



Terms of Reference of the Fire and Rescue Performance and Resources Board

Approved August 2024

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Board has been established to enable the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (“the Commissioner”) to review Essex County Fire and Rescue Service’s (ECFRS’s) performance, ensure that budgeted resources (both human and financial) are closely aligned with fire and rescue priorities and to ensure that resources are effectively and efficiently utilised.
- 1.2 The Board will enable the Commissioner to maintain effective oversight of the totality of the fire and rescue service and to hold the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive to account (including through their representative with delegated authority) for the delivery of fire and rescue services and of the priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan.
- 1.3 The Terms of Reference of the Board will be reviewed on a biennial basis.
- 1.4 The Board will:
 - a) Scrutinise, support and challenge the overall performance of the fire and rescue service including against the priorities agreed within the Fire and Rescue Plan and Community Risk Management Plan.
 - b) Support the Commissioner in holding the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive to account for the exercise of functions which are delegated to them as well as the exercise of functions of persons under the direction and control of the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive.
 - c) Advise the Commissioner on actions to be taken to maintain an efficient, effective and economic fire and rescue service for Essex.
 - d) Identify and consider themes / “deep dives” for scrutiny, challenge and support.
 - e) Monitor actual revenue spend against budget and the forecast outturn, advising corrective action where appropriate in order to further advance the priorities of the service and Commissioner.
 - f) Oversee implementation of the service’s Treasury Management Strategy.
 - g) Monitor actual and forecast capital expenditure and resourcing of the approved capital programme.
 - h) Monitor use of the service’s reserves.

- i) Monitor the progress made in delivering planned efficiency and transformation savings.
- j) Receive updates against the key transformation initiatives, as governed and delivered by the service's Portfolio Management Board.
- k) Monitor workforce composition and demographics and champion initiatives to increase workforce diversity.
- l) Monitor customer and employee satisfaction survey results and the actions taken in response.
- m) Monitor and take steps to improve compliance with key people management processes, such as those relating to operational training and annual performance appraisals.
- n) Oversee the implementation of the Continuous Improvement Plan, taking account of recommendations arising from HMICFRS inspections, peer reviews and other external reviews and reports (both local and national).
- o) Monitor complaints and compliments made to the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, and the learning arising from these, on a quarterly basis.
- p) Review papers to be submitted to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel and the Audit Committee, other than those approved by the Strategic Board.
- q) Scrutinise the service's procurement activities and identify areas of commissioning that would assist in delivering the Fire and Rescue Plan.
- r) Receive additional reports from the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and its sub-boards as appropriate.
- s) Commission additional reports via the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive as appropriate.

1.5 The Performance and Resources Board has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in these Terms of Reference.

1.6 Operational management of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is outside the scope of the Performance and Resources Board. This sits with the Senior Leadership Team, chaired by the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive.

2 Membership

2.1 The membership of the Performance and Resources Board is as follows:

- a) Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- b) Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- c) Deputy Chief Fire Officer
- d) Director of Corporate Services
- e) Director of People Services
- f) Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- g) Director of Finance and Improvement

- h) Assistant Director of Corporate Communications and Community Engagement
 - i) Strategic Head of Performance and Resources to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 - j) Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire and Rescue) to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- 2.2 A standing invitation is extended to the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive. The following colleagues will also receive standing invitations to support the consideration of standing (monthly) agenda items:
- a) Performance, Business Planning and Policy Manager
 - b) Finance Manager to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 - c) Procurement Manager
- 2.3 Additional members of staff may be invited by the Commissioner to support agenda discussions. Chief officers of other organisations, representatives of community groups and subject matter experts may also be invited by the Commissioner to support the work of the Board where appropriate.
- 2.4 This meeting will be chaired by the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner.

3 Frequency and notice of meetings

- 3.1 The Board will meet monthly. The calendar of meetings shall be agreed at the start of each year. In the event that a meeting date needs to be changed, wherever possible, at least one month's calendar notice will be given.
- 3.2 Further meetings outside of the normal cycle of the Board can be convened at the request of the Chair or any of its members, subject to agreement by the Chair.
- 3.3 Unless otherwise agreed, formal notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with the agenda of items to be discussed, will be forwarded to each member of the Board, any other person required to attend and all other appropriate persons determined by the Chair, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Individual papers may be circulated with shorter notice where an item of business is considered by the Chair to be sufficiently urgent to justify this.
- 3.4 Any meetings held outside the normal cycle of meetings should be convened with a minimum notice of five working days. Extraordinary or urgent meetings may be held with less notice but should be for exceptional matters only, subject to the Chair's agreement and quorum requirements. In this case the agenda and any supporting papers will be sent to Board members and to other attendees at the same time as the meeting notice is sent out.
- 3.5 Oral reports will not be accepted for substantive agenda items except in very exceptional cases, at the discretion of the Chair.

