrey County Council- Transformation Programme

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s51906/Item%209%20-%20Council%20report%2013%20November%202018-%20organisation%20strategy%20PFS%20transformation%20and%20people%20strategy.pdf>

HMIC Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018/19 Annual Assessment– Surrey Fire and Rescue Service- <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/surrey-fire-and-rescue-service-report-2018-19.pdf>

Surrey Fire and Rescue, Public Safety Plan (2016-25)

https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/87341/Public-Safety-Plan-2016-to-2025.pdf

Surrey Fire and Rescue, Vision, Mission and Aims

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/fire-and-rescue/about/our-vision-mission-and-aims>

Surrey Fire and Rescue, Values and Behaviours

https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/161586/Surrey-Fire-and-Rescue-Services-values-and-behaviours.pdf

Potential barriers to success (Risks / Dependencies)

Officer and Member availability
Ability to engage Service Users and external organisations
Delays with the delivery of the Fire Service Transformation Programme
Number of project work streams to consider

Equalities implications

The Working Group recognises that there are a number considerations around equalities when conducting its work, and there are a number of people with various needs that will be contributing to this process. It will be mindful of how it conducts its work in order to ensure people are provided the opportunity to contribute, and that any barriers to doing so are mitigated.

The Group will monitor the equalities implications emerging from its recommendations with officers, and will work to identify mitigation measures for those with a potentially negative impact.

Task Group Members (4) <i>(Proportional Representation Required)</i>	
Spokesman for the Group	Saj Hussain
Democratic Services Officer (DSO)	Huma Younis

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