

# Public Document Pack



## NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

### MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY

**Date:** Friday, 19 December 2014      **Time:** 10.30 am

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

**Members are requested to attend the above meeting to be held at the time, place and date mentioned to transact the following business**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. P. Davey'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority**

### AGENDA

### Pages

- |          |  |         |
|----------|--|---------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>   |         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</b>   |         |
| <b>3</b> | <b>MINUTES</b><br>Of the meeting held on 26 September 2014 (for confirmation). | 3 - 10  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>CHAIRS' ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>   |         |
| <b>5</b> | <b>BUDGET GUIDELINES 2015/16</b><br>Report of the Chief Fire Officer           | 11 - 16 |
| <b>6</b> | <b>REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF INTENT</b><br>Report of the Chief Fire Officer       | 17 - 20 |
| <b>7</b> | <b>COMMITTEE OUTCOMES FOR NOTING</b><br>Report of the Chief Fire Officer.      | 21 - 42 |

- |           |   |         |
|-----------|---|---------|
| <b>8</b>  | <b>ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POST</b><br>Report of the Chief Fire Officer   | 43 - 52 |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC</b><br>TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE REMAINING ITEM(S) 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 |         |
| <b>10</b> | <b>EXEMPT MINUTES</b><br>Of the meeting held on 26 September 2014 (for confirmation).   | 53 - 54 |
| <b>11</b> | <b>COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES</b><br>Report of the Chief Fire Officer  | 55 - 60 |

**ANY COUNCILLOR WHO IS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING AND WISHES TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES SHOULD DO SO VIA THE PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AT FIRE SERVICES HEADQUARTERS ON 0115 967 0880**

**IF YOU NEED ANY ADVICE ON DECLARING AN INTEREST IN ANY ITEM ABOVE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES OFFICER SHOWN ON THIS AGENDA, IF POSSIBLE BEFORE THE DAY OF THE MEETING.**

**Constitutional Services Officer:   Mark Leavesley  
  0115 8764298  
  catherine.pryor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk**

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[website address to be inserted]



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

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 26 September 2014 from 10.30 am – 1.21pm**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)  
Councillor Brian Grocock (Vice Chair)  
Councillor John Allin  
Councillor Chris Barnfather  
Councillor John Clarke  
Councillor Stephen Garner  
Councillor Michael Payne  
Councillor Ken Rigby  
Councillor Gordon Wheeler  
Councillor John Wilmott  
Councillor Liz Yates  
Councillor Eunice Campbell  
Councillor David Smith  
Councillor Timothy Spencer  
Councillor Malcolm Wood

Absent

Councillor Tony Roberts  
Councillor Jon Collins

The Chair welcomed Councillors, officers, members of the media and the public to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

**21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Jon Collins.  
Councillor Tony Roberts.

**22 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**23 CHAIRS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) the Chair announced that in the interests of transparency the meeting would be video recorded to enable the deliberations to be shared with others who are

unable to attend the meeting. This was permitted under the Authority's constitution;

- (2) the Chair advised the meeting that Councillor Ian Campbell is no longer a member of the Fire Authority. The Chair will write to Councillor Campbell to thank him for his hard work during the 18 months he served on the Authority. Councillor Campbell is replaced by Councillor Sybil Fielding and the Chair welcomed Councillor Fielding back to the Authority;
- (3) the Chair and Chief Fire Officer, along with other Chairs and Chief Fire Officers, attended the annual memorial service held in London to commemorate fire-fighters who have died in service. The events included a wreath-laying ceremony outside St Paul's Cathedral;
- (4) the Chair has attended the Local Government Association Fire Service Management Committee. Conditions of service review was discussed at the meeting and Policy and Strategy Committee would consider the matter in depth at its next meeting on 7 November.

## **24 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP**

**RESOLVED to note the appointment of Councillor Sybil Fielding to the Fire Authority in place of Councillor Ian Campbell and to confirm her appointment to the Human Resources Committee and the Strategic Equalities Board.**

## **25 MINUTES**

The Authority confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

## **26 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2013/14**

Peter Hurford, the Treasurer to the Fire and Rescue Authority, presented his report including the final accounts of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority to the meeting for approval.

A revised balance sheet was tabled at the meeting.

Peter Hurford thanked Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources and the Finance Team for their hard work and diligence in preparing the final accounts.

The key messages for the Authority were;

- the good news that the external auditors were able to offer a clean audit certificate;
- the plan to use reserves to reduce revenue costs in future years;
- the fact that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (Trading) Limited had declared a profit.

Councillor Chris Barnfather thanked Ian Pritchard, Executive Director of the trading company for his efforts in increasing the customer base over the year which had allowed the trading company to make a profit and pay a dividend.

Councillor Wood echoed these remarks and paid tribute to Neil Timms and his team for the sound financial footing the service was on despite a long period of austerity.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to approve the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 set out in Appendix A to the report;**
- (2) to note the financial results for the year for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (Trading) Limited as attached at Appendix B of the report.**

## **27 EXTERNAL AUDITORS' REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE 2013/14**

The Treasurer introduced the joint report of himself and the Chief Fire Officer presenting the External Auditors' ISA 260 Report to Members and seeking Members' approval of the management representation letter to the External Auditors.

The report was presented by Andy Cardoza of the External Auditors who advised the meeting that the Auditors expect to issue an unqualified audit opinion by the statutory deadline of 30 September 2014, and an unqualified value for money conclusion. The audit did not identify any material errors in the financial statements and other errors identified had been corrected.

Andy Cardoza thanked the Finance Team for their work on the accounts, including the provision of good, clear working papers and a good response by officers to any queries raised by the Auditors. This was echoed by Members.

The Chair thanked the external auditors for their positive comments and asked the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources to pass the thanks onto the Finance Team.

- (1) to note the contents of the External Auditors' ISA 260 Report;**
- (2) to approve the management representation letter to the External Auditors as set out in Appendix B of the ISA 260 report.**

## **28 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14**

Peter Hurford, the Treasurer presented his report providing Members with an update on treasury management activity during the 2013/14 financial year.

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

## **29 OPERATIONAL COVER PROPOSALS-CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

The Chair, on behalf of the Authority, received a number of petitions from Councillor Dave Smith the Chair of the Community Safety Committee.

A representative of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) asked the following questions of the Chair regarding this item;

Question 1

‘the Fire Brigades Union is appalled at the potential loss of further front line pumping appliances. Is this Authority completely certain that Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service has exhausted ALL other means of saving money other than removing fire engines and their crews from their communities? ‘

The Chair replied as follows;

‘Since 2010 the Authority has received a £5m cut in Central government funding resulting in a reduced budget from £48m to under £43m. The Authority has already made significant reductions in all areas of the service.

