

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY 19 FEBRUARY 2018

UK EMERGENCY MEDICAL TEAM DEPLOYMENT TO BANGLADESH - 17 DECEMBER 2017 - 3 FEBRUARY 2018

The Authority received a presentation from Graham Mossop, Watch Manager who attended the meeting to update Members on the recent deployment of the UK Emergency Medical Team (UK EMT) to Bangladesh. The UK EMT was a collaborative between: the Department for International Development, NHS / Public Health England, UK Med, Handicap International and UK the UK International Search and Rescue Team (ISAR). He explained that (UK ISAR) was a co-operative of Fire and Rescue Services formed over 25 years ago who responded to humanitarian disasters and emergencies and provided capacity building across the world.

On 17 December 2017 a team was mobilised to Bangladesh to carry out a Medical Needs Assessment, which resulted in the mobilisation of the UK EMT on 24 December 2017. The mobilisation was to support the rise in Diphtheria cases in the refugee Rohingya community and due to in-country medics being diverted to treat patients. The World Health Organisation had requested assistance to further assist UNICEF with a vaccination campaign aimed at vaccinating children between the ages of 6 weeks – 15 years old. Difficulties included: travel distances to reach patients as these could be as long as 2 hours each way; procurement of items in the bazaars; waste management; water sanitation and hygiene (WaSH).

WM Mossop assessed: the infrastructure and the treatment centres and highlighted both good and bad practices in relation to WaSH; he liaised with infection control practitioners, generated standard operating procedures and promoted WaSH in line with international operating standards. A simple 4 bin system was introduced to segregate at the point of use, clinical waste, non-clinical waste, sharps and glass. Chlorination of water was addressed with a simpler system using aquatabs being adopted in the health / diphtheria antitoxin (DAT) centres. Fire Safety training was given to the Rohingya security guards at all the centres in relation to raising the alarm, evacuation procedures and the use of fire extinguishers. Training of local clinicians took place which was designed to enable them to continue DAT and associated medical treatments.

The positive outcomes were that; the UK EMT triaged over 3,000 refugees with over 500 being treated for diphtheria; 5,100 refugees across all areas were treated with DAT; antibiotics were provided for mumps and tonsillitis; the UK government donated approximately £2m towards the cost of the massive vaccination programme and over £59m in total to the crisis; clinical skills of local medical staff were improved and the infrastructure and procedures in relation to WaSH were improved across all sites. A total of 350,000 children had been vaccinated in the district in addition to 130,000 local Bangladesh children who lived in close proximity.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FIRE VISION 2024

The Authority noted that each year at its annual conference, the Local Government Association (LGA) released a conference document which focussed on the current and future challenges of the Fire and Rescue Sector from the LGA Fire perspective. This year the document was entitled "What will 21st Century Fire and Rescue Services Look Like in 2024?" Members considered the document that set out its mission, vision and rationale for change as well as presenting some ambitions and actions.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 required the Secretary of State to prepare a National Framework for fire and rescue authorities to keep it under review. The Authority noted that the National Framework was last published in 2012 and that the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, the Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP was consulting on changes cited as needed to embed the fire reform programme and provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The Home Office 'Fire and Rescue National Framework for England' consultation document was considered and the Chairman's response noted.

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) – PROGRESS TOWARDS INSPECTION – BRIEFING

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 set out that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) would inspect and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England. In July 2017, HMICFRS extended its remit to include inspections of England's Fire and Rescue Services. This would assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and people of the 45 Fire and Rescue Services in England: -

- Effectiveness: how effective is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- Efficiency: how efficient is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- People: how well does the FRS look after its people?

The HMICFRS' inspection programme for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England was subject to the approval of the Home Secretary and the consultation to HMICFRS' inspection methodology closed on the 19th February 2018. It was noted that HMICFRS could also undertake further inspections at any time. The inspection would be developed with the fire and rescue service and would be designed to promote improvement and to identify all aspects of the excellent work undertaken. The Authority noted there would be 3 tranches of inspection, with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service being inspected in the first tranche during summer 2018.

An Audit Assurance Team led by Area Manager Tony Crook had been established. The team was responsible for the Service response to the inspection and would support HMICFRS in: the audit and assessment of performance against the Inspection Criteria; overseeing the coordination, analysis and presentation of information to HMICFRS, Service Management Team and the Combined Fire Authority; acting as a key point of contact for LFRS with the inspectorate throughout the entire inspection process and keeping staff informed and updated.

REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19 - 2022/23

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer that presented a gross revenue budget requirement for 2018/19 of £55.1m. This allowed for the increase in pay costs arising from forecast pay awards of 2.0%, additional posts required to meet increased demands and further investment in apprentices, all of which was partly offset by the identification of £0.8m of efficiency savings.

The final Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed funding was in line with the draft figures presented in December, i.e. £24.3m a reduction of £1.0m (4.0%), and that the council tax referendum level was increased to 3.0%.

The Authority considered council tax options for 2018/19 which met the requirements to deliver a balanced budget and maintain an adequate level of reserves and determined a 2.99% increase (£1.96 per annum, less than 4p per week) per Band D property. In order to deliver this an unidentified savings target of £0.3m was included in the budget.

The Authority was faced with a growing funding gap in future years, the extent of which was considered as set out in the report, however it was noted that 2019/20 was the final year of the current four year settlement, and hence funding in future years was uncertain. Currently the Authority remained in a good financial position with reserves able to offset the financial challenges throughout the remainder of the four year settlement. The position became more challenging thereafter, by which time the Authority should have greater certainty on future funding, pay awards and future referendum limits.

FRANK DE MOLFETTA
Chairman

LFRS
Fulwood