



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 28 February 2020

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in January and February 2020.

Recommendations:

That Members note the contents of this report.

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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	17 January 2020
Finance and Resources Committee	17 January 2020
Human Resources Committee	24 January 2020
Policy and Strategy Committee	31 January 2020
Appointments Committee	04 February 2020

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

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

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority Community Safety Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 17 January 2020 from 11.17 am - 12.12 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Nick Raine (Chair)
Councillor Parry Tsimbiridis
Councillor Sue Saddington
Councillor Stuart Wallace
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Absent

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Ian Pritchard - Assistant Chief Officer
Mick Sharman - Area Manager for Service Delivery
Damian West - Area Manager for Prevention
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

10 Apologies for absence

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

11 Declarations of interests

None.

12 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

13 Service Delivery Performance

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) submitted a question which was responded to at the end of the item.

Mick Sharman, Area Manager for Response, presented the report which provides the Committee with performance data for the period between 1 July and 30 September 2019.

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Community Safety - 17.01.20
The following points were highlighted:

- a) a total of 2,579 incidents were attended, which is a decrease of 1,020 incidents for the same period in 2018. A breakdown of these is included in the report;
- b) whilst the locally set response target is 8 minutes, the average attendance time was 8.25 minutes;
- c) on-call availability increased by an average of 1.36% to 83.31%, with the East Leake Station reporting the highest availability of 96.54%;
- d) the call answering time exceeded the '90% within 7 seconds' target at 96.5%;
- e) the mobilisation system target of 99% was met;
- f) annual training was completed on schedule with 14 of the 26 planned exercises completed;
- g) safe and well visits exceeded the target and there has been a range of community engagement and prevention activity, particularly around smoke alarm ownership and fire safety in the home;
- h) non-domestic premises fire protection regulation activity continues, including activity to support the recommendations of the Phase 1 Grenfell Tower report.

Members' questions were responded to as follows:

- i) the majority of accidental dwelling fires are cooking related. All incident data is collated and analysed and then targeted prevention campaigns introduced where appropriate;
- j) a question was raised about the cause of a fire at a solar farm which was reported; this information was not to hand but would be found and confirmed to the Members.
- k) training exercises take place at a variety of locations each year. For NHS hospitals, site specific information is available to fire fighters. Work is continuing with all non-domestic premises, including the hospitals in Nottingham, to reduce the number of unwanted fire signals.

The FBU posed their question, for which a response was provided.

There was a brief adjournment of 5 minutes when an additional question was posed (in line with the requirements). It was agreed for a response to be provided in writing and also circulated to members of the Committee. Both questions and the responses are issued with the initial publication of the minutes.

Members of the Committee welcomed the reduction in unwanted (automated) alarms.

Resolved

- 1) to note the report;**
- 2) for a summary of the planned response to a fire at a solar farm to be circulated to Members of the Committee by the Area Manager for Service Delivery following the meeting.**

14 Safer Communities Strategy

Damien West, Area Manager for Prevention, Protection and Fire Investigation, introduced the report which presents the Safer Communities Strategy to members for approval and sets targets to work towards by 2022.

The following points were highlighted, members' questions responded to and comments made;

- a) members expressed that the objectives within the strategy needed to be tangible so that progress against them could be reported, captured and monitored.
- b) there appeared to be a lack of understanding of the risk of not having and maintaining a fire alarm but with a persistent campaign, significant progress has been made;
- c) for some more vulnerable residents, the Fire Service will provide and fit fire alarms with 10 year battery life (as part of the safe and well visits scheme);
- d) although recommended where appropriate, the Service does not provide carbon-monoxide alarms as Cadent take the lead on this within the sector.

Resolved to support the adoption of the Safer Communities Strategy.

15 Unwanted Fire Signals Update

Damien West, Area Manager for Prevention, Protection and Fire Investigation, presented the report which informs the Committee of the progress in reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UwFSs) since the Services' change in policy as of 3 December 2018.

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

- a) there has been a reduction of 18% attendance to UwFSs against the same period last year;
- b) of the 2,510 calls received, 2,169 were UwFSs. 1365 of these incidents only had one appliance attend;
- c) hospitals continue to present the largest proportion of UwFS but this is reducing with 53 fewer calls against the same period last year;
- d) 519 premises owners have been contacted where UwFS occur, and for the most common occurrences, fire safety audits are undertaken;
- e) whilst some members expressed continued concern that school premises alarms were challenged and not automatically responded to, they were assured that prior to placing schools in this category, thorough risk assessments had been undertaken to ensure this response was most appropriate. However, this can be reviewed and if significant additional risks are found, the categorisation can be amended.

Resolved to note the report and support the continuation of the Tri-Service Unwanted Fire Signals Policy.

16 Combined Campaign Calendar

Damien West, Area Manager for Prevention, Protection and Fire Investigation presented the Services' combined campaign calendar which lists engagement, support, and activity by the Service and with partners, in response recommendations made in the HMICFRS report to promote the greater efficiency for all partners.

The themes of campaigns and activity range from safety awareness such as drowning prevention, road safety and home fire safety, to community and faith focus including Holocaust Memorial Day and British Sign Language Week.

