

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 4 and Monday, 9 November 2015.

PRESENT

Mr. S. J. Galton CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. R. Camamile CC
Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC
Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC
Dr. S. Hill CC

Mr. D. Jennings CC
Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mrs. C. M. Radford CC
Mr. R. Sharp CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

In attendance:

Mr. L. Yates CC, Local member for Glenfields (for Minute 44)

37. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2015 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

38. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

39. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

40. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

41. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following members each declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the item to consider the fire proposals s members of the Combined Fire Authority (Minute 44 refers):

Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC
Ms. M. E. Newton CC
Mrs. C. M. Radford CC

Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

Ms. M. E. Newton and Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC each declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the Annual Performance Report as they had relatives who were employees of the NHS. Mr. R. J. Shepherd declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of this item as a member of Charnwood Borough Council (Minute 45 refers).

42. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

43. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

44. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Consultation: Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016-2020.

The Commission considered the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2016-2020. The matter was before the Commission today as a result of an extraordinary meeting of the County Council held on 8 October which had resolved that the Scrutiny Commission should consider the consultation proposals in the first instance with a view to submitting its comments to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 18 November in order that a properly considered response could be debated at the full County Council meeting to be held on 2 December. It was noted that a detailed briefing on the consultation proposals and LFRS's budget position had been held for all members of the Council on 2 November.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the following representatives of LFRS who were in attendance to deliver a presentation to members and respond to any questions:

Richard Chandler, Chief Fire Officer
Alison Greenhill, Combined Fire Authority Treasurer
Steve Lunn, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

(A copy of the slides forming the presentations delivered by Messrs. Chandler and Lunn and by Ms. Greenhill is filed with these minutes.)

Arising from the presentations delivered, the following points were noted:

Budget

- The number of posts that had been "disestablished" as a means of avoiding compulsory redundancy was 101. A "six point" plan was in effect to avoid compulsory redundancy, which included options such as career breaks and secondment, however it was not possible to "force" firefighters down these routes. Compulsory redundancy of firefighters would in all probability result in local and national industrial action;
- 21 operational staff would be in a position to retire over the next 5 years. It had been forecast in the budget that firefighters would retire when eligible. Funding to cope with

this had been built into the budget accordingly;

- 7% capital financing in the County was not considered to be excessive, given the Service only received very small amounts of grant funding. The figure was higher for the City;
- The CFA aimed to build a contingency fund of £300k per year over the next four years as a result of the ongoing uncertainty of the budget position as set by the Government;
- The “Grey Book” was a term used for national conditions of service for firefighters, however LFRS worked outside the terms of the book for some of its services;
- LFRS had of the leanest upper management tiers of fire services in the country. 18 members of middle management staff had recently been removed. The Service had also employed a member of staff from the City Council as its Treasurer and were exploring with the County Council the possibility of legal and governance services being provided as a means of identifying further savings. Opportunities for further reductions were being explored on an ongoing basis, as well as more innovative solutions, such as possible mergers of some services with the Police Service and East Midlands Ambulance Service. Fire Investigation and Urban Search and Rescue Services were already shared with Leicestershire Police;

IRMP - General

- The modelling work on which the proposals had been formulated identified the level of risk in each “super output area” and included data around travel distances and the best routes to follow for incidents. The modelling data was published on the LFRS website;
- External audit of the Fire Service was undertaken in respect of finance and governance. The last peer review that had been conducted at Leicestershire was around four years ago. This was considered to be the average in terms of timescale;
- The consultation documents did not include the availability of cover from adjacent fire stations in neighbouring authorities.

Tactical Response Vehicles (TRVs)

- TRVs would respond to incidents and create a safe scene – they would not be equipped to deal with a house fire and other incidents of this and larger scales. The vehicles would not be expected to resolve incidents in isolation and would be supported at large scale scenes by a fire engine. If fire engines were not available at Leicestershire stations, they would be brought in from neighbouring Fire Services though capacity was built in to ensure this was a last resort;
- The target response time of 10 minutes was based around the arrival of the first appliance to a scene (ie. either a fire engine or a TRV) in accordance with standard procedures. Every incident type had a predetermined attendance based around the response required (ie. the appliance and the expertise);
- Billesdon Station would be the only station in the County to be equipped with only a TRV. It was acknowledged that under the proposals a fire engine attending a scene

in this area was unlikely to meet the 10 minute response time. However, it was highlighted that Billesdon Station attended, on average, only two incidents per year where a fire engine was required and it was noted that it was not currently possible to meet this target in the Billesdon area with the equipment available;

