

Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee  
15 July 2013

Report by the Secretary/  
Director of People

## **DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-16 CONSULTATION**

### **REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Fire Authority previously approved for the draft Strategic Plan 2013-16 to go out for formal consultation. During the 12-week consultation 11 responses were received.

This report summarises the feedback received from the responses.

The Strategic Plan will go before the next meeting of the Fire Authority for approval.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is asked to consider this report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to the Authority.

## FORMAL CONSULTATION

2. The Fire Authority approved for the draft Strategic Plan 2013-16 to go out for formal consultation (12 weeks) at its meeting on 15 March 2013. A questionnaire was produced to gather feedback, asking respondents to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the following questions regarding the draft plan:
  - How strongly do you agree or disagree with our objectives outlined in our Strategic Plan?
  - How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Strategic Plan is easy to understand?
  - How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Strategic Plan clearly explains the Service's objectives?
  - How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Strategic Plan clearly explains what the Service will achieve if the plan is delivered?
3. The draft plan and questionnaire were sent to community groups across the Service area which had expressed an interest in being involved in Service planning, neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services, Unitary Authorities, Ward Members, town and parish councils, local health authorities and NHS trusts, and the Police and Crime Commissioner. The questionnaire was available on the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service website and was promoted through the Service's Facebook page and Twitter feed.
4. In total, 11 completed questionnaires were received during the 12-week consultation period.
5. The responses to the questionnaire are shown in the table below and comments made are shown in Appendix 1.

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	TOTAL
How strongly do you agree or disagree with our objectives outlined in our Strategic Plan?				6	5	11
How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Strategic Plan is easy to understand?			1	8	2	11
How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Strategic Plan clearly explains the Service's objectives?			1	6	4	11
How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Strategic Plan clearly explains what the Service will achieve if the plan is delivered?			2	7	2	11

6. It is not surprising that the response to the consultation has been low. The Authority has undertaken a number of consultations recently, for example around the vision and precept. In addition, the Authority is embarking on engagement around the

operational efficiency programme, which will undoubtedly generate a much greater response.

7. The views of consultees will be considered when preparing the final version of the plan.
8. The Authority should take into account the views of consultees before approving the strategic plan.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

9. This report sets out the results of consultation so that the Authority can consider and approve its strategic plan.

#### FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10. None arising directly.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11. None arising directly.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

12. None arising directly.

#### CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

13. None arising directly.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

14. None arising directly.

#### COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

15. The strategic plan will be published when approved by the Authority. Feedback will also be provided to consultees.

#### DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

16. As outlined above.

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

17. None.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

18. The Committee is asked to consider this report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to the Authority.

**R GRAHAM**

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Secretary and Director of People

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RG/SJ  
4 July 2013



**Comments received from Strategic Plan 2013-16 consultation questionnaires**

1. I think the brigade does a fantastic job, with the resources they have, they are very brave and very humble, a credit to this country, please keep up the good work guys and girls, thank you all.
2. Like all public services you face significant challenges to deliver your plan with diminishing resources. Your outcome based measures appear appropriate and your risk based approach to emergency cover provides the basis of a benchmark to measure impact of changes in the future as you face up to the financial challenges
3. With reference to statement - " Conduct research and consult with our communities to determine how 'Community Impact from Emergency Incidents' could be measured so that we can publish our performance against a specific SPI relating to that" - I would suggest that this could be achieved by researching Property Damage (PD) and Business Interruption (BI) Insurance Losses in the Humberside Region over each annual period. This could be expanded to show financial losses to support industries and loss of jobs to the region. The insurance industry quotes UK Commercial Building Fire losses between 2002 to 2008 as a 50% increase with an annual loss of +/- £1.3bn. A big impact on local communities and UK GDP. Demonstrating a local reduction in commercial PD/BI fire losses and the subsequent impact on local communities I would have thought worthwhile
4. On the whole it is clear to me what the service are intending to do, so my comments below are more about style rather than substance and hope are viewed in the spirit in which they are made - to improve it further.
  - Page 65. 'our plan is forward looking and will always explain what we are planning to do in the next three years' - a statement of the obvious perhaps and not necessary. Chairman - 'we will always maintain the number of firefighters we need to crew our fire engines' - this is a bit like 'doublespeak' and I'm not sure what it actually means - how does it sit with the comment on page 82 that 'a further reduction in the workforce will be necessary'. I would have thought that the more successful you are with the preventative agenda the less need there is for firefighters to crew fire engines.
  - The fire service is primarily demand driven so I would expect the service to continually reduce risks and calls for service and therefore become leaner and more efficient - I wouldn't expect the service to 'maintain numbers' at some pre-determined level simply because the public might regard a fall as a diminution of service. page 66 - first paragraph under the heading 'what we will be doing the same but better' - this amply demonstrates the preventative agenda but the final three words could be changed to either 'keep people safe' or 'make people safer'
  - Page 68 - Of the 5 bullet points 'Preventing' should perhaps come first before 'Preparing'.
  - Page 69 - The shaded area mentions 'our core values are important... etc' but this seems out of place with the rest of the page regarding community outcomes.
  - It is only on the next page that I realised what your CORE values are. Page 71 Personally I'm not sure this section adequately describes the actual delivery, rather the mechanisms to effectively oversee delivery of your objectives. I'm assuming that each Chief Officer is personally responsible for one of the strategic

objectives - if so then this connection could be more explicit in the table at the bottom of the page.

- Page 73 - the first paragraph in bold font needs a re-write - none of the sentences really make any sense. Page 75 - how do you differentiate between low, medium and high risk areas. If, through the circumstance of my postcode I'm deemed a low risk area it seems I can naturally expect a reduced level of service. Should not the risk be categorised by the severity of the emergency?
  - Page 81 - the final sentence of the first paragraph is a little clumsy. Page 84 - this section would benefit from further proof reading - one sentence for example finishes with an 'and'. You mention the obvious at the start that a plan is forward looking and then look back at your previous plan at page 85. Would this not be more suitable for your Annual Performance Report'?
  - Finally - whose plan is this? Is the plan set out by the Authority for the Service to deliver, who hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the successful delivery or otherwise. The actual role of the Fire Authority could be made much more explicit if it is indeed their plan (it just so happens to have been written by the HFRS). Finally, as a general comment I believe the HFRS are committed to partnership working and have a good track record in terms of engaging communities and establishing good youth diversionary schemes - you could perhaps have exploited this a little more.
5. The fire service can and does make a major contribution to the prevention of harm and can be an important player in a local public health service, especially for vulnerable people. It is vital that this is not sacrificed in the need to make efficiencies.
  6. I just felt that the plan was perhaps over-long and with too many sections, meaning that there was a risk that both the key messages and the prioritisation of issues could be lost. So my comments are not so much about the content but the format and size.
  7. To help get the plan and all engagement out to the public, do you have a committee of public members, which work with different groups?