Resolved to endorse the approach being taken in relation to campaigns across 2020.

17 Update on the Service's Response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Inspection

Damien West, Area Manager for Prevention, Protection and Fire Investigation presented the report which includes the Services' responses to the findings of inspection by her Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

In total there were 25 areas highlighted for improvement by the inspection, 12 of which are relevant to the Community Safety Committee. These have been charted with commentary outlining the issues and how they are to be addressed.

Questions from Committee Members were responded to as follows:

- a) there has been a long-standing agreement whereby firefighters from several fire stations towards the edges of the county cross borders to support neighbouring services, which is reciprocated when appropriate. This is a practical solution to best supports citizens;
- b) where the Service may be the first to attend a multi-agency incident, it will take initial control and if not a Fire Service focused incident, will hand over incident management to the relevant agency on their arrival. For instance, fires are obviously responsibility of the Fire Service, whilst the main responsibility in responding to terrorism incidents usually sits with the Police;
- c) training on critical skills is continuous with a 14 week course for starters, and then ongoing throughout their career with a risk based approach resulting in annual refresher training for some skills, and lower frequency training for other skills.

Members of the committee expressed an interest in the different types of training undertaken and were invited to attend some future sessions.

Resolved to note the progress made against the agreed action plan.

Community Safety Committee (Agenda 17 January 2020)**FFBU Question to the**

SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE, Page 15, Appendix A

Prior to implementation of mixed crewing at Retford and Ashfield stations and the removal of wholetime cover from the hours of 18:00-08:00 the availability of the second appliance at those stations was around 90%. Since then this has fallen dramatically to 18% at Retford and 39% at Ashfield. When this proposal was brought forward to the fire authority, it was done so on the premise that it would not cause a reduction in fire cover at these stations.

The table contained in appendix A does not reflect the second appliance availability at Retford and Ashfield, total On Call availability is 68% at Ashfield and 61% at Retford. This dramatically reduces the overall On call availability figures, this shows a reduction of availability and not an increase as reported.

Does the Fire Authority agree that that all On Call availability should be reported and that an updated table should be made available to Authority members that accurately reflects the actual availability?

Authority Response

The Authority is committed to providing transparent performance reports to the communities it serves. On-Call availability is a key performance measure, particularly when assessing and monitoring changes to the services we provide. The Fire Authority agreed to the implementation of the Day Shift Crewing (DSC) crewing model following public consultation, which was implemented from 1 April 2019. It has always been the Service's intention to carry out a review of the DSC crewing model at both Ashfield and Retford, after a period of twelve months. The collection of twelve months of data will enable the Authority to understand the wider impacts of the DSC crewing model at these two stations. The review will include any impact on the On-call availability and will present the results of the DSC review to the Fire Authority.

Within the report presented to the Community Safety Committee on the 17 January 2020, the Service reports against On-call availability per station, this is consistent with previous reports and performance data. The Service is currently working towards implementing a data collection and performance management system called PowerBi. This system is being developed to provide accurate and timely information reports on a number of key performance measures, one of these being more timely and robust performance of On-call availability data.

The Chief Fire Officer recognises that on-call appliances provide the highest proportion of fire cover in the Service and maintaining On-Call fire cover in all areas of the county is an ongoing challenge, also recognised notionally in the 2019 State of Fire report. Investment continues with the On-Call Sustainability Team, tasked to further improve availability and resilience at all on-call stations and is a key focus for Service Delivery. To develop the On-Call for the benefit of Nottinghamshire communities, the Service welcomes further dialogue with Trade Unions to work collectively on the flexibility of its delivery model to improve outcomes for communities, whilst maintaining positive working conditions for staff.

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FBU question.

Agenda item 4, SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE, Page 9, 2.4

Is the authority aware that 10 out of the 16 stations have shown a reduction in availability (As shown in appendix A), with greater responsibility being placed on firefighters that undertake this duty as a secondary employment what is being done to prevent this trend from continuing?

Authority reply.

The Service, along with the wider fire sector, continues to seek solutions to the challenges faced to maintain On-call availability. Over the past 12 months the Authority has invested in a Sustainability of On-call Team, whose sole focus is sustaining and improving On-call availability. The Sustainability Team have a clear objective on improving both the recruitment and retention of all On-call employees.

The On-call performance data contained within today's report covers reporting quarter 2, 1 July to the 30 September 2019. The summer period is always the most challenging time of the year to maintain On-call availability, mainly due to family and school holidays. The Service has done much work to improve On-call availability, the result being that this year's quarter 2 average availability is 1.36% greater than the same period in 2018, with 12 of the 16 stations having improved availability this year compared to the same period in 2018.

The Chief Fire Officer recognises that On-Call appliances provide the highest proportion of fire cover in the service, and the Sustainability team have been tasked to consider alternative On-call models to further improve availability and resilience. To support this, the Service always welcomes further dialogue with Trade Unions to work collectively on improving outcomes for communities, whilst maintaining positive working conditions for staff.

