



**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:** 14 July 2023

**Purpose of Report:**

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in March/April 2023 and June 2023.

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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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	24 March 2023; 09 June 2023
Human Resources Committee	31 March 2023; 16 June 2023
Finance and Resources Committee	21 April 2023; 23 June 2023
Policy and Strategy Committee	28 April 2023

## **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.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Joint  
Headquarters - Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 24 March 2023  
from 10.00 am - 10.56 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Jason Zadrozny (Chair)  
Councillor Robert Corden  
Councillor Nicola Heaton  
Councillor Dave Trimble  
Councillor Nigel Turner

#### Absent

Councillor Nick Raine

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

Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection  
Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response  
Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor, Governance Officer

### **18 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Nick Raine – work commitments.

### **19 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **20 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **21 Service Delivery Performance Report**

Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response, and Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection, presented the report which informs members of the performance of the Service between 01 December 2022 and 31 January 2023.

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

- a) The Service attended at total of 1,612 incidents during this period, which equates to a 7.7% increase on the same period last year, but with a reduction in fires and an increase false alarms and Special Service Calls;
- b) The extreme weather of the past year is predicted to result in an overall rise in the number of incidents attended by 13.9%;
- c) Attendance of false alarms continues to be a significant draw on resources;
- d) Attendance to fires peaked, particularly for Priority 3 incidents (potential hazard to human life), during the exceptionally dry summer months;
- e) The majority of incident occurred within the Nottingham City district;
- f) Attendance response time during this reporting period averaged 7 minutes and 52 seconds against the current Community Risk Management Plan target response time of 8 minutes;
- g) On-call availability was averaging 87.1%, with availability for each on-call station provided within the report. Hucknall, Misterton, Newark and Warsop delivered availability in excess of 95%, whilst Southwell continues to experience problems and does not meet the Service's minimum standard;
- h) Breakdowns of the availability of on-call and day shift crewing of appliances at Ashfield and Retford are provided in the report;
- i) Further to member's request, the availability of Whole-Time day shift appliances is provided in the report, specifically because of mechanical fault, servicing, insufficient crewing levels, replenishment of contaminated PPE, out-of-county training, or for crew welfare. Ashfield achieved the lowest unavailability at 0.38%, whilst the second appliance at Stockhill was unavailable 3.46% of the time;
- j) Reduced availability of appliances at Stockhill and London Road stations was explained due to these stations being generally more active and therefore requiring decontamination/ preparation for further callouts;
- k) In response to members' concerns that it was counterintuitive to reduce the number of appliances at both Stockhill and London Road stations, as per the recent public consultation, if these stations were more active than some others, the Chief Fire Officer assured the Committee that generally across the Service there were only six appliances in action at any time on a normal day, and that the other 20 appliances within the City and County, would be available if required and resourced to risk, with further appliances available from neighbouring services if necessary;
- l) 96% of 999 calls were answered within 7 seconds;
- m) The mobilising system continues to present ongoing issues and performance had slipped to 83%. Work continues to address the issues and it is noted that backup mechanisms are in place and utilised. The system is due to be replaced, potentially

- through a joint procurement with Derbyshire, of a robust basic model that can be adapted and evolve as required;
- n) Arrangements and time scales for tendering for the new mobilising system are uncertain at the moment but members will be kept informed of progress;
  - o) The significant increase in false alarms, or unwanted fire signals (UwFS), could not be accounted for and further work is underway;
  - p) With regard to prevention work, the Service has now completed 2,745 Safe and Well Visits (SWVs) during the reporting period, which equates to an overall total of 93.05% of the 13,000 target for 2022/23, with an achievement of nearer 14,000 visits predicted to be completed by the close of this year, which results in next year's target rising to 14,000;
  - q) A variety of safety education and prevention packages have been rolled out across multiple schools, as listed in the report. Schools in areas where communities have been affected by fatal fires, have been targeted, as have schools in areas where data led profiling has identified higher safety risks, including increased fire setting tendencies;
  - r) Following members' concerns at the negative implications of naming a new school initiative 'risky schools', this title was suggested to be amended to 'safer schools';
  - s) The 'Fire Setters' programme continues to work with individuals referred to the programme following fire setting incidents. Success is very dependent on the individuals as many have complex and troubled lives, but it is estimated that 50-75% of participants do not reoffend;
  - t) Road safety interventions aimed at young adults in advance of them being eligible to drive, such as Operation Highway take place with partners and have reached more than 450 pupils;
  - u) The 'Stay Wise' programme is being rolled out nationally through the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC), with the Service's Youth Engagement Officer seconded to help co-ordinate this work nationally and prevent each service working in isolation to develop their own education programmes;
  - v) The interactive home safety advice tool 'Safe Links' is due to be rolled out soon with the intention to provide broader safety advice for people in their own homes;
  - w) Evaluation of programmes is key for prevention with different approaches to different programmes. HMI acknowledged the Service's commitment to evaluation and learning from the results;
  - x) The completion of 1,200 Fire Safety Audits is on target for this year, with 337 requiring informal action and 29 premises receiving formal notices;
  - y) Fire Safety Inspectors continue to be shadowed until able to undertake inspections as part of their warranted status. The Service is on target to achieve the 500 Business Safety Checks for 2022/23;

- z) A broad variety of protection activities have been undertaken in this reporting year, and are listed in the report;
- aa) The high numbers of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) continue to prove a challenge with 2,767 of the 3,880 UwFS being considered due to false alarm apparatus, with 2,176 being from residential premises where people are often most vulnerable and where the Service has no statutory enforcement powers;
- bb) The Building Safety Act is progressing and will require a multi-disciplinary inspection team, similar to that the JAIT (Joint Audit and Inspection Team) operated by the Service and city council, with 23 buildings over 18 meters in height yet to be inspected;
- cc) The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 became law on 23 January 2023 and places further statutory duties on the Service and responsible persons, most significantly regarding buildings of 18 metres and more in height which will place further burdens of responsibility on the Service and require reconsideration of capacity and demand;
- dd) Other neighbouring Services don't appear to have any issues with retention of Inspection and Safety officers which is an issue in the South of the Country;
- ee) The NFCC is lobbying for further building safety measures including ensuring that tall buildings have more than one staircase.

Members commented:

- ff) When appropriate, members of the committee would welcome an invitation to observe the delivery of some of the school education programmes;
- gg) The work of officers in exceeding the target of delivering more than 1,000 Safe and Well Visits beyond the target is commended;
- hh) It's vitally important that with the rapid redevelopment of higher buildings within the City, that Safety inspections are completed in a timely manner.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **22 2022 Fatal Fires Review**

Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection, presented the report which updates members with an overview of the fatal fire incidents attended by the Service during the 2022 calendar year.

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

- a) There were 11 fatalities from 7 incidents during 2022, compared to 7 fatalities in 2021;
- b) All fatalities were within domestic premises;

- c) 3 of the fatal incidents occurred within the Ashfield District Council area, 3 in Nottingham City, and 1 in Broxtowe;
- d) Ages of the fatalities ranged from a child of one year, up to a 91 year old;
- e) 7 of the fatalities matched the 'CHARLIE' profile, with 3 living alone, 2 smokers, and 2 having care packages;
- f) Of the 7 incidents, 4 addresses were known to the Service via previous interactions/referrals, but this shows that even if known to the Service and partners and targeted for preventative support, there is no guarantee that multi-agency engagement will prevent incidents;
- g) The report sets out background information to each of the 4 addresses, including a history of engagement and support;
- h) The Serious Event Review Group meets following a fatality and considers the circumstances and what additional preventative work could be helpful;
- i) The Service ensured that community reassurance and engagement activities took place in the communities in which the fatalities occurred;
- j) Occupational Therapist input has proved valuable to support some particularly vulnerable citizens as part of the SWVs;
- k) Training and educating partners on the CHARLIE profile, which identifies those most at risk of a domestic fire, is ongoing and learning shared between partners;
- l) The mobilising system is premises focused, but the internal systems are person focused. However, people move home and things change, including complexity of health and care needs, so there is no guarantee that information gathered during SWVs, which may be useful when attending a fire, remain relevant, and resources aren't available to enable to physically check and then confirm/update the relevancy.

