

# Public Document Pack



## **ADDITIONAL / TO FOLLOW AGENDA ITEMS**

This is a supplement to the original agenda and includes reports that are additional to the original agenda or which were marked 'to follow'.

### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

#### **MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY**

**Date:** Friday, 28 September 2018    **Time:** 10.30 am

**Venue:** Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD

**Constitutional Services Officer:** Cath Ziane-Pryor    **Direct Dial:** 0115 8764298

#### **AGENDA**

#### **Pages**

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# **BUSINESS RATE RETENTION PILOT BID**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 28 September 2018

**Purpose of Report:**

To note the approval through delegated powers for the Authority to enter into a joint bid alongside Nottinghamshire District / Borough Councils, Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council for the Business Rates Retention Pilot for 2019/20.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 On 24 July 2018, the government issued a prospectus inviting local authorities, particularly in two tier areas, to submit applications to be pilots for the 2019/20 Business Rates Retention Scheme by 25 September 2018.
- 1.2 This will be the second year of the pilot programme. As was the case in 2018/19, the pilot will only last for one year (2019/20) with the aim of exploring options for local government finance reforms, including promoting sustainability and promoting growth. It is anticipated that this will be the last year of such pilots. 2020/21 should see the introduction of the new 75% business rates retention and new funding basis being implemented across local government.
- 1.3 The prospectus seeks applications for areas to form business rates pilots, either for a county area or beyond. If the application is for a whole county, as it is for Nottinghamshire, then all local authorities and the Fire Authority must be supportive.
- 1.4 Applications were to be received by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by 25 September 2018, and there is an expectation that the decision will be known within the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement, probably in December 2018.
- 1.5 Due to the short timescale and the submission date, the inclusion of the Authority in the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pilot Bid 2019 has been approved through delegated powers.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The seven district and borough councils have been in a business rates pooling arrangement since April 2013, based on the existing 50% business rates retention. The Fire Authority is not a member of the pool, but receives 1% of business rates available for distribution. Should business rates across the county fall there is a safety net set at 92.5% of the baseline position.
- 2.2 The 2019/20 pilot requires all authorities, including fire, to be within the pool which will retain 75% of business rates rather than the existing 50%. This will see Nottinghamshire City Council and the Fire Authority join the pool.
- 2.3 A breakdown of the Authority's anticipated funding for 2019/20 under the existing system is shown in the table below.

	<b>2018/19 £</b>	<b>2019/20 £</b>
Revenue Support Grant	5,961,472	5,335,308
Business Rates	3,585,468	3,621,323
Section 31 Grant	298,000	250,000
Top Up Grant	6,999,939	7,155,193
<b>Total External Funding</b>	<b>16,844,879</b>	<b>16,361,824</b>

- 2.4 Current budget projections anticipate a total of £10.777m to be raised in 2019/20 from business rates and business rate top up grant, with a further £250k expected from related Section 31 grants, which are received from central government to compensate for changes in legislation such as small business rate relief.
- 2.5 If successful, the pilot would see the Authority lose all the 2019/20 Revenue Support Grant (RSG) allocation, anticipated to be £5.3m, but would receive an increased share of business rates to compensate for this. The Authority will take a share of the additional 25% business rate income being retained in the pool – which is thought to be in the region of £10m across the whole county.
- 2.6 A proportion of the additional funding will be paid into the Economic Development Committee to be allocated to approved economic development projects. This will assist in ensuring sustainable business rate growth in future years.
- 2.7 There is very little risk from taking part in the pilot scheme, despite the removal of the no detriment clause, which was included in the 2018/19 pilot scheme. The Authority is currently protected if business rate funding drops below 92.5% of its baseline level. The governance arrangements of the pilot scheme would see this rise to 95%, providing a level of extra protection.
- 2.8 It is anticipated that business rate income across the county would have to fall in excess of 10% for the Authority to be in a worse funding position than at present. If this happened it would affect the Authority's business rate income whether the Authority was in the pool or not.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Any additional income resulting from a successful pilot bid will be for 2019/20 only, as from 2020/21 onwards a national business rate retention scheme is expected to be introduced. Additional funding will therefore be used to help transition into the new funding regime and to support future collaborative projects.