- There were differing styles of TRV, with crews of between two and three firefighters, depending on the nature of the incident at which they were required.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the following members of the Fire Brigade Union (FBU):

Graham Vaux, Brigade Chair
 Adam Taylor, Health and Safety Spokesman
 Phil Coates, Executive Council Member for the Region

In introducing themselves, it was indicated that Mr. Vaux and Mr. Taylor were both professional firefighters with significant experience in the Fire Service. A copy of the submission from the FBU is filed with these minutes.

They made the following points:

- There would be a total reduction of 190 from the available 650 firefighters. It was felt that reductions to frontline services should be kept to a minimum and there were viable alternatives to these proposals which would not risk public safety;
- The removal of Kibworth and Central Stations would leave the public unsafe – the closure of Central was highlighted as being particularly dangerous given it dealt with around 1500 calls per year and was the busiest station in the County. There was a lack of clarity around the equipment used to respond to high-rise incidents and where this would be stored were Central to be closed;
- 9 fire engines were to be removed under the proposals, leaving a total of 19 for the whole County;
- The introduction of TRVs was a concern as they were untried and untested in Leicestershire and with only a fraction of the equipment carried compared to that of a traditional fire engine. The vehicles were not capable of life saving operations, but were intended to be sent to most incidents;
- The City of Leicester would be expected to operate with only 3 fire engines and this was felt to be significantly less than other cities of similar size;
- Huge areas of the County would be left with little or no fire service coverage at all;
- Incidents of rescue operations were known to be on the increase;
- Though incidents as large scale as the Kegworth Air Disaster in 1989 were few, there were many significant incidents attended which required a level of response that would be unachievable were the proposals to be agreed;
- The FBU's suggested sale of Birstall Fire HQ would achieve savings of £11 million, which could be put towards achieving transformational ways of working and

collaborative initiatives;

- Raising the council tax precept should also be considered as an alternative option.

Arising from the presentation, the following points of the FBU were noted:

- The FBU was actively assisting in supporting those in the disestablished 101 posts to take up alternative options, such as secondment. This had meant that over 30 members of staff had been encouraged down this route thus far. A further 20 were being encouraged to retire;
- The TRVs had less equipment than a fire engine and were primarily based around initial attendance at a scene or stabilising a vehicle at a road traffic collision. The FBU felt that a priority should be placed on life saving activities. There was a large discrepancy between how management and the FBU viewed the TRVs;
- The FBU was of the view that water rescues could increase in the future as a result of increased flooding and incidents of this type required a minimum crew of five. The TRVs were not capable of rescues of any type and would not be an adequate response in these circumstances;
- The FBU said that it had not been actively consulted on the proposals or been given an opportunity to discuss alternatives prior to going out to consultation.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Anthony Morgan, President of the Retained Firefighters Union (RFU). A copy of the submission from the RFU is filed with these minutes. Mr. Morgan did not wish to add to his submission.

Arising from questions, the following points made by Mr. Morgan were noted:

- Retained Firefighters were viewed as “easy targets” for the cuts as they were not viewed as being “operational” staff;
- There had been no consultation with the RFU in regard to the alternate proposals they had put forward as a means of identifying the required savings;
- The proposals did not include any information around station costs. The RFU had obtained information in this regard from LFRS via a freedom of information request;
- Retained firefighters were regarded as being “part-time” workers and so were provided with the same training opportunities as whole time staff, albeit provided over a longer period of time.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the following retired firefighters who had previously been employed at LFRS:

Ian Lockyer (previously Manager at Billesdon Station)
 Chris Bilby (predominantly an operational staff member)
 Paul Percival (previously a Group Manager)

A copy of the submission from the retired firefighters is filed with these minutes. It was noted that the retired firefighters had also submitted a separate paper to all elected members of the Council.

