Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Corporate Governance Committee

Date: 10 March 2021

Subject: Service Development Programme and 'Our Plan 2020-24' – Appendix A tasks

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For: Information

Purpose

1.   The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Governance Committee (CGC) of progress made since January 2021 in the delivery of projects within the Service Development Programme and the tasks included in Appendix A of Our Plan 2020-24.

Recommendation

2.   The Corporate Governance Committee is asked to note the progress made since January 2021 in the delivery of projects within the Service Development Programme and the tasks that are included in Our Plan 2020-24.

Executive Summary

3.   Progress is reported in respect of 14 projects that are currently in various stages of development or implementation. The report also includes progress against the 24 outstanding tasks from Appendix A of Our Plan 2020-24.

Background

4.   Below is a summarised update on the status of the projects that are currently being delivered by staff and officers.

Service Development Programme - Project Updates

Emergency Services Network (ESN)

5.   A general update from the Government programme has been received regarding some further delays relating to the availability of certain technical elements. On that basis there is a suggestion that full transition may not be achieved until 2025. The Government is currently re-planning based on these delays and will provide an update when this work is completed.

6. Despite these delays, work is progressing locally. The latest coverage testing work packages have all been successfully completed and submitted. The Service Information Team spent two days reviewing the minor roads coverage on the internet portal and produced a report showing that there were still 173 minor roads that need to be tested for coverage. This report was shared with Police and the Ambulance Service. The three Services will discuss how to get these roads tested.

Views Replacement

7. The project will replace the decommissioned 'views system' used for performance management and will seek to implement additional planning, risk management and project monitoring capability within the system.

8. The data warehouse continues to be developed internally by the ICT department. An automatic daily update of the Incident Recording System (IRS) information has been successfully established. Initial dashboards, focusing on IRS based key performance indicators were available from 27 January 2021.

9. Work continues with the integration of the risk and vulnerable person information, which should enable dashboards presenting this data to be available from the end of March 2021.

High Reach Appliance Replacement

10. This project has been created to procure and deliver a high reach appliance to replace one of the existing Aerial Ladder Platform vehicles.

11. The options analysis and recommendation report for the high reach appliance type has been approved by the Tactical Management Team (TMT).

12. The supplier selection process has commenced and is due to be completed by the end of June 2021.

Appliance Replacement Project

13. Four replacement pumping appliances have been delivered and are all now operationally available. The project was extended to include the procurement of four further appliances identified in the 2020/2021 capital budget.

14. The current estimate is that those appliances will be built by the end of April 2021 and handed over to Operational Response by the end of July 2021.

Devolved Budget Management Project

15.   A project to devolve budget management to department and district managers. The initial implementation took place at the start of the 2019/2020 financial year. The project was paused by SMT until the new Finance Manager was in post. This position has now been filled and a review of the project will be undertaken in line with other Service priorities towards the summer. The Finance Manager will decide if this should continue as a formal project or whether training and embedding of devolved budget management will become a business as usual activity.

On-Call Review Project

16.   A project to review, adopt or change procedures or practices to meet the needs of organisational, societal or demographic change within On-Call reward, recruitment, retention and conditions.

17.   The final recommendations of the project were submitted to SMT on 27 January 2021. Dedicated SMT workshops have taken place to review the findings and recommendations in detail and agree which elements will be progressed to implementation. The approved recommendations will be shared with TMT in March 2021.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Replacement Project

18.   A project to procure replacement operational PPE is progressing well. The sizing exercise has been completed and Bristol Uniforms are currently manufacturing the items. The rollout is on-schedule to be completed before the current contract expires at the end of March 2021.

Virtual Fatal 4 (VF4) Replacement Project

19.   A project to develop a VF4 van to replace the existing VF4 car. Unfortunately, there have been significant delays to the project supply chain caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, most recently with suppliers unavailable to complete the vehicle painting and technical fit out. A revised completion date is not known at this time, although a formal launch of the vehicle is still planned to take place later in the year when social distancing restrictions are lifted.

Web GIS Project

20.   A project to upgrade to a web-based geographical information mapping system.

21.   Stage 2 of the project, which included the creation and live deployment of Firemap (a desktop application providing easier access to map-based incident and hydrant information) was successfully completed on 12 January 2021.

