

Customer Satisfaction and Value for Money Reporting

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report advises of proposed changes in the collection and reporting of customer satisfaction data and asks the Committee to consider whether it should receive reports on value for money annually, following Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) public and business consultation.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and agree:

- a) The proposed changes in the reporting of customer satisfaction data; and
- b) Whether it should receive reports on value for money annually, following IRMP public and business consultation.

3 Background

One of the Fire Authority's corporate aims is:

To deliver an effective fire and rescue service at a cost
that is acceptable to our community

This is supported by two public value measures:

- The achievement of a minimum four star rating ('Good') in our customer satisfaction on not less than 80% of occasions; and
- The achievement of a minimum four star rating ('Good') for service that represents Value for Money on not less than 80% of occasions.

These statistics are currently obtained using paper-based questionnaires, issued to members of the public following formal interaction with the Service. Separate questionnaires are issued following emergency incidents, community fire safety activities and attendance at headquarters. Issue and collation of the questionnaires is protracted and time-consuming.

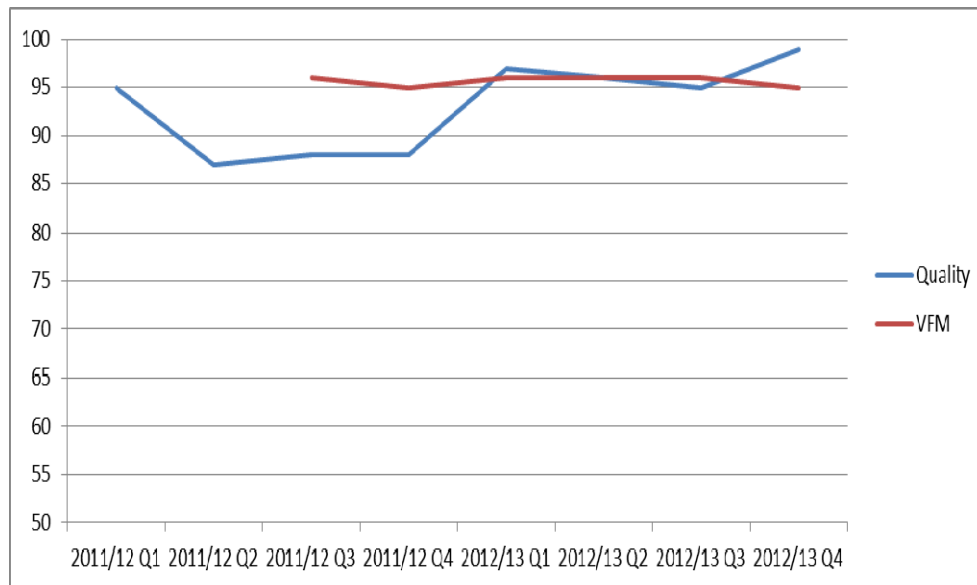
Furthermore, although the incident and safety questionnaire responses are useful in identifying trends and areas for improvement, it is questionable whether the interaction responses are an accurate measure of the performance of the Service as a whole.

For the value for money assessment, the questionnaire shows the Service's costs compared with other purchases or insurance arrangements, but not with other fire or emergency services. Officers, therefore, wish to consider ways in which a better informed opinion might be gathered.

In light of the above and the fact that the Service is continuously exploring how to streamline processes in order to work more efficiently, officers wish to review the value of this information and the way in which it is gathered and reported.

4 Performance History

The following graph shows the recorded performance levels, since they were introduced in 2011.



This shows a very consistent performance, enabling consideration to be given to reducing the collation and reporting frequency.

5 Proposed Way Forward

The Service has reviewed the activity and statistics produced, and now proposes the following.

- To develop an electronic system for collecting and collating quality of service responses. It should be recognised that this may limit the range of responses received and alter the balance of positive, neutral and negative comments. Collection and collation of data would be based on a proprietary hosted solution at an annual cost of approximately £300.
- Incident and community safety responses would be considered internally and reported to the Audit and Performance Management Committee quarterly. Visits to Headquarters would be considered internally and used to identify departmental improvements.
- Value for money would be assessed as part of the Integrated Risk Management Planning consultation, when respondents would have a better understanding of the Fire Authority's risk, income and expenditure. This would be reported annually to the Audit and Performance Management Committee.

It is not proposed that the measures set by the Strategy and Resources Committee be changed.

6 Financial Implications

The cost of introducing a proprietary hosted solution would be approximately £300 per annum, which could be met from existing budgets. This cost would be counteracted by a significant reduction in the amount of time spent by officers in gathering the data.

7 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8 Initial Impact Assessment

An Initial Impact Assessment has been completed.

9 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.