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**Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Finance and Resources Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service HQ, Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 17 January 2020 from 10.00 am - 11.13 am

Membership

Present

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)
Councillor Toby Neal (from minute 21 to 27 inclusive)
Councillor Nick Raine
Councillor Andrew Brown
Councillor John Longdon

Absent

Councillor Mike Quigley MBE

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Becky Smeathers - Head of Finance
Charlotte Radford - Treasurer to the Authority
Ian Pritchard - Assistant Chief Officer
Gavin Harris - Head of Digital Transformation
Terry Scott - Head of Procurement and Resources
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Mike Quigley – Councillor John Longdon substituting

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

20 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

21 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Report to 30 November 2019

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report which informs members of the financial performance of the Service in the year 2019/20 to the end of November 2019.

Committee members' questions were responded to as follows;

- a) With regard to the transport overspend of £57k, this relates to the efforts to get the vehicle maintenance backlog cleared under the new contract, but also with regard to the accidental damage of a water carrier. Further, more detailed information will be provided to members at a later stage once a full review has taken place to identify any potential cost recovery from the previous contract. Any potential benefit of any cost recovery can be assessed at this time. Members should be assured that contractual clauses have been added to the new maintenance contract to protect the Service;
- b) There will be a report brought to the Committee regarding the future disposal options for the old Hucknall Fire Station;
- c) The upgrade and replacement of vehicle CCTV system will allow the download of footage automatically when the vehicles return to the station.

Members of the Committee welcomed the overall budget underspend.

Resolved to

- 1) note the report;**
- 2) approve the transfer of £170k CCTV in vehicles project funding, to fund the PPE helmets to enable them to be purchased in 2019/20 rather than 2020/21 as originally anticipated;**
- 3) approve slippage of £160k for the CCTV in vehicles capital project.**

22 Budget Proposals for 2020/21 To 2023/24 and Options for Council Tax 2020/21

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report which provides the budget proposals for 2020/2021 to 2023/24 including the impact of funding variations, and requests that Members consider and select the preferred council tax option for recommendation to the full Fire Authority.

The following anticipated elements were recognised for having a potential impact on future budgets:

- i. An unconfirmed grant allowance;
- ii. The required upgrade of ICT equipment, including on appliances;
- iii. The final determination Local Government Pension Scheme superannuation following the McCloud case;
- iv. Pension administration (as a new provider is required and the cost will increase);
- v. Pay increase;

- vi. Additional overtime pay;
- vii. ICT licenses;

The potential options for setting Council Tax and the impact on future year budgets are set out in the report.

Members of the Committee made the following comments and questions were responded to:

- a) The report is well presented and given the number of citizens served, and the service provided, the option to increase Council Tax by 1.95% was recommended;
- b) The further use of reserves is not supported but the proposed Council Tax increase of 1.95% is supported;
- c) The compensation element of pensions could be an area that will impact on the Income and Expenditure Account, as is the same across the whole of the Public Sector. The extent of the impact is not yet known so it's not possible to look for a remedy yet and as pension funds are not eligible to pay compensation, the cost may be borne by the Service unless Central Government provide a grant;
- d) Advice has been sought from the precepting Authorities with regard to business rates, but clarity cannot be provided until the end of January;
- e) Following a review of earmarked reserves, £1.4m has been reallocated to create a Transformation and Collaboration earmarked reserve. There will be a report to the full Fire Authority with further details on how this will help support the Service's efficiency and transformation plans over the coming years.;
- f) The Service has finite resources and once the reserves are spent, it will be difficult to replace them.

Resolved to recommend the Fire Authority that a 1.95% increase in Council Tax is approved.

23 Digital Strategy 2019-2022 (Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Department)

Gavin Harris, Head of Digital Transformation, presented the report which seeks approval for the new Digital (ICT) Strategy 2019 to 2022.

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

- a) Whilst the last ICT Strategy was for a 4 year period, it has been reviewed and re-written to align with the latest Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP);
- b) The 7 principals of the strategy are:
 - i. Access from anywhere with any device;
 - ii. Innovation and responsiveness built in;
 - iii. User-centric solutions;

- iv. Digital skills development;
 - v. Digital-first;
 - vi. Microsoft –first;
 - vii. Cyber security is essential;
- c) Whilst one of the principals is to enhance the agility of staff, cyber security will remain a priority;
- d) It is proposed that new tablets, 2 to each fire appliance, will increase the flexibility and efficiency of staff particularly when attending Safe and Well visits. This will remove the need to update forms and paperwork on return to the station and provide access to real-time data;
- e) The roll-out of the new systems will be managed as projects with an analysis of performance and effectiveness through staff feedback.

Resolved to approve the Digital (ICT) Strategy 2019 to 2022.

24 Update on the Service Response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire And Rescue Services Inspection

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report which provides responses to the recommendations of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) with regard specifically to the Finance and Resources Committee and the improvement plan schedule.

The following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) The Service is confident that the improvement work can be completed in time for the next inspection;
- b) With regard to the need to accelerate ICT to support efficiency and effectiveness, there is a small team focusing on digitalisation and ensuring that an 'incident ready' system can be used 'on the go' as fire appliances travel back to the station rather than the updates being required on return to stations;
- c) With regard to ensuring sufficiently robust plans are in place to consider the medium term financial challenges beyond 2020, processes are being examined to determine if digitalisation will be of benefit, with an additional focus on ICT training and an improved use of statistics;
- d) The proposed computers have an expected lifespan of approximately 5 years; the current tablets in use are approximately 10 years old;
- e) Issues around the implementation of the new emergency services network (ESN) are complicated but the financial implications will be considered within a comprehensive spending review.

