



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: 27 February 2015

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in January and February 2015.

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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	9 January 2015
Finance and Resources Committee	16 January 2015
Human Resources Committee	30 January 2015
Policy and Strategy Committee	6 February 2015

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**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 9 January 2015 from 10.00am –
11.52am**

Membership

Present

Councillor David Smith (Chair)
Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Ken Rigby
Councillor John Wilmott
Councillor Roger Jackson

Absent

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Craig Parkin - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Keith Jones - Head of Service Delivery
John Mills - Fire Prevention Officer
Cath Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

14 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

**15 FIRE INVESTIGATION: UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM - JUBILEE
CAMPUS**

Further to the report submitted to the last meeting, Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer introduced Keith Jones, Head of Service Delivery, and John Mills, Head of Fire Protection.

John Mills, Head of Fire Protection, informed the Committee that whilst the structural fabric of the building, 'Glulam' could bear weights in excess of many other structural

fabrics, until the building is completed and all fire safety measures installed, as with most timber frames, buildings are vulnerable to fire.

From the investigation of the fire, the following pattern of events and involvement were reported to the Committee:

- (a) the Fire and Rescue Service was alerted to an incident at the building at 7:55 pm, however, examination of CCTV attached to surrounding buildings, identified smoke emitting from the building from approximately 7:35 pm. During this period the fire became well established;
- (b) on this occasion social media, in the form of filming of the fire by onlookers from different angles, provided a useful tool for investigating the fire and identifying that it originated in the far right of the building where there was an electrical feed and contractors' equipment was stored;
- (c) whilst the building was burnt to the ground, the fire was prevented from affecting other surrounding properties. However, very little evidence remained to assist the fire investigation which involved Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, including the Regional Hydrocarbon Dog Handler, Nottinghamshire Police, and the Health and Safety Executive for Construction Sites;
- (d) the investigation was also supported by :
 - (i) University of Nottingham;
 - (ii) Morgan and Sindall Construction;
 - (iii) Burgoyne's Forensic Investigators;
 - (iv) British Research Establishment;
- (e) fire investigations are undertaken by process of elimination, considering:
 - (i) accidental;
 - (ii) deliberate/criminal;
 - (iii) electrical and/or gas supply;
- (f) Crime Stoppers received a call to say that there was human interference and while this was investigated, no evidence found to confirm this;
- (g) the regional hydrocarbon dog searched the area in which the fire was believed to have started but the very nature of a building site means that where petroleum for generators and other known accelerants which are commonly used in construction are found to be present, it is often not possible to conclude criminal activity;
- (h) electricity and gas mains supply had not been connected to the site but an electrical supply was in place for use by the contractors in the form of generators for their power tools and to charge equipment such as scissor lifts;
- (i) the building contractor, Morgan Sindall, which has an excellent reputation in the industry, were found to have adhered to all fire safety and timber framed construction requirements and even exceeded those requirements;
- (j) it is concluded that electrical supply is the most likely cause of the fire which was exacerbated by the initial recording of smoke at a time when the site was

unattended and the fires development for nearly half an hour until the Fire and Rescue Service attended;

- (k) as the GlaxoSmithKline development is to proceed and the contractor retained, Morgan Sindall representatives are to meet with the Fire Service to discuss what further measures can be put in place to improve fire safety on site during the vulnerable period of development. It is predicted that recommendations will include a 24 hour presence on site. As the contractor is on site during the day this may only apply to non-working hours and while a physical presence would be preferable, monitored security cameras would still be of benefit as tackling a fire in its early stages could prevent considerable damage.

Councillors are concerned that while sprinkler systems specifically for buildings during development are available, they are not a legal requirement and insurance companies do not appear to offer reduced premiums if such sprinkler systems are installed. This is not an issue which is confined to large-scale multi-million pound developments, but it is also relevant to domestic properties.

Councillors welcomed the report that sprinklers were a legal requirement in Wales and queried why fire safety measures should be any different for England. It is noted that the Fire Rescue Service nationally continues to lobby for the installation of sprinklers.