22.   The final stage, linking maps to other systems is due to be completed by the end of May 2021.

eOPAS Optimisation Project

23. A project to re-implement eOPAS, the occupational health system, making it fit for purpose to the benefit of Forge Health and LFRS.

24. Stage 1 involved the pre-employment screening process, which was successfully implemented for internal staff on 23 October 2020, however this still needs to be completed to benefit external customers (Forge Health).

25. To progress this effectively and further aspects of the project, the project board have suggested that the input from the Occupational Health Manager role, which is currently vacant, is vital.

26. As such, TMT in December 2020 agreed that further work on the project should be suspended until an Occupational Health Manager is in place.

FireWatch Project

27. A project to develop and improve the functionality of FireWatch, the HR and personnel recording system.

28. Stage 2 focuses on process and reporting improvements. However, given the current capacity of project resources, other commitments and service priorities the original project implementation dates are unachievable. The tasks and timescales within the project will need to be reviewed and re-planned. An exception report outlining the revised plan will be presented to TMT in March 2021 for approval.

Learning Management System Project

29. A project to develop a comprehensive Learning Management System.

30. A system called ORACLE provided by 'Learning Pool' was selected and successfully implemented on 30 November 2020.

31. The next project stage, which includes learning pathways and maintenance of competence programmes, and development of the promotions process is due to be completed by the end of February 2021.

Fleet Replacement Project 2020-2021

32. A Project to manage replacement of vehicles identified and supported via agreed Capital Bids.

33. The procurement of three Director cars, nine Fire Protection Officer cars and the non-specialist replacement vehicles (station and workshop vans) was successfully completed at the end of December 2020.

34. The specialist vehicles, including a fogging unit, a welfare vehicle and a rope rescue van have all been ordered and are expected to be delivered by the end of March 2021.

<u>Health and Safety Process Enhancement Project</u>

35. A project to redesign Health and Safety Processes.

36. The first stage of the project, which concentrated on the safety event reporting form and the creation of the SQL database was successfully completed at the end of December 2020.

37. The subsequent stages have been refreshed to ensure that the tasks are delivered in the most appropriate order. The original deliverables and timescales remain unchanged.

Our Plan Action Plan 2020-24 - Appendix A Tasks

Aim 1 – Fewer incidents with lower impact

<u>Continue to undertake our education and enforcement activities, targeting those most at risk.</u>

38. A significant proportion of the year has been spent in some form of national or local Covid lockdown restriction. This has impacted on how both Prevention and Protection activity continues to be delivered across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). Innovative solutions have continued to be introduced across the organisation to continue to interact with members of the community. The solutions being in the form of both direct interactions with the communities of LLR or if more appropriate a remote form of interaction. The Community Safety Team have been supporting Response in introducing ways to conduct Home Safety Checks (HSC). Virtual HSC's, social media advice and guidance and web-based interaction have all proved successful.

39. The inclusion of safe and well advice has been beneficial as members of the community have continued to face the challenge of Covid-19. In order to ensure members of the community continue to remain safe and well, follow up HSC visits are scheduled with individuals when appropriate. The team of Community Educators have spent time over recent months' quality assuring the HSC's given by response crews. In this way the service can be confident that across the organisation HSCs are consistent in content and delivery. Throughout the pandemic if a highly vulnerable member of the community is identified as requiring a HSC, then the team of CE's will continue to carry out an appropriate socially distanced 'door step' HSC.

40. The team of Fire Safety Inspecting Officers within the Protection Department have returned to conducting the majority of fire safety audits via direct interaction with the community, only visiting premises that are able to demonstrate being Covid compliant. The focus within the Fire Protection

Department and the team of Fire Safety Inspecting Officers continues to be the completion of the annual Risk Based Inspecting Programme (RBIP).

41. The team are also involved with the Building Risk Review (BRR) Programme. The programme is an outcome of the Phase 1 Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI). This has identified a significant number of tall buildings in LLR. The team have contacted all Responsible Persons for the identified tall buildings to detail the recommendations of the Phase 1 GTI, offering guidance where required.

Develop an assurance process to indicate how effectively we identify new risks.