Members commented as follows:

- m) The communication of the Service with elected members following a local fatal incident is welcomed, as is the assurance provided to local communities following such a tragic event;
- n) Members were shocked at the continuing high numbers of incidents due to electric blankets and naked flames. Whilst scented candles remain popular, it is presumed that the use of electric blankets has increased since heating prices have risen. Also of concern is the social media trend of supposedly heating a home by using a candle and terracotta pot device, which doesn't really work anyway and can explode. The ongoing national safety awareness education, including the prominent television campaign, are welcomed.



The Chief Fire Officer responded at the request of the Chair, that the investigation into the substantial Savanna Rag site fire in Mansfield is ongoing, but local residents have expressed immense gratitude to the Fire Service for controlling the ferocious fire and preventing the loss of neighbouring homes.

Partners worked well together including Severn Trent Water which made additional water supplies available on scene to the Service in the form of 30,000 litre water tankers.

**Resolved to note the report.**



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Joint Headquarters - Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 9 June 2023 from 10.07 am - 11.17 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Nick Raine (Chair for the meeting)  
Councillor Robert Corden  
Councillor Anwar Khan  
Councillor Devontay Okure  
Councillor Nigel Turner

#### Absent

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

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

Damien West – Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Bryn Coleman - Area Manager for Prevention and Protection  
Andy Macey - Area Manager for Response  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

### **1 Appointment of Chair for the Meeting**

In the absence of the appointed Chair, Councillor Jason Zadrozny, Councillor Nick Raine was appointed Chair for the meeting.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Jason Zadrozny, on County Council business.

### **3 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair presiding at the meeting.

## 5 Service Delivery Performance Report

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the report which provides an overview of Service performance for the financial year 2022/23.

Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response, provided the following update on Response and answers to member's questions:

- a) It's worth noting that statistics are compared against previous years' activity, which includes periods of time significantly impacted by the Covid pandemic, and so overall to an overall increase in activity;
- b) Activity is summarised as follows:
  - i. 11,343 incidents were attended, which represents increase of 12.4%;
  - ii. Unwanted Fire Signals increased by 12.1%;
  - iii. fires increased by 18.7% due to the extreme summer weather conditions;
  - iv. special service activity reduced by 4.4%;
- c) The report provides a visual representation of the types of activity month by month during the year, and also the number of callouts per district, for which Nottingham City had by far the greatest at 3,246;
- d) Also, included in report is a breakdown of the three priority types of incidents attended per month, which are summarised as:
  - o priority 1, severe risk to life;
  - o priority 2, serious hazard and high-risk threat;
  - o priority 3, confirmed low risk to human life.
- e) Whilst the Service aims for an attendance time of eight minutes or less, due to the number incidents during last year's hot summer, many of which were difficult to get to and/or the precise location unclear, attendance time averaged 8.15 minutes, whilst attendance time for the current year, to date, is averaging 7.55 minutes;
- f) On-call availability achieved 87.1% against target of 85%, placing it within the top 3 UK Fire and Rescue Services;
- g) Hucknall Fire Station achieved 100% on-call availability, closely followed by Worsop;
- h) Long-term On-call availability issues continue at Southwell Station, but following focused recruitment, there are now 26 on-call new starters;
- i) As previously requested, a detailed breakdown of performance at both Ashfield and Retford Fire Stations is included in the report and shows a marked improvement at Ashfield, but a reduced performance at Retford, mainly due to vacancies as 3 firefighters have left the Service;
- j) With a target of 98% availability, Wholetime Duty System (WDS) availability performed well overall, with the exception of the second appliance at Stockhill Lane, with an availability of 97.1%;

- k) The seven second 999 call response time target of 96% was only marginally missed by the Joint Fire Control, at 95.6%. However, this can be attributed to the large number of summer incidents, and the added complications of identifying the exact of location of and access to incidents in very rural areas;
- l) Mobilising performance dropped due to ongoing issues with the mobilising system which is due to be replaced in 2024.

Bryn Coleman, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection, highlighted the following points, and responded to members' questions:

- m) The target of 13,000 Safe and Well Visits was exceeded by 7%, totalling 13,914;
- n) 86.9% of Safe and Well Visits (SWV) were delivered to citizens over 65 years of age and/or disabled citizens, which is in line with the CHARLIE profile of those most at risk of fires in the home;
- o) Fire safety, road safety, and water safety awareness activities were undertaken;
- p) The Safer Schools programme is being rolled out to schools based in areas where there is a higher occurrence of fires, whilst the Fire Setters Scheme received referrals of 128 individuals;
- q) Due to vacancies within the Fire Safety Inspectors Team, it had not been possible to meet the target of 1,200 Fire Safety audits, however 1,024 were successfully completed, with 531 Business Safety Checks (BSC) undertaken by operational crews and 123 shadowed by inspectors;
- r) Total number of BSC by operational crew exceeded the target of 500 by 6.2%;
- s) The following prevention activities were undertaken in 2022/23:
  - i. 216 post fire inspections;
  - ii. 241 follow-ups to complaints;
  - iii. 30 issuing of Enforcement Notices;
  - iv. 8 Prohibition Notices;
  - v. 766 building regulation consultations;
  - vi. 320 licencing consultations;
  - vii. 96 other consultations with agencies.
- t) The number of unwanted fire signals (UwFS) increased by 9.1%, against a target reduction of 3%. This figure is higher than the national average and provided an increase of 7.6%. Once attended, the Service do follow up to determine the cause of the UwFS, and to try to prevent further unnecessary attendances. The main culprits were residential premises, then non-residential premises, including hospitals, followed by hotels and care homes;
- u) Lift rescues reduced by 7% to total of 177;

- v) The Joint Audits and Inspection Team (JAIT) has inspected 188 buildings (21,747 flats) and is yet to inspect 21 buildings in excess of 18 m in height, and 273 buildings below 18 m;
- w) The Health and Safety Executive is to oversee establishment of regional multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) of professionals from building control, fire safety and the housing sector to support their regulatory responsibilities. As Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire have the highest number of high-rise buildings, these two Services will collaboratively lead on the regional MDTs, with funding available to support the additional resourcing of new regulatory legislation;
- x) Following the extreme weather of last summer and the substantial rise in fires, some of which will have been natural combustion, prevention activities continue and the Service is ensuring that response capacity is available at the height of the summer, when demand is at its greatest. In addition, consideration is being given to specific requirements of rural fire fighting and the potential investment in a rural fire fighting vehicle for 2025;
- y) The availability of On-Call firefighters at Southwell Fire Station is an ongoing challenge, but staffing has been increased this year, including dual contract firefighters (working as Wholetime, and On-Call) but this not resolve all issues. The Service is investigating revision of the On-Call contract to make it more accessible and attractive to potential On-Call recruits, whilst also ensuring that the adequate resources are available;
- z) The Fire Safety Inspection Team was not able to meet its targets due to staffing issues, including retirements and the two years required to train and qualify for unsupervised inspection. In addition, the metric does not take into account the entire workload of ongoing inspections where concerns are raised, and further visits required. Further to that, 50% of checks undertaken by operational crews require a further visit from an inspector, which again. Is not recognised within the metric;
- aa) A proportion of UwFS can be attributed to the increase of care in the community and the knock-on effects of other services', not necessarily emergency services, inability to attend vulnerable people in need. Attending crews never presume that there is a false alarm and always respond. There are potential measures which could be put in place in vulnerable people's homes, including a smoke and/or heat detection unit, which alerts a named individual when triggered. If that individual does not respond, the system then summons the emergency services;
- bb) With regard to the tall building inspections, the establishment of the Multi-Discipline Teams (MDTs) will relieve some of that work pressure, but at the same time, some members of the Fire Safety Inspection Team will be transferred to staff the MDT, from which they may be transferred out of county to assist in work in the highest need areas. Current fire safety advisers can go for promotion which enables 12 month training, for which there is grant funding available, instead of two years of training. However, this still limits projected staff planning to 12 months;
- cc) Mobile data terminals (on board appliances) are often slow to update, but when attending an incident, the premises should maintain a fire resistant box on site providing relevant structural and safety information. Following changes in

legislation, maintaining this information and ensuring it is up-to-date is now the responsibility of a named responsible person.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **6 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, Areas For Improvement**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates the Committee on the Service's progress against two of the four Areas For Improvement (AFI) identified by his Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue (HMICFR) in 2021, for which this committee has been delegated the monitoring and scrutiny role.