The Balancing the Budget report agreed by Members in February this year identified further reductions in government funding and proposed a number of areas where further savings of £2.4m could be made. The Authority agreed that the majority of savings, £1.4m, would come from areas away from fire engines, leaving approximately £1m to be found from operational fire stations to assist in meeting that overall deficit.

The Finance and Resources Committee under the chairmanship of Councillor Wood, has robustly scrutinised all areas of spend in detail, however, due to the fact that a significant amount of the budget is related to employee costs, some 78%, it is inevitable that staff cost need to be reduced in order to meet the financial challenges. Hence reduction in both the operational fleet in tandem with other savings including none station staff costs, collaboration and partnership working are all now being considered.’

Question 2

‘the Authority has a duty to scrutinise the recommendations of service management. Therefore, is the Authority satisfied that by removing front line fire engines, that they are not making decisions that will compromise fire-fighter safety, or indeed reduce our capability to safely and effectively perform rescues at life threatening fire incidents involving 3 engines, during peak times, at any location within the county?’

The Chair replied as follows;

‘the independently validated Fire Cover Review 2010 produced by professional officers provides robust risk analysis and information regarding the decisions being considered. The fundamental factors leading to the recommendations in the report recognises the infrequency of incidents and the close proximity of other resources when required to respond to emergencies.

Attendance standards and operational procedures for dealing with life risk incidents remain unchanged. The Chief Fire Officer, as the professional advisor

to the Fire Authority, is confident that removing the number of appliances required to make the savings will not significantly affect overall operational effectiveness, or compromise fire-fighter safety.

### Question 3

‘as the Fire Brigades Union in Nottinghamshire represents 97% of your fire-fighters, we are astounded and disappointed that our officials have not been consulted directly by members of this Authority, or indeed senior management with regard to these proposals.

In order to address this obvious lack of engagement, and to provide Authority members with a broader perspective of issues such as frontline cuts (amongst other issues), will this Authority, therefore, commit to developing an open framework (within the next 6 months), whereby CFA members will regularly meet with Nottinghamshire FBU officials, to discuss issues that are of importance both for the Authority and the members of Nottinghamshire Fire Brigades Union?’

The Chair replied as follows;

‘the Authority and its Officers have an ethos and track record of engaging with staff and their representatives. The proposals regarding consultation were agreed at the public meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee on the 25<sup>th</sup> April and formally launched on 19<sup>th</sup> May. The FBU provided a written submission to ORS which has been considered within their outturn report.

I am aware that during the period of consultation Senior Officers have met both formally and informally with the trade unions.

In addition, I, on behalf of the Authority, have met with the FBU without exception, each and every time requested, this includes meeting a delegation from the FBU at Highfields.

The FBU is also afforded the opportunity to table written questions at all CFA meetings and committees on any agenda item, this is not common practice across other authorities.

You may also be aware that I have met with both local and regional officials of the FBU including a meeting with local FBU representatives last week and regional officials this week.

I have also in addition met jointly with The CFO and FBU representatives. I believe this has provided ample opportunity for the FBU to engage in the consultation process and comment fully on the proposals.’

The Chief Fire Officer, John Buckley presented his report setting out the outcomes of the consultation on the proposals to remove two appliances from operational service. The Chief Fire Officer reminded the meeting that at the meeting of the Fire Authority on 28 February 2014, a range of proposals that could achieve the required £2.4m of savings had been identified. In response to that report, the Authority agreed to consult on

proposals affecting six stations, namely Central, Collingham, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill, and Warsop. The Authority had also agreed that the Policy and Strategy Committee should consider and approve the consultation documentation and process. At its meeting on 25 April 2014, the Chief Fire Officer presented a report 'Consultation on the Reductions in the Operational Fleet' to the Policy and Strategy Committee. In response to the report the Committee agreed the consultation approach and tasked the Chief Fire Officer with presenting a report to this meeting identifying options for reductions in operational resources.

The consultation had been undertaken by Opinion Research Services (ORS) and Dale Hall of ORS attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the consultation outcomes.

As a result of the consultation, the Chief Fire Officer recommended to members the removal from operational service of the second appliance from Highfields and the deletion of 20 whole time posts from the establishment and the removal from operational service of the second appliance from Mansfield and the deletion of 12 retained posts from the establishment. These recommendations will realise £905,000 of the savings. The shortfall of £95,000 will be considered within the broader areas of the 'Balancing the Budget in Future Years' report of February 2014.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to remove from operational service the second appliance from Highfields and the deletion of 20 whole time posts from the establishment;**
- (2) to remove from operational service the second appliance from Mansfield and the deletion of 12 retained posts from the establishment;**
- (3) to request the Chief Fire Officer to prepare a further report reviewing the impact of the decisions in resolutions (1) and (2) above in 12 months time and to present it to the Authority as soon as practicable thereafter.**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 12.45 pm for a comfort break and resumed at 1.00 pm. Councillors Stephen Garner and Ken Rigby left the meeting at this point.

## **30 POST DELETIONS**

John Buckley, the Chief Fire Officer, introduced his report recommending the deletion of three substantive posts from the support establishment as agreed by the Human Resources Committee.

**RESOLVED that the vacant posts set out in the report are deleted from the establishment.**

## **31 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2013-14**

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report presenting the Annual Statement of Assurance 2013-14 for approval.

**RESOLVED to approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2013-14**



### **32 PAY POLICY**

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report seeking the agreement of members to a Statement of Pay Policy 2014/15 in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 which places a requirement on 'relevant authorities' to prepare pay statements for each financial year.

**RESOLVED to agree the Statement of Pay Policy 2014/15**

### **33 COMMITTEE OUTCOMES FOR NOTING**

The Chairs of the following committees, produced reports which included the minutes of those meetings:

- (a) Finance and Resources Committee 11 July 2014;
- (b) Community Safety Committee 4 July 2014;
- (c) Human Resources Committee 11 July 2014;
- (d) Policy and Strategy 18 July 2014.