Resolved to note the progress made against the Action Plan.

25 Exclusion of the public

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

26 Disposal of surplus land at Newark Fire Station

Terry Scott, Head of Procurement and Resources, presented the report.

Resolved to approve the option determined at the meeting.

27 Installation of an electrical substation by Western Power Distribution at Bingham Fire Station

Further to minute 20 of the Finance and Resources Committee on 19 October 2018, Terry Scott, Head of Procurement and Resources, presented the report which informs members of the requested amendments to the lease agreement for Western Power to install an electrical substation at Bingham Fire Station.

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



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service HQ,
Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 24 January 2020 from
10:03am to 11:34am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos (Chair)
Councillor Vaughan Hopewell
Councillor Jawaid Khalil
Councillor John Longdon
Councillor Salma Mumtaz

Absent

None

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development
Adrian Mann - Governance Officer
Craig Parkin - Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Matt Sismey - Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager

17 Apologies for Absence

None.

18 Declarations of Interests

None.

19 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2019 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

20 Permanent Change to Establishment: i-Trent Development Support Role

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on the proposed creation of an additional i-Trent technical support role, to provide resilience for the i-Trent support team. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the i-Trent Human Resources (HR) database was introduced in 2014. The system is developed and supported by a dedicated i-Trent team, with technical input from ICT. In addition to holding employee and post information, the system supports the administration and reporting of training, payroll, absence management and establishment management. Employees have access to an employee portal that enables them to review their personal details, book leave and register for training courses. The i-Trent system interfaces with many internal databases, including the mobilising system. Developments over the next year include Payroll Phase 2 (expense management), time recording, employee development and Performance Review, and all of these require i-Trent support;
- (b) the current i-Trent support team consists of a part-time HR Systems Officer, a part-time System Administrator and a Systems/Absence Administrator, who commits up to 18.5 hours to i-Trent support. The demands on the i-Trent team since its introduction have increased significantly due to internal requests for system enhancements, the increasing complexity of reporting arrangements/data analysis to support the performance management system and external inspection requirements, and the need for i-Trent to interface and transfer information with other internal systems. Additionally, there is an ongoing requirement to implement system upgrades so that the system can operate at its optimum level;
- (c) to achieve the required capacity, and to enable the Systems Officer to focus more on strategic issues, the creation of a new Grade 4 technical Development Support role is proposed. The original funding for the i-Trent support team was based on a full-time Systems Officer role and a 30-hour Systems Administrator role. However, the current post-holders have since reduced their hours. As such, the funding for the role will be covered largely by the under-spend from the existing salary budget.

Resolved to recommend the establishment of a full-time i-Trent Development Support post to the Fire Authority.

21 Amendments to Maternity Provisions

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on the proposed amendments to the current occupational maternity and adoption provisions. The proposed changes relate to maternity leave only, as provision is made for paternity and shared parental leave under different policies. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the current maternity provisions are based upon the public sector national agreements set out for operational and support employees, which enhance the statutory regulations. Additionally, local enhancements are set out within the Service's Maternity Policy and Procedure, which apply to all employees. The National Fire Chiefs' Council has circulated a new best practice document, which has consolidated practice across all English Fire and Rescue Services. Although this is a guidance document, all Services have been encouraged to review their own practice against the guidance;
- (b) the Service's existing provisions are, largely, in line with the guidance documents. The layout and wording of the existing policies has been changed to reflect the

template in the guidance document more closely, to provide more clarity and make it easier to follow. However, some recommendations are not covered in the Service's maternity provisions currently, in areas such as premature births; miscarriage, termination or still birth before 24 weeks; parental bereavement leave; surrogacy; and fertility treatment;

- (c) the proposed changes to the policy do not represent a significant additional cost in themselves, but they do extend current leave arrangements, which will have salary cost implications. The most significant proposal is the extension of occupational maternity (OMP) and adoption pay (OAP). The suggested approach set out in the national guidance extends the paid leave period to 26 weeks' full pay, followed by 13 weeks' statutory pay. This would also be applied to Adoption Leave and pay, which follows broadly the OMP/OAP provisions. The other options would be to keep the current provision or, as has been done at a small number of Services, apply local enhancement to extend full pay to 39 weeks and half pay for 13 weeks, taking paid entitlement to the full maternity leave period of 52 weeks;
- (d) it is difficult to predict the exact cost of increasing occupational maternity/adoption payments, as it will vary based on the numbers taking the leave in a period, their service length, their pay level and the length of the maternity/adoption leave. The current cost of £4132.75 could rise to £11,663.60, but this indicative figure does not include backfilling roles during maternity leave periods which, if maternity pay is increased, would also cost proportionately more, as the cost could not be off-set by reduced or no-pay periods. It is not possible to claim any further costs from central Government beyond the statutory payments;
- (e) the enhanced maternity benefits are a key issue for the recruitment and retention of female employees between the ages of 16 and 45. Enhanced maternity benefits is also an important step towards closing the gender pay gap. The enhancement of provision does have a financial cost, but it is a positive step in supporting and retaining women, particularly in operational roles;
- (f) the Committee felt that the further provision for parental bereavement leave is a very positive step. In the event of miscarriage, the policy will not give the father an automatic right to paid leave, but all situations will be considered for compassionate leave on a case-by-case basis.