They made the following points:

- They had a current understanding of the working practices of LFRS and had experience of devising and implementing IMRPs;
- The current proposals had been developed by a small elite group exercising a narrow perspective;
- The consultation process had been severely flawed and had not adhered to the “Gunning Principles” or Government guidance on how to conduct a consultation process;
- The IRMP proposals were operationally unsound, based on simplistic modelling and were biased towards solutions designed to address fiscal constraints whilst at the same time disregarding risk;
- Evidence provided by LFRS had been misleading. The role of TRVs had been misrepresented;
- It was hoped that LFRS would have engaged all of the expertise in its management to produce a set of proposals that would improve operational capability, rather than diminish it.

Arising from questions, the following points made by the retired firefighters were noted:

- Billesdon Station would have a TRV available 24 hours a day. 75% of the time when the fire engine was currently available at the Station was at periods of high risk when there was a higher potential for road traffic collisions or house fires;
- The “Gunning Principles” aimed to ensure meaningful consultation and highlighted the importance of (i) formulating consultation at an “informative” stage, (ii) enabling informative consideration and response, (iii) adequate time being given to consideration and response and (iv) the findings being taken into consideration. It was felt that the 10 week period of consultation for proposals of this magnitude was inadequate;
- Some consultation events had been poorly attended. It was felt that this had indicated a lack of awareness and publicity for the consultation and the proposals that were being put forward. A suggestion was made that banners could have been erected at fire stations to raise awareness;
- It was suggested that, by having issued some guidance on operational procedures for the use of TRVs, LFRS had already taken a decision to implement their use;
- A decision on the proposals would be made by the CFA and not, as had been stated in the submission, a small number of senior officers;
- It was felt that running a referendum on a council tax precept increase should be explored as a means of retaining capacity;
- It was suggested that TRVs were a valuable resource but should not be treated as an alternative to traditional fire engines. It was felt that the right spread of tools

would need to be available to LFRS in order to carry out its role effectively;

- Whilst the Service had managed to meet demand with only six fire engines over the strike period, it was felt that this was due to a large scale campaign to make the public aware of the strikes and the likely limited service that would be available during this time.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr. L. Yates CC, the County Councillor for Glenfields, who had requested the opportunity to address the Commission on the proposals.

Mr. Yates CC made the following points having discussed the proposals with some operational staff at LFRS over the past weeks:

- The CFO had informed members at the briefing held on 2 November that if the proposals were agreed and proved not to be effective, he would have to go back to the CFA and gain their views on an alternative approach. This was not felt to be acceptable;
- LFRS had abused statistics and data to make their points;
- There was a sense of fear and intimidation and a lack of communication between senior officers and frontline staff;
- The expertise of dedicated staff would be lost should these proposals be agreed;
- The country was at a high risk of a terror attack and it was felt that this was a very unfortunate time to be making such severe cuts to the Service.

(Arising from the evidence that had been gathered it was felt that it would be beneficial to give the Chief Fire Officer the opportunity to respond to the points and claims made. It was therefore suggested by the Chairman and agreed by the Commission that it would adjourn and reconvene at a meeting on Monday 9 November at 10.00am to enable the Chief Fire Officer to respond to the points made and for some conclusions to be drawn by members from the session in order that these could be forward on to the Cabinet for its consideration.)

- The Scrutiny Commission reconvened at 10.00am on Monday 9 November -

The Chairman explained to members that the Commission had reconvened to enable it to:

- Hear from the CFO in regard to summing up its points and responding to any pertinent issues raised by those witnesses whose evidence had been taken at the meeting on 4 November; and
- Conclude its findings for forwarding on to the Cabinet.

The Commission considered a supplementary pack of information containing the following pieces of information requested by the Commission during the debate:

- Community Risk Modelling work undertaken by LFRS;
- Operational Fire Station costs 2014/15;

- Retained availability as at August 2014.

(The latter two documents had been obtained by the RFU as a result of a Freedom of Information Request and this information had been verified by LFRS as being accurate.)