- 3.2 The outcome of the bidding process is expected to be announced as part of the provisional finance settlement, allowing any implications to be built into the 2019/20 budget process.

#### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising directly from this report.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this report is not associated with a policy, function or service.

#### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Should the bid be unsuccessful then the current funding arrangements will continue into 2019/20.
- 7.2 The governance arrangements for the business rate pool reflect those of the existing pool and have been considered by the Authority's Monitoring Officer.
- 7.3 The bid requires signing off by the Authority's Treasurer.

#### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The risk management implications have been considered in the body of this report. The purpose of running the pilot schemes is to ensure a robust funding regime for the future of local government.

#### **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

The bid has been drawn up in collaboration with all Nottinghamshire Authorities.

#### **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members endorse the approval through delegated powers of the inclusion of the Authority in the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pilot Bid 2019.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 28 September 2018

**Purpose of Report:**

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in June and July 2018.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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Chief Fire Officer

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

As part of the revised governance arrangements the Authority has delegated key responsibilities to specific committees of the Authority. As part of those delegated responsibilities, the chairs of committees and the management leads report to the Authority on the business and actions as agreed at Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 1 June 2007.

## **2. REPORT**

The minutes of the following meetings are attached at Appendix A for the information of all Fire Authority Members:

Community Safety Committee	22 June 2018
Finance and Resources Committee	29 June 2018
Policy and Strategy Committee	06 July 2018
Human Resources Committee	13 July 2018

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All financial implications were considered as part of the original reports submitted to the committees.

## **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

All human resources and learning and development implications were considered as part of the original reports submitted to the committees.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this report is not associated with a policy, function or service. Its purpose is to update the Fire Authority on the outcomes of committee business.

## **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Service's performance in relation to matters addressed through the committee structure is scrutinised through a range of audit processes. The Service needs to continue to perform well in these areas as external scrutiny through Comprehensive Performance Assessment and auditors' judgement is key to future Service delivery.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report, as the report seeks to provide Members with an update on the business and actions of Fire Authority committee meetings which have taken place in the last quarter.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 22 June 2018 from 10.37am - 11.37am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark (Chair)

Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan

Councillor Parry Tsimbiridis

Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Absent

Councillor John Handley

Councillor Brian Grocock was also in attendance

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Wayne Bowcock - Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Dan Quinn - Area Manager and Head of Service Delivery

Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor John Handley – Leave

Councillor Vaughan Hopewell (as proposed substitute)

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE JANUARY - MARCH 2018**

Dan Quinn, Area Manager and Head of Service Delivery, presented the report which updates the Committee on the Service Delivery Performance between 1 January and 31 March 2018.

The report contains details of incident categories and numbers and Retained Duty System availability data by station.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) during the final quarter of 2017/18, 2,245 incidents were responded to which is a decrease of 370 compared to the same period last year. This reduction is mainly due to the First Responder Trial termination in September 2017;
- (b) an average of 83.2% availability was achieved across the Retained Duty Stations, with East Leake achieving an impressive 98.2% availability;
- (c) 138 deliberate secondary fires (non-structural property) were responded to. Where arson is suspected, the Police are informed and if they feel appropriate, the incident is followed up but NFRS do not receive an update of whether the arsonist has been caught but the Police may seek assistance to investigate the fire further.

The Chair recognised the complexity of incidents to which the Service responds and asked that the Committee's thanks to all concerned was recorded.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **5 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE ANNUAL OVERVIEW**

Dan Quinn, Area Manager and Head of Service Delivery, presented the report which provides an overview of Service Delivery during the year period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

A detailed summary of incident categories and numbers is provided in the report.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) as per the reference in the previous minute, the year comparison incident totals provide a clear reduction in incidents responded to, from 11,012 to 10,577 due to the termination of the 'First Responder Trial' in September 2017;
- (b) the Service has no legal power to prevent land owners storing flammable materials such as tyres but can highlight fire risk and advise safety precautions. Concerns can be passed to Environmental Health;
- (c) of the 13 animals rescued, this generally relates to domestic pets which are rescued from house fires. The stereo-typical 'cat up a tree' is generally remedied by citizens;
- (d) due to revised methods of reporting to the Committee, it is now easier to identify specific geographical areas of concern for incidents such as deliberate fires, which can then be targeted with preventative engagement;
- (e) the variance in retained duty availability is closely monitored and retained recruitment is targeted at stations with the most vacancies (currently Ashfield and Retford). However, it takes 12 months to recruit and train firefighters. Whilst the ideal availability would be 100%, procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate appliance responses are

provided. An availability target of 70% or over for retained stations is not uncommon in other F&RS's. The Service is investing in improving retained duty staffing;

- (f) retained duty staff availability is closely monitored by each District Leadership Team who will ensure that staff are complying with their contractual duties. Higher level intervention can be called upon if necessary.

