

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 24 MARCH 2004**

#### **STRATHCLYDE FIRE BRIGADE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

##### **Report by Director of Community Services**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise members of the proposals contained within the Strathclyde Fire Brigade, Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In the last few years a number of policy papers have been published by the Scottish Executive aimed at modernising and improving the quality of the Scottish Fire Service. These policy papers include:-

- 2.1.1 “The Scottish Fire Service of the Future”, which introduced the concept of Integrated Risk Management as a tool for ensuring that the correct resources are available in the correct place at the correct time to deal with emergency incidents.

- 2.1.2 “The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service: Proposals for Legislation” which would give Fire Authorities a statutory duty to respond to non-fire emergencies and a wide range of other duties. These proposals cover many of the recommendations outlined in the Bain Report.

- 2.2 In response to these policies and proposed legislation, Strathclyde Fire Board initiated the production of an Integrated Risk Management Plan.

- 2.3 The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) sets out Strathclyde Fire Board’s strategic modernisation agenda.

- 2.4 Annual action plans linked to the IRMP will be published detailing achievements against the previous year’s objectives along with the objectives for the coming year(s).

- 2.5 The Integrated Risk Management Plan and the associated actions plans aim to demonstrate the Board’s commitment to sustainable development based on the three key elements of Public Safety, Staff Safety and Best Value.

### **3. INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN - PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 The integrated risk management plan covers 7 strategic areas of improvement, with 29 associated action points. These are set out below:-

### **3.2 Existing and Potential Risk**

- In order to reduce the risk of loss of life and severity of injuries occurring in fire and other emergencies, we will expand our role in the community to involve Local Authorities, local people and local groups in partnership schemes.
- The specialist skills of our dedicated Fire Investigation teams will be maintained and used to enhance service provision not only to the public but also the other emergency services.
- We will embrace the new proposed Fire Safety Legislation and all of its implications in order to ensure improvement in service delivery and safety standards in the built environment.
- We will implement a training programme to ensure that operational personnel have the expertise to allow them to carry out combined Community Safety/Operational Risk Assessment inspections. The information obtained from these inspections will be used to inform decisions on the appropriate level of operational response.
- We will ensure that our Community Safety staff maintain their competence by providing the appropriate training to allow them to carry out Statutory Fire Safety Inspections.
- We will modify our response to incidents from a purely property based approach to one which places a suitably high emphasis on life safety. We will ensure that our activities are directed towards educating people in the dangers of fire, making buildings safe and protecting our sites of heritage, commerce, and the environment. This strategy will help to reduce the number of fires that occur.

### **3.3 Our Response**

- We will develop and introduce a Formal Emergency Call Challenge Policy to reduce the number of hoax calls made by identifying and adopting best practice.
- We will adopt a policy of mobilising to automatic fire alarm calls on an individually risk assessed approach.
- We will implement a pilot scheme to examine the effectiveness of increasing, where appropriate, our operational response options to areas of known high risk at times of peak activity. This will ensure that our Fire Appliances are in place at the right time in communities at greatest risk of death and injury from fire.

- We will develop a Strategic Reserve policy in order to allow greater participation by operational staff in Community Safety activities.
- We will investigate the number of occasions that High Reach Appliances responding as part of a Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA) are used in the early stages of an incident or a suitable alternative can be employed, their inclusion in the first attendance PDA will be reviewed and they will be mobilised in accordance with more appropriate criteria.
- We will investigate and evaluate an Aerial Rescue Pump that combines the flexibility of front line appliances with a high reach capability to enable us to further consider the group's findings.
- We will focus our efforts to assist in those types of incidents that present a significant danger to the community or the environment. We will encourage people to approach other appropriate agencies where they are able to provide assistance and where speed of response is not critical. We will work with other emergency services in reducing the number of casualties at road traffic accidents.
- We will participate fully in the "Sea of Change" project in conjunction with the national project team.
- We will form an internal Firelink project team in order to prepare for the changes to current procedures. We will liaise with Firelink and the successful supplier to ensure a seamless migration to the new system.
- We will investigate the means of entering into co-responder/first responder partnerships with the Scottish Ambulance Service. We will implement a pilot scheme where additional training and critical care resources are provided to front line appliances.
- We will provide our staff with an IT infrastructure that will facilitate effective targeting of Community Safety resources.

### **3.4 Major Incidents**

- We will strategically locate Major Incident Vehicles within the Strathclyde Fire Brigade area and ensure personnel are trained to provide Mass Decontamination of the public, Firefighter Decontamination and also provide an Urban Search and Rescue capability utilising a range of new equipment.