Resolved to support the proposed changes to maternity provisions as set out under 'Option 2' in the report and approve the associated changes to local occupational maternity and adoption pay.

22 Review of Commissioned Services for Safe and Well Visits

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented a report on the proposed changes to the Service's Safe and Well Visit delivery model. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the recent inspection of the Service highlighted that, at 3.3 per 1,000 population, the number of Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) being completed is lower than the England average of 10 visits per 1,000 population. However, SWVs completed by external providers did not count towards the Service's completion statistics as recorded in the latest inspection;

- (b) over the last 16 months, work has been carried out to improve protection and prevention services, with a priority to increase the number of SWVs carried out by 2022 while retaining the high proportion that are delivered to those at high or very high risk. The Service has exceeded its target of completing over 6,000 SWVs in 2019/20 and hopes to reach 8,500, which represents an increase of over 50% in productivity, with a proportionate increase in the number of high-risk referrals. Consideration is being given to how the Service can continue to improve its productivity by completing 9,000 visits in 2020/21 and 12,000 in 2021/22. However, it is vital to ensure that the focus remains on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable as fully as possible;
- (c) it is proposed that the £45,000 that is used currently to commission external providers is used instead to increase the Service's establishment of Grade 3 Specialist Home Safety Operatives (SHSOs) by 1.5 posts. These SHSOs will conduct high-risk SWVs and manage the follow-up activities. The additional 1.5 SHSOs will complete approximately 500 SWVs per year and each of these visits will count towards inspection statistics. In addition, the new roles will provide additional capacity within the Persons at Risk Team to assist with the increased follow-up activities, which will grow with increased SWV productivity;
- (d) this model will place the function under direct Service performance management control to assure consistency in delivery and accurate recording, driving the ambition to increase Service productivity to address community risk. The Service will continue to work with external providers as referring partners, with more partnership and joint working measures in place with Council housing officers, Nottingham City Signposting and the NCHA Homeless Prevention Service. Appropriate information sharing agreements are in place and the database systems will be upgraded. Further training opportunities will be introduced for SHSOs with partners around engaging with vulnerable people, including those suffering from alcohol issues or the threat of homelessness, in addition to the existing training for age-related issues;
- (e) if any councillors are interested in joining the SWVs, the senior officers would be glad to discuss this with the Persons at Risk Team.

The Committee extended its thanks to the Persons at Risk Team for their significant work in this vital area.

Resolved to support bringing the delivery of Safe and Well Visits (supplied currently through commissioned services) in-house and recommend the associated creation of an additional 1.5 full-time equivalent Grade 3 Specialist Home Safety Operative posts within the establishment to the Fire Authority.

23 Update on the Service Response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Inspection

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented an update on the Service's response to the outcomes of the recent inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services. The following points were discussed:

- (a) each of the 25 areas for improvement identified within the inspection report have been allocated to a lead officer, with clear milestones and expected outcomes in place, and 8 of the areas are under the remit of Human Resources. The Chief Inspector has now published an overall report on the Fire and Rescue Services in England to identify trends across the country and a cross-mapping exercise is underway to ensure that the Service is addressing all of the issues;
- (b) Area 17 (“The Service should put appropriate mechanisms in place to enable closer monitoring of hours worked by staff”): the issues highlighted by the inspection relate primarily to dual contractors, who are whole-time firefighters who also provide support to on-call stations, and the lack of overview of the hours they have worked and rest breaks they have taken across both roles. To address this, a weekly timesheet has been for dual contractors that will be reviewed locally and by the On-Call team. An annual welfare review meeting for dual contractors and those undertaking secondary employment via an i-Trent workflow will be undertaken by line managers and will include a health and stress questionnaire. The system will rely on self-declaration, so it will be monitored closely. The requirement for staff to take adequate breaks will be managed carefully with the need to ensure full operational coverage for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire;
- (c) Area 18 (“The Service should develop a wellbeing strategy and a system to improve understanding of health, safety and wellbeing trends”): the inspectors felt that there was a strong level of good practice within the Service, but that there was not an over-arching health and wellbeing strategy to draw it all together, and that the effectiveness of the wellbeing measures were not evaluated consistently. A Wellbeing Strategy has been drafted for publication and a programme of Occupational Health site visits will take place throughout 2020 to promote the strategy and the support available through Occupational Health provision. The Occupational Health and Fitness Manager will provide an update report on a quarterly basis to analyse sickness and wellbeing trends;
- (d) Area 19 (“The Service should ensure its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation”): the inspectors felt that the Service promotes its values to improve behaviour, but 15% staff reported witnessing recent behaviour not in line with Service values in the staff survey. To address this, there will be a consistent promotion of core values with a focus on the theme of ‘One Team’. The Harassment Policy and Procedure has been reviewed in consultation with the representative bodies. A forum for discussing harassment and bullying issues has been scheduled to establish the employee experience and identify steps to promote a workplace culture where inappropriate language and behaviour is recognised as unacceptable and challenged. A Behavioural Competency Framework will be introduced alongside the new Planning, Development and Review process, which will set out expectations of positive behaviours, including Value and Respect for Others. Further training will also be provided to supervisory managers so that they are more confident in resolving issues informally, through conversations and mediation, rather than escalating incidents to the formal process when this may not be required or proportionate;
- (e) Area 20 (“The Service should develop a training plan that clearly aligns and supports its workforce plan”): each department has established its training needs for 2020/21 and an ICT Training Plan will be implemented. A review has been undertaken of