42. The assurance procedure indicating how effectively the service identifies new risks has been completed and published.

Evaluate how effective our protection and prevention work is and use the information for future plans.

43. A survey has been used widely used across the organisation during the year to capture and evaluate the work carried out within Protection and Prevention. The information gathered is then evaluated across a number of areas. This includes satisfaction rating, equality diversity and inclusion and behavioural change. The evaluation is being analysed jointly with the Planning and Performance Department and its purpose is to establish if all community groups are being engaged with across LLR.

44. The evaluation will then allow for a more focused and targeted approach with a wider section of the community ensuring all community groups are considered and engaged with. This targeted approach will form the basis of both department and district plans in the future. The analysis of evaluation statistics benefits Community Safety, enabling a more targeted approach to HSCs as well as the Fire Protection Department by ensuring that the 2021-2022 RBIP is based on the very high and high risk premises. As well as being based on operational incident statistical data.

45. Behavioural change evaluation is important as this demonstrates that interaction over a number of visits brings tangible benefits compared to just a single interaction. Follow up visits reinforce behavioural change in individuals, as this is an opportunity to confirm understanding and witness lifestyle changes.

Deliver any required improvements identified in the reports following the Grenfell fire.

46. 48% of the 46 Grenfell Phase 1 inquiry recommendations have been closed with evidence provided. By April 2021 the service forecasts another 14% being closed. Covid-19 has impacted on the planning arrangements for closing recommendations and the remaining 38% will be undertaken during the next financial year. This means the changes to operational response will be delivered during 2021/22. Key deliverables so far include: improvements to the Major Incident procedures; notification of Major Incidents to blue light partners; improved radio communications; Fire Protection department engagement with

building Responsible Persons, and purchasing smoke hoods for casualty rescue.

Aim 2 – Respond effectively to incidents

Use our fire engines flexibly, aiming to attend life threatening incidents in an average of 10 minutes.

47. Total number of standbys from 1 April 2020 to 31 January 2021 is 869 with an average duration of 2hrs 2minutes. This is where fire appliances are moved from their usual base to another location during periods where other appliances are committed to incidents, undertaking training events, community engagements or undergoing unplanned maintenance, to provide an operational response.

Use our firefighters efficiently and flexibly to maximise our appliance availability.

48. To maximise fire appliance availability, the service utilises On-Call staff to provide cover at Wholetime stations where there are crewing deficiencies, for reasons such as sickness, training events or Covid partnership working. On-Call staff were used 264 times for this purpose between April 2020 and January 2021.

Implement alternative crewing arrangements in the event of the Service moving away from the current Day Crewing Plus (DCP) duty system.

49. A service project to identify alternative arrangements for the DCP duty system has been initiated and will deliver alternative solutions during the period of the current IRMP. There have been two project board meetings held to date. Membership includes Trade Union Representatives (FBU and FOA), staff working the DCP shift pattern and Service managers.

Increase the availability of our On-Call appliances to respond to incidents.

50. To assist in the increase of on-call appliance availability the Service has undertaken a number of pieces of work:

   i. Initiated a project to review the On-Call provision with an aim of increasing availability to as close to 100% as possible. The report and recommendations are currently with SMT to consider;

   ii. Increased recruitment. Currently 3 recruitment campaigns per year with 12 individuals recruited per campaign;

   iii. Reduced training times for new starters. In the last 12 months this has reduced from 24 months to train an On-Call member of staff to now 10 months meaning new starters are available to crew appliances in a shorter period of time. The reduced time to train has not reduced the training programme each Firefighter receives.

iv.   Trials of alternative contracts. Three On-Call sections are trialling new contracts of employment allowing a flexible approach to hours of availability and use of leave. This has led to increased availability from individuals.

51.   At the beginning of the work in 2018 On-Call availability was 50%. Since 1 April 2020 the average availability of On-Call appliances is 79%. (Covid has had a positive impact on On-Call appliance availability as many On-Call staff have been working from their home addresses and supplying additional cover).

Aim 3 – Deliver value for money quality services

Purchase a second high reach appliance to replace the older one of the two vehicles.

52.   The Combined Fire Authority approved the procurement of a replacement high reach appliance in February 2020 as proposal 3 of the 2020-2024 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). Project progress is outlined in paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 above.