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

- a) The two AFIs are as follows:
  - i. AFI 2 – the Service should assure itself that its risk-based inspection programme prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk;
  - ii. AFI 4 – the Service should ensure that, when responding to a 999 call, mobile data terminals (MDTs) are reliable to allow staff to access risk information;
- b) with regard to AFI 2, as previously reported to the Committee, the Service is collaborating with a Nottingham Trent University PhD student who has undertaken an in-depth evaluation of the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP), to ensure that it is fit for purpose and operating effectively. The full report is scheduled to be presented to the Committee at its October meeting;
- c) AFI 4 was confirmed as completed in June 2022 following a successful trial and then roll out in this financial year across the tri-service collaboration appliances of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue, Derbyshire Fire Rescue and Nottinghamshire Fire Rescue of new MDTs, including additional hardware.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) note the progress with addressing the AFI assigned to the Community Safety Committee;**
- 2) agree to receive future updates on progress.**

## **7 Grenfell Tower Inquiry and Tall Building Response**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provides an update on the actions taken in response to the Grenfell Tower Action Plan, to enable effective firefighting and rescue responses to fires in tall buildings.

Following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) Following the tragic deaths of 72 people in fire at Grenfell Tower, six years ago, a public inquiry was established to examine the circumstances and present recommendations to help prevent future incidents by addressing building safety regulations and how emergency services respond;
- b) Since 2020, the Service has formulated an action plan to address the inquiry recommendations and has inspected 23 tall, high risk buildings (18 m and above), which present a range of challenges including firefighter access and/or the potential for fire to spread easily within premises. This information is collated with fire protection partner agencies, the responsible person for the building, and operational crews to ensure that of the best possible plans of action are in place for the premises. This work is ongoing, being regularly monitored and recorded;
- c) Joint Fire Control have also been undertaking tall building exercises, from which learning continues with regard to disability evacuation, residents with foreign languages, and potentially those with disabilities;
- d) 50 table top exercises have been undertaken with all stations, alongside no-notice physical exercises to ensure familiarity with response plans;
- e) Funding has been received from Central Government, some of which has been spent on specialist equipment, such as smoke hoods to aid evacuation, along with additional firefighting equipment, examples of which are available for members to view following the meeting;
- f) High-rise response procedures continue to be tested and feedback provided at a local and national level to support a fully holistic learning environment to ensure that best practice is embedded across the sector;
- g) With regard to fire protection, a lot of new legislation has been introduced or scheduled, which presents further challenges with regard to additional learning and enforcement knowledge for firefighters;
- h) Paragraph 2.13 of the report lists the requirements of the named responsible person, as is mandatory for each tall building where people reside above 11 metres;
- i) Building Safety Inspectors are highly qualified and in great demand, both in the public and private sector, and so current vacancies place another pressure on the Service;
- j) To give assurance and ensure that residents of high-rise buildings know what is expected of them in a fire, the Service holds targeted community events to engage and educate higher risk communities to ensure there is a wholly joined up understanding and response. In addition, the Service has a dedicated website page providing advice for residents of tall buildings;
- k) After the Grenfell Tower tragedy, there was a lot of immediate national and local activity focusing on the removal of ACM cladding, which was responsible for the

rapid spread of fire on the tower. This continued to be closely scrutinised with the Fire Service taking an ongoing lead;

- l) Ongoing building safety inspections continue to find problems with buildings, particularly where there has been a change of purpose, such as offices converted to student accommodation, where compartmentalisation has been compromised and fire can spread easily or even unnoticed between units;
- m) The new building requirements do assist with reducing fire risk for newly renovated properties. Service officers are confident the Service has robust processes in place identify and highlight issues, and to work with building owners and partners, including with enforcement where necessary, to protect the safety of citizens;
- n) The Service hasn't identified buildings or businesses that are purposely non-compliant, but there is a challenge with regard to timescales due to resourcing issues within the sector around the limited number of contractors qualified to remove ACM cladding, which is far exceeded by the number of buildings acquiring cladding removal, and so the Service works with the buildings' responsible person, providing safety advice and guidance in the meantime. This can sometimes result in the provision of a waking watch during nights until proper systems put in place;
- o) Nottingham City has the most high-rise properties within the county. Where a high risk building is identified, the Service works closely with the responsible person to address the issues, but issues are also highlighted to operational crews to ensure they are aware and able to respond effectively. Partner agencies are also informed, and the Service undertakes resident/community engagement, to ensure that residents have an understanding of what to do if an incident does occur. Where issues are identified, the Service undertakes and records regular monitoring and where progress is not made enforcement action can be taken;
- p) There are 23 high-risk high-rise buildings outstanding full compliance, from approximately 300-400 high-rise buildings Nottingham. If the level of safety presented an immediate risk to residents in any of these buildings, the Service would issue prohibition notices to prevent the occupation. Some of these buildings need elements of improvement. The majority of these premises are student accommodation with a yearly turnover of residents, meaning a repeat of the safety advice is required annually, but the responsible persons and building owners are more often taking responsibility for this element;
- q) Every frontline appliance now carries smoke hoods which are used regularly, including at domestic property fires to evacuate occupants.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) note the contents of the report;**
- 2) endorse the ongoing work being undertaken to ensure an effective response to fires in tall buildings.**



## 8 British Sign Language Charter Progress Report

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates the Committee on progress against the five pledges of the British Sign Language (BSL) Charter.

Following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) The five pledges are as follows:
  - o Pledge One: consult formally and informally with the local deaf community on a regular basis;
  - o Pledge Two: ensure access for deaf people to information and services;
  - o Pledge Three: support deaf children and families;
  - o Pledge Four: ensure staff working with deaf people can communicate effectively using British Sign Language;
  - o Pledge Five: promote learning and high-quality teaching of British Sign Language;
- b) This commitment is just one element of the Service's drive to ensure that it can engage across all communities and provide an excellent Service to all citizens, including ensuring that the citizens can communicate with the Service, and that the Service can communicate to them;
  - i. Specialist prevention teams are learning British Sign Language to help better engage with the deaf community;
  - ii. Specialist heat and smoke alarms which incorporate flashing lights and vibration pads in the event of a trigger, have been made available to members of the deaf community for installation in their homes;
  - iii. There has been increased engagement with the BSL community, including through social media, on the Service's website and with the 999 BSL service specifically for deaf citizens to contact in the event emergency;
  - iv. Specific engagement has been undertaken with the deaf community with regard to the community risk management plan;
- c) the BSL charter will further be reviewed through the inclusion performance group and strategic inclusion board;
- d) further technology will be investigated with regard to interpretation technology and apps to assist crews and community engagement, including support staff;
- e) The Service also proposes to visit deaf schools and the deaf community as a whole to increase fire safety awareness;

- f) Consultation is ongoing to ensure the needs of the community are met by the Service without any access discrimination.

Members welcome the work and progress to date.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) note the content of the report;**
- 2) support the Service's commitment to continue to improve its services for the deaf community.**



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold,  
Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 31 March 2023 from 10.01 am - 10.49 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor John Clarke MBE (Chair)  
Councillor Callum Bailey  
Councillor Sybil Fielding  
Councillor Nicola Heaton  
Councillor Mike Quigley MBE  
Councillor Roger Upton  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora (substitute)

#### Absent

Councillor Steve Battlemuch

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

Craig Parkin – Chief Fire Officer  
Becky Smeathers - Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority  
Matt Reavill, Head of Corporate Risk and Assurance  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **26 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Steve Battlemuch, Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora substituting.

### **27 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **28 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **29 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Report to January 2023**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which informs members on the 2022/23 financial performance of the Service and Prudential Code monitoring to the end of January 2023.