**RESOLVED to note the reports and the business undertaken by the Committees.**

### **34 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**The Committee decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda 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 outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.**

### **35 EXEMPT MINUTES**

The Authority confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair

### **36 RESILIENCE PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE**

John Buckley, the Chief Fire Officer presented his report updating the Authority on the arrangements and plans in place for dealing with the on-going industrial dispute between the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the Government.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the latest update from the Chief Fire Officer and continue to support the activities in place to maintain operational cover;**
- (2) to accept further update reports to either the full Fire Authority or Policy and Strategy Committee, as appropriate.**

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# **BUDGET GUIDELINES 2015/16**

Joint Report of the Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer

**Date:** 19 December 2014

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform Members of the likely budget position for 2015/16 and to request that the Fire Authority set general guidelines within which the Finance and Resources Committee will develop a detailed budget proposal for 2015/16 to 2017/18.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

**Name :** Neil Timms  
Head of Finance and Resources

**Tel :** 0115 967 0880

**Email :** [neil.timms@notts-fire.gov.uk](mailto:neil.timms@notts-fire.gov.uk)

**Media Enquiries Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
(0115) 967 0880 [bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk](mailto:bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk)

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 28 February 2014 the Fire and Rescue Authority set the capital and revenue budgets of the Authority for the years 2014/2015 to 2016/17 the precept for 2014/2015 and the anticipated levels of Council Tax for the period 2014/2015 to 2016/2017. These are:

	<b>Budget £ms</b>	<b>Band D £s</b>
2014/2015	42,892	71.05
2015/2016	43,209	72.44
2016/2017	43,814	73.85

- 1.2 Members will be aware that the budget figures for 2015/2016 and beyond were estimates prepared at the time and in the light of expectations in relation to allowable levels of Council Tax and estimates of Central Government Grant.
- 1.3 Members will be aware that the Minister for Local Government did not make his announcements in respect of grant funding, referendum limits and Council Tax Freeze grants until the afternoon of 18<sup>th</sup> December and the detail for individual authorities was not released until some time after this. It is regrettable therefore that this paper has been prepared at very short notice and Members would therefore not have had time to consider this fully before the Fire Authority meeting.
- 1.4 Nevertheless it is important that the Authority considers its budgetary position going forward and provides the Finance and Resources Committee with guidance as to the parameters within which to develop a budget proposal for 2015/2016 and beyond before final budget proposals are considered by the Fire Authority in February 2015.

## 2. REPORT

### FINANCIAL POSITION

- 2.1 The financial position of the Authority remains stable, despite having had several periods of financial restraint. Wherever possible, budget reductions identified for future years have been implemented as soon as possible and this has contributed towards some underspends in prior years which have enabled balances to be maintained at a healthy level. This in turn has allowed a measured approach to be taken to budget reductions over the past few years.
- 2.2 A gradual process of reduction in balances and reserves, using them judiciously to reduce the revenue costs of capital going forward have enabled the capital programme to be maintained whilst still being able to meet budget reduction targets.

- 2.3 Nevertheless in the 2014/2015 budget process it was still identified that further budget reductions of £2.4m would be required up to 2016/2017 if other assumptions remained good.

## **GRANT REDUCTIONS**

- 2.4 The grant received by the Authority (including the estimate of NNDR) in 2014/2015 was £22,163,002 and was anticipated to reduce by £1,849,286 to £20,313,716. This figure was therefore used in all the calculations relating to 2015/2016 budgets.
- 2.5 The announcement made by the Minister and subsequent details show that this figure is £126,998 lower than that which was anticipated for three reasons:

£44,961 has been removed to take account of prospective reductions in employer pension contributions following the actuarial revaluation of 2012.

NNDR has been assumed to rise by £28,061

Top up grant has been reduced by £53,975

What will actually happen is that the assumed level of NNDR of £3,395,405 will be replaced by the District Councils' actual assessment of NNDR when these figures are declared in late January 2015.

- 2.6 As a consequence therefore it is fair to say that the figures announced on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015 are not significantly different to those previously announced in February.
- 2.7 There have been no announcements for any future years and therefore the previously assumed figures are to be used.

## **COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT**

- 2.8 The Minister announced that the Government will be again seeking to encourage Local Authorities to freeze council tax rises by making a grant to those authorities that do not increase council tax. This grant will be the equivalent of a 1% rise in Council Tax and importantly will be consolidated into the base for future years.
- 2.9 In tandem with this government have also announced that any authority that increases council tax by 2% or more will be required to hold a referendum to seek the approval of the electorate to this increase.

## **REVENUE BUDGETS**

- 2.10 Members will be aware that a significant amount of work has been carried out across the service during the current year to seek out the necessary budget reductions that had already been predicted and this work continues. The

Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee has again worked closely with officers to gain assurances as to the robustness of budget estimates. This year, the Chair of Finance and Resources and the Director of Finance and Resources worked together with budget holders to carry out a base budget review of some of the largest budgets with a view to discussing proposed reductions with senior managers.

- 2.11 Managers remain confident that the work that has been carried out across the service will be sufficient to achieve a balanced budget for 2015/2016 but there are still a number of variables that may affect this position. Briefly these unknown elements are:

- The actual level of NNDR to be included in budgets
- The level of the council tax base
- Surpluses and/or deficits from prior years

These figures will become clearer in the new year.

### **PROPOSED GUIDELINES**

- 2.12 There are clearly a significant number of unknown variables influencing the 2015/2016 budget process and levels of Council Tax which flow from that and it is suggested that the most appropriate strategy to adopt is to press on with the Authority's plans to meet budget reductions as already set out in previous reports.

- 2.13 This is also a way of isolating the problem to be solved to one of financing where there will be, as usual three major sources:

- i) Revenue Support Grant
- ii) Business Rates
- iii) Council Tax

Arguably only Council Tax is in the direct control of the Authority but in reality this is also be limited by ministers.

- 2.14 In simple terms the Authority has a number of options:

- i) Set Council Tax at zero and take the Council Tax Freeze grant offered by the government
- ii) Reduce Council tax and take the Council Tax Freeze grant offered by the government
- iii) Increase Council Tax by an amount lower than the 2% referendum limit.
- iv) Set a budget which would require a referendum

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications are set out in full within the body of the report.

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

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

### **5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An initial equality impact assessment has not been prepared in relation to this matter.

### **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 from this report.

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

The primary corporate risk is that sufficient financial resources are not available to the Authority. An early guide for the Finance and Resources Committee in terms of the development of the budget will help to manage this risk.

### **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are requested to approve guidelines set out in Paragraph 2.14 as a framework for the Finance and Resources Committee to develop the Authority's draft budgets for 2015/16 to 2017/18, and to make recommendations to the Fire Authority.

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

None.

Peter Hurford  
**TREASURER TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**





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# REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF INTENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 19 December 2014

**Purpose of Report:**

To advise Members that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's Written Safety Policy Statement of Intent has been reviewed to ensure it remains current in terms of content and signatories.

## CONTACT OFFICER

**Name :** Craig Parkin  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

**Tel :** 0115 967 0880

**Email :** craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is required to produce, periodically review and revise a Written Safety Policy (WSP) which codifies its approach to identifying the hazards associated with its work activities and then controlling the risk as determined by risk assessment.
- 1.2 An important part of the WSP is its initial Statement of Intent which indicates the commitment of the organisation to which it refers to a high standard of health and safety risk management.
- 1.3 The Statement of Intent must indicate the approach to be taken and be endorsed by signature by those who represent the organisation, its employees and its ethos.
- 1.4 NFRS's current Statement of Intent was last considered and endorsed by CFA on 4 September 2009.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The content of the current Statement of Intent, attached at Appendix A, accurately reflects NFRS's approach to discharging its duty of care to its employees (and others affected by its work activities). It has been revised to indicate the role of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer in enacting day-to-day responsibility on behalf of the Chief Fire Officer, the increased role of risk information in producing "suitable and sufficient" risk assessments and address minor changes in terminology.
- 2.2 The document is the basis for the more definitive modules of NFRS's Written Safety Policy and together the two elements form an auditable approach to achieving and maintaining safe systems of work.
- 2.3 A recent audit of NFRS's safety management system identified that the Statement of Intent required slight amendment and to be re-endorsed by signatures from those persons currently occupying the posts indicated.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from the review of the document.