Relocate and centralise our Learning and Development facilities.

53.   A report outlining the current progress was presented to the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) at its meeting on 10 February 2021.

54.   The project is scaling back from a single consolidated site for the Learning and Development Centre to a cost-effective split site solution.

Procure replacement Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for our firefighters.

55.   As outlined in paragraph 19 above, the project is progressing well with all firefighter personal protective equipment on schedule to be replaced by the end of March 2021.

Continue to collaborate with other blue light services and our partner agencies to support our purpose of safer people, safer places.

56.   A significant amount of collaboration continues to take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic and this will continue over the coming months. Attendance at the Strategic and Tactical Coordinating Groups and the Local Resilience Forum ensures the Service has the latest information and is able to offer help and assistance where required.

57.   The Road Safety Team continue with their positive relationship with Leicestershire Road Safety Partnership. The partnership has confirmed their continued funding for 2021/2022 and this allows the Road Safety Team to continue to focus on and target the agreed road user group of 15-24 year-olds and the new user group of 12-18 year-olds for pedestrian safety.

58. The positive relationships established as part of the HSC process has resulted in a significant number of referrals being received from partner agencies. Across all partner agencies a total of 413 referrals were received and appropriately triaged and prioritised by the team.

59. The Vulnerable Persons (VP) module continues to receive referrals on a weekly basis. On average the team are receiving 40 VP referrals per week. Each referral will require the team to triage the referral and contact partner agencies as necessary. Several referrals require the input of the Vulnerable Adult Risk Management (VARM) Framework to ensure the correct level of multi-agency involvement. The VP referral process has received positive feedback from a number of partner agencies but specifically the Leicester Clinical Commissioning Group Complex Care Team.

60. 84 Operational Response training exercises that included three fire appliances or more have been completed between April and December 2020. These included cross border exercises with neighbouring fire and rescue services, other blue light services and a selection of partner agencies. These were undertaken at a range of risk locations and involved specialist exercises such as Urban Search and Rescue.

Develop the bistro area of the headquarters building to maximise office space and explore opportunities for leasing the space to generate income.

61. The development of the Bistro area at Headquarters has not been progressed significantly to date. SMT are however considering the use of the area by internal LFRS departments.

Aim 4 – An engaged and productive workforce

Enable our staff to do the right thing to help our communities.

62. Despite the impact of Covid-19, the Learning and Development team have continued to deliver operational training to suit current conditions to ensure that staff remain competent in skills required to respond to incidents. They have secured additional kit (360-degree cameras etc.) under the Covid-19 budget to further adapt training to be delivered in a compliant way. They are currently exploring the concept of web streaming training to stations.

63. The service continues to use competency based interviewing for all roles. This has been based on frameworks that staff agreed for operational roles. Most support roles have now been mapped and these frameworks will go on to be used in the development of appraisals on the Oracle (learner management system).

64. The first stage of Oracle launched early, providing on-line learning material on safeguarding and mental health and wellbeing. The project continues to progress and all operational technical competencies are being mapped onto the system to facilitate recording of evidence linked to maintenance of competence.

Implement a Learning Management System (LMS) to record operational competence.

65. The new LMS has been implemented as detailed in paragraphs 31 to 33. The project team continue to work with individual teams/stakeholders to create the required look, feel and content of the courses within the system.

Undertake a staff survey, sharing the results and developing improvement plans.

66. The 2020 staff survey has been completed and the results communicated. The six initial themes from the Survey which were identified as requiring attention have been shared with staff. Actions to address these themes will feature in individual district and department plans during 2021/2022.

Embed the Service's values and behaviours throughout the organisation.

67. The staff survey and the HMICFRS Covid survey results confirmed that LFRS staff have a high level of awareness of the Service behaviours.

68. Embedding of the Service values and behaviours will continue during 2021/2022 alongside the new National Fire Chiefs Council Code of Ethics. The Code is designed to guide all Fire and Rescue Service employees in their day-to-day conduct, providing professional standards of practice and behaviour to carry out business honestly and with integrity and to underpin organisational culture. It provides the expectations for how employees should behave in any given situation, to assist with decision-making.

Aim 5 – Provide assurance

Implement a performance management system.

