



Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

MINUTES of the meeting held remotely and streamed to
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCt4VuYp8JJJvXCLRmSRJ1mw/featured> on 11
September 2020 from 10.32 am - 11.23 am

Membership

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)
Councillor Toby Neal (Vice Chair)
Councillor Andrew Brown
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Stephen Garner
Councillor Vaughan Hopewell
Councillor John Longdon
Councillor Mike Quigley MBE
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Parry Tsimbirdis
Councillor Sue Saddington
Councillor Jawaid Khalil
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Salma Mumtaz
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Nick Raine

Absent

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer
Craig Parkin - Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Candida Brudenell - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Malcolm Townroe - Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Fire Authority
Becky Smeathers - Head of Finance
Gavin Harris - Head of Digital Transformation
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Jason Zadrozny
Paddy Tipping, Police and Crime Commissioner
Charlotte Radford, Treasurer to the Fire Authority

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2020 were confirmed as a true record and will be signed by the Chair.

4 Chair's Announcements

A HMICFRS virtual thematic inspection will take place during October regarding the Service's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that the Chair will be interviewed, which, with the inclusion of elected members, indicates a positive step forward. There is an expectation that the response will be issued by public letter and that grades will be issued separately.

The Chair has responded to Sir Tom Windsor regarding his next 'State of Fire' report which is expected to be published in the New Year.

Annual pay increases have been agreed at 2% for operational staff and 2.75% for support staff. The 2.75% is 0.75% higher than that budgeted for and will require an additional £50k to be found per year.

Central Government is currently reviewing the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Members of the Authority will be kept informed.

Issues with inflexibility around staffing roles and pay have been identified during the changing demands on the Service during the COVID -19 pandemic and will be considered at a national level with involvement from the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

Work on the Joint Police/Fire Headquarters at Sherwood Lodge has started and is on track to achieve a planned move in early 2022.

Hucknall Police, Fire and Ambulance Joint Station has opened. This is the first 3 blue light site in the county and is predicted to achieve substantial savings.

There will be a Member's seminar at the rising of Authority.

As today is the 19th anniversary of the 11 September New York attack on the World Trade Centre and other sites in the USA, where 412 emergency service workers lost their lives, 343 of whom were fire fighters, our hearts go out to those families affected, specifically those connected to Fire and Rescue Services. The Authority observed one minute's silence to remember all those who lost their lives in services across the world.

5 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Report to 31 July 2020

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report which outlines expenditure to the end of July 2020, highlighted the following points and responded to member's questions:

- a) there currently is an underspend in the revenue account of £1.2 million which is within two areas;
 - i. the COVID-19 grant from Central Government, as illustrated in table 1 of the report , not all funds have yet been allocated, but spend will continue;
 - ii. £730,000 underspend from the normal revenue budgets due to the delay in recruitment of full-time firefighters. The recruitment schedule has now been postponed until April 2021 and whilst there is a saving on whole-time salary and wages, overtime will be necessary and the migration of 14 on-call firefighters to whole time posts will have an impact on retained availability;
- b) there has been £1m capital expenditure to date, as expected, with expenditure predicted to increase with the start of building works at the new joint headquarters;
- c) figures are not available yet with regard to the cost to the Service associated with the further delay of the Emergency Services Network (ESN). Although there is grant funding from Central Government, this does not cover the full cost to the Service. However, the shortfall has now been included into the Service budget. Members of the Authority will be informed if there is any progress in Central Government approving the business case.

Members of the Authority praised all staff on how quickly and effectively they had responded to the needs of partners and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, including adaptation and variance of budgets to support the necessary work.

Resolved

- 1) **for the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Craig Parkin, to arrange for a joint letter from the Chair, Vice-Chair and Lead Opposition spokesperson, to the relevant Government Ministers, expressing concern at the additional cost incurred by the Service as a result of the delays in progressing the establishment of an Emergency Services Network;**
- 2) **to note the report.**

6 Annual Statement of Assurance

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report and Statement of Assurance document for 2019/20 which provides assurance that the Service is operating effectively in regard to finance, governance and performance, against the aims of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

This new format is intended to make the information more assessable and appealing to citizens, so feedback from Authority members would be welcomed.

Highlights of performance and achievements are outlined in the report and provide evidence to support the progress in delivery and general improvement of the Service.

It is noted that the report is accessible through the Fire and Rescue Service Website on a web link, which can be shared with other Local and Parish Councils.

Members of the Authority:

- a) welcomed the new format of the Statement document and congratulated the Service for its production and also for the listed achievements of the Service;
- b) requested that some areas highlighted in the document are considered in more detail at a later date;
- c) welcomed the highlighting of the valuable community support, welfare and prevention work undertaken by the Service;
- d) praised the format of the document as excellent, easy to read, and an interesting and enjoyable read;
- e) requested that to ensure that the good work of the Service is recognised by citizens and elected members, that the Statement of Assurance is circulated to all councils, including Parishes, within the County, and shared with other elected members, either electronically and possibly by hard copy in libraries.

Resolved to approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2019-20.

7 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Update

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provides an update to the Authority on the Service's response to the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) 8 'Areas For Improvement' (AFI) had already been closed as completed and there are a further 5 closed today as follows:
AFI 5 and AFI 6 relating to performance and evaluation, AFI 19, relating to investment in people, values and inclusion, AFI 21 around the consistent recording of training and quality, and AFI 22 around Positive action work, all of which are detailed in Appendix A to the report;
- b) The timescale for completing AFI 20 will need to be extended by three months as although the core work is complete, further time is required to implement the necessary IT software to align with the Professional Development Review process;
- c) As per the reference by the Chair, there is to be a virtual thematic COVID-19 inspection which will commence on 12 October 2020.

The Chair commented that the constructive feedback from elected members at previous member seminars has been valuable and praised officers for the progress made.

Members welcomed the visual presentation of the training undertaken.

Resolved to

- 1) note the progress made against the AFI Improvement Plan;**
- 2) note the Covid-19 thematic inspection of the Service planned by the HMICFRS;**
- 3) agree the closure of five further Areas For Improvement and the extension to 31 December 2020 for AFI 20.**

8 Committee Outcomes

Resolved to note the report and minutes of the following meetings:

Policy and Strategy Committee 01 May 2020

Policy and Strategy Committee 24 July 2020

9 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, under Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3, on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

10 Engineering Section Restructure

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report.

Members of the Authority welcomed the mutually beneficial approach taken.

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.