Members of the Committee welcomed the revised report format and requested that more geographic detail on where incidents occurred, either by district or Fire Station is available for future reports, along with year on year comparative information on retained duty availability.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **6 REDUCING THE NUMBER OF UNWANTED FIRE ALARM SIGNALS THROUGH COLLABORATION**

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the Committee that during 2017, the Service responded more than 3,000 unwanted, automated fire detection alarms. The automated alarm systems in question are generally fitted to industrial units which are not connected to domestic/residential properties. These alarms are commercially maintained and are often triggered as a result of heat/ dust / by accident and without fire or smoke, or as a result of incorrect installation.

Unwanted alarm signals are most prevalent within the City area due to the density of industrial premises. Other Fire and Rescue Services across the country have reacted to these unwanted calls by requiring that the need to attend is confirmed in addition to an automated alarm, but NFRS had continued to respond without this confirmation.

The Service does not have any role in approving or recommending installations, maintenance and replacement of such alarms, and although Building Control does have limited involvement, only a 'named responsible person' is required for an automated alarm system to be connected (via Alarm Receiving Centres) to the emergency Services. There is currently no penalty for consistent unwanted alarms and therefore no deterrent to ensure that systems are correctly installed and maintained.

The National Fire Chief's Council has issued guidance to try and reduce unnecessary call-outs to these alarms. The Regional Implementation Team has also issued guidance as three of the five services in the region have differing approaches. The amended policy complies with the guidance from both organisations and is proposed to be operated by Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services, initially as a trial during which Fire Control Staff will continue to gather information on the alarm and ask further questions to challenge whether there is any evidence that an alarm has been appropriately activated. This may include requiring the 'responsible person' to attend the premises and confirm that the Service's attendance is required.

The new approach will include the following changes from the current policy:

- (i) Move from call challenging between the hours of 07:00 and 18:00 to 24 hours, 7 days per week;

- (ii) Hotels will be call challenged during the day, but not during night time hours, 21:00 – 08:00;
- (iii) A standard level of attendance after call challenging to AFD calls of one appliance.

The several premises types which will be exempt from these changes and trial are listed within the report.

There are unlikely to be any direct savings as a result of this trial as the crews will be on duty anyway, but there are broader productivity implications regarding the ability to provide Home Safety Checks, the ability to respond to other incidents and fuel usage.

A member of the Committee expressed concern that the report did not provide comprehensive information on the number of appropriate automated alarms and call-outs during the period in question, there is no mention of the direct risk to citizens and what the implications may be if the Service does not respond when its attendance is necessary. In addition, the cost implications are purely notional and there is not enough information about the proposed call-challenge process. Due to the risk factors and potential cost implications of a building and business lost through fire, NFRS should continue to dispatch at least one appliance to all call-outs, possibly with the exception of empty properties.

Members' questions were responded to as follows:

- (a) it can very difficult to schedule safety engagement sessions with schools, and Home safety Checks with some individuals. Whilst responding to a call will take priority, it is not always possible to rearrange sessions which result in a lost opportunity for valuable preventative work;
- (b) the guidance by which the trial will operate has been provided at a National level following evidence provided by other Fire and Rescue Services showing a benefit as a result of call challenging. NFRS aim to move towards adopting the National guidance, whilst Leicestershire will participate in the trial except for one minor variation until the trial results are available before considering their position;
- (c) Nationally, schools are not included on the exempt list as by their nature they are excellent at evacuating buildings and safety management when occupied;
- (d) the 3,000 unwanted alarms have consisted of malicious calls, calls of good intent and false alarms, of which NFRS attended nearly 1,000 routinely with 3 appliances whereas other Services only send one appliance;
- (e) if approved by this Committee and the Tri-Service Board, the trial could start within the next 6-8 weeks. A start date can be provided to members of the Committee.