### **3.5 Our Staff**

- We will introduce the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) throughout the brigade and will implement a role rather than rank

based management structure. All personnel will work within nationally laid down occupational standards.

- We will develop and implement a procedure that will allow appropriate staff members to undertake firefighting and community safety duties where necessary whether they work the Wholetime or Part-Time system.
- We will improve our service delivery in this area by crewing appliances with a combination of Wholetime and Part-time staff where necessary in order to meet crewing needs.
- We will maximise the effectiveness of our personnel and resources and review current Detached Duty and Standby Procedures, Time Off in Lieu, and the use of Pre-Arranged Overtime in order to achieve a flexible approach and maximise staff availability. In addition, the Board's Special Leave Policy is currently the subject of a Best Value review. We will continue to promote policies which will support the health and welfare of all our staff and reduce absence due to sickness. We will welcome the opportunity of positive changes to the pension regulations which will allow staff the flexibility to continue their employment where appropriate.
- Where necessary, we will alter working patterns and routines include training and maintenance programmes, in order to fulfil the Brigade's wide range of functions. We will determine best practice in order to facilitate our role, including the use of flexible working, part-time working, voluntary overtime and the development of duty systems that will enable us to deliver the most efficient and effective service to the community we serve, whilst complying with employment and Health and Safety legislation.
- We will undertake a Best Value service review to determine whether routine station administrative tasks could be carried out by any other means.
- We will work with the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission and the Health and Safety Executive to assist us to introduce a number of pilot schemes focusing on family friendly and good work life balance issues for all of our staff. We will adopt best practice in order to develop and sustain a fully inclusive culture in the workplace that supports diversity. Our intention is to make the prospect of a career in the Fire Service a much more attractive proposition to the wider community.

### **3.6 Brigade Review**

- We will undertake a strategic and organisational review in keeping with the principles of Best Value at all levels to ensure that Strathclyde Fire

Brigade reflects the current and future needs of the community we serve.

### **3.7 Efficiency and Effectiveness**

- Whether performance review is through the process of comprehensive performance assessment or some other method, we will welcome the process of demonstrating our performance to our stakeholders.
- In addition to external audit and inspection processes carried out by Audit Scotland and the Fire Services Inspectorate, we will actively seek opportunities to report our performance to stakeholders.

### **3.8 Consultation**

- We are committed to maintaining transparency in the development of IRMP and we will inform and consult appropriate stakeholders and partner organisations on an ongoing basis as proposals and initiatives emerge. All opinions and comments received during consultation within the current consultation period will be recorded and considered for relevance and validity. Findings will be reported and evaluated at Management Team and Fire Board levels prior to any decision being made in relation to changed emergency service provision.

## **4. DISCUSSION**

4.1 Following discussions with the Firemaster regarding the implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan and the possible effects on fire and rescue service in East Ayrshire, it has been confirmed that there will be no adverse effect to services in East Ayrshire.

4.2 The Firemaster indicated that there are no proposals to

- close fire stations in East Ayrshire
- reduce the number of appliances or size of crews or
- implement compulsory redundancies.

4.3 In many respects the proposals will give greater flexibility to the Firemaster. For example, at the present time, Strathclyde Fire Brigade has a fixed response to any incident in line with the "Approved Standards of Fire Cover". This is essentially Government guidance linked to the Fire Services Act 1947 which means that depending on the nature of the area the brigade must make a specified response. For example, in the middle of Glasgow one appliance must be at the incident within five minutes; the second within eight; and a high reach appliance within ten minutes. In less populated areas the specified cover could be as low as one appliance in twenty minutes.

- 4.4 There is no flexibility in this scheme to allow for such variables as movement of workers out of or in to an area of office accommodation or even between day and night.
- 4.5 The Brigade are therefore proposing to change to a risk based approach which will allow greater flexibility and service provision to be tailored to demand. This may involve moving appliances about at times of peak demand, providing 'combi' appliances and perhaps changing shift patterns.
- 4.6 There will be full consultation on the proposals with a wide range of stakeholders including Trade Unions.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Nil

## **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Nil

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Nil

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The proposals by the Fire Board to develop an Integrated Risk Management Plan are to be welcomed since undoubtedly they will lead to greater effectiveness and efficiency within the Brigade. They will also provide the Firemaster with much greater flexibility in the deployment of resources.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (i) Remit to the Director of Community Services to advise the Firemaster that the Council welcomes the content of the Integrated Risk Management Plan; and
  - (ii) Note this report.

William Stafford  
Director of Community Services

WS/JC

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2004

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Strathclyde Fire Board, Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan, Consultation Document.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background paper should telephone 01563 576023 and speak to William Stafford.

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