RESOLVED

- (1) for the report to be noted;**
- (2) to continue to support the Fire and Rescue Service in its campaign for the installation of sprinkler systems to improve fire safety and reduce risk to life and property;**
- (3) for the thanks and appreciation of the committee to be recorded to all firefighters who had attended the blaze and to all officers involved in the investigation.**

16 CASE SUMMARY: PROSECUTION UNDER REGULATORY REFORM FIRE SAFETY ORDER 2005

John Mills, Head of Fire Protection, and Keith Jones, Head of Service Delivery, informed the Committee of a recent court case involving the Fire Authority in pursuance of fire safety breaches under the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005.

The report outlines the case of an individual (RP - responsible person) who although initially appearing to comply with the fire safety requests of the Fire and Rescue Service in regard to 2 properties which he let to hen and stag parties, ultimately challenged the Service and individuals serving within it.

The process by which the case was escalated to Crown Court is summarised as follows:

- (i) following an expression of fire safety concerns by a member of the public who had attended the building, officers inspected the premises in 2010 and

the RP was provided with an informal Notice Of Deficiencies which identified areas of fire safety concern and was supported by advice on cost effective solutions to rectify issues at both properties;

- (ii) during 2011 there was a fire at one of the premises and the attending fire crew provided further advice;
- (iii) as a result of this incident and as part of the 'risk-based inspection program', the premises were again inspected in 2012 and fire safety standards were found to have significantly deteriorated. The RP claimed that the 2005 order did not apply to his premises and declined to address the fire safety issues identified. As a result a formal Enforcement Notice was issued. As neither party were willing to alter their stance, the issue was escalated to the Magistrates Court;
- (iv) an initial Magistrates Court hearing was held and an appeal hearing was cancelled. When eventually heard, the Fire Service requested and was awarded court costs totalling £2,500 although this sum is yet to be received;
- (v) during February 2013 the property was re-inspected and it was found that the required works had not been completed to an acceptable standard. Further visits to the premises were denied;
- (vi) the RP requested that the Magistrates Court reopen his appeal against the enforcement notice and following several adjournments this request was denied. Court costs totalling £4,444 were awarded to the Fire Service but are yet to be received;
- (vii) during February 2014 the RP appeared in Nottingham Crown Court and the matter was adjourned to September 2014 for a full trial, at this point the RP changed his plea to guilty on several charges and the Fire Service decided not to pursue the remaining charges due to public interest;
- (viii) during November 2014 Nottingham Crown Court fined the RP £22,000 and he was ordered to pay the Fire and Rescue Service £78,000 towards costs, none of which have been received.

The following points were highlighted and Councillor's questions responded to:

- (a) Officers are not aware that any of the required changes have been made yet but it is understood that the properties are no longer in use;
- (b) the Service does everything in its power to educate, inform and support businesses to improve safety and for the majority of instances this help is accepted and acted upon;
- (c) although pursuing prosecution has proved expensive and full costs have not been awarded to the authority, it is vital that the enforcement program is not undermined and is strictly followed;
- (d) where costs and fines have been awarded, the Service will pursue the payment, this may result in a prison sentence for non-payers;

- (e) the business was not shut down following the initial complaint as it is reasonable to allow time for the safety improvements to be made. It was only when the resistance of the RP to make the improvements that the case was escalated;
- (f) it is not feasible for Local Authorities or the Fire and Rescue Service to inspect all business premises due to capacity. The Fire and Rescue Service does have an ongoing risk based inspection programme relating to 'life risk' and where incidents where 'sleeping risk' premises have been attended by a crew, the priority of a follow up inspection of the site is heightened;
- (g) every premises must have a 'Responsible Person' who takes responsibility for safety. However, the public also have a responsibility report safety concerns.

It is noted that the Service's processes in these type of cases have been highlighted regionally as good practice.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the report and the workload that this case type creates for the organisation;**
- (2) for Councillors in attendance to be kept informed of the progress of retrieving the costs awarded to the Authority by the courts in this case.**

17 COMMUNITY SAFETY REVIEW

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates Councillors on the Community Safety Review within the organisation, and a revised performance management and reporting process for reporting to this Committee.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) The review was conducted under four key themes of:
 - (i) Research and information gathering;
 - (ii) Identification of community safety priorities;
 - (iii) Departmental structure options;
 - (iv) Performance monitoring and reporting;
- (b) the Community Safety Team has been restructured so that more resources are focused in the community and in partnership working;
- (c) the 'South' and 'City' groups have been merged;
- (d) the team is better integrated than previously;
- (e) the main priorities of community safety have been identified as:
 - (i) personal risk;
 - (ii) road safety
 - (iii) elderly;
 - (iv) education.