The Chair acknowledged that there were risks but that broader consideration of the issue is required, including the requirement of a co-ordinated approach within the Tri-Service group. The trial should not be dismissed due to the hesitant approach of the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. However, with the majority of Committee members supporting a trial, it was agreed that further, more detailed information should be provided to members of the Committee when the outcome of the trial is reported to the committee six months after its implementation.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to approve the participation of the Service in a joint 'Unwanted Fire Alarm Response Trial' with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service, for a period of 6 months subject to the agreement of the Tri-Service Board;**
- (2) for a report providing the outcomes of the trial to be submitted to the Committee for consideration prior to the continuation or adoption of the proposed revised policy.**

## **7 RURAL COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Dan Quinn, Area Manager and Head of Service Delivery, presented the report which updates the Committee on the preventative activity and wider service delivery to the rural community of Nottinghamshire.

Whilst 80% of the county is considered rural, during 2017/18 NFRS attended 93 fires at agricultural type premises which are considered particularly vulnerable to arson and businesses can be seriously impacted by a significant fire, with 40% never able to trade at the same level again.

Following the introduction of a revised 'Farm Fires Procedure' and with advice from the Rural Crime Partnership Group, NFRS and Nottinghamshire Police have jointly produced a new guidance folder for farmers on how to protect themselves from arson and rural crime. The folders were recently promoted at the County Show and have been well received by the rural community, complementing the joint activity by the District Neighbourhood Police Teams and local NFRS crews which visited farms and rural properties to promote the 'Operation Bifocal' campaign which focuses on preventing the prevalent theft of farm and heavy machinery. The 'Focus on Farms' campaign will start shortly.

Members of the Committee queried as excessive the cost of producing the folders but were assured that the folders are of very good, robust quality and that the required procurement procedure of obtaining three quotes was followed.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **8 PRINCE'S TRUST HOUSE: STOCKHILL FIRE STATION**

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the Committee that the former fire service house, which has stood vacant for many years, attached to the Stockhill Fire Station, has been renovated and is now in use as the County Hub for the Service's Prince's Trust activity.

Pete Hales, the Partnership Manager, has led on the refurbishment project with Prince's Trust Team 33 who raised funds, approached local businesses for materials and asked for support from local residents to complete the renovation. NFRS provided financial support of £1,200 towards the renovation and will continue to meet the cost of utility services to the property.

Members welcomed the use of the building to benefit the young people engaged in the Prince's Trust Programme hosted by NFRS and commended everyone involved in the Stockhill House project, particularly the young people and contributors of resources.



The Prince's Trust Programme is appreciated as a successfully engaging some particularly troubled and vulnerable young people to build their self-confidence and encourage them to achieve positive outcomes.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY  
FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,  
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 29 June 2018 from 10.00am - 10.57am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Malcolm Wood (Chair)  
Councillor Andrew Brown  
Councillor John Clarke  
Councillor Brian Grocock  
Councillor Mike Quigley MBE

Absent

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

John Buckley	- Chief Fire Officer
Craig Parkin	- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Ian Pritchard	- Head of Procurement and Resources
Becky Smeathers	- Head of Finance
Catherine Ziane-Pryor	- Governance Officer

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUT-TURN FOR 2017/18**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report informing members of the financial performance of the Service in the year 2017/18, and analysing significant variances against revenue and capital budgets. This final position will also be reported in the Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 at the Combined Fire Authority meeting on 20 July 2018.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) total expenditure for 2017/18 was £41.971m against a budget of £40,805m;
- (b) earmarked reserves are £1.211m;
- (c) £384,000 was used from general reserves, which is an underspend of £142,000;
- (d) there is an overall budget overspend of £1.166m;
- (e) variances are detailed in the report and include:
  - (i) Pay award;
  - (ii) Pension costs;
  - (iii) Superannuation/National Insurance;
  - (iv) Business Rates;
  - (v) Planned fleet maintenance;
  - (vi) Capital Financing Costs
  - (vii) Secondment income;
- (f) with regard to the additional expenditure of £178,000 on fleet maintenance, this was as a result of several incidents, including mechanical engine failure on an appliance, an accident (for which an insurance claim has been submitted), and a fault found on some appliances between the vehicle and pump which requires specialist correction by the manufacturers. If this fault is found to be in appliances across the UK, then there may be grounds for a claim, but this is yet to be determined.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) note the contents of the report;**
- (2) recommend to the Fire Authority to transfer £500,000 from general fund to the Transition Earmarked Reserve;**
- (3) approve the total capital slippage of £1,248,000 to be carried forward to 2018/19 as detailed in paragraph 2.21 of the report.**