current leadership development processes and a revised Middle Management programme will be introduced, to increase diversity in leadership roles. A Supervisory Development Programme has been scheduled to provide support for newly promoted Crew and Watch Managers. A new Planning, Development and Review process is in place to identify the training and development requirements for all staff, including non-operational employees, and individual training plans will be produced. Work will be carried out to align the operational training planner with wider aspects of workforce development and training;

- (f) Area 22 (“The Service should improve communication around positive action through all levels of the organisation”): a Joint Statement on Positive Action has been drafted for circulation via the internal communications channels, following consultation with representative bodies. A positive action programme will be implemented as part of the planning and resourcing for whole-time recruitment in 2021, to seek to achieve a strong level of representation amongst the candidates. Events will be held at stations and will involve station personnel in supporting them. A briefing will be issued to explain fully what the Service aims to achieve through the proposed positive action and to challenge any negative assumptions, and middle management is being engaged in ensuring that this is successful. However, turnover in the Service is low, recruitment is irregular and there is a geographical requirement for on-call rolls, so it will take time for the effects of positive action to be reflected in the workforce;
- (g) Area 23 (“The Service should ensure individual performance targets clearly support objectives within the Integrated Risk Management Plan”): a new Performance and Development Policy has been published and will be promoted as part of the launch of the Performance Development Review process, with training on how this will be accessed through the i-Trent system. Departmental plans are in place, with a new progression procedure;
- (h) Area 24 (“The Service should improve staff awareness and understanding of promotion and selection process”): a progression process to higher-level operational roles is undertaken annually. A Progression Procedure is in place, but further mentoring and coaching will be provided to prospective candidates to ensure that they understand the process and selection criteria clearly;
- (i) Area 25 (“The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders”): a review will be undertaken to identify the options and potential benefits of introducing a high-potential talent management scheme. However, the Service is a relatively small organisation with low staff turnover, so it may only be viable to introduce this kind of scheme in partnership with another Service or Services. Informal development programmes are in place, such as Aspiring Leaders. Steps will be taken to make this provision more formal, using a mix of internal and external management development trainers. External providers are giving general management training, while a trainer is being tendered for to provide additional training for middle and senior managers. The Service has good links with Nottingham Trent University and bursaries are available for staff who are looking to develop other work-related skills and proficiencies.

The Committee noted the report.

24 Human Resources Update

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on the key Human Resources metrics for the period of 1 October to 31 December 2019, including absence reporting from the period of 1 July to 30 September 2019. The following points were discussed:

- (a) sickness absence has decreased since the preceding period, but is slightly higher than the same period in the previous year. Long-term conditions (often musculoskeletal and mental health related) account for 70% of sickness absence. Sickness absence within the Service is slightly higher than the sector average, but work is underway to reduce this. Conversations are taking place with the Services with the lowest levels of long-term sickness absence, to seek to improve 'return to work' provision;
- (b) the new Joint Control Room with the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service has seen relatively high sickness absence during the early period of its establishment. As the team is small and specialised, it is difficult to provide cover. However, it is anticipated that the situation will improve once the new ways of working become established;
- (c) 20 members of staff left the Service (mainly due to retirement) and 6 new staff joined. One Employment Tribunal has been registered, following an employee's departure. As part of the process, an internal investigation is underway.

The Committee noted the report.

25 Equalities Monitoring Report

Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, presented a report on the breakdown of the workforce by protected characteristics between 1 January and 31 December 2019, and the work being done to improve diversity at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the number of women in the workforce has increased to 15.54% over the last two years, with 43 (6.13%) employed in operational roles (including management roles). However, 35.85% of the new starters in 2019 were women. The proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees has also increased slightly, but less significantly than hoped. Declarations of sexuality, disability and mental health are also low, so work is underway to ensure that employees are comfortable discussing these subjects in the work environment. Further reasonable adjustments to improve accessibility at work are under consideration, in addition to improvements in equalities monitoring;
- (b) the number of women and BAME employees in middle management and above is low, so positive action is in place to help create pathways for potential management candidates who are at fire fighter level, currently. A low number of BAME candidates have been successful in applying for support roles. An audit system is in place for these applications and a Human Resources representative is in place on appointment panels, to ensure that the process is fair. It is also a primary aim to

ensure diversity on the interview panels. Work is taking place to explore ways to attract more BAME citizens to apply for roles in the Service.

The Committee noted the report.