Further information on the Performance Framework is to be submitted to the next meeting.

The following responses were given to Councillor's questions:

- (f) the Service is working closely with early intervention agencies with regard to the elderly and dementia sufferers;
- (g) a grant had been secured to provide cycle maintenance sessions for young people which will also provide an opportunity to inform and educate cyclists;
- (h) where people can't be easily educated, including some elderly and dementia citizens, sprinkler systems are especially recommended;
- (i) the Service is keen to engage in further community partnership working but needs to be realistic about the capacity of officers and ensure that engagement is prioritised to where the service can have the most influence;
- (j) it is a concern that the figures held by NCH regarding fires in homes varies from those attended by the Service;
- (k) historically the Fire Prevention Team are focused on securing legislation to support the installation of sprinklers;
- (l) improved sharing of information with the Police will ensure that both Authorities can assist each other in improving community safety and security.

Councillors commented:

- (m) with the drive to keep elderly and infirm people living in their own homes for as long as possible, it is important to ensure that safety is maintained for this growing section of the community;
- (n) there is still an on-going need for cycle safety training for young people but a growing issue is irresponsible driving of disability buggies. Consideration should be given to providing basic safety training;
- (o) it is acknowledged that the Service works closely with Nottingham City Homes (NCH) and several Housing Associations so it is disappointing that for the new-build NCH properties, sprinkler systems are not being installed. This is a short-term financial saving as along with the a potential risk to life, a sprinkler system costing a few hundred pounds is cheap against an average cost of a fire of £65,000 where a sprinkler system hasn't extinguished or inhibited a fire.

RESOLVED to note the report.



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

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 16 January 2015 from 10.00am to 11.42am

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	- Observer
Peter Hurford	- Treasurer to the Authority
Neil Timms	- Strategic Director of Finance and Resources
Catherine Ziane-Pryor	- Governance Officer

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

21 MINUTES

It is noted that with regard to minute 18, 'Occupational Road Risk' the Road Risk Group Action Plan will be submitted to a future meeting.

RESOLVED for the minutes of the last meeting held on 10 October 2014, to be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors John Clarke (10.06am) and John Allin (10.07am).

23 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT TO NOVEMBER 2014

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the report which details the financial performance of the Service between 31 March 2014 and 30 November 2014, highlighting key areas where outturn variances are most likely to occur.

The following points are highlighted in the report with a brief explanation of the predicted figures:

- (a) the Revenue Budget is £42.9million with an estimated overall variance of 0.67% totalling £290,000;
- (b) the net cost of industrial action during 2014/15 is estimated to be £442,000;
- (c) the whole time variance to date is £365,000 underspend with an estimated outturn underspend of £245,000;
- (d) retained pay is predicted to have an underspend of £244,000;
- (e) administrative and support staff pay, £344,000 underspend;
- (f) pension strain, has an outturn of £158,000 overspend;
- (g) Prince's Trust, £86,000 deficit with an underspend of £33,000;
- (h) fleet maintenance has £40,000 of additional maintenance charges to pay;
- (i) premises underspend of £37,000;
- (j) insurance overspend of £22,000;
- (k) supplies and services, £50,000;
- (l) support services, overspend of £100,000;
- (m) earmarked reserves of £280,000;
- (n) depreciation and impairments of £6,000;
- (o) capital financing costs underspend of £239,000.

It is noted that the cost of the cost of industrial action is now predicted to be £373,000.

An explanation of the Capital Programme is provided in the report.

RESOLVED to approve the following earmarked reserves:

- (i) £200,000 potential costs arising from developments in communications;**
- (ii) £ 80,000 future ill health charges (top up to pensions reserve);**
- (iii) £200,000 to support the transition to a joint control room.**

24 PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING REPORT TO 30 NOVEMBER 2014

Peter Hurford, the Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which outlines the performance to the Prudential Indicators for Capital Accounting and Treasury Management for the two-month period ending 30th November 2014.

One small technical breach had occurred on the upper limit of loans between 12 months and 5 years. This was due to a reduction in total borrowing and is not considered a significant risk.