**5 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING TO 31 MAY 2018**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report informing members of the financial performance of the Service so far in the year 2018/19 to the end of May 2018.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) the report outlines areas with a higher risk of significant variance and it is noted that there are likely to be further changes during the course of the year;
- (b) Summary Expenditure and Funding Position:

	2018/19 Budget £'000	2018/19 Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Expenditure	42,227	42,514	42,039	(475)
Income	(40,783)	(40,783)	(40,783)	(0)
General Fund Reserves	(1,444)	(1,444)	(969)	(475)
Earmarked Reserves	0	(287)	(287)	(0)
Total	0	0	0	0

- (c) reserves are still in line with the levels agreed in February by the Fire Authority;
- (d) with regard to reserves, this Service's reserve level is mid-table of all English Services. The full listings are due to be published by Central Government and CIPFA and will be brought to the next meeting;
- (e) the National Joint Council (NJC) has requested that all Chairs and Chief Fire Officers attend an update briefing next week with regard to the pay award, which suggests significant developments. NFRS has budgeted 2% but Scotland has proposed 20% pay rise over 5 years. In addition to the pay award issue, there are differing views regarding broadening the role of Fire Fighters;
- (f) with regard to the Breathing Apparatus (BA) capital project, the budget figure includes the purchase of BA radios which have been trialed and will now be rolled out across the service;
- (g) the delay of 7 weeks to the completion of Newark Fire Station does not have a significant direct impact on the Service as it is predicted that the majority of costs will be met by the builder.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of this report.**

## **6 PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING TO MAY 2018**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report informing the Committee of the performance for the two month period of 31 May 2018 relating to the Prudential Indicators for Capital Accounting and Treasury Management.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) in April the Service committed to some short –term borrowing of £3m until July to assist with cash-flow whilst waiting for the Central Government Grant;
- (b) a long-term loan of £1m was taken out in May to take advantage of the low interest rate;
- (c) the report contains information on the loan maturity profile, total debt compared to Prudential Limits, and cash balances for the period 1 April 2018-31 May 2018.

**RESOLVED to note the content of the report.**

## **7 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report bringing to the attention of Members the annual report prepared by the Authority's Internal Auditors, including the outcomes of two additionally commissioned audits. The Internal Audit strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20 is included along with the Annual Audit Report.

Rob Disney, from Internal Audit at Nottinghamshire County Council was in attendance to respond to Member's questions along with Ian Pritchard, Head of Procurement and Resources.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) where senior officers believe that there may be an issue with process or procedure, Internal Audit are invited to investigate and recommend solutions which will support the Service;
- (b) a specialist audit was undertaken by blue light tax consultants to ensure that the Service is legally compliant, specifically with regard to Employment Taxes, the Construction Industry Scheme and VAT. Action is being undertaken to amend processes around taxation connected to vehicle leases following a change in legislation;
- (c) a Pension Administration audit was undertaken and an audit opinion of substantial assurance issued;
- (d) based on the Internal Audit Work completed during the year, an opinion of satisfactory was issued on the overall level of internal control;
- (e) although no specific issues were identified, as a matter of good practice, action challenge is one of the recommendations which has been implemented in that once an action has received management approval, confirmation is sought that the action has been completed;
- (f) low risk issues are treated as advisory as it is more efficient for the Service to focus on addressing higher risk issues;
- (g) an external Quality Assurance test was completed in March and illustrated a high level of compliance with some helpful recommendations to take forward;
- (h) Ian Pritchard assured the Committee that all assets are tagged as part of the Red Kite System. Processes are thorough although some unregistered kit had been found in a store at the Mansfield Station;
- (i) Internal Audit will be asked to examine new estate management, including lease agreements, room hire and collaboration agreements. Although the majority of lease agreements are now formalised, there needs to be a nationally agreed collaboration process as circumstances are changing quickly as collaboration arrangements develop.

