

LEICESTERSHIRE

FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE

Status of Report: Public Agenda Item: 13

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority
Date: 8th April 2015
Subject: Organisational Change Project – Integrated Risk Management Plan
Consultation Outcomes – Deferred Proposals
Report by: The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Author: Richard Chandler (Deputy Chief Fire and Rescue Officer and Director of
Organisational Development)
For: Decision

1. Purpose

This report re-presents to the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) the proposals to crew all fire engines with a minimum of 4 and remove the second fire engine from Oakham. It also presents alternative crewing arrangements for consideration.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 At the CFA's meeting on 11th February 2015 the Loughborough proposal (£779,040) was rejected and the proposals to reduce crewing and remove Oakham's second fire engine were deferred to this CFA meeting.
- 2.2 Since this decision was made, there has not been any additional evidence provided in support of the arguments against the proposals. Rutland County Council (RCC) have presented a conditional offer of £150,000 over a two year period, which does not alter the fact that the second fire engine is not required. The recommendation to remove the second fire engine remains the same.
- 2.3 Reduced crewing only affects a very small number of fire appliances, the majority of which have a backup engine at the same station that arrives within 4 minutes of the first attending engine. In addition to the 3 city stations the On-Call (or Retained Duty System / RDS) fire engines are deemed to be operationally available with a crew of 4. At a national level there are a number of other Fire and Rescue Services that operate with crews of 4 with more moving in that direction e.g. Hereford & Worcester. In addition, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) are taking a stance at their national Conference in May to support a minimum crew of 4.
- 2.4 The current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) (2013 - 2016 Appendix C) and policy sets an absolute minimum number of firefighters that it is considered provides a competent unit for basic operations of 4. All issues raised throughout the IRMP consultation period have

been subject to a comprehensive response within the IRMP Public Consultation Summary Report (pages 22, 23, 24; annex H pages 9 and 10). Therefore the proposal to crew with 4 still does not represent a significant change and so the recommendation remains the same.

- 2.5 As suggested by the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer (CFO) during February's CFA meeting, in consultation with the FBU, an alternative crewing arrangement is being developed to identify further savings. This report recommends that the CFA authorise the CFO to commence collective consultation and develop associated processes and management systems to facilitate its implementation within the 5 year plan.

3. Report Detail

Background

- 3.1 On 11th February 2015 the CFA rejected the Loughborough proposal representing a saving of £779,040 and deferred until today's meeting the decisions to crew all fire engines with a minimum of 4 as standard; and remove one fire engine from Oakham. These proposals represent a saving of £648,064 and £97,150 respectively and include a reduction of 17 wholetime firefighter posts and 12 On Call posts.
- 3.2 Issues presented in support of the arguments against the initial proposals were included and responded to within the IRMP Public Consultation Summary Report and included perceived impacts on community and firefighter safety as a result of:
- Reduced capability on outlying stations to make effective lifesaving interventions in the initial stages of an incident;
 - The time taken for additional reinforcing fire engines to attend in outlying areas; and
 - Resilience in the event of an unplanned absence temporarily taking the fire engine(s) off the run.

Where We Are Now

Oakham

- 3.3 Following the RCC Council Meeting on 23rd February 2015 a 2 year conditional contribution of £150,000 over the next 2 years (2015/16 to 2016/17) has been approved. If accepted, the funding would be provided on the condition that Rutland retains 2 fire stations, with the current number of engines staffed by one full-time and two On-Call crews. RCC recognise that the matter of the size of the crew and the operational hours are a matter for the CFA. RCC are expecting the CFA to use the 2 years to look for further economies or shared services including first responders and Rutland Military bases.
- 3.4 Notwithstanding the above and based upon the outcomes of the IRMP Consultation on Proposals For Change 2015-2020, the recommendation to remove the second fire engine remains the same.

Reduced Crewing

- 3.5 The CFA's current response strategy includes 30 fire engines, 14 of which are On-Call and are deemed to be operationally available with a crew of 4. The majority of these operate in

outlying or rural areas. A decision that challenges crews of 4 as standard will result in a review of response standards across the organisation. This may have an impact on the On-Call availability across the CFA's area in the future.