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

There are no such implications as the Statement of Intent is self-explanatory and features in the current training delivered throughout NFRS on health and safety risk management issues.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because equality issues arising have been previously identified and addressed.

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

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

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The production of a Written Safety Policy – inclusive of the Statement of Intent, is a requirement under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Statement of Intent provides a basis for NFRS's commitment to identifying hazards, quantifying risk and applying proportionate risk controls as a means of reducing loss to ensure it maximises its reducing budget.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members endorse the Statement of Intent.

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

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**Statement of Intent**

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service [NFRS] is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees - and the health and safety of those non-employees affected by its work activities - and has devised a Safety Management System which is detailed in its Written Safety Policy. Application of this Policy will contribute to improved service delivery.

This Statement of Intent forms the first of the three parts to the Written Safety Policy, the contents of which continue to be developed, discussed and adopted. They are audited, reviewed and then revised as necessary.

It is NFRS's intention to strive to ensure a safe and healthy working environment as part of its wider risk management initiatives and to pursue progressive improvements in health and safety risk management performance. Its employees are a key resource and have a vital part to play in implementing the Policy.

To achieve this the Service will consider:

- the equipment that is used by employees to do their work;
- the premises where they carry out their work;
- the information, instruction, training and supervision they receive;
- the substances they use and encounter;
- the suitable and sufficient risk controls they need to follow - as indicated by objective risk assessment;
- occupational health and fitness matters;
- the competence of employees in terms of health and safety;
- the need for effective communication of health and safety risk management information.


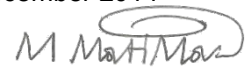




The following approach will be applied:

- constructive dialogue with employee representatives;
- recognition that legal requirements are the minimum;
- ultimate responsibility for matters of health, safety and welfare resting with the Chief Fire Officer with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer having delegated day-to-day responsibility;
- provision of the necessary expert advice when needed;
- inclusion of best practice as identified in other organisations;
- linkage of risk assessments to site specific risk information, incident monitoring and incident debrief.
- application of risk assessment to the procurement of equipment and services;
- identification of targets for improvements in risk management;
- inclusion of risk management aims in the organisation's Integrated Risk Management Plan;
- recognition of the importance of health and safety risk management objectives in relation to other service objectives;
- recognition that failures of health and safety risk management controls are not necessarily the fault of individual employees;
- integration of risk management considerations into all management decisions;
- auditing of compliance with the standards given in the Written Safety Policy;
- annual consideration of health and safety performance by the Combined Fire Authority.

All employees will play a part in the Safety Management System and resources will be made available to achieve the necessary safety culture based on risk assessment and the "safe person" concept.

The standards outlined in the Written Safety Policy will be applied in the spirit of fairness and dignity and the above Statement of Intent applies to future legal requirements as well as current ones.

Endorsed by the Combined Fire Authority at its meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Signed		Chief Fire Officer	Signed		FOA
Signed		Chair of CFA	Signed		RFU
Signed		FBU	Signed		UNISON

Dated 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014



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# COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 19 December 2014

**Purpose of Report:**

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in October and November 2014.

## CONTACT OFFICER

**Name :** John Buckley  
Chief Fire Officer

**Tel :** (0115) 967 0880

**Email :** john.buckley@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

## **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	3 October 2014
Finance and Resources Committee	10 October 2014
Human Resources Committee	10 October 2014
Policy and Strategy Committee	7 November 2014

## **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. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report.

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

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -  
COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood  
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 3 October 2014 from 10.00 am - 11.23  
am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor David Smith (Chair)  
Councillor Brian Grocock  
Councillor Ken Rigby  
Councillor Roger Jackson  
Councillor Malcolm Wood

Absent

Councillor John Wilmott

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

Wayne Bowcock - Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
Emma Darby - Engagements and Partnerships Officer  
Keith Jones - Risk Reduction Manager  
Carol Jackson - Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

**5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor John Wilmott

**6 DECLARATIONS ON INTERESTS**

None

**7 MINUTES**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

**8 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Wayne Bowcock, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, provided members with an update regarding the current performance of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NRFS) in relation to prevention, protection and response.



The key issues brought to members' attention were;

- the performance figures for 2013/14 were generally good, with over achievement of targets in several areas. There were however three areas where there was an above 10% under achievement of targets:
  - fatalities in primary fires;
  - accidental dwelling fire deaths;
  - fires in non-domestic premises;
- due to the fact that the targets for fatalities in primary fires and accidental dwelling fire deaths are zero, a single death has a significant impact on the targets;
- NFRS continues to measure performance against other similar fire authorities to share information in areas where improvements can be made or where it could be of use to assist others to improve. Whilst the areas are similar in terms of geography and in population quantity, there are some stark demographic and specific population density differences which can contribute to performance variations

Several issues were raised and points made in the discussion which followed:

- work is being undertaken with the managers of buildings to ensure that they are taking greater responsibility for unwanted fire signals;
- the elderly with mobility issues are particularly vulnerable to fire risk, as are those who smoke. The use of ointments and creams which are petroleum based by the elderly can exacerbate any fire risk;
- NFRS continues to lobby for the compulsory installation of sprinklers in new build properties;

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and to support the work contained within it.**

## **9 RISK REDUCTION UPDATE**

Wayne Bowcock, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, introduced Emma Darby, Engagement and Partnership Officer, who provided members with an update regarding current prevention activity taking place within Gedling Borough Council as part of a multi-agency initiative.

