

Division(s):

CABINET - 14 FEBRUARY 2012

INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) OXFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY - DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2012-13

Report by the Business & Improvement Manager – Fire & Rescue

Introduction

1. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework to which Fire Authorities must have regard when discharging their functions. The 2008-11 Framework requires each Fire and Rescue Authority to produce a publicly available IRMP. The report proposes a number of projects to be included within the Fire Authority's IRMP for the fiscal year 2012-13.
2. The proposals in the report were agreed in their entirety by the Delegated Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities, Councillor Judith Heathcoat, on 17th October 2011.
3. The proposals were also presented to the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee on 7th November 2011 and at the time of writing this report will also be subject to further scrutiny at this committee on 13th February 2012.
4. The agreed proposals within this Action Plan 2012-13 have been subjected to full internal & external consultation for a period of 12 weeks. Cabinet is therefore invited to comment on the proposed Action Plan, consultation responses & management responses to the consultation responses.
5. The Secretary of State initially published the latest Fire and Rescue National Framework in May 2008. The purpose of the Framework was to provide strategic direction from central government whilst ensuring that authorities continue to make local decisions. The Framework set out the Government's objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service and what fire and rescue authorities should do to achieve these objectives. More recently, Ministers have stated that the 2008/11 National Framework remains in force, but the Minister responsible for Fire and Rescue matters no longer expects to enforce the following aspects of it - Regional Management Boards, Equality and Diversity, Workforce Development and Asset management. Whilst there is expected to be a new version of the Framework document released this year the Minister has made it clear that the use of Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) will continue to determine the need for and allocation of local fire prevention, protection and response resource to allow local decisions to be made by practitioners and elected members on the basis of locally assessed risks and circumstances.

6. Each Fire and Rescue Authority should ensure that the IRMP:
 - Is regularly reviewed and revised and reflects up-to-date risk information and evaluation of service delivery outcomes
 - Has regard to the risk analyses completed by Local and Regional Resilience Forums including those reported in external Community Risk Registers (CRRs) and internal risk registers, to ensure that civil and terrorist contingencies are captured in their IRMP
 - Reflects effective consultation during its development and at all review stages with representatives of all sections of the community and stakeholders
 - Demonstrates how prevention, protection and response activities will be best used to mitigate the impact of risk on communities in a cost effective way
 - Provides details of how Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver their objectives and meet the needs of communities through working with partners
 - Has undergone an effective equality impact assessment process.
7. Fire and Rescue Authorities should review the effectiveness of 'cross-border' integration arrangements with neighbouring authorities and set these out appropriately in their IRMPs.
8. Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority published its strategic IRMP in April 2008 providing the strategic direction for the next five years. This document is subjected to annual review and updated and amended as required. The current strategic IRMP requires no amendment for the fiscal year 2012-13 and will be refreshed as a new strategic document for the fiscal year 2013-14.
9. The projects that have been proposed for the action plan 2012-13 have been subject to consultation for 12 weeks. Oxfordshire Fire Authority have consulted with the following: Neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services & their elected members, district, town and parish councils, businesses, the voluntary sector, all internal staffing groups within Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service including representative bodies and members of the public.
10. The Senior Management from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service has responded to the comments made during the consultation period and the responses are available to Cabinet within this report. These responses will also be published on the internet for public access.
11. The following items summarise the projects for inclusion in the IRMP Action Plan for the fiscal year 2012-13. These include a consultation response summary & OFRS senior management response:
 - **Project 1: Business Continuity Review**
Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Business & Improvement

Objective: To supplement existing arrangements by fundamentally reviewing the business continuity arrangements for Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service. This will include capital assets, ICT systems, human resource and neighbouring Fire Authority arrangements as defined with sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Outcome: OFRS will have suitable & sufficient business continuity arrangements in place to deal with planned, unplanned or extreme events.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 90% of respondents supported this project proposal and there were no oppositions to the proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

Management Response:

N/A as no comments were expressed.

- **Project 2: Recruitment & Advancement Review**
Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Service Support

Objective: To fundamentally review firefighter selection, recruitment & advancement within OFRS. Since Fire & Rescue Authorities are no longer constrained by National Firefighter Selection Tests (NFFST) and Advancement & Development Centre's (ADCs)¹ there is a significant opportunity to address areas of concern within the recruitment & advancement process.

Outcome: A more streamlined & robust recruitment & advancement process that best meets the local needs and circumstances of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service & Oxfordshire County Council.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 83% of respondents supported this project proposal and 10% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that there should be linkage with project 6 (Operational Assurance Framework).

