

COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC CHANGE, TRANSFORMATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

**HELD ON FRIDAY 16 MAY AT 14:00
IN MEETING ROOM 8 AND REMOTELY VIA TEAMS**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Kirsty Williams, Chair

OFFICERS PRESENT: ACO Alison Reed – Director of People Services, ACFO Brian Thompson- Director of Technical Services, Dominic Mika – Director of Strategic Change and Transformation, T/AM Mike Wyatt – Head of Risk Reduction, AM Matt Jones – Head of Operations, Rhian Moore – Head of Communications and Engagement, Lisa Shroll – Head of People Services, Jake Alpert – Chief of Staff, GM Mike Evans, Wayne Thomas – T/Head of Corporate Support, GM Mike Evans, Christian Landeg-John

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Commissioner Carl Foulkes, Chief Fire Officer Fin Monahan, Assistant Chief Fire Officer Dean Loader, Area Manager Neil Davies and Lisa Mullan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced the tragic events that unfolded in Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service earlier that day. The Committee took a moment of silence to pay their respects.

4. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC CHANGE, TRANSFORMATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2025

The Chair agreed the minutes as a true record of discussion and no matters arising.

5. UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The action log has been updated accordingly.

6. REPORTS FOR DECISION

6.1 PROGRESS ON DELIVERY OF INDEPENDENT CULTURE REVIEW REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Dominic Mika, Director of Strategic Change and Transformation stated that a process has been agreed at the Service Improvement Board whereby recommendations which are deemed complete are brought to the board for approval and then to this Committee for final sign off. The report outlines a new amendment on how we will do the quality assurance which will provide demonstratable evidence that we have done the recommendation. Kirsty Williams commented that it is good to see dates included on the programme events of those that are in progress. Dominic Mika added that the dates signify when we expect to be done, but not the full approval process. The target date is noted and then will be taken to the Service Improvement Board and then further to this Committee. Kirsty Williams added that adding dates was a useful addition and asked for them to be shown in UK format as they currently appear in US.

RESOLVED THAT

- 6.1.1 The Commissioner noted the progress reported on implementation of the ICR recommendations.
- 6.1.2 The Commissioner agreed and noted the additional evidence gathering required for sign-off of ICR recommendations.

6.2 PRIORITISATION OF PROJECTS AND TASKS WITHIN THE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

Dominic Mika, Director of Strategic Change and Transformation, presented the report. The paper outlines the Chief Fire Officer's priorities for the Service, which the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has gone through in detail. The paper identified the new prioritisation framework showing P1 as immediate risks and highlights what the critical workstreams are such as the independent culture recommendations, risk management in its entirety and CRMP which will fit into wider pieces of work. Kirsty Williams commented that most items have ended up on the prioritisation list and was concerned that we are asking for too much, too quickly and has concerns around capacity and resilience to manage it. Rhian Moore explained that there is a plan for Communications and Engagement, but they have phased it due to challenges around resilience.

Kirsty Williams expressed that the terminology of describing the progress of the work on the prioritisation framework is not appropriate for a public

facing document and requested that this is amended. It was also requested that future iterations of the document have explanations to elaborate as the report does not explain what is working well and what is not and if there are roadblocks, there is no explanation for what is being done to progress the task or recommendation.

RESOLVED THAT

- 6.2.1 The Commissioner noted the prioritisation model outlined in the report.
- 6.2.2 The Commissioner noted the alignment with the wider service improvements.
- 6.2.3 The Commissioner noted that the delivery will be monitored through the Service Improvement Board.
- 6.2.4 The Commissioner requested that the terminology under the status tab on the prioritisation framework is amended.

7. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 THEMATIC REVIEW – OPERATIONAL TRAINING UPDATE

Brian Thompson, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report in the absence of Area Manager Neil Davies and highlighted the following:

- We remain on track to complete the whole thematic by 31st December 2025.
- Recommendations 1 and 4 has required more work with our operational colleagues as there were many interdependencies with the other.
- Recommendation 1: Uniformed members of SLT and Cardiff Gate held a meeting to look at the training calendar and we are 40%. This will be trialed to get it right and then it will be rolled out by Unitary Authority.
- Recommendation 2: We are 99.5% complete on recommendations 2A and 2B. Uniformed members of SLT has conducted an in-depth review of the TNA and Brian Thompson proposed bringing the TNA to the Commissioners informally.
- Recommendation 3: This is at 10%, once recommendation 1 is complete this will reduce the training burden, there is wider work with Matt Jones being done on this.
- Recommendation 4: We are happy with the progress, and there is capacity to progress the microteachings.
- Recommendation 5: Operational colleagues have visited Holland,

and we have experts visiting the Service. There has been significant progress on this.

- Recommendation 6: Once the Operational Effectiveness review has been done then that will be embedded into the training. Each individual recommendation will go through a substantial evidence sign off process.

Kirsty Williams queried in relation to Recommendation 2A and 2B, what the level of impact would look like and how we mitigate and manage the risk with the stations that we anticipate will increase their business. Matt Jones explained that there will be planned activity incorporated, whereby there are protected periods of time where the appliance is unavailable. A discussion was had around On Call colleagues to alleviate pressures, and further work will be required on this area. The Senior Leadership Team agreed to a £270k investment to make firefighters operationally safer and more effective. Our metrics will have quantifiable data driven through our Key Performance Indicators to demonstrate how this will impact our staff and the public.