The key points of the presentation were as follows;

- current government policy encourages elderly people to live independently. 20% of the population in Nottinghamshire is over the age of 65. Whilst dwelling house fires are decreasing, the numbers of fires in the home of the elderly is increasing;

- it is vital that a programme to reduce the amount of emergency care accessed by this group of people is embedded into any partnership agenda;
- by accessing the Adult Social Care Framework database that contains the names and addresses of all Nottinghamshire citizens who are in receipt of social care, the Service is able to target interventions toward those most at risk and is therefore not reliant on referrals;
- in partnership with Gedling Borough Council, the Service has adopted an approach to 'make every contact count'. The Gedling Project pilot is a multi-agency initiative with Gedling Borough Council, the Police, EMAS and NRFS;
- NRFS has a specialist risk reduction operative who works with the elderly to ensure that they have adequate fire protection in their home, that they are aware of the risk of fire, what precautions to take and are able to escape their property in the event of a fire. This operative works closely with Age UK and other specialist partners to gain an expertise in dealing with the elderly;
- the risk reduction operative has received additional training to be aware of other risk areas for this demographic group and, where possible, address these risks whilst they are in the premises. Where this is not possible they will refer on to appropriate services, this could be through First Contact or specialist contractors;
- the Risk Reduction operative is competent to:
  - complete Home Fire Safety Checks, including the fitment of alarms and providing fire safety advice;
  - advise on home security, including the fitment of bolts and door chains, door and window alarms;
  - rectify hazards in the home, loose carpets rugs etc;
  - fit hand rails and other aids;
  - advise on electrical hazards, dangerous appliances and heating;
  - issue temporary emergency heating;
  - give advice on doorstep callers and the 'Buy With Confidence Scheme'.
- where there are specialised pieces of work (fitment of outdoor lighting) this could be referred on to local traders;
- once the operative has visited and made the property safe, the householder will be 'risk rated'. Those in the higher risk bracket will be placed on an 'observation list' controlled by the local authority who will ensure that they receive follow up visits from local police beat teams and are checked on a regular basis by local services (Neighbourhood Teams, refuse collectors etc);

- the Scheme will be evaluated, with a view to rolling it out further if it is successful;

In the discussion which followed, Members were in agreement that there was a huge need to get private landlords on board with such initiatives.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the contents of the report and to support the work contained in it;**
- (2) that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer be tasked with bringing an interim report evaluating the pilot scheme to a future meeting of this Committee.**

## **10 FIRE PROTECTION UPDATE**

Wayne Bowcock, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided members with an update regarding the current fire protection activity taking place;

- Fire Protection has been reacting to investigations which have established that more needs to be done to support people living with dementia;
- significant additional funding has been made available to care homes providing dementia care if they achieved the 'Dementia Quality Mark'. One of the criteria involves the provision of additional stimulus, which could be achieved by sensory decorations within the care home setting and could involve the use of combustible items. The interpretation of the guidance available and the need for operators of care homes to comply with other relevant legislation or guidance has been inconsistent;
- the Service has liaised closely with Dementia Care to develop effective guidance for care homes. The Service has also liaised closely with Nottinghamshire County Council to ensure that fire safety compliance can be achieved without affecting the opportunity for care homes to achieve the Dementia Quality Mark and the associated funding;
- the Fire Protection Team has been working with care home operators to ensure that guidance and compliance is understood and interpreted appropriately. The Service has a legal obligation as the primary authority to uphold the requirements of the Fire Safety Order. Where care home operators have been unable, or unwilling, to follow advice or comply with informal notices the Service has the option to adopt a more formal approach;
- Fire protection continues to support premises and responsible persons that provide care for people living with dementia who aspire to achieve the Dementia Quality Mark by providing guidance on how to achieve this while still meeting their legal obligations under the Fire Safety Order.

**RESOLVED to note the report and to support the work contained within it.**

## **11 INCIDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM JUBILEE CAMPUS**

Wayne Bowcock, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented his report giving an appraisal of the fire that occurred at the University of Nottingham Jubilee Campus on 12 September 2014.

The key points drawn to the Committee's attention were;

- the GlaxoSmithKline Carbon Neutral Laboratory for Sustainable Chemistry on the University of Nottingham's Jubilee Campus was approximately 70% complete at the time of the fire;
- social media played a large part in attracting attention to the fire. The incident attracted National media coverage and the media was used to 'warn and inform' residents of nearby properties of the dangers of flying embers and action they should take to avoid problems from the smoke;
- the incident was first reported at 20.36 pm and Control mobilised 12 appliances, 2 ariel ladder platforms, the Command Support Unit, the Incident Support Unit, 4 Station Managers, 1 Group Manager and a Media Liaison Officer;
- during the initial stages of the incident, NFRS was supported by colleagues from Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of the normal response arrangements. Assistance was also received from the Environment Agency, Severn Trent and Western Power as well as East Midlands Ambulance Service and the Police;
- the incident was scaled down in the early hours with crews checking for 'hot spots'. Police Crime Scene Investigation and Fire Investigation began on Monday 15 September and the investigation is ongoing. It will include CCTV footage and witness statements;
- there is significant interest in the incident due to the unique size and construction methods used in the building. The Building Research Establishment has been contacted and will be kept informed of developments. A structured debrief will take place with the commanders and representatives from other agencies who attended the incident. The findings from this will be fed back to the Operational Assurance Team;
- University officials have praised NFRS for the professional way in which it dealt with the incident. Whilst the building has been lost there are no casualties or fatalities;
- Peter Holland the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor has been briefing the Fire Minister on the incident;
- even though the incident had involved a lot of resources from NFRS the Deputy Chief Fire Officer was confident that it had not compromised the ability of the Service to deal with any other issues which had arisen in the County at the same time;

**RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the report;**
- (2) that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer be tasked with keeping members up to date on the investigations into the cause of the fire.**



**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 10 October 2014 from 10.00 am - 10.45  
am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Malcolm Wood (Chair)  
Councillor John Allin  
Councillor Chris Barnfather  
Councillor John Clarke  
Councillor Gordon Wheeler

Absent

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

Councillor Brian Grocock	present as an observer
Kate Buckley	Internal Audit Nottinghamshire County Council
Neil Timms	Strategic Director of Finance and Resources
Peter Hurford	Treasurer to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Carol Jackson	Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

**12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None

**13 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None

**14 MINUTES**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

## **15 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT TO AUGUST 2014**

Neil Timms, the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the Chief Fire Officer's report on the financial performance of the Service in the year 2014/15 to the end of August 2014, analysing the significant variances against the original programme. The key points drawn to the Committees attention were;

- the total revenue budget for 2014/15 is £42.892 million and the forecast outturn variance at this stage is an under spend of £621,000, which represents an overall variance of 1 %. However, there are still seven months of the year to go, during which time many factors could influence the final outturn;
- the capital programme for 2014/15 of £4.364 million was approved by members at the full Fire Authority meeting and to this has been added a budget of £1.091 million for the remaining expenditure expected on the Tri-Service Control and Mobilising system for which a capital grant was received in 2012/13. In addition slippage from 2013/2014 has added a further £5.542m to create an overall programme of £10.997m.

**RESOLVED to note the report;**

## **16 PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2014**

Peter Hurford, Treasurer to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority, presented his report informing the Committee of performance to 31 August 2014 relating to the prudential indicators for capital accounting and treasury management.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **17 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS**

Neil Timms, the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the Chief Fire Officer's report bringing to the attention of Members three reports prepared by the Authority's Internal Auditors. Neil Timms introduced Kate Buckland of Internal Audit, Nottinghamshire County Council, who commented on the three areas;

- fixed asset data migration – the Auditors have been able to provide a substantial level of assurance as to the accuracy of the data transferred and have made one recommendation about the recording of old asset numbers in the new system to enable the audit trail between the old asset registers and the new system to be strengthened. This has been done;
- ICT Strategy – the auditors are generally complimentary about the strategy and arrangements but have made a series of medium risk recommendations and these are being addressed;
- Business Risk Management follow up – this confirms that all previous recommendations have been implemented and a reasonable level of assurance is provided by the Auditors.