Management Response:

Whilst this will be an individual project within the 2012-13 IRMP, the Operational Assurance Framework project will certainly include elements of the overall selection, recruitment & advancement strategy.

- **Project 3: Road Traffic Casualty Reduction**
Responsible Manager: Area Manager - Safety

Objective: To utilise the recently re-structured Road Safety Team in determining & delivering a comprehensive Road Safety strategy which

¹ This was announced at the Fire Ministerial workshop on 29th July 2010

compliments the '365 alive vision' and the 'Travelling in confidence' strand within the business strategy.

Outcome: Improved safety education and operational response to RTCs, contributing to the reduction of injuries and fatalities from road related hazards & a societal cost saving to the county of Oxfordshire.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 86% of respondents supported this project proposal and just 3% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

Management Response:

N/A as no comments were expressed.

- **Project 4: Olympics 2012 Pre-Planning**
Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations & Resilience

Objective: To fully engage with the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum, South East Fire & Rescue Authorities and other key partners with regards to Olympic pre-planning within the Thames Valley area.

Outcome: OFRS will be confident & more effective in its resilience & response arrangements to potential 'major events' at venues in relation to the Olympics 2012.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 86% of respondents supported this project proposal and 7% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that we should not be wasting time on this project.

Management Response:

Whilst there are no Olympic sporting events taking place in Oxfordshire there will be a procession of the Olympic torch relay which will pass through various routes within Oxfordshire. This is already taking up considerable resource from OFRS with regards to inter-agency pre-planning & response for a potential terrorist attack. OFRS are also working closely with neighbouring Fire & Rescue Services who are holding Olympic sporting events to ensure resilience for the very same reason.

- **Project 5: Retained Duty System (RDS) Availability Review**
Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations & Resilience

Objective: To fundamentally review the RDS particularly in relation to selection, recruitment (links with project 2), retention, crewing arrangements & support from Wholetime resources. This will include areas such as competence levels & potential revised crewing arrangements for both RDS & Wholetime resources.

Outcome: A Retained Duty System that best meets the local needs and circumstances of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service & Oxfordshire County Council and the local communities and ensures suitable 'arrangements' are in place as required by Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, .

Consultation Summary:

- Overall 79% of respondents supported this project proposal and 10% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that Retained fire-fighters training needs to be reviewed and their training time per week extended.
A number of Retained Duty System (RDS) personnel have also expressed an interest in being involved in this project.

Management Response:

RDS training requirements are currently being reviewed as part of the overall Training Competency Framework (TCF). Senior management also certainly recognise the expertise & experience that RDS personnel can bring. A number of individuals within the RDS have already been identified and invited to work with the responsible manager for this project.

- **Project 6: Operational Assurance Framework**
Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Projects

Objective: To develop a strategic operational assurance framework within OFRS to evidence that suitable 'arrangements' are in place as required by Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and to maintain and improve fire-fighter safety.

Outcome: An improvement in the way that OFRS identifies, understands, manages and mitigates risk, leading to improved community safety, operational resilience, service delivery & a safer workforce.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 80% of respondents supported this project proposal and 10% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that the wording of the question implies a pre-determined outcome, rather than a process which will generate improvements.

Management Response:

OFRS senior management are committed to ensuring that Fire-fighter safety is of the highest priority. We believe that a comprehensive operational assurance framework will go a long way in determining this whilst also ensuring that we deliver a 1st class operational response to the people who live, work & travel within Oxfordshire.

- **Project 7: Data Sharing to Improve the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults & Children**

Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Safety

Objective: To review & improve data sharing protocols within OFRS, Social & Community Services and other relevant stakeholders in relation to improving safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable adults & children

Outcome: A reduction, particularly in relation to the number of fire fatalities & serious injuries within this vulnerable group. Improved protection of vulnerable adults & children for non – fire related events.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 86% of respondents supported this project proposal and just 3% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

Management Response:

Whilst no specific comments have been made in relation to this consultation it should be noted that OFRS personnel have already made a number of referrals' to safeguarding organisations in relation to concerns regarding vulnerable adults & children. We believe that this project will only strengthen our understanding of such issues and improve our partnership arrangements.

- **Project 8: Review of Incident Command, Baseline Worst Case Operational Scenario Planning Assumptions.
Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations and Resilience**

Objective: To examine the organisational implications of the nationally prescribed Incident Command System in relation to the agreed baseline worst case scenario planning assumptions.

