



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES of the meeting of the Authority held on **13 DECEMBER 2013** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8PD from 10.34 am to 11.45 am.

Membership

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)
Councillor Brian Grocock (Vice Chair)
Councillor Chris Barnfather
^ Councillor Eunice Campbell
Councillor Ian Campbell
^ Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Jon Collins
^ Councillor Stephen Garner
Councillor Colleen Harwood
Councillor Michael Payne
Councillor Ken Rigby
Councillor Tony Roberts
Councillor David Smith
Councillor Tim Spencer
Councillor Gordon Wheeler
Councillor John Wilmott
Councillor Malcolm Wood
Councillor Liz Yates

Members absent are marked ^

41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Eunice Campbell
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Stephen Garner

42 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

All Principal Officers – minute item 48;
John Buckley, Deputy Chief Fire Officer – minute item 46;
Craig Parkin, Area Manager - minute item 47.

43 MINUTES

The Authority confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2013 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

44 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported on the following matters:

- (a) Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has reached the highest 'Excellent' level of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework, which recognizes the way in which it delivers services and employs people. From 4-6 December, the Peer Challenge team, a group of external assessors, visited NFRS and spoke to over 100 employees, union representatives, managers, suppliers, Fire Authority Members, members of the public and partners. The Chair thanked all officers and members involved for their hard work in helping to achieve such a high standard;
- (b) the Chair had recently spoken to the Regional Executive of the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) concerning the ongoing industrial dispute between its members and the Government. Relations between the FBU and the Authority remained good. The Chair suggested that he write to the Minister, Brandon Lewis urging him to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible. All members requested sight of the letter before it is sent.

45 BUDGET OUTLOOK

The Chair announced that this item was withdrawn from the agenda as no grant settlement figures had yet been provided by the Government. Neil Timms, the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources agreed to circulate the figures to Members when he received them.

John Buckley, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer left the room prior to consideration of the next item.

46 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

The Chair presented his report as Chair of the Appointments Committee seeking approval to the unanimous recommendation of the Appointments Committee to the appointment of John Buckley as the next Chief Fire Officer to the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service following a rigorous interview process.

RESOLVED

- (1) to agree to the appointment of John Buckley as Chief Fire Officer with effect from 1 April 2014, as recommended by the Appointments Committee;**
- (2) to task the Chief Fire Officer with recruiting to the posts of Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer.**

John Buckley rejoined the meeting and the Chair congratulated him on his appointment on behalf of the Authority.

Craig Parkin, Area Manager left the room prior to consideration of the next item.

47 APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

The Chair presented the Chief Fire Officers' report seeking approval to the recommendation from the Appointments Committee with regard to the appointment of Area Manager Craig Parkin as Assistant Chief Fire Officer for a period of up to nine months.

RESOLVED that Area Manager Craig Parkin be appointed as temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer with effect from Monday 16 December 2013 for a period of up to nine months.

Craig Parkin rejoined the meeting and the Chair congratulated him on his appointment of behalf of the Authority.

The Principal Officers left the room prior to consideration of the next item.

48 PRINCIPAL OFFICERS' PAY REVIEW

A representative of the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) asked the following question of the Chair regarding this item:

'In these times of austerity, redundancies and cuts is the Authority comfortable with the recommendation that principle (sic) officers base pay should be increased by a total of 3.8% over two years? Being mindful that other public sector workers employed by the service have had to accept a 1% pay award only after years of a pay freeze'

The Chair replied as follows:

'Firstly, I think it is important that this is subject to Authority approval and the inference in the question precedes the decision as the Fire Authority is yet to consider this.

However, in response, the Fire Authority have a contractual obligation to review the salary of the Chief Fire Officer every two years benchmarking it against our nearest comparators as laid out in the Services' agreed pay policy. This has been established for over five years with the last review in 2011 resulting in no uplift at all. The salary has remained static for four years with the last increment being paid in January 2010. This year's review has resulted in the uplift that the Fire Authority is going to consider today.

Given the implications that the FBU have identified, the recommendation from the Policy and Strategy Committee, which consider this process, is to stagger the increase so that next year's award is 1% which is in line with what all other employees have been given this year. There has been no award in 2013 as per previous recommendations.

The remainder has been deferred until January 2015.

As a consequence of the outcome of the Policy and Strategy Committee, in honouring the current agreement, we are recommending that the current benchmarking process is reviewed. This review and its outcomes will be brought to a further meeting of the Fire Authority.

The Chair, presented the Treasurer and the Clerk's joint report, informing Members of the outcome of the biennial Principal Officers Pay Review. The review undertaken by the Treasurer and Clerk to the Fire Authority had resulted in a 3.8% increase in base salary being required to bring the Principal Officers salaries in line with pay levels of comparable Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The Policy and Strategy Committee, whilst noting that it is bound to adhere to the established Pay Policy in considering Principal Officer pay, agreed to exercise discretion and phase the 3.8% over two years with 1% being awarded from January 2014 and 2.8% from January 2015.

RESOLVED

- (1) to agree to implement a 1% award effective from 1 January 2014;**
- (2) to agree to implement a 2.8% award effective from 1 January 2015;**
- (3) to undertake a review of the current methodology for establishing Principal Officer pay, to be led by the Treasurer and Clerk to the Fire Authority and that a report be presented to the next meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee on 31 January 2014.**

49 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report seeking the approval of the Authority to the proposed Information and Communications Technology Strategy.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and agree to adopt the ICT Strategy.

50 PROPOSED CHANGE OF FIRE AUTHORITY DATE – FEBRUARY 2014

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report seeking the approval of the Authority to change the date of the February meeting of the Authority from 21 February 2014 to 28 February 2014 to allow for any voluntary redundancy decisions to be fully incorporated into the budget planning process.

RESOLVED to agree a change of date for the February meeting to Friday February 28 2014.

51 COMMITTEE OUTCOMES FOR NOTING

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

- (a) Performance Monitoring Committee 18 October 2013;
- (b) Finance and Resources Committee 11 October 2013;

- (c) Community Safety Committee 4 October 2013;
- (d) Human Resources Committee 25 October 2013;
- (e) Policy and Strategy Committee 1 November 2013

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

52 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.

53 RESILIENCE PLANNING

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report updating members on the four periods of industrial action that have taken place since the last report and on the continuing current measures being taken in order to manage and deal with disruptions to business continuity which may arise as a result of industrial action by Fire Brigade Union members.

RESOLVED

- (1) to accept the latest update from the Chief Fire Officer;**
- (2) to defer the decision on pension buy-back arrangements until such time as the dispute is resolved.**

The Chair wished Members and Officers a Merry Christmas.