

By: Chief Executive

To: Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority – 16 October
2013

Subject: PRIMARY STRATEGIES

Classification: Unrestricted

FOR DECISION

SUMMARY

As part of the Spring 2013 cycle of Committee meetings, Members considered five draft primary strategies covering community safety, business safety, operational response, managing the environment and workforce issues. Since that time, the documents have been further refined, taking on board Members' comments made at Committee meetings and in subsequent discussions. A number of the strategies have also been discussed with partners, and their comments have been used to refine the strategies further.

Attached to this report are the five primary strategies, and Members are asked to approve them.

Additionally, the opportunity has been taken to make minor amendments to the wording of the Terms of Reference for the Planning and Performance Committee to reflect the Authority's previous decision to rename the Integrated Risk Management Plan as the Safety Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to approve:

1. The five primary strategies (**Appendices 1 to 5** refer).
2. That, in the Planning and Performance Committee's Terms of Reference, item 6 be amended to read: "To oversee the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process, including approving publication of the Authority's Safety Plan for consultation." (paragraphs 9 and 10 refer).
3. That, in the Guidance on Issues to be Considered by the Authority, "Safety Plan" be substituted for "Integrated Risk Management Plan" in item 3 (paragraphs 11 and 12 refer).

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

COMMENTS

Background

1. At its meeting on 17 October 2012 the Authority approved the approach being taken to develop its five new primary strategies, relating to the safety of people, the safety of businesses, responding to emergencies, managing the environment and workforce issues. The five strategies lay the foundation for all future developments to the Service. An initial draft of each primary strategy was developed, and Members considered these as part of the Spring 2013 cycle of meetings.
2. Each of these documents is forward looking, and therefore refer to the Safety Plan rather than the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

Development Process

3. The documents have all been through a significant development and briefing process. By way of a reminder for those Members who were on the Authority at the time, and for the benefit of newer Members, a list of the occasions where Members have considered or been party to discussions on the development of the strategies is set out below:-
 - July 2012 - Briefings for all political groups;
 - October 2012 – Briefings for all political groups as part of development of the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2013;
 - November 2012 – primary strategies included in the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2013 and consulted on with public, businesses and partner agencies;
 - February 2013 – outcomes of consultation reported to Members alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan;
 - March 2013 – draft Workforce Strategy presented to Human Resources and Equalities Committee;
 - April 2013 – draft Responding to Emergencies, Focus on your Safety and Focus on Business strategies presented to Planning and Performance Committee;
 - April 2013 – draft Caring for the Environment Strategy presented to Audit and Governance Committee;
 - April 2013 – Members’ briefing session on current community safety activities and products;
 - June 2013 – Members’ induction session held at Service Headquarters following the Authority’s Annual Meeting, which covered elements of all the strategies in an interactive setting;
 - July 2013 – Members’ awayday focusing on the draft strategies.

Consultation

4. Since the drafts were presented to Members, each strategy has also been subject to consultation with relevant partner agencies. The Focus on your Safety Strategy was presented to the Community Safety Partnerships in Kent and Medway. Feedback was very positive, and Kent's Community Safety Partnership commented on how easy the strategy was to read. It has also been shared with Kent Police. The Focus on Business strategy was discussed at the Kent Economic Forum in June. Again feedback was positive, and the focus on small and medium-sized businesses was thought to be appropriate. The Responding to Emergencies strategy was discussed at the Kent Resilience Forum, and was very well received. The Caring for the Environment strategy was shared with the Climate Change Team at Kent County Council, whose membership includes all district councils, health service and the Environment Agency. Comments were also sought from a contact at Medway Council. The comments made as a result have been reflected in the strategy.
5. The Workforce Strategy has been the subject of numerous discussions with staff and supervisory managers, particularly as part of seminars for watch managers held in April and May 2013. The comments made, particularly around the need for clear and simple messages which can be communicated to staff, have been reflected not only in the Workforce Strategy but across the whole suite.

Changes Made to the Strategies

6. Overall, the strategies have all been refined, taking on board Members' comments at the various sessions referred to above, and have also been updated to reflect year-end data where this is used. Links have also been made between the suite of strategies. Importantly though, the principle has been applied that information only appears in the relevant strategy and is not repeated in the others.

Plain English

7. A further action that has been taken is to compare the strategies to the style guide that was recently published by the Government. This is to avoid jargon and buzzwords which many people find off-putting or which reduce the clarity of documents. Some jargon specific to the fire and rescue service is needed, but where it has been used an explanatory note has been added. The style guide is available at <https://www.gov.uk/designprinciples/styleguide>.

Terms of Reference of Planning and Performance Committee

8. The Authority agreed the current Terms of Reference for its Committees in June 2012 (Minute 11). Subsequently, at its meeting in February 2013, the Authority decided that the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) should be re-named the Safety Plan (Minute 43). The Terms of Reference of the Planning and Performance Committee include oversight of the IRMP process.
9. The current Terms of Reference of the Planning and Performance Committee include the following as item 6:-

“6. To oversee the Authority’s Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process.”
10. It is therefore proposed that item 6 of the Planning and Performance Committee’s Terms of Reference should be amended to read as follows:-

“6. To oversee the Authority’s Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process, including approving publication of the Authority’s Safety Plan for consultation.”

Guidance Note on Issues to be Considered by the Authority

11. The current Guidance Note on Issues to be Considered by the Authority includes the following as item 3:-

“3. To agree the Authority’s Corporate Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan.”
12. The Safety Plan is always considered by the Authority following consultation, alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan at the February meeting each year. It is proposed that item 3 of the Guidance Note should read as follows:-

“3. To agree the Authority’s Corporate Plan and Safety Plan.”

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

13. An impact assessment for each strategy has been completed. A summary of the findings is attached at **Appendix 6**.
14. The minor amendments to Terms of Reference and to the Guidance Note reflect the Authority’s decision to change the name of the Integrated Risk Management Plan to Safety Plan. The revised wording will also help to clarify the respective roles of the Committee and the Authority as far as the Safety Plan is concerned.

RECOMMENDATION

15. Members are requested to approve:
 - 15.1 The five primary strategies (**Appendices 1 to 5** refer).
 - 15.2 That, in the Planning and Performance Committee's Terms of Reference, item 6 be amended to read: "To oversee the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process, including approving publication of the Authority's Safety Plan for consultation." (paragraphs 9 and 10 refer).
 - 15.3 That, in the Guidance on Issues to be Considered by the Authority, "Safety Plan" be substituted for "Integrated Risk Management Plan" in item 3 (paragraphs 11 and 12 refer).