69. The internal development is continuing with the creation of a data warehouse with links to some of the Service's major data systems. An update is provided in paragraphs 7 to 9. Early provision of dashboard performance reports for key performance indicators and community safety feedback are now available. Further dashboards linking to other system data will be introduced on a phased basis through to August 2021.

Complete the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) community safety initiative.

70. A summary report created by the University of Leicester which outlined the findings and recommendations for improving engagement with BAME communities was presented to TMT on 21 January 2021. The main recommendations, which were approved for implementation, include the creation of a visual strategy for a person-centred approach to fire safety and the creation and delivery of a training package for community engagement and fire safety.

Implement our HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

71. Progress is continuing on the Improvement Plan produced to address the areas highlighted in the inspection report produced by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). A separate detailed report has been submitted to the Corporate Governance Committee meeting on 10 March 2021.

Implement a universal web-based mapping system.

72. The project to implement Cadcorp GIS Web Mapping (Corporate platform of Web based maps and data) is covered in paragraphs 22 to 24 above.

Publish Annual Data Protection Officer's (DPO) report.

73. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) continues to publish quarterly monitoring and update of activity reports to TMT, the latest being quarter 4 covering activities between 1 September and 31 December 2020. The annual DPO report (covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2020) was presented to TMT on 18 February 2021. Following approval there, the report will now be presented to the Senior Management Team.

Improve how we communicate using social media and our website.

74. Over the last months of the financial year, LFRS have been targeting a lot of social media in line with the weather warnings received in the county. Timely messages were sent out in line with flood warnings, showing photos from real incidents of cars stuck in floodwater, to try and 'hit home' to audiences the reasons why they should not drive through floods. Social posts were also scheduled for the snow with safety messaging. The format of these posts was varied with a mixture of new animations and static images. These were all tailored to the current lockdown, reminding audiences to only drive 'if it is an essential journey'.

75. On-Call recruitment was the main focus on social media throughout January and February. Brand new profiles of current On-Call Firefighters were shared to encourage people to apply. We also pushed the 'Workshop Wednesday' Zoom meetings. A press release was written and shared on social media and the website, focusing on Meghan, an On-Call Firefighter at Ashby. This was picked up from the channels by the Leicester Mercury and later BBC Radio Leicester, who spoke to Meghan (promoting On-Call Recruitment and more females becoming Firefighters) on 17 February.

76. Overall, social posts promoting On-Call recruitment reached 8,381 people.

Improve engagement with our communities.

77. Targeted engagement for festivities has continued – for example for Chinese New Year, the service shared topical and timely posts on why it is dangerous to use paper lanterns, and cooking safely.

78. Supporting partner agencies with messaging about the Coronavirus vaccine – helping to share the message of what age groups it is available for and how to book in, sharing myth busting messages, and showing that the fire service is 'Ready, Willing and Able' to step up to provide support. Though volunteering has not been required from LFRS, posts have been shared from other fire and rescue services who have been volunteering, such as by administering vaccines – to show communities that they are supported in many ways, 'not just fires'.

79. As always, engagement has taken place with communities on national campaigns – such as 'Time to Talk Day' for mental health – signposting support, and acknowledging that the lockdown restrictions could be impacting our communities.

Report Implications/Impact

80. Legal (including crime and disorder)

Legal issues are dealt with within each project or task. There are no items for Corporate Governance Committee's attention.

81. Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)

Financial issues are dealt with within each project or task. There are no items for Corporate Governance Committee's attention.

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

The current Covid-19 situation represents a risk to some of the projects currently being undertaken. Individual project risk registers will continue to be maintained; however, it should be noted the uncertainty around allocation of internal resources and when suppliers will return to 'normal', means that the situation is changing regularly and as such it may not be possible to detail the absolute latest position in this report.

83. Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

Stakeholder engagement is considered within the delivery of each project or task. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken where necessary on all activities.

84. Environmental

Environmental impacts are considered within the delivery of each project or task. There are no items for Corporate Governance Committee's attention.

85. Impact upon Our Plan Objective

These projects and tasks are designed to assist the CFA in meeting all of the objectives detailed in 'Our Plan 2020-24'.

Background Papers

None.

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