26 Apprenticeship Update

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on apprenticeships within the Service. The following points were discussed:

- (a) it has been Government policy since 2016 to increase the number of apprenticeships available, particularly within the public sector. Significant progress has been made in the numbers of apprentices employed by the Service since January 2019 in both operational firefighter and support roles, for which the Service is able to draw down funding from the apprenticeship levy;
- (b) this has been due primarily to the intake from the 2018 firefighter selection process, which has seen 19 apprentice firefighters contracted to the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship Standard. This is a 26-month apprenticeship that, subject to successful completion, covers the full development period (including spending time on station), so that the apprentice firefighters become competent at the end of the assessment period. The first cohort of eleven apprentice firefighters commenced their apprenticeship in January 2019. A further cohort of eight apprentice firefighters commenced in September 2019;
- (c) public sector employers have been set a target of 2.3% of the workforce as new apprenticeship starters. Based on a Service workforce of 798 (excluding those with dual contract arrangements), this would require 18 new apprenticeships each year. From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, 16.67% of all new starters were on apprenticeships, representing 1.32% of the total workforce. Overall, apprentices account for 2.4% of the total headcount. Despite the increase in new-start apprenticeships, which saw 11 new apprenticeship start between September 2018 and September 2019, the Service did not meet this target during 2018-19;
- (d) while the target is based on a headcount and includes the whole workforce, the Service is unable to register on-call trainees onto the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship, as they are not able to comply with the eligibility criteria due to their hours of work. This means that the majority of appointments made each year cannot be counted against the target. However, the overall headcount figure (against which the percentage of new starts is calculated) does include on-call employees. This has been recognised by the National Fire Chiefs' Council as a sector issue and lobbying is taking place to address this anomaly;
- (e) the apprenticeship programme is inspected by Ofsted, to ensure that the right standards of education are maintained. The Service is now also an accredited training provider at a national level, giving access to the Government's training levy. Five members of staff in support roles are undertaking new qualifications.

The Committee noted the report.

27 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, Paragraphs 1 and 3, on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

28 Exempt Minutes

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2019 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

29 Regrading of Posts

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented a report on the outcomes of the job evaluation process that has led to a permanent change to the support (non-uniformed) establishment.

The Committee noted the report.



**Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Strategy Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold
Nottingham NG5 8PD on 31 January 2020 from 10.01 am - 10.39 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Brown
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Toby Neal
Councillor Stuart Wallace (as substitute for Councillor
Jonathan Wheeler)

Absent

Councillor Jonathan Wheeler

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer
Charlotte Radford - Treasurer to the Authority
Malcolm Townroe - Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority
Becky Smeathers - Head of Finance
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

14 Apologies for absence

Councillor Jonathan Wheeler – Councillor Stuart Wallace substituting

15 Declarations of interests

None.

16 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

17 HMICFRS Update: Publication of the State of Fire And Rescue Report

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provides members with an overview of the newly published HMICFRS State of Fire and Rescue report which refers to all 45 Fire and Rescue Services.

In addition to the link within the report, a complete paper version is available for members of the Authority to view.

It is noted that the report is not legally binding on Fire and Rescue Services nor Central Government, and is clear that it has been issued in an advisory role, although there will be further consideration of the recommendations.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) Four main recommendations have been made to the sector as a whole, which are summarised as follows:
 - i. review with precision and determine the roles of: (a) FRSs; and (b) those who work in them. (by June 2020);
 - ii. consideration of the current pay negotiation machinery and whether an independent pay review body and the future of the 'grey book' should be revised. (by June 2020);
 - iii. consideration of whether Chief Fire Officers should have operational independence. In the meantime, clear guidance on demarcation between those responsible for governance and operational decision making by the Chief Fire Officer. (by September 2020);
 - iv. production of a code of ethics for all FRSs to be considered as part of each employee's progression and annual performance appraisal. (by December 2020).
- b) recommendation 'i' refers to co-responding and the broadening role of firefighters and the services which they deliver. Not all Services had diversified and as there is an element of localisation whereby Services can adapt to serve the needs of their specific communities, so there are different models operating but not all Services which have diversified have met their statutory requirements;
- c) with regard to 'iii', CFOs having operational independence, currently the statutory powers are in the control of the Fire Authority and the CFO works on behalf of the Authority. It is clear that the report is written with a Policing background whereby the Chief Police Officer has the overriding responsibility and control. Across Services procedures vary greatly, to the extent that one CFO is not authorised to spend above £500 outside the agreed budget without the authorisation of the Authority. This target completion date of September 2020 is extremely tight and may not be achieved;
- d) establishment of the code of ethics (recommendation 'iv') has resulted from finding some 'toxic' cultures within the Sector. NFRS is working with the LGA and is expected to be a consultee in formulating the code;
- e) HMICFRS will undertake a full audit of all Services, which will start for NFRS in July 2020 with a self assessment and then an inspection which is predicted for November/December. Members will be kept informed;

- f) appendices A and B to the report provide bullet point summaries of the overall findings from the inspection of the sector.