RESOLVED to note the report.

25 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2015/2016 TO 2017/2018 AND OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TAX

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the report which provides options for the recommendation to the full Fire Authority for a balanced revenue budget over the next 3 years including implications for Council Tax.

The following responses were given to Councillor's questions:

- (a) the outline budget was set last February and now needs to be updated to include further potential savings identified by a Panel consisting of Councillor Wood as Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, Peter Hurford, as Treasurer to the Authority and Neil Timms as Strategic Director of Finance and Resources;
- (b) Members have been concerned regarding the underspend on the capital programme, but this has often been due to delays, including the time between ordering fire appliances and receiving them which can be 14 months. Due to this, plans need to be in place at least a year before equipment is required;
- (c) construction of the new Fire Station at Gresham is taking longer than predicted due to unforeseen delays in purchasing land. This will result in the Fire Service not being able to perform to the programme as although some flexibility is built-in, it will not be sufficient in this instance so the programme will be reduced by 20% to allow for this slippage;
- (d) more detailed information will be available for the full Fire Authority meeting regarding the implications on council tax options;
- (e) In 2008 the Service assessed all of the Fire and Rescue Service estate and considered sustainability of the capital programme. The cost of refurbishment and new build were considered and it was found that refurbishment of fire stations was not feasible as better value for money could be achieved by building new properties. If building programmes were 'slowed down', there would only be a short term benefit with a greater long-term impact;
- (f) the capital spend on appliances and their expected working life has been considered but could be revisited. Lifespan varies for different equipment with pumping appliances currently active for 12 years but built with a 15 year life span. If members requested, this could be reconsidered but would need to include consideration of maintenance costs and again, a short term benefit could have a longer term negative impact;
- (g) a Fire Cover Review is taking place at the moment to ensure that all Fire Stations are sited appropriately. Land has not yet been identified for any new stations although several options are available.

RESOLVED

(1) to note:

- (i) the Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2015/2016**
- (ii) the outline Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018;**

(2) to recommend that the full Fire Authority, subject to more in-depth complete and longer term information being available, including from Central Government, consider the following two funding options for the Service;

- (i) a zero increase in Council Tax;**
- (ii) an increase in Council Tax below the referendum ceiling.**

26 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2014/15

Peter Hurford, Treasurer to the Authority, presented an update on treasury management activity during the first half of the 2014/15 financial year.

RESOLVED to note the report.

27 CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the report which updates the Committee on the Corporate and Strategic Risk Registers.

Members questions were responded to as follows;

- (a) cyber terrorism is a heightened threat but the Fire and Rescue Service system security is very robust and the service is unlikely to be an attractive target;**
- (b) there are financial risks as Council Tax grants are reduced significantly. In addition, there may be a move from Central Government for business rates to be collected by the Local Authority. This may result in lower incomes.**

RESOLVED

(1) to note and endorse:

- (i) the Strategic Risk Register;**
- (ii) the Corporate Risk Register;**

(2) to note the most significant risks facing the Authority;

(3) for the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources to request that the Risk Manager provide a response to members of the Committee regarding the level of protection considered against risks.

28 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED 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 outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

29 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF LAND AT MANSFIELD

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the report which seeks authority for the disposal of a strip of land owned by the Fire Service, at Mansfield. Several options were suggested to the Committee.

RESOLVED to approve Option 4.

30 PURCHASE OF LAND AT THE FORMER GRESHAM WORKS

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the report which seeks authority for arrangements to be put in place for the acquisition of the former Gresham Works.

RESOLVED for approval to be given for officers to make an offer to purchase the land in line with the terms set out in paragraph 2.6 of the report.



**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 30 January 2015 from 10.02am to 11.12am

Membership

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)
Councillor Eunice Campbell
Councillor Stephen Garner
Councillor Liz Yates
Councillor Sybil Fielding

Absent

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor Brian Grocock	- Observer
Peter Hurford	- Treasurer to the Authority
Craig Parkin	- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Neil Timms	- Strategic Director of Finance and Resources
Catherine Ziane-Pryor	- Governance Officer

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

21 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

22 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE - QUARTER 2

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Office, presented the report which updates the Committee on Human Resources issues within the Service.
The report details the sickness figures for the last Quarter for employees as a whole and also in for the following groups:

- Whole time;
- Retained;
- Control;
- Support;
- Long Term Absence and Medically Certified Absence.

