



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY held on Wednesday, 20 June 2018 at Lecture Theatre - Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire at 10.30 am

PRESENT: Councillors M M Barker, G Hayes, D Beckett, M Biggin, Carey, D Flude, P Harris, E Johnson, N Jones, D Mahon, J Mercer, G Merry, K Mundry, S Nelson, R Polhill, B Rudd, T Sherlock, M Simon, J Weatherill and S Wright

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

B Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bailey, B Dooley and S Parker and the Police and Crime Commissioner David Keane.

C Fire Authority Membership

It was noted that the following Members had been appointed to the Fire Authority by the respective constituent authorities:

Representing Cheshire East Borough Council (5 Con, 2 Lab, 1 Ind)

Conservative

Cllr B Dooley
Cllr G Hayes
Cllr G Merry
Cllr M Simon
Cllr J Weatherill

Labour

Cllr D Bailey
Cllr D Flude

Independent

Cllr D Mahon

Representing Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (3 Con, 4 Lab, 1 Ind)

Conservative

Cllr E Johnson
Cllr N Jones
Cllr S Parker

Labour

Cllr D Beckett
Cllr J Mercer
Cllr B Rudd
Cllr T Sherlock

Independent

Cllr M Barker

Representing Halton Borough Council (3 Lab)

Labour

Cllr P Harris
Cllr S Nelson
Cllr R Polhill

Representing Warrington Borough Council (3 Lab, 1 Lib Dem)

Labour
Cllr P Carey
Cllr K Mundry
Cllr S Wright

Liberal Democrat
Cllr M Biggin

Note: The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, Mr David Keane, has also been afforded certain rights in relation to Fire Authority business, including the right to attend meetings.

D Election of Chair

The Director of Governance and Commissioning asked for nominations from Members for the position of Chair. Councillor B Rudd was nominated unopposed and was duly appointed Chair of the Fire Authority.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor B Rudd be appointed as Chair of Cheshire Fire Authority until the Annual Meeting in June 2019.

On taking the Chair Councillor Rudd thanked Members for their continued support.

E Election of Deputy Chair

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Deputy Chair. Councillor S Nelson was nominated unopposed and was duly appointed Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority. Councillor Nelson also thanked Members for their continued support.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor S Nelson be appointed as Deputy Chair of Cheshire Fire Authority until the Annual Meeting in June 2019.

F Appointment of Group Spokespersons

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments of Group Spokespersons be noted:

Conservative: Councillor G Merry

Democratic: Councillor M Biggin

Labour: Councillor B Rudd

G Appointment of Lead Members

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments of Lead Members be noted:

Cheshire East: Councillor G Merry

Cheshire West and Chester: Councillor T Sherlock
Halton: Councillor S Nelson
Warrington: Councillor K Mundry

H Chair's Announcements

The Chair asked Members to note the content of the Chair's announcements which included details of the Authority's achievements and events Members had attended since the last Fire Authority meeting.

He congratulated Councillor Karen Mundry on becoming Mayor of Warrington and Councillor Stuart Parker on his new position as Sheriff of Chester. He also informed Members that this would be Joanne Smith's last meeting as the Governance and Corporate Planning Manager. Members thanked Joanne for all her hard work and support over the last few years and wished her well for the future.

I Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

J Minutes of Fire Authority

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 22nd May 2018 be approved as a correct record.

K Minutes of Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee meeting held on 5th June 2018 be received, for information.

L Appointments to Committees etc., Outside Bodies and Member Roles

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report which covered the following items:

- a) Responsibilities of the Fire Authority and its committees, boards etc.;
- b) Political proportions on the Fire Authority;
- c) Political proportionality rules (where they apply and where they don't and their affect upon the allocation of seats on committees etc.);
- d) Appointment of Members to available seats on committees etc;
- e) Appointment of independent members;

- f) Appointments to outside bodies;
- g) Appointment of Member Champions; and
- h) Endorsement of Member/officer buddy arrangements.