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

- a) Further to the report submitted to the last meeting there have been significant changes, which are set out in table 1 of the report, and present a £515k underspend against the revised budget of £46.297m:
- b) This level of underspend is significant, especially when taking into consideration the 7% pay settlement and the resulting impact on the Service;
- c) Table 2 of the report sets out the financial variances since last reported to the committee in January 2023. This identifies an additional £147k, which includes grant funding for a Fire Protection Officer, but the Service is struggling to recruit to the post, due to a national shortage. As a result, this figure is likely to be moved into next year's budget;
- d) A significant number of vacancies has resulted in underspend and is contributed to by the reduction of 12 posts since the last report;
- e) There has also been an underspend on anticipated over time of £206k;
- f) The decrease in energy and fuel prices against the predicted cost, has provided an underspend of approximately £182k;
- g) It is proposed that a new £300k earmarked reserve for the Replacement of the Mobilising System is created using the surplus business rates relief grant and £193k of the revenue underspend. Since Leicestershire Fire rescue service have withdrawn from the initially proposed tri-service purchasing agreement, cost to both Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire will increase;
- h) There is an anticipated £180k of income from the apprenticeship levy, which is built into the budget;
- i) Due to significantly increased interest rates, investments have generated £164k as at the time the budget was set interest rates were anticipated at only 0.5%, and have risen to 3.5%;
- j) Table 1 of the report sets out the estimated movement in reserves during this financial year, and it is noted that any underspend will feed through and support next year's general fund reserve and budget setting for 2024/25;
- k) There are some minor adjustments to projects within the capital programme due to delays and issues around the supply chains, along with access to and rising cost of parts, most specifically regarding vehicles;
- l) Table 5 of the report sets out slippage, for which approval is sought, along with the proposed reallocation of capital budget underspend;
- m) It is proposed that £117k of the underspend is reallocated to Worksop Fire Station where there has been an increase in costs and retention costs, and that £50k is

allocated to extending the life of breathing apparatus by 10 years by the replacement of the valves;

- n) The original overtime and basic pay costs budget was expected to overspend following increased activity during the hot summer. However, on-call turnouts has dropped by 25% since then which has resulted in an underspend position. ,;
- o) The Service maintains a 10 year rolling capital programme, but the budgets report only anticipates the next four years ahead as future funding is unknown, and may change. Equipment and vehicles have been prioritised within the 10 year capital programme, and whilst the estates program was temporarily paused, in the current circumstances it is anticipated that it will be possible to provide more accurate future projections for next year's estate budget setting;
- p) Within the estates capital programme, progress of the training school capital bid has been delayed until the Service can be sure that the project can be met within a financially stable model;
- q) Although major capital projects may have been paused as part of the proportional approach to potential available funds, the Service still strives to be considered by HMICF&RS as outstanding, which will require environmental investments around estate, whilst maintaining focus on the commitments to communities in the community risk management plan.

Members welcomed the healthier financial position of the Service compared to only a few months ago, but reiterated the importance of having a longer term view of the funding settlement from Central Government to better enable financial planning.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) **approve the transfer of the £147k fire protection grant to earmarked reserves (as set out in sections 2.2 & 2.15 of the report);**
- 2) **approve the creation of a £300k earmarked reserve for the replacement mobilisation system project (as set out in section 2.4 of the report);**
- 3) **approve £285k of slippage to the capital programme as detailed in the table below.**

<b>Capital Project - Request for Approval of Slippage to 2023/24</b>	<b>Amount to be slipped to 2023/24 £'000</b>
<b>Mobile Computing (Surface Go's for the Appliances)</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Community Fire Risk Management Information</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Workshop Fire Station retention</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Light Vehicles</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>285</b>

- 4) **note the capital programme underspends detailed in the table below:**

- 5) **approve the reallocation of £117k from this underspend to fund the retention and other costs of £117k for Worksop Station;**
- 6) **approve the addition of a new £50k 2023/24 project to extend the life of existing Breathing Apparatus, to be funded from the 2022/23 underspends.**

<b>Capital Budget Underspends and Reallocations 2022/23</b>	<b>Underspend 2022/23 £'000</b>
<b>Cloud Migration</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Switch Upgrades</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Occupational Health - ICT Capital</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Newark Fire Station</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Replacement Duty Rig</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>Foam Branches</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Water Rescue</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Light Vehicles</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>Reallocation to Worksop Station</b>	<b>(117)</b>
<b>Reallocation to Breathing Apparatus 2023/24 project</b>	<b>(50)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>537</b>

### **30 Internal Audit Report 2021/22 Update**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which provides the committee with an update on progress against the annual audit plan 2022/23.

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

- a) Four audit reports have been completed, one has been postponed to next year, and another three are in progress;
- b) Auditing of performance management had previously been a struggle but now the team is resourced appropriately, significant progress has been made, with 'reasonable' assurance issued and nine recommendations made;
- c) Fleet maintenance received a 'reasonable' assurance, with two priority one recommendations made which are being addressed. It had been a struggle to keep within the budgets in this area;
- d) Asset disposal was awarded 'limited' assurance last year, so the team worked hard and this too has now been issued as 'reasonable' assurance, with work ongoing in some areas;
- e) Budget management was issued with substantial assurance as risk levels have lowered. Regular reports are received by the Strategic Leadership Team and reported back;
- f) With regard to managing the asset register, particularly regarding ICT and people moving more towards home working, the move from the old HQ provided an

opportunity for asset clearance, which included the disabling of devices to be disposed of and reducing the risk of any data breaches. Members concerns regarding the detailed ICT asset register will be reported back to the ICT team;

- g) Members should be assured that all assets are included on the register and have an allocated assets number. This register included for inspection by internal audit colleagues. It is recognised that ICT colleagues to maintain strict asset controls.

**Resolved to note the report.**

### **31 Corporate Risk Management**

Matt Reavill, Head of Corporate Risk and Assurance, presented the report which will continue to be brought to the committee on a regular basis for monitoring and scrutiny, following members concerns at the high number of high-level risks identified.

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

- a) Since the initial report of concern was presented to the committee, the 6 very high risks have now reduced to 3, mainly due to many external factors, including the risk of industrial action, which has reduced now that the pay of the has been accepted;
- b) The current 'very high' risks are summarised within the report and updated as follows:
  - i. Inability to set a balanced budget– this risk has eased, but the Authority has had to use reserves to achieved a balanced budget within this year next year and onwards;
  - ii. firefighter pension scheme -there is still some uncertainty and no further update on the legal case;
  - iii. mobilising -this is a complex issue, although the risk of strike has subsided, there is a continuing risk around implementation of the new mobilising system which includes an increased financial risk now that Leicestershire have withdrawn from the project;
- c) Risk 15, reputation, is a new area of risk and has emerged following reports of inappropriate cultural behaviours within some specific Fire and Rescue Services and the publication of the HMICFRS report on culture within the fire and rescue service. The Service continues work in line with the Community Risk Management Plan's (CRMP) commitment to 'support and develop our workforce and promote an inclusive culture'. From the staff survey, 12% of respondents said that they had felt bullied and/or harassed in some way at some time. Work is ongoing to ensure that this behaviour is addressed by way of an action plan to ensure some of the sector's cultural improvement areas identified are implemented. There is concern that with a negative impact on reputation, this may result in citizens feeling less comfortable with firefighters in the homes, so this behaviour must stop and citizens be reassured;
- d) It is intended to de-escalate some levels of risk, re-examine the threshold of the medium and above risks, and propose that only risks above the medium level are put before the committee, with all lower level risks dealt with departmentally;

- e) It is noted that the Emergency Services Network development is not on the risk register as progress has been paused nationally for the past two years;
- f) The risk level summary table within the report is to be amended to remove the very high risk rating for 'availability of resources', which is listed correctly as medium risk;
- g) Where identified, risks are incorporated into the CRMP.

Members welcomed:

- h) The committee's future focus on only very high, high and medium risk areas for monitoring and scrutiny;
- i) The work to eradicate any culture within the Service which could have a negative impact on staff, the Services' reputation with citizens, and following on from that, the confidence that citizens may have in the Service which could restrict the Service's protection, prevention and rescue work.

#### **Resolved**

- 1) to endorse the Service's approach to managing the key risks to the Authority;**
- 2) to note the most recent version of the Corporate Risk Register (attached at Appendix A to the report) specifically the risk area of Mobilising, Budgets and Pensions that are rated as 'very high' and new risk area of Service Reputation;**
- 3) to approve the removal of the following risk areas from the CRR and endorse these risks will now be monitored at departmental level:**
  - Emergency Services Network**
  - Legal Knowledge**
  - Programme Governance**
  - Environmental;**
- 4) to approve that the corporate risk management report returns to a six-monthly reporting frequency following the de-escalation of three areas of risk previously reporting as 'very high'.**





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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold,  
Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 16 June 2023 from 10.01 am - 11.34 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Liaqat Ali  
Councillor Callum Bailey  
Councillor Richard Butler  
Councillor Sybil Fielding  
Councillor Patience Ifediora  
Councillor Anwar Khan  
Councillor Roger Upton

#### Absent

Councillor John Clarke MBE

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

Candida Brudenell – Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Becky Smeathers – Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority  
Terry Scott - Head of Procurement and Resources  
Andrew Howarth – Internal Audit Team Manager  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **1 Appointment of Chair for the meeting**

Resolved for Councillor Patience Ifediora, Vice-Chair of the Authority, to Chair the meeting.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor John Clark, on other County Council business.