Arising from a further presentation from the Chief and Deputy Fire Officer, the following points were noted in response to those points raised previously by the FBU, the RFU and retired firefighters:

FBU

- TRVs would be used to respond to 80% of the calls received by the Service, which were mostly “low level” incidents. The number of large scale incidents was quite rare and TRVs would not be used as the “first attendants” in these circumstances;
- An image illustrating the equipment carried by a TRV used by LFRS on a trial basis was circulated to members *(a copy of this illustration is filed with these minutes)*. It was considered to be adequately equipped to deal with all low-level incidents;
- Policies were in place for the use of TRVs as a result of a TRV that was on-loan and in use in Rutland on a trial basis. The exact specification of the vehicles that could be used in Leicestershire as a result of the proposals had not yet been established;
- The Service currently had 28 fire engines and would be moving down to 19, with an additional 3 TRVs, should the proposals be agreed. TRVs were not capable of life-saving operations. It was for this reason that LFRS was retaining a fleet of traditional fire engines;
- By spreading resources more evenly across the County, it was envisaged that the Service would be able to keep to its “10 minute attendance time” performance measure;
- It was felt that speed of response by the Fire Service was only one of a number of factors that affected casualty rates;
- There would be 7 fire appliances to cover the City area rather than the 3 suggested by the FBU. 5 appliances would be used to respond to high-rise incidents, which would leave cover for other incidents were they required. Resources could also be called upon from other areas in the County and, where necessary, outside of the County. These arrangements were well established;
- The Service, as part of arrangements via the Fire and Rescue Service National Co-ordination Centre, could respond robustly to large-scale incidents on a national basis. Resources could be called on from across the whole of the United Kingdom, where necessary;
- Automatic fire alarm call-outs had been dramatically reduced over the past five years and work continued to improve performance further in this area. The Service did not intend to charge for false alarms, as in most cases these incidents occurred at public buildings such as hospitals. It was felt that this would therefore merely shift public money from one agency to another;

- The number of rescue operations that occurred in 2010/11 was 363, the figure for 2014/15 was 434. “Rescues” were categorised as being a number of different operations such as “assist other agencies”, “affecting entry or exit” (ie. someone being locked out of their premises), “lift release” (being locked in a lift), and “removal of objects from a person”. Some of these incidents would have previously required the attendance of a fire engine, however this was felt to be unnecessary and a good usage case for TRVs;
- 41 operational managers had been in place in 2010; this figure was now at 32. It was felt that it would not be possible to reduce this further at this stage. Support staff had been reduced from 148 to 97.

RFU

- The role of a whole-time and a retained firefighter was the same, however whole-time staff were trained for 15 hours per week, whereas retained staff trained for 3 hours per week. Whilst stressing the need for an increased use of retained staff, the “Night Review” did not account for the difficulty of retaining and recruiting retained or “on-call” staff.

Retired Firefighters

- The Service was confident that the consultation had met the “Gunning Principles” and the “Consultation Principles Guidance” document available from the Government. No decision had pre-emptively been made before consulting. A number of staff engagement events had been held across the County attended by 709 members of the public. 2 further events had been scheduled on request;
- All Fire Stations were supplied with posters informing of the consultation and the local consultation event. A lengthy list of stakeholders, agencies and organisations had been written to informing of the consultation. LFRS offered to make this list available to members on request;

Arising from questions from members, the following points were noted:

- The Government had very recently announced that the Department for Communities and Local Government would face a budget cut of 30%. It was unknown to what extent this would affect local government at this stage, however it was expected that this would equate to an 8% year-on-year saving for LFRS, which, unless there was a level of protection for Fire budgets, was worse than that which had been forecast as part of the CFA’s Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- Road casualties had recently increased in the County and this was mirrored across the country, though this was known now to be falling. Education would be key to ensuring this continued. Attendance at these incidents would usually require a traditional fire engine as well as another vehicle, dependent on the severity of incident;
- Paper copies of the previous IRMP consultation had been known to be filled out in advance by some interested groups. In an effort to avoid this, it had been intended to run to the consultation as an “online only” exercise. An equality impact assessment had highlighted that this would not be possible and in response, numbered paper copies were made available on request;