The Chair thanked Kate Buckland for her attendance.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **18 OCCUPATIONAL ROAD RISK**

Neil Timms, the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the Chief Fire Officer's report following up on the report which had been brought to this Committee on 11 July 2014 looking at the work being undertaken to manage the risk to the Authority posed by at-work driving activity. Members requested a report on the Service's motor insurance accident history including a comparison of the Service's approach to driver training with that of other Fire and Rescue services. The publication of the report has attracted a lot of local media interest.

The key statistics revealed by the statistical analysis of motor accident data are;

- there has been a decrease in the total number of accidents over the last seven years of 20%, primarily due to a decrease in blue-light accidents of 40%. However, there has been an increase in accidents under normal road conditions of 35% over the same period;
- between 2007-2014, in relation to blue-light driving, 90% accidents were the driver's own fault whereas in normal road conditions, 79% of accidents were the driver's own fault;
- the most frequently occurring accidents, both under blue-light and normal driving conditions, involve manoeuvring, whether negotiating tight gaps or undertaking vehicle movements in or around the station;
- where large scale losses have occurred, the principal causative factor has been the inappropriate use of speed;
- the Area Manager, Service Delivery, and the Business Risk Manager are currently investigating how driver training can be used to facilitate improvement with a view to reducing the number of accidents and driving down insurance premiums and repair costs;

In the discussion which followed, Members were in agreement that action needs to be taken to reduce the number of accidents and requested that the Road Risk Group be tasked with formulating an action plan setting out proposals and bringing it back to this Committee at its next meeting on 16 January 2015.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the measures being taken to reduce the Authority's exposure to the risks associated with at-work driving;**
- (2) that the Road Risk Group bring an action plan back to this Committee at its meeting on 16 January 2015.**



**19 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PROPERTY STRATEGY**

Neil Timms, the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the Chief Fire Officer's report presenting the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Property Strategy for approval. Once adopted, the Property Strategy will replace the current Sustainable Capital Plans 2008.

Ian Pritchard, Head of Procurement and Estates explained to Members that the Strategy is aimed at providing a flexible framework in which the NFRS Estate will be developed into the future. It is intended to provide the agility to accept the constantly changing environment and to be able to adapt to both internal and external influences. The planning process will include consideration of any existing or future potential for estate rationalisation and for maximising the use of any existing building stock before building any new facilities. This will include considering dual use of buildings or part of buildings to ensure the effective use of assets e.g. meeting rooms for training and community use.

**RESOLVED to accept the Property Strategy set out at Appendix A of the report.**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -  
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood  
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 10 October 2014 from 13.32 pm - 14.07  
pm**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)  
Councillor Liz Yates  
Councillor John Allin (as substitute for  
Councillor Sybil Fielding)

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell  
Councillor Stephen Garner  
Councillor Sybil Fielding

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

Tracy Crump - Head of HR Services  
Nick Linthwaite - HR Manager  
Craig Parkin - Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Carol Jackson - Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

**11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Sybil Fielding  
Councillor Stephen Garner

**12 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None

**13 MINUTES**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

**14 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's quarterly report updating members on human resources issues within the Service. The

following statistics relating to Quarter 1 (Q1), 1 April - 30 June 2014 were drawn to Members' attention:

- absence rates have increased by 12% (150.5 days) across the workforce as a whole during Q1, compared to the previous quarter and by 29% compared to the same quarter of 2013;
- the increase is accounted for primarily by non-uniformed sickness absence. 70% of this is long term in nature i.e. for a period of more than 28 days and relates to significant medical issues e.g. surgery, stress/anxiety and musco-skeletal conditions;
- staff with stress related illnesses are offered support from Occupational Health with a view to getting them back to work as quickly as possible;
- targeted absence for 2014/15 remains as for 2013/14;
  - whole time and control 6 days;
  - non-uniformed 7 days;
  - whole workforce 6.25 days;
- there have been 19 leavers and 7 starters since the last report. Fire-fighter roles are over-strength by 6 posts with 14 vacancies at supervisory level. A Crew Manager selection process will be run in early November to address the gap in Supervisory Manager roles. This will reduce the over-establishment of fire-fighters;
- there were two whole-time retirements on the grounds of permanent ill-health during Q1 of 2014-15. These are the first for a number of years;

Members felt that the Nottingham Post's coverage of absence figures following the publication of this report had not reflected the true picture of absence across the organisation. The Chair agreed to respond to the article published by the Post by way of a letter for publication, setting out the full facts for the benefit of the public.

**RESOLVED to endorse the report.**

## **15 ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POST**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report seeking approval for the establishment of a Communications Officer post within the Corporate Communications and Administration team. The proposed new role will be one dealing with day-to-day activity and help deal with the growing demand for information and provide the ability to respond quickly to this demand.

The Chair asked the Assistant Chief Fire Officer to pass on the Committee's thanks to the Corporate Communications team for the excellent job it is doing in maintaining effective and pro-active media services, keeping the media, staff and the public fully informed in difficult times.

**RESOLVED to support the establishment of a new post of Communications Officer and to recommend this to the Combined Fire Authority.**

16 **DISCRETIONS UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSIONS SCHEME**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report seeking member approval on the Service policy statement in relation to the discretions that exist under the Local Government Pension Scheme.

**RESOLVED to approve the Service policy statement regarding application of employer discretions under the Local Government Pension Scheme**

17 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**The Committee decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda item in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on that basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.**

18 **REGRADING OF POSTS**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report notifying members of the applications considered by the Job Evaluation Panel in respect of changes to the permanent non-uniformed establishment, during the period April to September 2014 (inclusive).

**RESOLVED to note the report.**



## **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 7 November 2014 from 10.00 am – 11.40 am.**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)  
Councillor Chris Barnfather  
Councillor John Wilmott

#### Absent

Councillor Brian Grocock  
Councillor Jon Collins  
Councillor Gordon Wheeler

Councillor Roger Jackson (substitute for Councillor Gordon Wheeler)  
Councillor David Smith (substitute for Councillor Jon Collins)

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

John Buckley	Chief Fire Officer
Peter Hurford	Treasurer to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Craig Parkin	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Neil Timms	Strategic Director of Finance and Resources
Malcolm Townroe	Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Carol Jackson	Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

## **10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Brian Grocock  
Councillor Jon Collins  
Councillor Gordon Wheeler

The Chair welcomed Councillor Roger Jackson both to the meeting and to the Fire Authority.