Disciplinary and grievance occurrences are also listed along with a breakdown of approved, actual and variances in staffing.

The following points were highlighted and questions responded to:

- the majority of employees do not have any sickness absence;
- the reduction in sickness levels across the Service is reassuring;
- the provision of reasons behind sickness levels, such as long-term conditions, is helpful in presenting a fully comprehensive overview;
- where fire appliance staff may have been off work for a substantial period, it may be possible for them to return to work with modified duties in a different area of the Service. Statistically they will still be shown as absent from their substantive role, even if they are not absent from work. (There are only 7 staff currently on modified duties);
- phased returns to work are also available to staff returning to work following a long term absence, and they too may be eligible for modified duties;
- the modified duties policy has recently been reviewed to ensure that the duties offered are appropriate for each individual;
- as there is not a significant issue with short-term sickness absence, the current focus is on addressing long term absence. This includes a prompt reaction to ensure that conditions do not deteriorate;
- there can be a delay for HQ to ascertain exactly why an employee is absent with illness, but the absence of that employee is registered immediately as appropriate cover usually needs to be arranged.

Members of the Committee welcomed the drop in sickness absence levels.

RESOLVED to note the report.

23 POST DELETIONS - PRINCE'S TRUST

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which requests support to permanently delete non-uniformed posts following a restructure of the Prince's Trust Team. The final decision will be made by the full Fire Authority at the meeting in February.

The Fire Service's work with the Prince's Trust has proved highly successful but due to changes to the financing of the Prince's Trust Team, a restructure has taken place and includes partnership arrangements with Nottinghamshire Police and West Nottinghamshire College.

The reduction in staffing has involved extensive consultation with employees and trade unions to avoid compulsory redundancies and as a result, one member of staff resigned to move to a different job and two staff agreed to voluntary redundancies.

Members welcomed the achievements for young people made possible and supported by the Service's work with the Prince's Trust.

RESOLVED to support the recommendation to full Fire Authority to delete the following posts:

- (i) Prince's Trust Team Leader;**
- (ii) Prince's Trust Support Officer.**

24 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED 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 the 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.

25 PENSION ADMINISTRATION

Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, presented the report regarding the administrative arrangements for the Fire Fighters pension scheme.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.



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

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -
POLICY & STRATEGY**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood
Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 6 February 2015 from 10.00 - 10.23**

Membership

Present

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

Absent

Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Jon Collins

Councillor David Smith (substitute for Councillor Grocock)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance

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

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Grocock) other City Council business
Councillor Collins)

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

21 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

22 PROTECTED PENSION AGE

Further to minute 28 dated 31 January 2014, Neil Timms, Strategic Director of Finance and Resources, introduced the report which informed the Committee of the latest position in regard to the Authority's pension scheme.

The following points were highlighted for Members;

- following an audit, requested by this Committee, controls have been put in place that provide substantial assurance that risk has been mitigated following actions to address identified key risks;
- an action plan has been produced, which documents recommended actions or considerations, for identified low to medium risks;
- in relation to an identified medium risk issue (relating to the potential liability of the former Pensions Administrator for costs incurred from its failure to advise the Service of the loss of protected pension age for one of the pensioners, and whose continued employment was in contravention of the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs rules), the Head of Finance and Resources is currently engaged with the Pensions Administrator in negotiating a resolution;
- in relation to the identified low risk issues, relating to further administrative procedures to ensure that employees fully understand the taxation position on re-employment following retirement, the majority of the Auditor's recommendations are completed or in the process of completion;
- as a result of the Auditor's recommendations, an amended draft Retirement Policy is currently out for consultation, and the letter sent to employees who are employed on dual contract arrangements, setting out the implications and conditions of re-employment on their protected pension age, has been amended.

During discussion, members stated that, while they were concerned with the Auditor's findings that the Authority was dealing with the process incorrectly (as were numerous other Fire Authorities), they were pleased that it has come to light and the processes were now being revised/amended as necessary.

RESOLVED to note the report, including the Internal Auditor's Report, the action plan, to address the low to medium risks, and the draft amended Retirement Policy (Uniformed Employees).