A revised copy of Appendix 2A was distributed at the meeting to reflect the establishment of the three political groups and also the changes to the allocation on committees. The Director of Governance and Commissioning pointed out that it had been necessary to consider the seat numbers to ensure that the political proportionality would work satisfactorily when seats were being allocated. As a result, the number of seats on Estates and Property Committee had been reduced from 7 to 6. The Director of Governance and Commissioning confirmed that the necessary changes to the constitution would be made to give effect to this if Members approved the approach.

Details of the proposed nominations to the various committees, outside organisations and member champion roles had been provided by the three political groups. Completed version of Appendices 2B, 3 and 4 were provided to all Members in order that they check them prior to approval

A complete list of the appointments made at the Fire Authority meeting (covering Appendices 2B, 3 and 4) is attached as an Annex to these minutes.

RESOLVED That:

- [1] the responsibilities of the Fire Authority set out in Appendix 1A be confirmed;**
- [2] the responsibilities of Committees, Boards and Groups set out in Appendix 1B be agreed;**
- [3] the political proportions on the Fire Authority set out in paragraph 4 be agreed;**
- [4] the approach to the allocation of seats explained in paragraphs 6 and 7 and the revised copy of Appendix 2A be agreed;**
- [5] the appointments required as set out in Appendix 2B be agreed (see Annex);**
- [6] the appointment of independent members (to act in an advisory capacity) as set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report and shown in Appendix 2B be agreed (see Annex);**
- [7] the appointments to outside bodies set out in Appendix 3 (see Annex) be agreed;**
- [8] the appointments of Member Champions set out in Appendix 4 be agreed (see Annex); and**

[9] the continuation of the Member/officer buddy arrangements be agreed.

M Programme of Member Meetings 2018-19

RESOLVED:

That the Timetable of Meetings for 2018-19 be noted.

N Constitution

The Director of Governance and Commissioning informed Members that, as noted in Item 1L, changes to the number of seats on the Estates and Property Committee would included in the final version of the constitution for publication on the Authority's website.

A Member queried whether additional Members could be appointed to the Fire Authority to act as reserves for Members who were unable to attend. The Director of Governance and Commissioning stated that he did not think that the provisions in the Combination Scheme would allow this. He added that he would submit a report to the Governance and Constitution Committee to review the position.

RESOLVED:

That the Fire Authority's constitution be re-adopted.

2 END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT 2017-18

The Treasurer introduced the report which provided details of the 2017/18 end of year review of the Authority's financial position. He drew attention to paragraph 4 of the report which detailed the overall position in relation to the revenue underspend (£89k) and explained that appendices 1 and 2 provided a more detailed analysis of the key areas of underspend. He explained that it had been anticipated that a number of one off items of expenditure would be financed from Reserves; these had been approved in February 2017 and were expected to amount to £2,226k. At year end the position was that £1,131k of this one off expenditure could be met from the revenue budget rather than reserves. He added that as a result of the finalisation of the year end position, the level of Reserves (£28,221k) was higher than anticipated.

The Head of Finance presented further details of the main year-end variances for each department which were outlined in the report. She also referred Members to paragraph 4 of the report which set out the movement in reserves and asked for Member approval to return a net £1.654m which had not been required in-year.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the 2017-18 end of year financial report be noted; and

[2] the sum of £1.654m be returned to reserves.

3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2017-18

The Head of Finance introduced this report which provided a review of the Authority's treasury management activities during 2017-18. The report also provided information about compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Practices during the year.

The Head of Finance highlighted the key areas of the report which provided details on the following:

- a) the Authority's loans portfolio position at 31st March 2018;
- b) the Authority's investment portfolio position at 31st March 2018;
- c) a summary of performance for the year 2017-18; and
- d) the Authority's performance in 2017-18 against the key Prudential Indicators.