- The Fire Authority had spent £40k on last year's IRMP consultation and had taken the view that it would be imprudent to repeat this given the financial position the Authority faced. An independent company had been hired to conduct the process and this had cost in the region of £2k. If any groups had not received a copy of the consultation, the Chief Fire Officer offered to rectify this outside of the meeting;
- The 10 minute attendance time performance measure responded to the first attending appliance at a scene, including instances where this would be a TRV. It was highlighted that modelling work had shown that there were, on average, two incidents per year in Billesdon where a TRV would not be the first attending appliance;
- A number of other Fire Authorities were known to be using TRVs to a varying degree, such as: West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Humberside, Tyne and Wear, Cumbria, Northumberland, Cornwall and Devon and Somerset. It was felt therefore that their use was now well established;
- There would be opportunities to reduce back office and support staff further and these changes would be considered by the CFA in due course. The Service was only required to consult publicly on "operational" changes to the Service;
- LFRS had reached a point at which compulsory redundancy would need to be explored in order to produce a balance budget. This would be a decision for the CFA;
- The Fire Service had approached Leicestershire Police regarding the possibility of sharing their control room. LFRS were also in discussions with other Fire Services regarding collaboration, however it was known that some services had priorities that were at odds with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and that therefore, it would not always be possible to achieve savings via this route;
- The timing of equality impact assessments (EIA) for consultation was not set in stone, however it was known that EIAs were usually devised and fine-tuned throughout a consultation process. LFRS had drafted an EIA for the consultation process in advance.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Combined Fire Authority Treasurer for their attendance at the Commission's meeting and the thorough way in which they had provided responses to members' questions.

The following motion was moved by Mr. Sharp CC and seconded by Mr. Charlesworth CC:-

"That the Cabinet be advised as follows:-

1. That the Commission finds that the scale of cuts outlined in the proposals present an unnecessary and unacceptable risk to the operational performance of the Combined Fire Authority and that this view is based on evidence that points to:-
 - a) A lack of clarity or confidence in the CFA's ability to remove surplus staff that is contributing to over half of its projected deficit with no plausible plan in place to tackle this as a matter of urgency thereby inflating the problem and creating a

real risk that further cost savings attributable to redundancies would not come to fruition;

- b) Opportunities that exist to explore alternative cost reduction proposals that might alleviate the need for the scale of cuts proposed, including but not limited to:
 - i) Greater use of retained firefighters;
 - ii) Extending the 'life' of existing vehicles;
 - iii) Greater collaborative working with local and regional emergency services;
 - iv) Various 'cheaper' staff proposals;
 - v) The sale or lease of the Birstall Headquarters and to decamp to Central Fire Station or another existing building;
 - vi) More appropriate use of Tactical Response Vehicles.
- c) Weaknesses and lack of openness in the modelling of response times which provides real concern at the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service's ability to respond in a timely manner with the weight of response required;
- d) The process of putting together the IRMP being very exclusive, relying heavily on senior officers and failing to draw on the wide experience within the LFRS;
- e) The consultation being too narrow in its content, having failed to properly contact key stakeholders within and immediately outside the area, being inadequately signposted to the public thereby restricting access to those with internet access and as such not being undertaken in accordance with the 'Gunning principles'.

2. The Commission therefore urges the Cabinet to:-

- a) Oppose the proposals and seek an urgent review of alternative cost reduction options to reduce the scale of cuts required from frontline services and for this review to be more inclusive of officers within the CFA;
- b) Seek from the CFA a clear plan for the early delivery of the resource reduction required to deliver the £1.3million overdue savings;
- c) Request the CFA to carry out a full and transparent audit of its incident response times including the measurement of appropriate 'weight of response times';
- d) Request the CFA to commission an "external audit" of future proposals;
- e) Note that the lack of a scrutiny process within the CFA has impacted negatively on the quality of debate and to recommend that the CFA reviews its scrutiny process."

On the motion being put and before the vote was taken, five members rose asking that a named vote be recorded. The voting was recorded as follows:-

For the motion: Mr. Sharp CC, Mr. Charlesworth CC, Mr. Galton CC, Dr. Hill CC and Ms. Newton CC.

Against the motion: Mr. Shepherd CC, Dr. Feltham CC, Mrs. Camamile CC, Mrs. Dickinson CC, Mr. Jennings CC and Mrs. Radford CC.

The motion was put and not carried.