## **11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer and Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, both declared a personal interest in agenda item 4, 'Conditions of Service Questionnaire', in so far as it related to the Gold Book and left the meeting whilst this part of the report was considered.

Councillor Chris Barnfather declared an interest in agenda item 7, 'Complaint from Fire Industry Association' as he is a Director of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (Trading) Limited.

## **12 MINUTES**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

## **13 CONDITIONS OF SERVICE QUESTIONNAIRE**

John Buckley, the Chief Fire Officer, introduced his report seeking approval of a formal response to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) conditions of service questionnaire.

The following points were highlighted for Members;

- the questionnaire is the result of the Government (following the review by Sir Ken Knight) commissioning a consultant to undertake an independent review to establish; 'whether the conditions of service for fire fighters (Grey and Gold Books) are seen as actual or perceived barriers to change that could otherwise provide a more efficient service to the public';
- the consultant undertaking the review has issued separate questionnaires to both Authorities and their employees. The consultant has been offered a face to face meeting with the Authority but has declined the invitation;
- the Consultant is expected to report to Government on the review by February 2015;

Members were invited to comment on the proposed response by the Authority attached to the report. Members approved the proposed responses save for those to question 28. Members agreed that the proposed response to question 28(b) be amended to read;

'It is a fundamental right to withdraw labour. Locally, staff have responded to a life risk incident during a period of industrial action.'

Councillors Barnfather and Jackson did not agree that fire-fighters should have a blanket right to strike.

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer and Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, left the meeting whilst the Gold Book element of the report was considered.

The Chair asked the Chief Fire Officer to pass on the Committee's thanks to colleagues in Corporate Services and Human Resources for their work on the questionnaire.

**RESOLVED to approve the final version of the response to the questionnaire as the formal submission of the Fire Authority.**

Councillors Barnfather and Jackson requested that their disagreement with the answer to question 28 be noted in that they did not agree that fire fighters should have a blanket right to strike.

## **14 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

John Buckley, the Chief Fire Officer, introduced his report updating members on the proposed arrangements for performance monitoring following the decision of the Authority to remove the Performance Monitoring Committee.

The proposed arrangements are:

- Finance and Resources Committee currently receives reports on;
  - revenue/capital monitoring;
  - outcomes of financial audits;
  - treasury management;
  - value for money programme;
  - prudential code;
  - risk management;
  - road risk;
  - insurance claims;

and it is intended that it will now also receive reports on;

- expenditure per head;
- % undisputed invoices paid within 30 days;
- Human Resources Committee currently receives reports on;
  - sickness/absence;
  - retirements;
  - establishment figures;
  - disciplines;
  - grievances;
  - redundancies;

and it is intended that it will now also receive reports on;

- staffing equalities issues;
- Policy and Strategy Committee currently receives reports on;
  - statement of assurance;
  - transparency compliance;
  - peer assessment outcomes

and it is intended that it will now also receive reports on;

- organisational assessments;
- community equalities issues;
- IRMP progress;

- Community Safety Committee currently receives reports on;
  - response statistics;
  - prevention statistics;
  - protection statistics;
  - benchmarking

and it is intended that it will now also receive reports on;

- % of Home Safety Checks in high risk properties,
- customer satisfaction;
- operational activity.

**RESOLVED to approve the arrangements set out above.**

## **15 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE**

John Buckley, the Chief Fire Officer, introduced his report providing Members with an overview of the measures in place for effective information management to ensure transparency and compliance.

The following key issues were drawn to the attention of Members;

- the Coalition Government has sought to unburden local government in terms of performance reporting but the requirement for greater transparency about the services being provided is putting increasing demands upon the Service in terms of the publication and provision of information;
- the number of Freedom of Information Act requests received has increased from 56 in 2012 to 112 to date in 2014;
- the Service can charge for the provision of information but only when the time taken to gather it is likely to exceed 18 hours;
- the majority of FOI requests are received from the media, disaffected employees and those being prosecuted by the Service. There are relatively few genuine public enquiries;
- there are procedures in place for dealing with FOI requests once they are received. Nevertheless dealing with them does require resources, including senior officer's time;
- by making greater use of the internet and publishing more information proactively it is hoped that this will lead to a reduction in individual requests and reduce the day to day demands on the Service;

**RESOLVED to note the report.**



## **16 COMPLAINT FROM THE FIRE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report informing Members of a complaint from the Fire Industry Association (FIA) concerning Fire Authority trading companies.

The key facts are;

- the FIA represents 620 businesses operating in the same areas as the 'arms length trading companies' set up by Fire and Rescue Authorities;
- the FIA complaint is not against any individual Fire Authority but against the UK Government, accusing it of providing unlawful state aid to 'arms length companies' by allowing them the free use of the Fire and Rescue Service 'brand';
- in order to assist the Government in replying to the complaint, the Chief Fire Officer's Association and the Local Government Association, with appropriate legal advice, are drafting a joint paper which the Government may choose to use in their response to the Commission;
- as NFRS have been cited specifically in the complaint it was considered that an individual letter should be written to the Department for Communities and Local Government setting out the NFRS position and this is attached to the report;
- this is a complaint against the UK Government who will have to refute the complaint. There is no suggestion that NFRS have failed to act within the existing legislation. Management will keep a watch for any developments and report them to Members.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **17 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Committee decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda item in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on that basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

## **18 MULTI CAPABILITY ASSURANCE PROCESS OUTCOMES**

John Buckley, the Chief Fire Officer, introduced his report updating Members and providing them with assurance of the operational capability of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service in relation to its national resilience role.

**RESOLVED to accept the outcomes of the report and to endorse the steps being taken within Paragraph 2.9 of the report.**

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

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# **ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POST**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 19 December 2014

**Purpose of Report:**

The Authority is asked to approve the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee to establish a Communications Officer post within the Corporate Communications and Administration team.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

**Name :** Craig Parkin  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

**Tel :** 0115 967 0880

**Email :** craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries  
Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

## **1. BACKGROUND**

The Human Resources Committee, at its meeting on 10 October 2014, considered a report from the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Support), which made the case for establishing a new post of “Communications Officer”.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The Corporate Communications team provides support to the Authority in all matters regarding marketing and communications, internal communications, press and media handling, digital and social media engagement and provision of materials to support Prevention activities.
- 2.2 In order to address an issue of growing demand, it is proposed that a new role of Communications Officer be established to deal with day-to-day activity. The detailed report considered by the Human Resources Committee is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.3 The Human Resources Committee supported the recommendation to establish the post, and have referred this to the Authority for ratification.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of this new post would be £20,736 per annum, rising to £23,674 per annum through incremental progression. The budget for this post was included in the 2014/15 budget in anticipation of this proposal and funded from the savings from the deletion of 3.5 fte posts.

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

The human resources implications are contained within the report.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because there are no policy or service delivery implications. The recruitment process will adhere to the Service’s recruitment policy.