### **3 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair, presiding at the meeting.

## 5 2022-23 Revenue and Capital Outturn

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which provides a historical update on the financial position of the Service for the 2022/23 financial year.

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

- a) Initially it was anticipated that there would be a significant deficit in 2023/24 of up to £3 million which would require cost saving cuts to the Service, so recruitment was delayed until the position became clearer – this created an underspend position for 2022/23;
- b) Higher than anticipated business rate relief grant was received towards the end of the year which has created a surplus £170,000;
- c) Holding vacant posts resulted in an underspend on staffing, but this saving was used to fund the 7% firefighter pay award;
- d) With a budget of £46 million, an underspend of £236,000 was achieved, with the proposal to transfer this sum to the following earmarked reserves:
  - £213,000 to the Mobilising Reserve for the Mobilising Project
  - £23,000 to iTrent Reserve for additional Consultancy;
- e) The whole time pay underspend equated to 1.8% the whole time pay budget;
- f) Transport costs were overspent by £433,000 due to the increase in fuel costs, but also vehicle maintenance costs as the replacement of appliances has been delayed and there are added complications with regard to accessing vehicle parts;
- g) Table 3 of the report provides a breakdown of reserve movement during the 2022/23 financial year;
- h) The costs, and gains from the apprenticeship levy are built into the budget and fund full-time training, but it is noted that the costs of training are far greater than funds received from the levy;
- i) The final figure for the business rate covid relief grant has now been finalised by the billing authorities, and there is no potential for the authorities to claw back any funding already received;
- j) Replacement fleet vehicles had been delayed from the initially proposed schedule as the life time of vehicles had been extended in an effort to save funds. However this has resulted in greater maintenance costs and the Service has experienced three catastrophic engine failures in vehicles which are nearly 15 years old;

- k) There is a delay in the supply of appliance chassis, although initially nine months, the delay is now 18 months, but four new pump appliances are expected to be in service for April 2024;
- l) Slippage for the whole year totals £980,000, but overall underspend totals £844,000.

**Resolved**

- 1) **to note the contents of the report;**
- 2) **to approve the transfer of £236k of underspends to Earmarked Reserves to support ongoing projects, as identified in section 2.2 of the report:**

<b>Earmarked Reserve</b>	<b>Amount £'000</b>
<b>Mobilising Reserve</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>iTrent Reserve</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>

- 3) **to approve the slippage of £980km on the capital programme as detailed in Section 2.43 and Table 5 of the report.**

**6 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Monitoring Report to April 2023**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which sets out the financial performance of the Service and Prudential Code monitoring for the 2023/24 financial year, to the end of April 2023.

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

- a) The Prudential limits were set in February, the report provides an update on notable variances and activity since then;
- b) Table 1 in the report provides a summary of expenditure and funding, which includes a predicted underspend of £1.3 million, attributed to the following:
  - i. Whole time pay underspend was forecast at £525,000, for which between 16 and 28 posts are currently vacant;
  - ii. Non-uniform pay predicted a £45,000 underspend;
  - iii. Pensions are expected to overspend by £16,000, but there is a forecast underspend of £33,000 for injury allowance payments;
  - iv. Sales fees and charges predicted a surplus of £93,000;
  - v. The income surplus of £416,000, includes secondment income, remaining government grants, protection uplift, interest receivable;
- c) Further information on the capital financing costs is provided later in the agenda;

- d) Table 3 of the report sets out anticipated movement in reserves;
- e) With regard to the new appliances, the fourth appliance isn't expected to arrive until the new 2024/25 financial year, and so will be included in that year's budget;
- f) Recruitment is ongoing and turnover of staff has returned to normal levels. However, specialist areas such as IT and finance are nationally difficult to recruit to, especially with regard to pension services and some posts have been vacant for over a year;
- g) It is an aspiration for the whole of the non-operational service fleet (used by green book staff) to be electric within five years. As such, 12 stations already have electric charging points whereby staff charging their own vehicles are recharged at cost for the electricity used;
- h) Progress against the decarbonisation and energy reduction program includes the purchase of five hybrid vehicles;
- i) Whilst ICT programme spend has been slower than predicted, it is likely to pick up as vacancies are filled and team capacity and activity increases;
- j) All Prudential indicators are in line with the limits approved;
- k) Borrowing levels currently exceed the capital financing requirements as the Service borrowed early when rates were low, and is now benefiting from this advantage. A £3m loan is due to be repaid in March 24 which will bring borrowing levels back in line with the capital financing requirement at year end.

### **Resolved**

- 1) **to note the contents of the report, including the changes to the fire appliance capital budget outlined in sections 2.32 – 2.34 of the report;**
- 2) **to approve the addition of a new £12k Marauding Terrorist Attack Equipment project to be funded from Capital Grant (section 2.30).**

### **7 Unaudited Final Accounts 2022/23**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report, highlighted the following points, and responded to members questions:

- a) As is required, the draft statement of accounts has been published to the website prior to the end of May and is presented to the committee for scrutiny;
- b) It is anticipated that the external auditors will not be able to commence the 2022/23 audit due to ongoing issues within the audit sector, including additional auditing requirements being imposed, which require additional resources when recruitment is very difficult, resulting in delays. Audits are currently running a year behind schedule;

- c) The outturn report looks at the management costs, while the audited statement looks at the full cost of providing the Service;
- d) The core accounting statements provide two years' worth of information;
- e) Financial Training regarding the statement of accounts can be made available to members if desired.

**Resolved to note the draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23, as attached at Appendix A to the report.**

## **8 Home Office Efficiency and Productivity Plan**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Efficiency and Productivity Plan Home Office submission for the financial year 2023/24 in response to the Home Office request for an Efficiency and Productivity Plan.

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

- a) It is noted that as part of the agreement to enable the Service to increase council tax, an efficiency and productivity plan is required by the Home Office, to show that the service every effort to identify any inefficiencies and address them;
- b) The efficiency and productivity plan is attached the report sets out:
  - i. the financial management of the Service;
  - ii. efficiencies already identified and addressed to date;
  - iii. actions to support all areas of staffing identify further efficiencies and/or improve productivity;
  - iv. progress against key performance indicators
  - v. how the Service has sought the broader efficiency and productivity benefits of collaborative working with other fire rescue services, other emergency services, local authority and health care services;
  - vi. the plan also sets out the Futures25 Efficiency Strategy for the Service;
  - vii. asset management and investment in technology;
  - viii. resourcing (including pay) and procurement;
- c) The service will continue to seek and ensure value for money;
- d) A Futures 25 phase 2 update report will be submitted to the fire authority in July 2023.

Members of the committee welcomed the document as very comprehensive and providing a useful background to the current position.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) note the content of the Efficiency and Productivity Plan for 2023/24;**

- 2) **endorse the Service's approach to delivering the plan via the Futures 2025 improvement programme;**
- 3) **agree to receive future update reports as necessary.**

## 9 Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, introduced Andrew Howarth, Internal Audit Team Manager, who presented the report.

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

- a) Internal audits were undertaken in the following areas and overall provided an assessment of reasonable to substantial assurance:
  - i. Performance Management;
  - ii. Fleet Maintenance
  - iii. Asset Disposals
  - iv. Budget Management Risk Management
  - v. Regionalisation / Joint Working
  - vi. Cyber Security
- b) It is noted that the Corporate Governance internal audit is postponed until the next financial year;
- c) Internal audits undertaken since the last report to the Finance and resources committee, and therefore, presented in more detail, are risk management, regionalisation/joint working, and cyber security;
- d) A summary of the recommendations for each audit is set out in appendix A to the report;
- e) The audit plan for this year is attached as appendix C to the report and identifies the following six areas for review:
  - i. Workforce planning & recruitment
  - ii. Contract management
  - iii. Leading the Service (National Fire Standard)
  - iv. Health and safety
  - v. Business continuity planning
  - vi. Information security (data & physical security)
- f) Any issues identified during an audit are presented with recommendations in an audit report and then action tracked for progress, with regular updates to the Chief Fire Officer. Members of the Authority would be made aware of any significant issues;
- g) Senior officers can request an internal audit in a specific area to identify issues and seek solutions;

- h) The proposed audit plan is not set in stone, and if concerns are raised in another work area, audit focus and priorities may change;
- i) The Cardiff checks referred to in appendix C to the report refer to ad-hoc checking of invoices which are then scrutinised in detail from initiation to process completion to ensure the proper processes have been applied and there are no areas of concern or fraud;
- j) With regard to staffing and recruitment, if an overspend does occur, the Service will look to address it by the end of the financial year, but there are currently external pressures such as inflation, pay and availability of suitably qualified staff.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) **note the outcome of the 2022/23 Internal Auditors Annual Report;**
- 2) **note the outcome of 2 of the 3 internal audit reports completed since the last audit update report to Finance and Resources Committee, the third being considered in private, later in the meeting;**
- 3) **note the 2023/24 External Audit Plan (Appendix C of the Internal Auditors Annual Report).**

**10 Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining 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.**

**11 Exempt Appendix to Internal Audit Report**

**Resolved to note the outcome of exempt audit report completed since the last audit update report to Finance and Resources Committee.**

**12 Sale of Former NFRS HQ, Bestwood Lodge**

Terry Scott, Head of Procurement and Resources, presented the report which provides an update on the sale of the former Fire and Rescue Headquarters at Bestwood Lodge.

**Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out on 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 Joint  
Headquarters - Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 21 April 2023 from  
10.05am -11.03am**

### **Membership**

#### **Present**

Councillor Dave Trimble (Chair)  
Councillor Robert Corden  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora  
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan  
Councillor Nigel Turner

#### **Absent**

Councillor Tom Hollis

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

Damien West – Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Matt Sismey - Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager  
Nick Linthwaite - Human Resource's Manager  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **19 Apologies for Absence**

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

### **20 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **21 Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **22 Human Resources Update**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the report, which was presented by Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, and Nick Linthwaite, Human Resources Manager, and provides an update on key human resources metrics and equalities monitoring data.



General statistics consider activity between the 01 January to 31 March 2023 reporting period, with absence figures spanning the period of 01 January to 31 March 2023, and equality statistics spanning the period 01 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

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

- a) During the reporting period 25 individuals joined the Service, and 17 left, resulting in the establishment holding 23 whole-time vacancies;
- b) With regard to the whole-year overview, spanning the 2022/23 financial year, two trainee courses were run to fill the whole-time establishment posts, which resulted in the recruitment of 24 whole time staff, who are scheduled to start in April and September;
- c) A service transfer recruitment period resulted in two successful candidates joining from other Fire and Rescue Services;
- d) The number of leavers was within the predicted numbers, with the rate slowing;
- e) A revised workforce plan will be presented to the next meeting;
- f) During the period of 1 October to 31 December, 102 sickness absence days were recorded for whole time staff, which is 17.3% lower than last year;
- g) As previously requested by members, appendix A to the report provides a breakdown of absence trends by year quarter, for the past three years;
- h) Appendix B to report provides a national fire service picture of sickness absence for whole time firefighters, retained firefighters, and green book staff, alongside all other Fire and Rescue Service reported absence;
- i) The Service continues to monitor trends, and where possible, take action to prevent further absence, including working with employees on long-term sickness absence;
- j) With regard to equalities, for the period 1st October to 31<sup>st</sup> March, there was very little change in the diversity of the operational workforce. The Support function is considered generally more representative of the county's population, however, there is still work to do;
- k) As previously requested by members of the Committee, the report sets out the percentage of protected characteristics within the whole workforce operational roles on-call roles and support roles, by percentage of the workforce;
- l) Work continues to further improve the diversity of the workforce and has included a rebranding of recruitment campaigns for all roles, and broadening recruitment engagement at jobs fairs public events and schools;
- m) Further information on the actual roles within the breakdown of the support work force by protective characteristic and grade was not available at the meeting, but could be supplied at a later date.

**Resolved to note the report.**

**23 People Strategy Update**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, provided an update on the priorities for the People Strategy 2022-25, which is in line with the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and underpinned by the national standards and work of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

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

- a) In addition to ensuring that the needs of the Service are met, the 4 key areas of the people strategy are:
  - i. shaping our workforce;
  - ii. positive workplace and culture;
  - iii. inclusion;
  - iv. health and well-being;
  
- b) with regard to Shaping our workforce,
  - i. During the 2022-23 the Service has undertaken a whole-time recruitment campaign;
  - ii. the 'Futures 25' efficiency planning and workforce review started during 2022/23, and is now entering phase 2, in which current structures and efficiencies will be examined to ensure that the Service can deliver to meet the needs of communities. A full update will be submitted to the Fire Authority;
  - iii. there had recently been a higher than usual turnover of staff, which has slowed and returned to expected rates. It appears that this was a national trend of resignations following the pandemic;
  - iv. as a result of an on-call firefighter recruitment drive, 33 applicants had been successful, but a 10% turnover is predicted. Recruitment and retention are a challenge but work is ongoing to address this;
  - v. it takes 2-4 years to train Fire Safety Officers but there is a national shortage as fire safety regulations and requirements continue to be extended;
  
- c) With regard to positive workplace and culture:
  - i. the Service maintains good two-way communication with colleagues and has introduced a revised behavioural framework to further support this;
  - ii. values and culture have been specifically highlighted as an important area by the review of the London Fire Brigade (LFB);
  
- d) inclusion is promoted throughout the Service and the communities it serves, with positive recruitment activity, but it is recognised that there is still work to be done;
  - i. much work has been done to develop employee networks;
  - ii. the Community Engagement Plan has objectives to enhance relationships with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, with work ongoing to ensure that all communities understand the role of the Service, not only in attending incidents but also preventative work;

- e) Health and wellbeing is recognised as an essential element of creating a positive workplace, particularly with the physical, mental and emotional demands of the Service, and where fitness is integral to the role;
  - i. the extension of the working age to 60 for operational staff and 67 for other staff results in additional health and wellbeing requirements to maintain fitness;
  - ii. those in operational roles who are unable to maintain the required fitness levels, for whatever reason, may be offered the opportunity to transfer to non-operational roles to support their employment with the Service;
- f) sickness absence levels and causes are closely monitored and considered, with appropriate support provided to help staff return to work. It is acknowledged that further work is required to better promote the health and wellbeing support available for staff to self-refer or freely access, including peer support;
- g) All staff undergo medical examinations every 3 years and there is an externally operated Employee Assistance Programme which staff can access without the Service being informed, and is most commonly accessed for mental health support;
- h) The Occupational Health Team has now returned to full establishment numbers, following a period of high staff turnover;
- i) The Firefighter's Charity also provides valuable support on many levels and access to Blue Light support for emergency services is also accessible;
- j) It is not easy to gauge the success of the work to promote wellbeing as not all elements record engagement and report it to the Service to prove an increase in support uptake, but any increase would be considered positive.

Members of the Committee welcomed the report, the improvements made to date and proposed.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **24 Wholetime Recruitment Process 2022**

Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, and Nick Linthwaite, Human Resource's Manager, presented the report which updates the Committee on outcomes from the whole-time firefighter selection process which concluded in October 2022.

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

- a) The target number for whole-time recruitment was up to 36;
- b) The process was delayed due to budget issues and awaiting the outcome of the Fire Cover Review;
- c) A 3 month programme of engagement and promotion undertook several routes of positive activity with a focus on attracting citizens with characteristics under-

- represented in the operational workforce, including women, BAME and minority ethnic groups, and LGBT potential candidates;
- d) To attract interest, the Service held a variety of events and activities, including multimedia promotions, 'have a go' sessions, and promotion of apprenticeship schemes offered by the Service;
  - e) Of the 168 applicants who engaged with the positive action, 40 were women and 49 were from a BAME background;
  - f) 18 of the 29 appointments (62%) who were involved in positive action were successful, 9 (31%) being female and four (13.8%) being BAME applicants;
  - g) 10% of all applications were from LGBT+ applicants which was the highest group success rate;
  - h) The report sets out a breakdown of the numbers of applicants that failed/dropped out at each stage of the process, including by characteristic;
  - i) It is acknowledged that ongoing work is required to become more reflective of the community it serves;
  - j) Further youth engagement work is proposed, including approaching schools, existing youth organisations and creating cadet schemes, which will also target under-represented groups;
  - k) A lot of ground work has already been successfully laid with community leaders who welcome the Service's interest and engagement;
  - l) In addition to new recruits, there were 2 transfers from other Services and 6 migrations from on-call to whole-time posts.

