



Classification	Official		
Meeting	Performance and Resources Board	Agenda no.	12
Meeting Date	29th July 2024		
Report Authors	AM Response – Craig McLellan		
Presented By	Director of Operations – Moira Bruin		
Subject	Response Strategy Update		
Type of Report	Information		
PFCC Action Point No.	N/A	For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the board note the progress against the Response Strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been produced to provide P&R with a progress update against the implementation of the Response Strategy and activity completed since the launch of the Response Strategy in late 2021. Key headlines are:

- Launch of the use of strategic stations to ensure effective cover across the service
- The development of a new response time modelling tool to inform future response standards
- A drive to use people not appliances as the most cost-effective way of using our resources.
- Closer management of Firefighter development pathways to facilitate frontloading of essential training courses such as appliance driving.
- Continued increases in the volume of Home Fire Safety Checks carried out by operational crews since the inception of the strategy.

BACKGROUND

Since the launch of the Response Strategy a review of our reporting methodology has been developed to enable progress against this strategy to be identified.

The Response function continues to be committed to delivering against the Response Strategy and is continuing to evolve governance to ensure this progress is measured in all areas of Response.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

This report highlights the key areas of progress thus far against the implementation of the Response Strategy

STRATEGY LAUNCH

Launching the Response Strategy focused on both internal and external stakeholders, ensuring clear, concise messaging, and importantly outlining the direction of travel for the lifetime of the Strategy.

GOVERNANCE

Since the launch of the Response Strategy the governance structure has been developed and a review of the Directorate meeting has been carried out. The new meeting structure provides greater transparency of decision making and accountability. This board feeds into Continuous Improvement Board by exception through the Head of Response. The board has as its attendee's, key staff across the Response function and other areas of the business that are vicariously responsible for delivery of key elements of the Response Strategy such as Prevention and Protection. The Directorate updates will be performance focused to enable board members to provide:

- Strategic and tactical updates on performance targets and projects and continually improve Service delivery through the PPR directorate.
- Create a shared vision and understanding of Service priorities.
- Inform reporting to other appropriate boards to enable working in collaboration and reduce isolation and duplication of efforts.
- Highlight concerns for decision for escalation to appropriate boards or departments.
- PFCC awareness on Protection-Prevention-Response performance and Service priorities.

This meeting has now been aligned to the production of the performance report to enable scrutiny and provide updates to SLT members ahead of Performance and Resource Board to ensure they are adequately briefed to answer the OPFCC questions.

ACTIVITY SINCE STRATEGY LAST UPDATE:

1) Operational coverage across all 12 strategic stations and 7 joint key stations has been maintained at 97% hitting the target of 98% in May.

2) The response team have undertaken work with the Performance and Analytics team to develop a data led, intuitive response time modelling tool, to deliver realistic response time metrics by Local Authority Output Areas across the whole of Essex This tool will allow us to change our current response standards to ensure they are both accurate and transparent and inform the planning through the upcoming CRMP.

3) Strategic workforce planning continues to be effective and enables the service to flex its recruitment options to match the needs of the response function. This is monitored through the operational resourcing board which gives oversight and monitoring of numbers of staff, budgets and provides the evidence to support effective recruitment decisions. Since the last report this has led to successful recruitment/transfer of Phase 3 firefighters from other Fire & Rescue Services to deliver skilled and competent personnel directly into our establishment. It has also directly informed the continuation of the current wholetime recruitment campaign.

4) To further support response, the team continue to deliver the following activities:

- Use of wholetime crews primarily to cover strategic stations. On call to be used at shift change overs.
- Standby moves only to be made to strategic stations other than in spate conditions.
- Increased use of on-call to on-call additional shift workers to put on-call strategic stations on the run.
- Mixed crewing to be utilised more regularly.
- Day Duty Officers are being used more often and department heads are encouraged to release their people to work at on call stations. (DDOR).
- Use of green book staff with On Call contracts also supporting ridership under the DDOR guidance
- Increased focus on progress through the phases of development.

5) Response have worked collaboratively with operational training to monitor, manage and expedite progression of Phase 1 & 2 Firefighters through their development pathways. This has facilitated earlier identification of individuals within Phase 2 for key training courses such as appliance driving and water rescue so that they can be trained prior to becoming Phase 3 competent firefighters, which in turn, supports appliance availability

- All Phase 1 & 2 pathway progression is now reported through weekly command performance meetings and fed monthly into the response performance meeting.
- Number of Phase 1 firefighters who have been on their pathways for more than 12 months and Phase 2 for 18 months has reduced significantly through structured reporting and subsequent management of individuals development pathways.
- All personnel in Phase 2 who have been nominated to drive have now been allocated driving courses to be delivered before the end of the year
- All P1 FFs that currently have all the prerequisites are booked onto a 2-week BA course prior to end of 2024.

6) To support availability levels the Resource Management Unit continue to work in conjunction with command teams to review and increase the number of times a day duty officer (DDOR) has been used

- DDOR's have been utilised 303 times in the first 6 months of 2024 which demonstrates a continuation of the significant increase since the delivery of the 17-point action plan in November 2023.

These numbers continue to increase and will continue to be used as they are a more cost-effective way of crewing on call appliances and support the strategic aspiration of moving people not appliances.

7) Resource Management Unit has developed and will continue to develop more efficient ways of maximising and reporting on availability.

8) Work continues understanding and improving wholetime firefighter productivity. The key Home Office metric of Home Fire Safety Checks as a measure of this continues to increase from the position the service was in when the Response Strategy was implemented. There remains further work to be done in this space.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

None specifically linked to this update.

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities

Prevention Protection and Response

Promote a positive culture in the workplace.

Make Best use of our Resources.

IRMP Priorities

Response

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this paper.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has a legal duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act to provide a resilient response to emergency incidents. This update is intended to demonstrate the work being done in the response function.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this paper.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N

Sexual orientation	N		
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The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the work that has been and will continue to be done in delivery of the response strategy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None required for this update paper.

FUTURE PLANS

The Response function is committed to continual improvement in line with the service's strategic intent. Further update papers will be provided to show the direction of travel.

The future plans are now focussed on the closing the 2021-2024 IRMP action plan whilst developing and delivering the 2025-2029 CRMP against the PFCC Fire and Rescue Plan.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

Response Strategy [Response Strategy 2020-2024](#)