RESOLVED THAT

7.1.1 The Commissioner noted the report.

7.2 THEMATIC REVIEW – GRENFELL UPDATE

Mike Wyatt, Area Manager Risk Reduction provided an update on the Grenfell recommendations and noted that significant work has been done since setting up the High Rise Team. We are now moving to phase 2 on the training and now have additional CPD training for incident commanders and staff looking at external fires. Mike Wyatt explained that we have a strategy and a procedure in place for mass evacuation and this is implemented for operational and control staff. The High Rise Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is out for consultation phase and will sign off many actions. The focus for the next 3 months is the evacuation SOP and for the team to progress with learning from Wales-Grenfell. In terms of challenges, the team have overcome capacity issues and are welcoming another Station Manager from the Business Fire Safety team.

There are 9 recommendations signed off and the team are working on the 10th, with a further meeting to be set up to present all the evidence for final sign off and provide an opportunity to ask questions. Kirsty Williams queried the difference in legislation between Wales and England and whether this had a potential to be problematic. Mike Wyatt explained that the Business Fire Safety team are aware of the differences and that the risks are mitigated with our auditors.

RESOLVED THAT

7.2.1 The Commissioner noted the report.

7.3 THEMATIC REVIEW – OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE REVIEW

Mike Evans, GM presented an update on the Operational Excellence report and key areas to note were:

- Recommendation 2: Awareness training has been done for this guidance, and we have covered all wholetime. This has been shared with other Services in Wales and NFCC partners. This is in progress and hopefully will be signed off by the next Committee meeting.
- Recommendation 3: This is covered off under Training. We are roughly at 90% progress with this recommendation.
- Recommendation 4 and 5: Mike Evans wanted to raise that there is slow progress with these recommendations. A report has been taken to Senior Leadership Team to approve the centralized two departments to one operational assurance team. There is an implementation plan to go along with this and a draft policy.
- The funding to purchase operational equipment will enhance teachings and the 22ml hose reel will be expanding to all trucks. This training is starting to become business as usual.

Kirsty Williams asked how we will work in synergy with the Chief Fire Rescue Advisor and Inspector recommendations with the HMICFRS report. It was raised that many of the points in the HMICFRS report are strategic in nature and there are areas within the report are included in the transformation piece.

RESOLVED THAT

7.3.1 The Commissioner noted the report.

5.4 THEMATIC REVIEW – BROADENING THE ROLE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN WALES – UPDATE

Matt Jones, Area Manager Head of Operations provided an overview of the report and key areas to highlight are:

We are in the second phase of the operational reset which is around shaping the role. We are looking at the roles and the key focus is to empower and develop future leaders and work on this will be in collaboration with the Leadership and Development Academy. Matt Jones noted that we are 95% complete on our actions and fatigue

management has been incorporated. Kirsty Williams asked if it is the intention to run the work passed quality assurance, Matt Jones confirmed this will be the case and once it is business as usual, we will drop the operational reset terminology. This is approximately 6 months away but will depend on where the Service wants to go with recommendation 2. There was a discussion around the challenges that will bring, Matt Jones explained that some watches have found structured days beneficial while some watches have not. Data is being captured for feedback.

RESOLVED THAT

7.4.1 The Commissioner noted the report.

7.5 HIGHLIGHT REPORTS FROM THE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

Dominic Mika, Director of Strategic Change and Transformation listed the top level highlight pieces in the improvement plan and noted that we are picking up the pace to improve agility of communication. Updates are circulated through our internal channels following the Service Improvement Board which is held 6 weekly. Some points to note were that the Service has launched the Leadership Academy and appointed George Gilbert as the Strategic Lead. Middle Leaders Engagement sessions to discuss Just Culture, the launch of the Strategic Improvement Plan, Vision Mission and Values work and Taking Care of Behaviors training to the Senior Leadership Team which is a bespoke training package for the organisation, based on the intelligence that we receive. The training will commence down to Group Managers and then rolled out wider, adopting a train the trainer method. The training consists of conduct behaviours, workplace sexual harassment, microaggressions and typical culture issues, how to report and being an upstander. Posters have been distributed and a visible in HQ and all our estates. Kirsty Williams queried how we evaluate the impact of the programme and that it has been successful. Lisa Shroll explained this is a mandated face to face training session and all new recruits will undertake this as well as any new starter programme for corporate.

RESOLVED THAT

7.5.1 The Commissioner noted the update.

7.6 UPDATE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Rhian Moore, Head of Communications and Engagement summarised the key pieces of work included within the report on the work to date this year. The plan addresses the improvements and provides an outline

approach with timescales and measurables. Rhian Moore reported that we have a better relationship with the Media. Kirsty Williams noted that the revamped SHOUT internal magazine is great, and it was pleasing to see the recent coverage around wildfires and that the media are reporting positive news. There was a discussion on how internal communication is working due to the number of retained staff. Rhian Moore will be conducting a communications audit to see how communications work for watches and how this gets cascaded.

RESOLVED THAT

7.6.1 The Commissioner noted the report.

7.7 PLANNING, PERFORMANCE AND RISK AND STATISTICS TEAM UPDATE

Wayne Thomas, Temporary Head of Corporate Support presented an update on the Planning, Performance and Risk and Statistics team which discusses the general day to day of the department. The report shows the structure, roles and provides an indication of the key priorities. Kirsty Williams appreciated the paper and noted it was useful to understand how the department operates.

RESOLVED THAT

7.7.1 The Commissioner noted the report.

8. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR STRATEGIC CHANGE, TRANSFORMATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE 2025/2026

There were no comments on the Forward Work Programme as this committee is more aligned to the Culture and Thematic Review.

9. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)

There were no items that the Chairperson deemed urgent.

10. ANY ITEMS TO REPORT BACK TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS COMMITTEE

There were no items to report back to the Board of Commissioners Committee.