Councillor Mike Quigley expressed concern that notoriously across the majority of organisations, asset management and property and premises are areas where controls tend to be weak and need to be closely monitored. It is suggested that a follow-up on Asset Management is allocated a timescale to be revisited. Consideration should include Wi-Fi.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the contents of the report;**
- (2) to approve the Internal Audit Strategy for 2018/19 to 2019/20 as set out in Section D of the Internal Audit Annual Report 2017/18 published with the agenda;**
- (3) for completed internal audits to be submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee as they are completed to assist with monitoring.**

## **8 ICT RESOURCE REVIEW**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report updating members on demands for resources in delivering the ICT Strategy of the Fire Authority. Gavin Harris, Head of ICT, was also in attendance to respond to any technical queries.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) the demands on the ICT Service are changing and additional resources are required to meet the increased number of risks and responsibilities that need to be managed internally and externally;
- (b) following a report to the Committee in January, an initial assessment was undertaken which concluded that additional permanent skills are required in the ICT Team to proportionally manage the risks identified, including cyber security and on-going project work;
- (c) currently there are 4 temporary posts which are in place to service specific project work, including Emergency Services Network (ESN), but there are not enough core specialist ICT positions to meet the current and projected future needs of the service;
- (d) the initial predicted cost of formalising appropriately capable staffing will be in excess of £200,000 per year but there are no feasible alternative options. In future, collaboration arrangements may provide opportunities but currently Police and Fire systems are not compatible;
- (e) in addition to seeking the support of this Committee, a formal report will be submitted to Human Resources Committee and if agreed, progressed to Full Fire Authority to consolidate the budget.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the contents of the report;**
- (2) to support a review of ICT Structure to identify additional resources;**

- (3) to receive further update reports on progress in delivering resources to manage future risk and review of the ICT strategy.**

## **9 CHANGES TO THE GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY**

Ian Pritchard, Head of Procurement and Resources presented the report which seeks approval to revise the Gifts and Hospitality Policy, the proposed draft of which is attached to the report.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) following an Internal Audit review of Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption procedures, a review of the Gifts and Hospitality Policy is required;
- (b) the report summarises the changes proposed to the existing Gifts and Hospitality Policy which includes reducing the declarable value from £25 to £10, including hospitality, and requiring entry into free draws to be declared and tightening of policies for staff responsible for budget and purchasing;
- (c) the revised policy will be published annually on the Service's website.

**RESOLVED to agree to the revisions to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.**

## **10 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

## **11 EXEMPT MINUTES**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.



## **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold  
Nottingham NG5 8PD on 6 July 2018 from 10.00 am - 11.08 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Brian Grocock (Chair)  
Councillor Andrew Brown  
Councillor Sybil Fielding  
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler  
Councillor Malcolm Wood

#### Absent

Councillor Michael Payne

### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer  
Matt Sysmey - Equality and Diversity Officer  
Ian Pritchard - Head of Procurement and Resources  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Michael Payne – Unwell  
Malcolm Townroe

### **2 MEMBERSHIP**

#### **RESOLVED**

- (1) to note that Councillor Sybil Fielding had been appointed to the Authority by Nottinghamshire County Council in place of Councillor Nicki Brooks;**
- (2) to confirm the appointment of Councillor Sybil Fielding as a member of the Policy and Strategy Committee;**
- (3) to reappoint Councillor Sybil Fielding as the Fire Authority Member representative to the Local Fire Fighter Pension Board and ACFO Craig Parkin as the Principal Officer representative to the Board;**
- (4) to appoint Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan as a substitute member of the Local firefighter Pension Board.**



### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Although not required to do so, Councillor Andrew Brown and Councillor Wheeler declared that with regard to Agenda item 10, Commercial Revenue Opportunities (minute 10) they are both Authority appointed Directors of 'Nottinghamshire Fire Safety Limited'. This did not preclude them from speaking or voting on the item.