Members' questions were responded to and comments made as follows:

- g) with regard to 'toxic cultures' it is known that there have been some issues identified (in other Services) with overbearing management styles which leaves individuals feeling oppressed. 'Closed watch cultures' can emerge where small watch teams experience very little change. This can be a strength, but it can also create independent cultures. In addition, the overt nature of some aggression expressed on some social media sites has been raised as an issue by respondents to the National Survey who have said that they have been the victim of, or witnessed, bullying in the past year;
- h) Localisation means that each Fire Service can agree terms with their own population and there is no standard definition of what a Fire Service does. Front line service and demands in the City vary significantly from those in rural areas. In addition, the way in which risk is assessed varies from Service to Service. Standardisation across the Sector of common tools such as risk assessment and recording of incidents will make overall monitoring, tracking and comparisons much easier;
- i) to prevent the embedding of watch cultures, the Service moves trainees around to gain experience at different stations. It is not possible to move established staff around, although when this has been done, despite initial resistance and even registering of grievances, the outcome has been positive. A lot of staff have perceptions that other stations and sites are not as good as their own, but once they have experienced other stations/sites, have found this not to be the case. The Service is working hard to promote its values and where some staff do act inappropriately, this is addressed. It's reassuring that staff do challenge behaviours and feel confident to raise concerns;
- j) Staff Conferences, which are attended by Senior Officers and sometimes elected members, are working well at bringing staff together who they may otherwise not encounter, with activities to encourage verbalisation, break bias, and re-enforce confidence that where issues are raised, the Chief Officer Team will respond;
- k) apart from the use of confrontational language, which is not necessary, clarity is required of some of the points made, such as the comment on trades' union influence not always being in the interest of the public. Although in some services the relationship with trades unions vary significantly to that of this Service, Trade Unions such as the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) are partners to this Service so such comments are not helpful, particularly without elaboration and possibly direction;
- l) the comment that better performance and talent management is needed, seems strange when it is common practice within the Police Service that once a member of staff reaches 30 years' service (and therefore experience) they are then 'let go';
- m) the timelines given to address the points raised are unrealistically tight but the Service is happy to engage in the required work, many of which is already underway.

Members of the Committee commented that the language used in the HMICFRS is unnecessarily insulting and confrontational and terms such as 'toxic' are very emotive, and

suggested that the Inspection report authors actually meet the staff on the front line and then reconsider if such language is appropriate.

Members of the Committee requested that a seminar be held specifically to look at the points raised by the inspection, and how they are to be addressed.

Resolved

- 1) to note the report;**
- 2) to endorse the approach to consider the recommendations contained within the State of Fire and Rescue Report;**
- 3) for a members seminar to be arranged to consider the recommendations of the inspection and how they are to be addressed within this Service;**
- 4) to agree to receive any additions to the formal HMICFRS action plans through the Fire Authority Committees.**

18 Collaboration Update

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates members on the progress of collaboration activities.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) planning permission has been passed for the new Joint Headquarters. Enabling work has started and a contractor for the building work is being sought. It is noted that with regard to traffic safety concerns, the A60 junction will be modified but details are yet to be confirmed;
- b) work is ongoing with regard to the Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) agreement which will be submitted to the Fire Authority for final approval;
- c) collaboration with the Police Service continues to develop, as can be seen by the draft 'info-graphic' which was available to view at the meeting. Collaboration is not just about sharing buildings and resources but is much broader, for the benefit of citizens;
- d) the West Bridgford joint Police and Fire and Rescue site is progressing. Parking issues were initially a concern for the Planning Authority but this has now been resolved. Once completed all police operational resources will move into site and the current central City base will close;
- e) Police colleagues will move into the shared service Hucknall site along with East Midlands Ambulance Service colleagues within the next few weeks and establish the first operational tri-service hub in the country. A formal opening ceremony will be held in March. Consideration is taking place with regard to options for disposal of the former Hucknall Fire Station site;
- f) joint prevention work is ongoing with consideration for a joint safeguarding operation;

- g) the Police and Fire Services' shared drone was deployed at a water rescue incident in Gunthorpe last week, and with its HD and thermal imaging, proved an excellent resource which prevented putting firefighters in danger of having to enter the water, as the drone was able to search the riverbanks;
- h) the Service already has border sharing arrangements in place with the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, by which the nearest available appliance is mobilised, now work is underway to share appliance availability between respective control rooms.

Resolved

- 1) to note the report;**
- 2) to endorse the Service's proactive approach to collaboration.**



**Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Appointments Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters - Fire and
Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on
4 February 2020 from 9.15 am - 6.02 pm**

Membership

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Brown
Councillor Vaughan Hopewell
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Toby Neal

Absent

Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Buckley	- Chief Fire Officer
Malcolm Townroe	- Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority
Tracy Crump	- Head of People and Organisational Development
Emma Law	- Gatenby Sanderson

1 Apologies for absence

Councillor John Clarke (Councillor Toby Neal substituting)
Councillor Jason Zadrozny - unwell

2 Declarations of interests

None.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 Exclusion of the public

Resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Paragraphs 1 and 3 of 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.

5 Selection process for the appointment of Assistant Chief (Fire) Officer

Five candidates were assessed and interviewed for the post.

Resolved to appoint Candida Brudenell to the post of Assistant Chief Fire Officer.