- 3.6 The current crewing proposal (reduce from 5 to 4 as standard) only affects 8 of the 30 fire engines in the CFA's area. Of these 8 fire engines, 6 are located on fire and rescue stations that also have a backup engine that provides an additional capability within 4 minutes. In addition, with the exception of 2 fire engines, the On-Call staff are utilised to maintain crewing levels in the event of unplanned absence.
- 3.7 At a national level, the fire and rescue sector are modifying response strategies to include emergency vehicles crewed with less than 4. This has been acknowledged by the FBU and is included in the agenda for the next FBU Conference expressing concerns over reducing crewing levels to below 4. The assumption being that the FBU will make a case to maintain minimum crewing levels of 4.
- 3.8 The current IRMP (2013 - 2016 Appendix C) and policy sets an absolute minimum number of firefighters that it is considered provides a competent unit for basic operations of 4. All issues raised throughout the IRMP consultation period have been subject to a comprehensive response within the IRMP Public Consultation Summary Report (pages 22, 23, 24; annex H pages 9 and 10). Therefore, the proposal to crew with 4 still does not represent a significant change and so the recommendation remains the same.

Pooling Arrangement

- 3.9 As suggested by the CFO during February's CFA meeting, an alternative crewing arrangement is being developed, a draft form of which has been presented to the FBU for consideration at the last joint meeting. The initial response from the FBU was positive, with the additional helpful suggestion by the FBU of introducing a self-rostering element to the crewing arrangement.
- 3.10 The current wholetime staffing model includes 12 fire and rescue stations employing three types of duty system: Shift, Day Crewing (DC) and Day Crewing Plus (DCP). The latter two, representing 7 of the 12 fire and rescue stations, are currently outside of the National Joint Council (NJC) For Fire & Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service 6th Edition (Grey Book):

Table 1 - Wholetime Fire & Rescue Stations By Duty System		
Shift x 5	Day Crewing x 1	Day Crewing Plus x 6
Eastern	Melton	Coalville
Western		Oakham
Central		Hinckley
Loughborough		Birstall
Southern		Castle Donnington
		Wigston *
<i>* This includes the change to Wigston from Shift to DCP in 2016.</i>		

- 3.11 Shift stations operate with four watches (Red/White/Blue/Green) of staff whilst the DCP and DC stations each have one group of staff. Each and every fire and rescue station is treated as an independent unit, provided with sufficient supervisory managers and firefighters to maintain sufficient crewing levels to cater for planned shortfalls arising from annual leave, sickness and training event secondment(s). This current approach of treating each fire and rescue station as an independent unit, presents an opportunity to make efficiency savings without affecting fire and rescue cover.
- 3.12 'Pooling' is an arrangement that groups stations into the relevant duty systems - Shift and DCP. The number of staff required to maintain sufficient crewing levels across the whole group of stations is calculated across the group as a whole as opposed to treating every station as a separate unit. The expectation being that staff will commence work from any one of the fire and rescue stations in the CFA's area.
- 3.13 Table 2 below shows that pooling applied to the current establishment levels results in a reduction of 22 posts without affecting levels of fire and rescue cover or crewing levels; with the exception of Loughborough who will crew with 4 and 4, not 5 and 4.

Table 2 - IRMP Pooling Arrangement Savings			
Changes Pooling ^{1 2}			
Watch Manager	Crew Manager	Firefighters	£ - Saving
-6	0	-16	£893,064 ³
¹ Including conversion of Wigston to DCP ² Maintaining crewing levels across organisation i.e. 5 on single pump with the exception of Loughborough's 1 st which will be crewed with 4. ³ Not including DCP enhancements of 27% where applicable			

- 3.14 Table 3 below identifies the benefits and considerations of 'Pooling'. The most significant advantage being the realisation of significant savings without affecting fire and rescue cover or crewing levels (with the exception of Loughborough). In addition, the Watch Manager reductions are more likely to be absorbed within the Service leaver profile over the next 2 years.