### **4 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **5 SHAPING OUR FUTURE ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH UPDATE**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates members on organisational development and inclusion activities taking place within the organisation. Matt Sysmey, Equality and Diversity Officer, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) the report provides an overview of the organisational cultural and behavioural values change to date;
- (b) there has been a focus on aspiring leaders at every level of the Service. There were 32 applications for the aspiring leaders course, the majority of which were female. As a result several secondments are underway and coaching is taking place as part of a holistic approach to developing careers;
- (c) a trial of 'three hundred and sixty degree' appraisals, with input from senior and junior colleagues, has been welcomed by staff as improving awareness and inclusiveness and will now be rolled out;
- (d) the staff suggestion scheme 'little acorns' continues to receive valuable suggestions at every level;
- (e) the focus on a diverse workforce is not merely about numbers but also progressing diversity of thinking and behaviours change;
- (f) the comprehensive programme of positive action has resulted in applications from 40 candidates during the recruitment drive, 13 of which are female and 7 are from a Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) background, which is the most diverse result yet;
- (g) 55% of staff responded to the staff survey which is an increase on last year's response of 40%. 84% of respondents would recommend the Service as a good place to work but only one third were happy with middle management. A working group will be established to develop an action plan to respond to and address the issues raised in the survey;
- (h) the Service is no longer listed in the Stonewall Top 100 Employers but this is due to the positive progress of other organisations;

- (i) the recruitment process is still at an early stage so there are no guarantees that all candidates will succeed. However, a female firefighter is actively supporting female candidates by running gym fitness sessions in preparation of the fitness tests;
- (j) communication with staff is regular and in different formats such as bulletins and via the intranet. It is appreciated that not all retained staff will regularly access such information, so a face-to-face communication approach with managers is to be promoted. The staff survey was helpful in understanding how staff prefer to receive communications;
- (k) staff may provide their details but the staff survey can be completed anonymously. It is hosted by an external company and every measure is taken to ensure that individuals cannot be identified. However, some staff remain sceptical.

Councillor Andrew Brown and Councillor Johnathan Wheeler reported that they had visited fire stations local to their constituencies and met crews. It was a concern that it appeared that there were some areas where communications needed improving to ensure that staff were informed of current circumstances, positions and activity. Meeting staff in person had proved a valuable experience which should be promoted to all members of the Authority.

The Chair welcomed as valuable both the positive and negative feedback by members of the Authority following their visits to stations and meeting with staff, emphasising the importance of staff being as open as possible in raising issues, suggestions and concerns.

## **REOLVED**

- (1) to note the progress made in the organisational development and inclusion agenda;**
- (2) to agree to receive further annual updates in this area.**

## **6 EMERGENCY SERVICES NETWORK UPDATE**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report updating members on the progress of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) programme by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services.

The following points were highlighted and responses given to members' questions:

- (a) the programme business case is being reviewed by the new programme Director, Bryan Clark. It is hoped that the outcome of the review will be issued by the end of July, before Central Government's Summer recess;
- (b) in summary there are 2 potential options, either close the programme down altogether or deliver it incrementally. It is suspected that the incremental introduction will be chosen;
- (c) the programme is currently 9 months behind schedule and further slippage is expected which presents a financial risk to the Authority in that the Section 31 Grant from Central Government for the programme is still set to expire in December 2019 and it is unlikely that the programme will be ready for implementation by then but it is yet to be clarified if any further funding will be available;

- (d) full records of the Service spend on ESN are maintained and include the engagement of temporary specialist staff. With uncertainty around future funding and the requirement to support a resilient ICT section, NFRS is reviewing the ICT structure.

**RESOLVED to note the content of this report and to receive further updates as the project develops.**

## **7 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

## **8 EXEMPT MINUTES**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## **9 RESILIENCE UPDATE**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the resilience update report.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendation within the report.**

## **10 COMMERCIAL REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report informing members on current income streams and potential opportunities for the future. Ian Pritchard, Head of Procurement and Resources, was also in attendance to respond to members' questions.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendations set out in the report and added to in the meeting.**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,  
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 13 July 2018 from 10.00 am - 10.31 am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)  
Councillor Vaughan Hopewell  
Councillor John Longdon  
Councillor Jackie Morris

Absent

Councillor Mohammed Saghir

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer  
Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Mohammed Saghir - leave

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4 WORKFORCE PLAN 2018-20**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, introduced the report which reviews the workforce plan for 2017-19 and presents the refreshed workforce plan for 2018-20. John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, also contributed to the discussion.