4 Forward planning and submission of papers

- 4.1 The forward plan, including the standing agenda items, will be reviewed and any proposed changes agreed at each meeting. Any items which are proposed to be added to the Forward Plan during the meeting will be confirmed by the Chair.
- 4.2 Where changes to the agenda are requested between meetings which impact the next scheduled meeting:
- Additional items must be accepted by the Commissioner and the Chief Fire Officer (or their respective deputies), and
 - Withdrawn items will remain on the agenda for a verbal explanation / update at the meeting.
- 4.3 Papers will ordinarily be added to the forward plan with a minimum of eight weeks' notice. Exceptionally, where need arises, papers may be requested with a minimum four weeks' notice.
- 4.4 Papers will be submitted on a template provided by the Commissioner's office unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire and Rescue). Papers must include a Government Security Classification.
- 4.5 Papers must be submitted to the Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Fire and Rescue) seven working days prior to the meeting in order to facilitate timely circulation.
- 4.6 Where papers are data dependent, and data availability means that a paper is anticipated to be submitted outside of this timeframe, a schedule for submission will be agreed at least eight weeks prior to the meeting at which the paper will be presented. This agreement will acknowledge any requests by the Commissioner for draft papers to be shared in advance, the Service Leadership Team (SLT) date for approval of the paper and the deadline for such draft papers.

5 Attendance at meetings and quorum

- 5.1 Members of the Board are expected to attend all meetings, wherever possible. Where this is not possible, a named substitute may be sent on their behalf, who must be appropriately briefed to represent the standing member.
- 5.2 A minimum of four members of the Board, including the Commissioner or their Deputy and the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Fire Officer must be present for the meeting to be deemed quorate. The meetings will be held in private with the matters discussed being placed in the public domain as appropriate.
- 5.3 An "open chair" will be available for colleagues attending as observers to the meeting, to support their personal development, at the discretion of the Chair.

6 Minutes

- 6.1 The Secretary will record the names and job titles of those present at the meeting, write minutes, including the key points made and decisions taken in principle at all meetings, along with any actions stemming from discussion that need to be taken.
- 6.2 The draft minutes of all meetings and decisions taken will be circulated within seven working days of the meeting, and agreed minutes will be published within 14 days of

the subsequent meeting. Amendments to the minutes may be submitted between meetings and, where the Chair is in agreement, a revised version of the minutes may be circulated. Any proposed amendments which are not authorised by the Chair between meetings must be highlighted at the following meeting for discussion and approval / rejection.

- 6.3 The minutes of the Board and unrestricted papers will be placed in the public domain as soon as practical after these have been approved by the Chair, with exclusion to any matter deemed private and confidential.
- 6.4 Once approved, the written minutes will be the official record of the meeting. In preparing these minutes a recording of the meeting may be used but this will be deleted once the official written minutes have been agreed at the following Board meeting.
- 6.5 The secretariat for the meeting will be provided by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office.

7 Decision-making (Commissioner or Deputy)

- 7.1 Although the Board has no decision-making powers, it may make recommendations for decisions to be taken by the Commissioner. Where such recommendations are made, the item may be referred to the Strategic Board. Where appropriate, a decision report may be submitted and approved outside of the Strategic Board following discussion at the Performance and Resources Board.

8 Publishing of information

- 8.1 All documents must be labelled in accordance with the UK Government Security Classifications.
- 8.2 The agenda will include verification of the security classification of papers and confirmation of these classifications (and approval for publishing) will be sought at the conclusion of each Board meeting.
- 8.3 Documents marked 'Official Sensitive' or above ('Secret' / 'Top Secret') are not to be published.
- 8.4 Documents labelled 'Official' and those not protectively marked may be published with the following exceptions:
 - The document must not include any personal details in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
 - The document must not contain or allude to any form of intelligence which may compromise operational activity and tactics.
 - The document must not contain any embedded documents that fall outside of the classification of the main paper.