Table 3 - Pooling Benefits
Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in the total number of staff employed without affecting fire and rescue cover. • The impact on the establishment reductive measures being offset by the predicted natural attrition of Supervisory Manager posts over the next 2 years. • Exceeds the comparative financial saving associated with the rejected IRMP Loughborough proposal. • Less staff employed per head for every crew member on duty at any one time – increased efficiency in human resources. • More flexible arrangements for staff within a self-roster system – staff select the shifts that they wish to work.

3.15 Issues and risks have been identified in Table 4 below. Whilst a 'Pooling' arrangement would provide a flexible shift and leave allocation system for staff; the quid pro quo would be an increased expectation on mobility and flexibility. This would require local negotiation and collective agreements with the FBU. Notwithstanding this, current wholetime operational staff employment contracts include a mobility clause.

Table 4 - Pooling Potential Issues / Risks		
No	Issues / Risks	Considerations
a)	Compliance with NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book)	Local negotiation to achieve collective agreement on how we make it work.
b)	Lack of willingness to travel to different work locations prior to commencement of shift	Consider financial incentive. Consider making it a contractual requirement. Local negotiation to achieve collective agreement.
c)	More complicated management of crewing (when and where staff will be working, specialist attribute requirements for specials)	Improved central and local management arrangements. Review, revise and agree new policy. Development and use of Firewatch. Use of additional hours contracts to add resilience.
d)	Management of leave (improve coordination to reduce potential for 'problem times' i.e. summer and Christmas)	Improved central and local management arrangements. Review, revise and agree a new Leave policy.
e)	Coordination and attendance at centralised training events (improve coordination to reduce potential for 'problem times')	Review/revise policy re nomination. Improved use of crews 'on the run' to reduce detachments. Improved central and local management of nomination arrangements. Use of additional hours contracts to add resilience.
f)	Maintenance of competence	More flexible approach to identifying and discharging individual and group training needs. Review, revise and agree improvements to Electronic Personal Drill Records etc. i.e. improve audit capability.

3.16 Pooling will require sufficient lead in time to facilitate both collective consultation and negotiation with Representative Bodies. In addition, it will take time to undertake the associated planning and development of relevant management systems and processes.

4. Report Implications / Impact

4.1 *Legal (including crime and disorder)*

The pooling system will require negotiation as there may be elements that may not comply with the guidance as set out in Grey Book.

4.2 *Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)*

The financial benefits and costs associated with the proposals are contained within this report. All have been costed on the same basis as the original IRMP proposals.

4.3 ***Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of service delivery)***

Failure to deliver the financial savings over the medium term will significantly impact on the ability of the CFA to agree a balanced budget. Implementation of the options set out in this report will not achieve the efficiency savings required to balance the budget in full, resulting in the CFA having to develop more options in the future. The timing of the implementation of the pooling and reduced crewing proposals will require modification to facilitate requisite savings and sufficient lead in time for collective consultation and negotiation and to develop robust management systems.

4.4 ***Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)***

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken for pooling and is attached at the **Appendix**.

4.5 ***Environmental***

Pooling does have the potential to increase individual operational staff travel distances.

4.6 ***Impact upon Our Plan Objectives***

The pooling proposal set out in this report represents an improvement in the efficiency in the use of staff and as such provides a value for money service.

5. **Recommendations**

The CFA is asked to approve each of the following proposals:

- a) Remove one fire engine from Oakham Fire and Rescue Station saving £97,150.
- b) Make 4 the standard crewing level across the Service saving £648,064.
- c) Authorise the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer to commence collective consultation and development of associated management arrangements to facilitate the implementation of pooling in line with this report.