The following points were highlighted and questions from the Committee responded to:

- (a) the workforce plan is reviewed yearly and looks ahead for a two-year period enabling the Service to plan for known and predicted changes to the establishment, including recruitment periods which can take up to a year;
- (b) the whole time establishment has reduced by 17 posts to 455, partly due to the deletion of 16 operational posts which have been via normal turnover;
- (c) maintaining the on-call establishment is an ongoing challenge and whilst 36 new trainees were appointed in 2017-18, 27 staff left the in that year, against a predicted total of 29;
- (d) as of the end of March 2018, 258 on-call employees were engaged compared to 251 the previous year, but retention remains a challenge and recruitment is on-going;
- (e) there are 59 firefighters with dual employment contracts of whole time and retained duty system posts;
- (f) there are 162 support posts, 15 of which are fixed term, some of which are working on ICT projects where specific expertise is required;
- (g) it was anticipated that during 2017-18, 16 operational employees would leave the Service as they reached the 30-year retirement point. Following previous patterns, a 7 further staff were predicted to leave the Service due to a variety of non-retirement reasons, and potentially further 20 could choose to take early retirement. By the end of the year a total of 19 operational members of staff had left the Service;
- (h) with regard to equality, during the recent recruitment process and following positive directed action, 17 women and 31 Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates have been successful in reaching the final stages of the selection process for the whole-time posts;
- (i) a further 40 whole-time posts will need to be recruited to during the next 2 years;
- (j) the Service still needs to identify £800,000 of savings by 2020, which is likely to have workforce implications as currently 79% of the total budget is spent on workforce;
- (k) as the retirement age of firefighters rises (to 60 under the new Fire-fighter pension scheme), it is anticipated that recruitment will be required less frequently, but that operational staff may leave the Service for reasons other than retirement as those joining Service are not likely to anticipate a 40-year career as a firefighter;
- (l) collaborative recruitment with Lincolnshire and Derbyshire Fire Rescue Services had been considered but was not found appropriate this time, although there is future potential, including at a regional level. Some training requirements are common across the Services and so this may provide an initial collaborative opportunity;
- (m) it is assumed that staff reaching 30 years of service and over the age 50 years of age will retire, and that half of the staff reaching 25- of 30 years of service and over the age of 50 years will retire early;

- (n) there is potential for significant retirement of Crew and Watch Managers within the next few years but succession planning is in place including developing some staff in preparation for them to apply for the vacancies;
- (o) as the retirement age rises the Service is considering health and fitness and how this may impact how people will want to work as they age. With an ageing population and more caring responsibilities of ageing parents, further flexible working will need to be considered;
- (p) it is possible for whole time operational staff to retire, have a break of six months, and then re-join the Service as retained duty staff without negative tax implications and with valuable experience;
- (q) external factors which influence workforce planning include national pay negotiations, broadening of role maps, the national living wage, apprenticeship targets, the Fire Rescue Service National Framework, and potentially, the result of the firefighter pension scheme legal challenge.

The members of the Committee welcomed the comprehensive report.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **5 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the human resources update including the key human resources metrics for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) detailed sickness absence levels will be reported to the next meeting as they could not be collated in time for this agenda deadline;
- (b) since the last report 14 new staff have started and 14 have left the Service;
- (c) in the National Fire Chiefs Council sickness absence survey, NFRS ranks 11 out of the 30 services for 6.74 days average sickness absence per Whole-time and Control employee (the lowest being 2.77 days and the highest 14.58 days), and 16<sup>th</sup> out of 30 for an average of 8 days sickness absence over the whole workforce (the lowest being 2.76 days and the highest 14.46 days);
- (d) there had been one incident reported under the Harassment and Bullying procedure.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **6 CONVERSION OF POSTS**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates members on the posts which have been re-designated during the period April 2017 to March 2018. The authority to re-designate posts was given to the Chief Fire Officer by the Authority in 2005 and is reported annually.

**RESOLVED to note that during the period April 2017 to March 2018 one Watch Manager Trainer post was converted to a Simulation Software Developer role.**

**7 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information by virtue of Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

**8 CHANGE TO PERMANENT ESTABLISHMENT: PAYROLL SECTION**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which requests a change to the permanent establishment within the Payroll Section. If agreed by the Committee, the recommendation will be submitted to full Fire Authority.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendations within the report.**

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