Outcome: As required by Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, organisational evidence and assurance that effective 'arrangements' are identified and implemented to ensure adequate resources for pre-determined attendance levels to operational incidents including officer attendance and command roles.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 79% of respondents supported this project proposal and 7% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

Management Response:

N/A as no comments were expressed.

- **Project 9: Improving Fire Control Resilience
Responsible Manager; Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

Objective: To deliver increased resilience in our call receipt, mobilising and incident management arrangements in line with OCC Cabinet requirements based on either a Thames Valley approach or alternative contingency arrangement.

Outcome: Implementation of arrangements to more effectively handle large volumes of 999 emergency calls and to increase the abilities of partners, if necessary, to receive calls and mobilise fire engines on Oxfordshire's behalf. Overall public safety will be enhanced by increased resilience

Consultation Summary:

Overall 68% of respondents supported this project proposal and 25% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

Management Response:

Whilst no specific comments have been made in relation to this consultation it should be noted that this project will also be subject to separate consultation, scrutiny arrangements & final approval on the options recommended via full cabinet.

Overall Consultation

A full list of responses to the consultation can be found in annex A of this report. Management will address these responses where possible and these will be shared on the consultation response pages of Oxfordshire County Council's public website but are not included within this report.

Financial and Staff Implications

12. Each project will fully recognise the prevailing economic constraints, delivering efficiencies or allowing existing/additional services to be delivered more effectively. If any budgetary pressures result from the implementation of these projects, they will be managed within existing budgets or flagged up to Cabinet through the annual Service Resource and Planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

13. Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to agree that all of the project proposals within this report are accepted by cabinet & adopted in the final version of the IRMP Action Plan 2012-13.

Background papers:

National Framework document for the Fire and Rescue Service
Oxfordshire Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-13
The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11.

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January 2012

IRMP 2012-2013 Consultation Responses

Question:

Please let us know what areas you think we should consider for inclusion in our Integrated Risk Management Planning?

Responses:

- Community safety the elderly and children's education
- Given the resource pool available via the large number of part-time employees (RDS) - I wonder if there are opportunities available to draw on that resource for project work related to the IRMP e.g. use of specialists or those with specific knowledge. Also, how does funding come in to the plan? Given more or less funding may make a significant difference in the outcomes.
- Time to arrive at a fire, it's too long.
- All the areas listed in the report.
- Flood response.
- The IRMP is focused on risk reduction and mitigation. The 365alive vision is delivering and I would like to see a focus on community responding to medical emergencies. With enhanced emergency lifesaving skills to (include defibrillation) many lives could be saved. This would embed us into the communities we serve. I fully support the integration into the County Council structure. The performance pledge could be included into the worst case scenario planning assumptions. End.
- This consultation does not ask real questions, merely do we support the intention to do a review on what we do, what will the reviews say? They're the real questions. This so called consultation is pointless.
- Firemen (or at least fire appliance drivers!) should be recruited from each local area specifically for their LOCAL KNOWLEDGE - we recently had an 'event' in our town (not a village, a TOWN) where the fire engine passed by our house (not where the incident was) THREE TIMES because the fire engine driver did not know the local streets!!! Local lads/lasses please!!!
- Perhaps consider wider collaboration in terms of generic functions - not just regional but national - such as training, uniform, appliances, tasks such as mobilisations - e.g. pda - national and so on.
- Retained fire-fighters training needs to be reviewed and to extend their training time per week.

Question:

Do you have any further comments you want to make regarding our proposed projects for the 2012 - 13 Integrated Risk Management Action Plan?

Responses:

- Why waste time on the Olympics?
- I think there are too many projects listed.
- The reason for opposing Q006 is the wording of the question. It implies a pre-determined outcome, rather than a process which will generate improvements. Q002 is better described, and the two need to be taken together.
- It's too woolly.
- No.
- This survey was not written in plain English which will affect responses.
- No.
- Close a few fire stations and build new ones where they are really needed such as Carterton. The system is antiquated.

CA8

- This may not be the correct forum, but do you think that the retained cover at Bicester will be adequate, bearing in mind the future growth of new residential estates and the eco town which I believe are predominantly built of timber construction.
- Who could NOT support the fire service and what they want to do to improve the service and their own future?! However, knowing how 'marketing types' write some surveys to favour a 'positive' result, I was slightly sceptical about the way the questions were all worded, so that only a moron could not answer 'yes' (full support) to all the questions! Good luck and thanks for your on-going hard work!