A further motion was put by Mr. Shepherd CC and seconded by Dr. Feltham CC:-

“That the Cabinet be advised as follows:-

1. That the Commission has noted the concerns expressed by the Fire Brigades Union, the Retained Firefighters Union, retired members of the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and others about the potential impact of these proposals;
2. That the members of the Council and the Scrutiny Commission has received a detailed presentation from the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and his colleagues on the consultation proposal and would wish to draw the following matters to the Cabinet:-
 - (i) That there are significant financial pressures on the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) and the consultation proposals should be seen in that context;
 - (ii) That the consultation proposals should be seen in the context of a 42% reduction in emergency incident rates in the last 10 years;
 - (iii) That the proposals now outlined by the CFO represent his and his management team’s professional assessment of the best use of reduced resources to deal with risk;
 - (iv) That whilst the CFA previously disestablished 101 operational posts financial provision continues to be made for these posts in the absence of an agreement with the trade unions as to a way forward, a situation which cannot be allowed to continue;
 - (v) That the CFA is pressing ahead with proposals for reducing its costs by engaging in shared service agreements and exploring a range of uses by other organisations of office space at its Headquarters.”

The motion was put and carried, 6 members voting for the motion and 5 against.

45. Leicestershire County Council Annual Performance Report 2015.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning the County Council’s Draft Annual Performance Report 2015. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 2”, is filed with these minutes.

The Chief Executive explained that the Annual Report was currently a draft and would be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 18 November, alongside the comments of the Commission, prior to consideration at the full County Council meeting scheduled for 2 December.

The Chief Executive reported that there were strong examples of delivery in the Annual Report across the priority themes. Some areas required a continued focus on delivery and improvement. It was noted that improvement plans were in place related to these.

There was some time lag in the data and therefore a higher risk that reductions in Government funding, such as the public health grant, would in future make it difficult to progress improvements. An inequitable approach in terms of Government funding also made it harder for the Council to maintain previous good comparative performance levels moving forwards. It was therefore important that the Council continued to press for fairer funding for the County and its services, including schools.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted:

- Members were informed that a review would be undertaken of the Council's Park and Ride Service to assess performance and whether it had impacted congestion levels. Further information would be provided to members in relation to this in due course;
- A report had been considered at the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September regarding a recent spike in road casualties. Early data for this year suggested that levels might now be reducing to previous levels;
- The Better Care Fund was still in its infancy with regard to measurable impact, though a significant amount of activity was underway and a range of projects had been commissioned. This was already having a positive impact on reducing delayed transfers of care, reducing admissions to care homes, improving reablement and helping to reduce continued high levels of hospital admissions;
- Extra national funding had been expected to impact on improved mental health service delivery. However the new funding now identified had still to be translated into agreed improvement plans and delivery on the ground. Work was underway to progress this;
- Monitoring of feedback from carers was carried out in the most part via surveys. The number of key performance indicators for carers had now grown as a result of the implementation of the Care Act. Overall reported Adult Social Care performance showed a mixed picture, in part due to performance on a number of perception indicators from the Adult Social Care service users and carers' surveys. Work was underway to understand any issues that lay behind the perceptions and to progress improvements;
- The proposed Combined Authority, if approved, was considered to be the primary vehicle through which joint and more efficient way of working could take place with the City Council and district/borough councils regarding issues such as transport, planning, housing and skills;
- A number of the service changes and transformation projects, such as those related to library services, sought to mitigate the impact of Government funding cuts;

Members noted the generally positive position but questioned whether, given the importance of continuing to press the Government for fairer funding for the County, the report contained sufficient information on the risks to the continued delivery and performance of services as a result of continued funding cuts.

The Chief Executive highlighted that the report was not prepared for the purpose of lobbying Government but rather to allow the Council to take an informed view on whether the current approved priorities in the Council Strategic Plan were being delivered. It was

noted that the relevant guidance would be considered, alongside the Council's governance and reporting processes, to ensure that members were given a sufficiently sharp focus on the current and potential future impact of funding reductions.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments of the Commission on the Annual Performance Report be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 18 November;
- (b) That the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to continue to monitor the number of those killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

46. 2015/16 Medium Term Financial Strategy Monitoring (Period 6).

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to the Commission's meeting in January.

47. Review of Earmarked Funds and Balances.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to the Commission's meeting in January.

48. Date of Next Meeting.

It was NOTED that the next meeting of the Commission was scheduled to take place on 27 January 2016 at 2.00pm.

10.00 am - 1.30 pm
04 November 2015

10.00 am - 1.50 pm
09 November 2015

CHAIRMAN