

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF : CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE : 15th JUNE 2016
REPORT OF : HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
AUTHOR : ANDREW LEADBETTER

**SUBJECT : APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES ETC. AND
OUTSIDE BODIES AND MEMBER ROLES**

Purpose of Report

1. This main purpose of this report is to allow Members to consider the following issues:
2.
 - a) Responsibilities of the Fire Authority;
 - 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.

Note:

Appendix 2B contains information about the political proportionality rules and allocation of seats on committees etc. Appendix 2C contains details of appointments required to committees, boards and groups. Appendix 3 shows the required appointments to outside bodies. Appendix 4 contains information about Member Champions. It is anticipated that Appendices 2C, 3 and 4 will be re-circulated complete with details of proposed appointees following discussions with the political Group Leaders.

Recommended:

Members are asked to:

- [1] **Confirm the responsibilities of the Fire Authority set out in Appendix 1;**
- [2] **Note the political proportions on the Fire Authority set out in paragraph 3;**
- [3] **Agree the approach to the allocation of seats explained in paragraphs 4 and 5 and Appendix 2B;**
- [4] **Agree the responsibilities of Committees, Boards and Groups set out in Appendix 2A;**
- [5] **Agree the appointments required as set out in Appendix 2C;**

- [6] **Agree the appointment of independent members (to act in an advisory capacity) as set out in paragraph 11 of the report;**
- [7] **Agree the appointments to outside bodies set out in Appendix 3;**
- [8] **Agree the appointments of Member Champions set out in Appendix 4;**
- [9] **Agree the continuation of the Member/officer buddy arrangements;**

a) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY

- 2. The responsibilities of the Fire Authority are set out in Appendix 1.

b) POLITICAL PROPORTIONS ON THE FIRE AUTHORITY

- 3. Political proportions are important as they determine the allocation of seats on some committees. The proportions are shown as percentages in the table below:

	Seats	Percentage
Conservative	8	34.78
Labour	14	60.87
Independent Member	1	4.35
Total	23	100

Note: The Independent Member is not entitled to any seats on the committees etc.

c) POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY RULES (WHERE THEY APPLY AND WHERE THEY DON'T AND THEIR AFFECT UPON THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES ETC.)

- 4. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and Local Government and Housing Act 1989 make provision for the handling of political group representation on some of the Fire Authority's committees. For the sake of simplicity the term 'political proportionality rules' has been used.
- 5. The political proportionality rules are not straight-forward. They involve the application of certain principles '...so far as reasonably practicable...' in allocating seats to political groups. These principles are set out below:
 - a) that not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
 - b) that the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;

- c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and
 - d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.
6. Members are asked to note the information above and in Appendix 2B when considering the appointments required in Appendix 2C and the allocations of seats.
7. Not all of the Authority's bodies are caught by the political proportionality rules. For example, the Member Training and Development Group is not.
8. Some other bodies exist where there is no requirement for appointments to be made at the annual meeting, e.g. Closure of Accounts Committee and Staffing Committee.
- d) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO AVAILABLE SEATS ON COMMITTEES ETC.**
9. Appendix 2A contains details of the responsibilities of the respective committees etc. The respective responsibilities for plans, strategies and policies attributed to the Fire Authority and Policy Committee are contained in the lists that have been slightly updated since Members last considered them in April. The lists are included in Appendix 2A.
10. Members will see that they are asked to appoint to the Safety Centre Members Sounding Board. Officers are in the process of preparing the governance documents for the charitable company limited by guarantee and an application to the Charity Commission. Shortly, Officers will assist members with the recruitment/filling of the positions for trustees on the Safety Central charity trust.
- e) APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**
11. Following a review of the role of independent (non-elected) members (IMs) the Authority has agreed that the number of IMs would be reduced to two and would be appointed for a 4 year term of office. They fulfil an advisory role and there is a separate item on the agenda in respect of these appointments.

f) OUTSIDE BODIES

12. Members are asked to make appointments to the outside bodies covered in Appendix 3. Members will see that the roles of the bodies and delegated powers (if any) are set out in the appendix.

g) MEMBER CHAMPIONS

13. Members are asked to appoint the Member Champions covered in Appendix 4.

h) MEMBER/OFFICER BUDDY ARRANGEMENTS

14. The Authority operates a Member/officer buddy arrangement. This is intended to provide Members with officer support to help develop their overall and wider knowledge of the organisation and the fire and rescue sector generally.
15. Members are asked to agree the continuation of the buddy arrangements. The alignment of Members/officers will be confirmed shortly after the meeting to take account of Member appointments e.g. Member Champion roles.

Financial Implications

16. The cost of operating the democratic process is contained within the Authority's budget.

Legal Implications

17. The Fire Authority has delegated certain functions to various decision making bodies and has in place arrangements to facilitate good communications between Members and officers. The appointments made as a result of this report help to ensure that decisions made will be set within a legal framework.

Equality & Diversity Implications

18. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

19. There are no environmental implications arising from this report

**CONTACT: JOANNE SMITH, FIRE SERVICE HQ, WINSFORD
TEL [01606] 868804
BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE**