

REPORT FROM OPINION RESEARCH SERVICES ON THE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT 5-YEAR PLAN CONSULTATION FOCUS GROUPS, FORUMS AND QUESTIONNAIRE



PRESENTED TO: Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING: Monday 9 July 2007
OFFICER PRESENTING REPORT: Brigade Manager (Support Services)
Des Tidbury

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

To inform the Executive Committee of the areas of the Consultation process managed by Opinion Research Services (ORS), namely the Elected Member and Stakeholder Forums, Focus Groups and the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Questionnaire.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is invited to CONSIDER the report, in particular the comments and views received during the consultation process.

3. BACKGROUND AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Members will recall that the Fire Authority at its meeting of 7 February 2007 approved the IRMP 5-Year Plan Consultation Strategy as recommended by the IRMP Working Party. A key part of that Consultation Strategy was to utilise the services of ORS who have previously been used by RBFRS to undertake Employee Surveys, Public Opinion Surveys and Local Satisfaction Surveys.

ORS are leaders in the field and are a 'preferred service provider' for the Fire Services Consultation Association having experience of IRMP Consultation processes in other Fire Authority's.

The Consultation Strategy developed by ORS with guidance from Members of the IRMP Working Party was delivered during the period, 12 February to 11 May 2007.

The attached report from ORS contains an independent and in-depth review of the Consultation process relating to the Elected Member and Stakeholder Forums, Focus Groups and IRMP Questionnaire. The first draft report was considered by the IRMP Working Party at their meeting of 13 June 2007 and changes were suggested and have been incorporated into the report attached here.

Some information items were requested by the IRMP Working Party and the answers are included here to expedite the information to Members. Firstly, Members requested a further breakdown of questionnaire responses by postcode, unfortunately at the time of writing this report the information requested has not been made available. It is hoped that ORS will make this information available to Members at the meeting of 9 July 2007.

Secondly, the expected building growth for Windsor and Maidenhead was requested, to compare with the growth of the Wokingham/Bracknell area (of 22,000 as stated in the consultation document). The Berkshire Structure Plan appears to cover to 2016 (as compared to the 2026 date within the South East Plan) and suggests an expected build of 4100 houses. The South East plan allocates 5620 houses to Windsor and Maidenhead by 2026. It should be stated that the IRMP 5-year Plan is based upon the current level of risk, rather than any future proposed build.

Thirdly, if the Windsor and Slough fire appliances were not available to cover an incident in Windsor, it is confirmed that the next two supporting appliances would be from Langley (covering for Slough) and Maidenhead.

4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL, RISK MANAGEMENT AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Due to the controversial nature of some of the proposals contained within the IRMP 5-Year Plan every effort has been made to ensure that the Consultation process has been as robust as possible to withstand external scrutiny. A key part of this strategy has been the decision to use ORS to provide an independent account of the outcomes of the Consultation process.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH STANDING ORDERS / FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Agreement to utilise the services of ORS was ratified by the Fire Authority at its meeting of 7 February 2007.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

The 5-Year IRMP Plan directly improves four strategic aims of the RBFRS. It will help:

1. Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.
2. Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and damage caused by hazards other than fire and render appropriate humanitarian service.
3. Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.
4. Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a Best Value framework.

7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON SENSE

Members will be aware that Representative Bodies are invited and are active participants in the preparation of all IRMP plans and projects.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

IRMP Working Party 14 November 2006 Agenda items 4 and 5 and Minutes.

IRMP Working Party 20 December Agenda item 4 and Minutes.

IRMP Working Party 10 January 2007 Agenda item 5 and Minutes.

IRMP Working Party 13 June 2007 Agenda item 5 and Minutes (not yet approved).

9. COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS

a) Chief Fire Officer

The Chief Fire Officer supports this report.

b) Fire Authority Treasurer

The Authority Treasurer has noted this report.

c) Clerk and Monitoring Officer

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer has noted this report.

Author: Des Tidbury
Brigade Manager (Support Services)
0118 9 32 2228

Date of report: 25 June 2007