

**TO:** Fire Authority  
**FROM:** Director of Operational Support  
**DATE:** 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008

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## **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008/09**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Fire Authority for the revised Service Improvement Plan 2008/09.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Fire Authority notes the outcome of the 12 week consultation period on the content of the Draft Service Improvement Plan, including slight amendment to the wording of 2 of the proposals, set out at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Fire Authority approves the revised Service Improvement Plan for 2008/09.

### **3. Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 Political: Fire Authority may be at risk if Integrated Risk Management Plan legislation not implemented effectively.
- 3.2 Economic: The options outlined in the Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 are aimed at providing the most cost effective service to the community whilst at the same time providing the optimum reduction of risk within it. The proposals also aim to improve productivity and make best use of our resources.
- 3.3 Social: The options outlined in the Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 serve to improve the quality of service to the community and thereby mitigate the effects of fire and other incidents on the welfare of that community.
- 3.4 Technological: The options outlines in the Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 aim to make the best use of available technologies to assist in delivering safe and effective services.
- 3.5 Legal: Chapter 1.1 of The Fire and Rescue National Framework 2006/2008 reiterates the legal requirement on all Fire Authorities to produce a local Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that sets out the Authority's strategy for:

- reducing the number and severity of fires, road traffic accidents and other emergency incidents occurring in the area for which it is responsible;
- reducing the severity of injuries in fires, road traffic accidents and other emergency incidents;
- reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents;
- safeguarding the environment and heritage (both built and natural); and
- providing value for money.

3.6 Environmental: The options outlined in the Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 will assist the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority in its duty of safeguarding the environment and heritage (both built and natural).

#### **4 Decision Making Process**

4.1 The Draft Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 has been the subject of a 12 week consultation period during which a range of stakeholders were asked for their views on the proposals.

4.2 The results of the consultation have been considered by the Policy and Finance Committee and amendments to the proposals made. Subject to any further amendments made by the Fire Authority the plan will be implemented from April 2008.

#### **5. Background**

5.1 The Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 (attached as Appendix 2) represents the Fire Authority's fifth year of integrated risk planning and is intended to be the principal management tool to steer future modernisation of the fire service to better meet the needs of local communities. A central tenet of the IRMP process is the involvement of all stakeholders via meaningful consultation and the Head of Media and Communications continues to plan the improvement of our performance in this key area.

5.2 We are maintaining the format of the document as agreed last year; in 2006/07 the Authority produced a more strategic IRMP that began a research process aimed at setting the long term direction of the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS). This Service Improvement Plan supports the IRMP and clearly establishes how the Fire Authority will seek to achieve its goals.

5.3 The IRMP is now viewed as an 'enabling' document rather than simply a list of specific projects. It is intended to strengthen the links between the Corporate Plan and the IRMP and to further embed IRMP proposals within the budgetary planning process.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

| Source Document  | Location   | Contact  |
|--|--|--|
| National Framework for the Fire and Rescue Service 2006-2008 | Fire Service HQ<br>Hinchingsbrooke Cottage<br>Huntingdon | Lawrie Booth<br>01480 444541<br><a href="mailto:lawrie.booth@cambsfire.gov.uk">lawrie.booth@cambsfire.gov.uk</a> |
| Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004                            | Fire Service HQ<br>Hinchingsbrooke Cottage<br>Huntingdon | Lawrie Booth<br>01480 444541<br><a href="mailto:lawrie.booth@cambsfire.gov.uk">lawrie.booth@cambsfire.gov.uk</a> |
| IRMP Guidance Notes 1-10                                     | Fire Service HQ<br>Hinchingsbrooke Cottage<br>Huntingdon | Lawrie Booth<br>01480 444541<br><a href="mailto:lawrie.booth@cambsfire.gov.uk">lawrie.booth@cambsfire.gov.uk</a> |



**Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 – Summary of Consultation**

**1 Consultation Strategy**

- 1.1 The strategy for consultation on the draft Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 was approved by the Community Safety Committee and was focused internally as the proposals have not developed sufficiently to be meaningful to the broader stakeholder group. However limited external consultation was carried out to ensure that interested parties would have the opportunity to comment on the proposals at this early stage.
- 1.2 Methods used internally have included circulation to all personnel a summary of the plan, Sharp End News, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils, electronic copy on the intranet, news release, presentations to staff in all districts and to the representative bodies.
- 1.3 Feedback from the consultation has been received by e-mail, written responses and notes made at the presentations. Set out below is a summary of the comments against each of the 5 proposals.
- 1.4 The Policy and Finance Committee considered the responses to the consultation and endorsed minor changes to the wording of proposals 1 and 5 as set out below.