Members of the Committee welcomed the success of the innovative positive action recruitment activity.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **25 HMICFRS Values and Culture Spotlight Report**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report, which informs the Committee of the recommendations from the spotlight review of the 'Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services', by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

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

- a) Specific themes of values and culture (including bullying, harassment, and discrimination), training and skills, fairness and diversity, and leadership were considered;
- b) It is noted that during initial inspections of 2018, concerns around the long standing culture and values of some Services had been raised by HMICFRS, and whilst approximately half of all Services had made good progress in addressing concerns, the others still required further work and received an 'inadequate' rating;
- c) Some examples of bad behaviour were found in other Services where staff did not feel confident in challenging inappropriate behaviour;
- d) 34 recommendations were made, all of which are listed in Appendix A to the report, 19 of which were specifically tasked to CFOs, and are to be fully implemented within 12 months;
- e) Prior to the HMICFRS Inspections, NFRS was already working hard on equalities and was rated as 'Good' for People, Values and Culture, but there is no room for complacency, so the Service continues to work to improve its current position, with the dedicated Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Lead Officer and Strategy Team creating the EDI Plan;
- f) Progress of the EDI is monitored monthly by the Chief Fire Officer, who also receives regular updates to ensure the continued progress of embedding values and behaviours into the culture of the Service.

Members of the Committee welcomed the progress, ongoing activity, achievement of a 'good' rating and the ambition to achieve an 'outstanding' rating in this hugely important area.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) note the content of the report from HMICFRS;**
- 2) support the approach of the Chief Fire Officer in addressing the Service's continued cultural journey;**
- 3) accept to receive updates against the specific HMICFRS recommendations.**



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Joint  
Headquarters - Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 23 June 2023  
from 10.05 am - 11.02 am**

### **Membership**

#### **Present**

Councillor Nick Raine (Chair)  
Councillor Robert Corden  
Councillor Tom Hollis  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora  
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan

#### **Absent**

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

Candida Brudenell - Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Damien West - Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

None.

### **2 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held 21 April 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **4 Human Resources Update**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the report which informs the Committee of the key human resources metrics for the period 1 April

to 31 May 2023, with the exception of absence data, which is for the reporting period 1 January to 31 March 2023.

Following points were highlighted and Members' questions responded to:

- a) Paragraph 2.1 of the report sets out the approved and in-post staffing figures for Wholetime, On-Call, and Support staff, it being noted that while 18 people left the Service, 14 have joined, but there still remains 18 vacant Wholetime posts, a deficit of 63.5 units of On-Call posts, and 7 vacant Support posts;
- b) Recruitment was paused last year with the potential need to cut services to enable the Authority to produce a balanced budget, against a predicted deficit. This has now been resolved and recruitment has commenced;
- c) Sickness absence has decreased in the last quarter and from the same period last year and is currently just below the national Fire Service average;
- d) Covid related sickness absences are included in the overall figures but also separately at 11.5% of the overall figure;
- e) Work-related sickness absence is generally fairly low, further detail can be provided to a future meeting;
- f) Overall, there has been a whole-year sickness absence decrease of 11.5% across all groups, with long-term sickness absence accounting for 61% of the overall figure;
- g) The report provides further detail of sickness absence for staffing groups, and a comparison to the national Fire Service trends;
- h) The Service maintains an Occupational Health Team on site which enables staff experiencing health issues to be brought into the system quickly and given appropriate support, which may include counselling, physiotherapy, or a range of support mechanisms;
- i) Appendix E to the report sets out the most common reasons for sickness absence, in which mental health and musculoskeletal issues rank high in most groups and so preventive measures/support have been put in place;
- j) The sickness absence statistics across all services nationally do not present a like-for-like comparison.

Members welcomed the additional 12 apprentice firefighters starting the two-year apprenticeship in September, with another Wholetime recruitment campaign commencing in 2024 for a total of 40 posts.

Identifying areas of work-related stress in the workforce could help prevent stress related sickness absence.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **5 Workforce Plan 2023-2025**

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the updated Workforce Plan, which contributes to the business planning process, which, in turn, supports the Community Risk Management Plan.

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

- a) The Workforce Plan looks ahead for up to two years at what will be required at that time and ensures that the workforce needs can be met;
- b) The Plan takes into consideration the following with regard to future planning and ensuring that staffing numbers are stable:
  - i. Workforce reductions through retirement, projected turnover and other factors;
  - ii. Workforce increases resulting from delivery of new Service requirements;
  - iii. The need for succession planning for specialist and managerial roles;
  - iv. Particular areas of concern within the Service;
  - v. Resourcing requirements
- c) Recruitment is a national issue for Fire and Rescue Services, particularly with On-Call roles and specifically in some areas of the county. However, the On-Call working model will be reviewed to try and address some of the issues to better suit modern living patterns;
- d) The Service aims to maintain full complement of 431 full-time firefighters, including increased cover at Ashfield Fire Station;
- e) As part of Futures25, the initial focus was on ensuring the Service could set and operate within sustainable budgets. The next phase will look at change and models of delivery across the Service, ensuring efficiency and sustainability;
- f) Workforce diversity is an ongoing issue for the sector as a whole, but the Service continues to try and diversify the workforce. One of the aims for the coming year is to improve engagement with and understanding of communities, and in addition to promoting the range of services provided and strengthening prevention work, to also promote the service as an employer of choice across a range of roles;
- g) The full Workforce Plan is attached as an appendix to the report;
- h) With regard to increasing diversity in the appropriate cohort, there is some evidence that potential applicants who engage in the Service's pre-recruitment positive action activity are successful in the recruitment processes. Work will continue to ensure that more people from diverse backgrounds are attracted to roles in the Service.
- i) Members should be assured that the Service will be focusing on communities in more deprived areas in forthcoming recruitment activities.



- j) The Service needs to ensure that the breadth of the roles available within the Fire Service is better understood by citizens, beyond that of frontline firefighter. It is anticipated that this will then support interest applications from the wider community.

Comments from Committee members included:

- k) The more the Service goes into communities, the better the response and awareness of the work it does will be. The Vice-Chair is working with members of the Equality Team to ensure the Service accesses a wide range of community events and activities to raise awareness of the Service and the potential opportunities;
- l) Whilst the City may have a broader range of BAME citizen diversity, other areas in the county, such as Ashfield and Mansfield, have a greater inequality in economic diversity. The Service also needs to focus on engaging with the longer term, lower income communities to promote prevention and protection work, but also the opportunities within Service;
- m) Members are asked that if they are aware of any community events, such as the Ashfield day or the Filipino Barrio Fiesta event in Nottingham, would they please inform the Service's Community Engagement Officer, so the Service can ask to be involved and have an engagement presence.
- n) The Chair agreed that the inclusion of social economic background as a target group engagement and recruitment was a valid point, adding that progress would be welcomed;
- o) Consideration should be given to the methods used by other Services and their achievement in broadening their engagement and recruitment. This includes the social media campaign to recruit more male nurses and female medical staff, or even the successful promotion of women's sport, such as football and cricket, and strengthening public support.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## **6 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, Areas For Improvement**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the report, which updates Members on the 'area for improvement' (AFI), which has been allocated to this Committee to address.

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

- a) The Service should assure itself that staff understand how to get well-being support;

- b) The report summarises the work undertaken so far, including:
- i. Review of post critical incident support;
  - ii. Updates on well-being provision;
  - iii. Information on how to seek information support;
  - iv. An independent employee survey;
  - v. A daily briefing on mental health information during mental health week;
  - vi. Suicide prevention crisis line developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council and The Firefighters Charity (to be launched later in the year);
  - vii. Provision and promotion of the 'Your Care' portal and app;
  - viii. Extended employee access to salary deducted purchases of home electronic equipment;
- c) Further proposals include:
- i. Review of the Well-Being Strategy;
  - ii. Briefings to duty officers on the revised post critical instance support process;
  - iii. Training for mental health advocates;
  - iv. Promotion of well-being by the Occupational Health Team, including easy access to clinics and a roadshow;
- d) Progress will be measured through a staff survey which is undertaken every two years, but engagement will be monitored regarding the numbers of people that services are supporting;
- e) The current added pressure of the cost of living crisis is acknowledged. The Service provides trauma counselling, anonymous counselling sessions, and support teams are in place to provide help and advice in confidence for broader mental health concerns. The feedback from peer support is that it has been really helpful to those engaged.