6. **Background Papers**

- a) Organisational Change Project – Balancing The Budget (CFA Report – 25th June 2014)
- b) Organisational Change Project – Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Consultation (CFA Report – 25th September 2014)
- c) Paper Organisational Change Project – Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation Outcomes (CFA Report – 11th February 2015)

7. **Appendix**

Equality Impact Assessment

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Appendix

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PRO-FORMA

Section 1 – Initial Assessment		
Directorate:	Community Response	
Team:	Fire Stations	
Responsible Person(s):	Rick Taylor (AM Community Response)	
Name of Policy/function:	OCP - Pooling	
Date of Assessment:	20 th March 2015	
Briefly Describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/function:	Introduction of a pooling crewing arrangement for station based wholetime operational staff to provide more efficient and effective use of human resources.	
Who will benefit from the policy/function?	The CFA due to a legal requirement to provide a balanced budget.	
What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Deficiencies in crewing levels	
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy/function?	Wholetime operational staff	
Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy/function?	CFA approve; implemented within the Organisational Change Project (OCP) by AM Community Response	
Are there any concerns that the policy could have an impact on:	Yes/No	Please justify your decision, say what evidence can be provided.
Race	No	The pooling crewing arrangement will require flexibility from operational staff regarding their work place. There may also be increased travel time and distance incurred as a result of this new crewing arrangement. It will not however have a disproportionate impact on race. Introduction of the pooling crewing arrangement will reduce the operational establishment by approximately 22 across the Service. The Service is taking all reasonable measures to enable an establishment reduction whilst minimising the risk of redundancy. In the event of the Service realising redundancies the Service has a strategy to ensure all staff are consulted in accordance with relevant regulations.

		Any impact on staff who are BME will be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Gender	Yes	Although child care in itself is not a protected characteristic, as defined by the Equality Act 2010; the Service acknowledges that women are more likely than men to carry the primary responsibility for looking after children. Therefore women are more likely to be impacted by any proposal to work from a different station/location.
Disability	No	Will not have a disproportionate impact on anyone with a disability. Any impact on staff who are disabled will be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Sexual Orientation	No	Will not be disproportionate on the basis of sexual orientation. Any impact on staff who are LGB will be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Age	No	Will not be disproportionate on the basis of age. Any impact on staff based on age will be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Religious or Belief	No	Will not be disproportionate on the basis of religion or belief. Any impact on staff with declared religions other than Christian will have to be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No	Will not be disproportionate on the basis of marital/Civil Partnership status. Any impact on staff who are married or in a civil partnership/not married or in a civil partnership will have to be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	Will not be disproportionate on the basis of pregnancy and maternity. Any impact on staff who are pregnant or on maternity leave will have to be considered at the point of selecting staff for the purposes of redeployment or redundancy.
Trans-gender or transsexual	No	Will not be disproportionate on the basis of trans-gender. Currently LFRS does not have any members of staff who have indicated to be

		undergoing any gender change.
Offenders	N/A	
Are there any concerns for unfavourable treatment in this policy?	No	The Service will take into account any concerns related to travel and childcare as identified (gender) above
Should the policy proceed to:	Partial: <i>(if yes, proceed to section 2)</i>	No Full: No <i>(if yes, proceed to section 3)</i>
Section 2 – Partial Impact Assessment		
Please state clearly the expected benefits of the policy.		
In light of the issues identified, are there any experts/relevant groups who you can approach to explore their views on the issues. If so, please list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the relevant groups/experts o how their views will be obtained o date they will be contacted 		
Please explain in detail the views of the relevant groups/experts on the issues involved. (please use a separate sheet if necessary)		
Please clearly state what action has been taken, if the policy/function has not proceeded to a full impact assessment.		
Section 3 – Full Impact Assessment		
a. Identify the aims of the policy and how it is to be implemented.		
b. Consideration of relevant data and research (see guidance notes for details).		
c. Assessment of impacts (see guidance notes for details).		
d. Consideration of measures .		
e. Formal consultation on the actual impact of existing policies and the likely impact of proposed policies.		
f. Make a decision in the light of data, possible alternatives and consultation.		
g. Monitoring for adverse impact in the future and publication of the results of such monitoring.		

<p>h. Publication of results of the Equality Impact Assessments (see Appendix 1 & 2 – Pro-forma for initial and partial assessment)</p>	
<p>Authorisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name and position of officer authorising the EIA (this should be the head of service). 	
<p>Contacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact details of officer to discuss EIA with if different from section 1, above. 	
<p>Date Completed:</p>	