## **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 from this report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The value of maintaining effective and pro-active media services is central to maintaining good relations with the media, employees and service users. The growing demand for information and the ability to respond quickly to this demand may be at risk if the Service does not adequately resource its Corporate Communications function, and could impact upon the reputation of the organisation.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee approve the establishment of a new post of Communications Officer.

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

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



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

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Human Resources Committee

# ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATION OFFICER POST

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 10 October 2014

**Purpose of Report:**

To seek approval for the establishment of a Communication Officer post within the Corporate Communications and Administration team.

## CONTACT OFFICER

**Name :** Craig Parkin  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

**Tel :** 0115 967 0880

**Email :** craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Corporate Communications team provides support to the Authority in all matters regarding marketing and communications, internal communications, press and media handling, digital and social media engagement and provision of materials to support Prevention activities.
- 1.2 As part of the last structural review, the Head of Communications role was extended to include the management of the Corporate Administration team as well as Corporate Communications, which has widened the scope and demands upon the role.
- 1.3 The role played by media and communications will be key to ensuring positive interaction and information sharing with both the public and service employees over future changes to the Service, this is particularly important at a time when the Services is facing financial constraints.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The role of the Communications team has evolved rapidly in recent years with the development of the Service internet and intranet, and the growing use of web-based tools such as social media to convey messages, warn and inform (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc) and engaging the communities we serve in our work.
- 2.2 These are important means of conveying information to and engaging with employees and service users. The Service currently has 7,208 Twitter followers and this is increasing. The recent incident at Nottingham University is an illustration of how effectively an integrated multi-media strategy can work, with 25,000 accessing the Service's Facebook page and a million Twitter users sharing the information.
- 2.3 This has meant that the skills and resources needed to advise Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service how to use these channels, as well as manage them, has significantly diversified and increased at a time when traditional forms of communications such as staff briefing papers, media enquiries and pro-active press releases need to be maintained.
- 2.4 The current Communications team comprises of the Head of Corporate Communications and Administration and a Communications Manager.
- 2.5 In order to address issue of growing demand, it is proposed that a new role of Communications Officer be established to deal with day-to-day activity. The job description and person specification are attached for information.
- 2.6 It is anticipated that this role may attract applicants at the beginning of their career, with sound social media skills and experience as well as a grounding in

more traditional skills. The role has been subject to job evaluation which has recommended a Grade 3 appointment.

2.7 In addition, the Corporate Communications team is in the process of establishing an out-of-hours provision for media enquiries and this post would contribute to this once established in role.

2.8 Whilst this would be a new post, the Corporate Administration team has already reduced its establishment by 3.5 posts (grade 3) through efficiencies arising from the re-structure process. These savings have formed part of budget reduction measures already implemented and reported to this Committee at its meeting on 11 July 2014 .

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of this new post would be £20,736 per annum, rising to £23,674 per annum through incremental progression. The budget for this post was included in the 2014/15 budget in anticipation of this proposal and funded from the savings from the deletion of 3.5 fte posts

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

The human resources implications are contained within the report.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because there are no policy or service delivery implications. The recruitment process will adhere to the Service's recruitment policy.

### **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 from this report..

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

The value of maintaining effective and pro-active media services is central to maintaining good relations with the media, employees and service users. The growing demand for information and the ability to respond quickly to this demand



may be at risk if the Service does not adequately resource its Corporate Communications function, and could impact upon the reputation of the organisation.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members support the establishment of a new post of Communications Officer and recommend this to the Combined Fire Authority.

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

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Post:</b>	Communications Officer,
<b>Grade:</b>	Grade 3
<b>Post Reference:</b>	XXXXX
<b>Conditions of Service:</b>	NJC for Local Government Services National Scheme of Conditions of Service
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Communications Manager
<b>Responsible for:</b>	None

**General Description of Post**

Effective communications will play a key role in fulfilling the organisation's aims and ambitions. The role of Communications Officer supports the running of Corporate Communications department and delivers first class external and internal communications including proactive and reactive media relations, internal and external publications and online communications.

**Specific Duties**

**Communications**

- 1.1 To assist the Communications Manager in the delivery of the organisation's corporate communications strategy.
- 1.2 To deliver proactive and reactive media relations service including researching and writing press releases, dealing with media enquiries and writing copy for a range of print and online publications / platforms.
- 1.3 To deal with communications relating to incidents, including providing live incident updates to the media and the public via social media, the website and other channels as required.
- 1.4 To assist in the on-going management and development NFRS' Facebook page and other social media channels including Twitter.
- 1.5 To take part in an out of hours media rota.
- 1.6 To assist with the production of internal and external publications.

- 1.7 To assist with the provision of an internal communications service including electronic briefings, staff briefing papers, supporting employee events and writing for and updating the intranet / staff newsletter.
- 1.8 To assist with a range of communications projects, from planning through to delivery.
- 1.9 To assist with press conferences and launches as and when required.
- 1.10 To represent the organisation at internal and external events, functions and meetings as required.
- 1.11 To undertake any other duties which may be reasonably regarded as within the nature of the duties, responsibilities and grade of the post.

### **Support**

- 1.12 To provide general support for the communications team including media monitoring, distribution and evaluation.
- 1.13 To maintain and keep up-to-date the department's systems and databases, including the media management database.
- 1.14 To ensure that all work takes account of the current legislation relating to the media and local government publicity, as well as Service policies and protocols.

### **General**

#### **(a) Health and Safety**

To take reasonable care for your own health and safety and work and that of other persons who may be affected by your work activities.

To co-operate with Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue's attempts to comply with health and safety legislation. Where appropriate you must safeguard the health and safety of all persons affected by the work activities you supervise at any premises you have control over.

To work in a safe manner in which you have been trained and instructed and advise your line manager of any health and safety problems you become aware of.

To familiarise yourself with the contents of the Service's Written Safety Policy.

To wear personal protective equipment supplied to you by the Service in the manner in which you have been instructed to do so.

**(b) Use of equipment and other appliances**

To take proper care in the handling, operation and safeguarding of any equipment, vehicles or appliance, used or issued by the Service or provided or issued by a third party for individual or collective use in the performance of the job holder's duties

**(c) Equalities**

To uphold the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's Fairness at Work and Equal Opportunities policies and practices and to treat all colleagues, service users and contacts with respect and in accordance with the expectations laid down by the Service.

To promote and deliver fair and quality services that are sensitive and responsive to all service users.

**(d) Code of Conduct**

To adhere to the standards of the Code of Conduct established by the Service.

**(e) Personal Development**

To keep up to date with current practice, undertake training and Continuous Professional Development as appropriate.

**(f) Information Technology**

To comply with security measures to protect against unauthorised access to, alteration or disclosure of information held on computer and ensure adherence to the principles of the Data Protection Act.

To undertake any training and operation of new technologies and associated systems as required.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 4, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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