**2 Proposal 1**

- 2.1 To explore, in conjunction with wholetime personnel and representative bodies, the feasibility of the introduction of a new Heavy Rescue Vehicle and the future use of the Rescue Vehicles at Cambridge and Peterborough.
- 2.2 Responses to this proposal were in the main supportive of the need to improve specialist rescue capability. There was however a difference of opinion regarding how to deliver that capability with some favouring a central heavy rescue unit and others cautioning against concentrating the resource into one location/vehicle. Accordingly, the wording of the proposal has been broadened to explore the feasibility of a heavy rescue unit whilst avoiding the pitfalls of a single vehicle. It is recommended that the wording of the proposal be amended to
- 2.3 **Revised proposal 1**  
To explore, in conjunction with wholetime personnel and representative bodies, the feasibility of the introduction of a new Heavy Rescue Vehicle whilst maintaining the resilience and timeliness of specialist rescue support across the service area, including cross border working.

### **3 Proposal 2**

- 3.1 To enhance and expand the current training regime for Incident Commanders and Incident Support Staff to improve the management of emergencies and satisfy the needs of national response frameworks.
- 3.2 This proposal has met with universal approval. Several additional comments have been made about improving the availability and consistency of the command support function. This issue links with proposal 4 use of strategic support stations and will be included in the detail of that project.
- 3.3 A common theme here was the need for CFRS to both mesh into other services' incident command arrangements and for CFRS to be capable of hosting regional and national support in the event of larger scale incidents seen elsewhere last summer.
- 3.4 It is recommended that this proposal is implemented.

### **4 Proposal 3**

- 4.1 The introduction of a 'mobile' team of three qualified Fire Safety Officers for a period of three years to undertake a proportion of the 'non-localised' fire safety workload (complaints, investigations, prosecutions, etc) in order to allow district-based fire safety teams deal with specific local issues.
- 4.2 This again met with universal approval. In particular, district based staff were in favour of improving our enforcement capacity, especially during the early tenure of the Fire Safety Order.
- 4.3 It is recommended that this proposal is implemented.

### **5 Proposal 4**

- 5.1 To explore, in conjunction with retained personnel and representative bodies, the feasibility of improved usage of retained personnel employed at Strategic Response Stations and the provision of alternative support engines where appropriate.
- 5.2 Most respondents were broadly supportive of the principle of improved usage of relatively quiet stations and appliances. All were supportive of the recognition by the Fire Authority of the need to maintain resilience in the current period of climate change and threat of terrorism. There were some questions asking for clarification on the potential preferential uses of these stations and appliances. The comments made will be available to the project team to ensure all questions are covered.
- 5.3 It is recommended that this proposal is implemented.

## **6 Proposal 5**

- 6.1 To work with our operational firefighters and their representative bodies to examine work routines, shift systems and deployment options in order to resource as many of the other proposals in this plan from within the existing workforce and budget.
- 6.2 This proposal raised a considerable amount of discussion with wholetime shift and day-crewed staff. The responses were mainly queries about the potential impact on conditions of service. It was generally accepted that it was appropriate for the service to seek to make optimum use of existing human and financial resources before contemplating asking the Fire Authority to impose another burden on the Council Taxpayers. However, there is also a degree of concern that any changes introduced would be detrimental to the conditions of service of the individual.
- 6.3 It was noteworthy that the proposal as set out above is a complex and interconnected set of projects that need to be managed collectively, but worked on as separate strands to avoid the project teams being too large.
- 6.4 Accordingly, the focus and intent of the proposal remains valid, but implementation would be simplified if the project strands were separated and the wording amended as follows.

### **6.5 Revised proposal 5**

To work with our operational firefighters and their representative bodies to examine

- a) work routines for wholetime shift and day crewed staff
- b) shift systems for wholetime shift, day crewed and flexible duty staff
- c) deployment options available for the outcomes of proposals 1 and 4

in order to resource as many of the other proposals in this plan from within the existing workforce and budget.