She assured Members that all the prudential indicators had been met and there had been no breaches during the year. She also informed Members that the authority had approved borrowing up to £9m to finance the Training Centre project in order to maintain sufficient cash resources to finance its capital expenditure commitments and emerging needs. The borrowing had not yet been utilised and the timing of this need to borrow, balanced carefully against the prevailing and forecast market rates, would be kept under close review throughout 2018-19.

It was also noted that Members would be interested in attending treasury management training and officers would arrange this as part of the Member Development Programme for 2018/19.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the report on treasury management activities for 2017-18 be noted; and**
- [2] the prudential and treasury management outturn indicators as detailed in the report be noted.**

4 PRIMARY AUTHORITY SCHEME PARTNERSHIP AUTHORISATION PROCESS AND GENERAL UPDATE

The Policy and Development Manager (Protection) presented the report which provided an update on the partnerships that Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service had entered into under the Primary Authority Scheme. It also sought Member approval to authorise officers to approve future Primary Authority partnership arrangements.

Members were provided with a brief overview of the Service's current partnerships with Hydes Brewery and Certas Energy (UK) Ltd. Details of the costs recovered (£19,266) from the work undertaken were also provided. The Policy and Development Manager (Protection) explained that the Service was currently drafting new partnership arrangements to ensure that all businesses entering into a new

Primary Authority partnership would be required to commit to a package of hours with the minimum being 80 hours per year. This already formed part of the partnership agreement signed by current partners.

The report also outlined the current partnership approval process which required Fire Authority approval for each partnership. The Policy and Development Manager (Protection) explained that the provision of Primary Authority partnerships had become competitive and it was recommended that the authorisation process be streamlined. The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive (Designate) added that the approval of partnerships had originally sat with Members as it was a new area of work for the Service. He explained that now that the partnership arrangements were embedded and the Service carried out due diligence to ensure that the partnerships to be entered into were satisfactory. He felt it would be appropriate for officers to handle decision-making associated with new partnerships.

Members discussed the proposals and a number of comments/queries were made including a request for hotel chains to be encouraged to use the Scheme and a query on how the scheme was publicised. The Policy and Development Manager (Protection) explained that the details of the scheme were being published on the website and officers also provided information on the scheme to businesses when carrying out fire safety inspections.

RESOLVED: That Members

- [1] continue to support the Service's involvement in existing and new Primary Authority Schemes; and**
- [2] authorise the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, the Treasurer and the Director of Governance and Commissioning to approve future Primary Authority partnership arrangements if they are satisfied with them.**

5 REFRESH OF RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Planning, Performance and Risk Manager (Joint Corporate Services) presented the report that sought Member approval for the revised Risk Management Policy. She explained that the Authority's risk management arrangements were now overseen by the Joint Corporate Services Planning and Performance team and the Risk Management Board had commissioned a review of the fire risk management policy to provide clarity on the approach to risk management with the introduction of the joint Corporate Services team.

The report outlined the approach being taken to develop policies. Separate fire and police policies/frameworks were being produced which took best practice from both and had the same look and feel whilst retaining their separate brands and maintaining each organisation's current risk management practices.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the revised Risk Management Policy, attached as Appendix 1 to the**

report, be approved.

6 FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND (2018)

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive (Designate) introduced the report which provide Members with information on the introduction of a new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the Framework) and work planned by officers to secure compliance with the Framework.

He drew Members attention to paragraph 2 of the report which outlined the main requirements. He added that whilst the Framework contained a number of requirements that were similar or the same as those in the previous version, there were a number of new requirements. There were 3 key themes highlighted; Engaging effectively with other agencies; Working in collaboration to enhance public safety; and Fire Reform.

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive (Designate) explained that officers had prepared a document which provided an analysis of the requirements in the Framework, allocating responsibility, commenting on the current position and where necessary flagging up questions that needed to be answered. It would lead to the preparation of an action plan which could be used to secure and monitor compliance. This would be submitted to Performance and Overview Committee for scrutiny.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the content of the report be noted; and**
- [2] officers be instructed to report to Performance and Overview Committee about compliance.**