Members welcomed progress and emphasised the need to ensure that staff are aware of the different options available for mental health support.

**Resolved to note the report.**



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold,  
Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 28 April 2023 from 10.02 am - 10.49 am**

### **Membership**

#### Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)  
Councillor Sybil Fielding  
Councillor Tom Hollis  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora  
Councillor Nigel Turner

#### Absent

Councillor Mike Quigley MBE  
Councillor Jason Zadrozny  
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler

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

Craig Parkin – Chief Fire Officer  
Becky Smeathers – Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority  
Damien West – Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Mick Sharman - Strategic Manager for Collaboration  
Malcolm Townroe – Clerk and Monitoring Officer  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **25 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Jonathan Wheeler (Councillor Nigel Turner substituting)  
Councillor Mick Quigley MBE  
Councillor Jason Zadrozny (Councillor Tom Hollis substituting)

### **26 Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **27 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2023, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **28 Annual Delivery Plan - Year Two**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provides an overview of the Service's Annual Delivery Plan for Year Two of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-25.

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

- a) The Authority is about to enter year two of the three-year CRMP, which has the following six strategic goals (greater detail is provided in the appendix to the report):

Strategic Goal 1: We will help people stay safe from fires and other emergencies.

Strategic Goal 2: We will improve fire safety in the buildings people live and work in.

Strategic Goal 3: We will respond immediately and effectively to emergency incidents.

Strategic Goal 4: We will continue to support and develop our workforce and promote an inclusive Service.

Strategic Goal 5: We will continue our improvement journey to deliver an outstanding Service.

Strategic Goal 6: We will manage and invest in our Service to ensure it is fit for the future.

- b) The focus areas for the 2023/24 Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) are set out in the report and are summarised as follows:
- i. deliver 14,000 Safe and Well Visits;
  - ii. complete 15,000 Safety Audits;
  - iii. review resourcing to risk;
  - iv. embed the Core Code of Ethics into the Service Values and behaviours;
  - v. phase two of our Futures25 programme;
  - vi. develop a strategy and roadmap for Service decarbonisation;
  - vii. deliver services within the budget set for 2023/24;
- c) If the proposed ADP is approved, it will be published to the service's website in plain text to ensure that is accessible to all, including translation and accessibility tools, with printed paper copies available on request;
- d) The Service has set a realistically achievable target of 2032 to achieve a rating of 'Outstanding', noting that it is a journey, and not just a destination. His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is relevant but the main driver for the Services is the community it serves. The next CRMP is likely to retain the stated strategic goals and for the longer term;
- e) The Service engages and communicates with the community and partners at all levels on a daily basis, and agrees that communication and engagement is key.

Comments from members of the committee included:

- f) This is an excellent piece work which clearly sets out the action plan, the objectives, aims and aspirations of the Service to meet the needs and the citizens it serves;
- g) The emphasis on the Service's core behavioural and cultural code is welcomed as evidence that the Service and Authority is not complacent in this area.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) **note the report;**
- 2) **approve the Year Two Annual Delivery Plan for publication.**

**29 Tri-Service and Replacement Mobilising System Update**

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the committee of the current position regarding Tri-Service mobilising.

Following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) Since 2019 Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services have operated a Joint Fire Control Project. In 2021, a tri-service arrangement was agreed with Leicestershire to operate two control rooms for the three services, with the collaborative approach proposed of jointly commissioning a bespoke mobilising system to be operated by the three services;
- b) in a letter dated 20 March 2023, in a letter to the Chief Fire Officer, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service stated its decision to withdraw from the tri-service arrangement for the joint procurement of the tri-service mobilising system, and only remain part of the joint control arrangement until 31 October 2024 when the current mobilising system contract expires. It was stated that Leicestershire Service will remain receptive to future potential collaboration opportunities;
- c) Although tendering has commenced, no formal commitments have been made, but instead of a three-way cost share, the costs of a new system and associated risk, will now be shared between only the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Services;
- d) The broader implications are yet to be fully understood, but will inevitably result in a greater financial contribution from remaining partners. As a result, £300,000 from and earmarked reserves has been allocated by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service to address the additional internal demands, including required capacity to support the delivery of this statutory function;
- e) To support the programme, a temporary Strategic Manager post has been established to support collaborative tendering and associated work streams for both Services. Under the authority delegated to the Chief Fire Officer, several candidates from both Services were interviewed but Nottinghamshire's Mick Sharman has been appointed to this post which is jointly funded with the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service. A detailed report of the current commissioning position, including collaboration, will be provided to a future meeting.
- f) Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority is taking the financial lead on the project. Current tenders to supply mobilising systems range between £3 and £8 million, dependant on the functions and adaptations required;
- g) It is not specifically known why Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has withdrawn from the arrangement, but Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has determined

that there are some elements of a new mobilising system which will require additional elements bespoke to response needs of that Service, and not necessarily all three Services, a decision was made to ensure that independent control, including risk management, is retained by Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service:

- h) The introduction of the Emergency Services Network continues to be postponed by Central Government, and is now anticipated for 2026 when this was initially proposed as 2018;
- i) There are future collaboration opportunities with Services further afield, such as South Yorkshire, which currently also operates the Systell system, but at this point in time, although a good relationship is maintained, there is no intention to seek a further partner.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) note the intention of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to withdraw from the Tri-Service arrangements for Fire Control;**
- 2) note the update on progress against the replacement mobilisation system project;**
- 3) note and endorse the appointment of a temporary, additional Strategic Manager to oversee related work streams.**

### **30 Manchester Arena Inquiry - Volume Two**

Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provides an update of the Service's response to volume 2 of the Manchester Arena Inquiry and areas for learning.

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

- a) Following the bombing of the Manchester Arena in 2017 which killed 22 people and injured more than 1,000, a public inquiry was held which examined the preparations for the event, how the attack was handled, and the emergency response;
- b) Volume 1 of the inquiry focused on the security arrangements for the event and venue, and the interoperable working between the Police and EMAS colleagues and across National Inter-agency Liaison Officers (NILOs);
- c) Volume 2 examined the emergency response to the attack and the impact of any inadequacies in the planning and preparation by the emergency services, and in the emergency response;
- d) The inquiry has provided 139 recommendations, of which 62 are relevant to the fire service and a further 51 specifically relevant to the Local Resilience Forum;
- e) The report summarises points of key learning required, including:
  - i. Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP);
  - ii. Failures in communication;

- iii. Inadequate training within Fire Control and for national interoperability, including with Liaison Officers (NIOs) in managing an incident of this nature;
  - iv. Poor decision-making;
  - v. Failures in interoperability relating to operational approaches and available systems;
  - vi. A lack of understanding by partner agencies of the capabilities, training, and equipment available to and of the FRS;
  - vii. Failures of incident command;
  - viii. Lack of understanding of 'Operation Plato' which is the agreed national identifier for the response to a no-notice marauding terrorist attack (MTA);
- f) On the release of Volume 1, although Fire and Rescue Response was not specifically found to be at fault, NFRS identified potential areas of learning where the Service response could be improved, and applied changes;
- g) Progress in addressing the areas of concern identified in Volume 2 has progressed well and is under constant review. The Service's CRMP Assurance Board meets monthly and tracks progress and scrutinises progress against the recommendations.

Members welcomed the comprehensive report and the hugely important piece of work.

**Resolved to:**

- 1) **note the contents of this report and support the approach being taken by the Service in response to the Manchester Arena Inquiry;**
- 2) **agree to receive further reports to enable monitoring and scrutiny on the implementation of learning.**

### **31 Bereaved Families Charter**

The Chair introduced the item, noting that the Charter has been written by the former Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Reverend James Jones, to ensure the pain and suffering of families affected by the Hillsborough tragedy is not repeated in future tragedies, emphasising that public bodies and authorities have a responsibility to look after the communities and citizens they support.

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report and responded to members' questions as follows:

- a) It was believed that the Service had adopted the Charter when it was released 3 years ago, but this was not the case, and so an apology is issued for the delay;
- b) The Charter is set out in the appendix to the report and asks that the Service has a commitment to learn from disasters and their aftermath, and the longer term impact beyond the initial response;
- c) In adopting the Charter, the Service commits to the 6 points set out in the appendix, which refers to the need for honesty, openness, mutual respect, and support and protection for the vulnerable and bereaved during and following difficult circumstances.

Members wholeheartedly endorsed the adoption of the Charter, acknowledging that the impact on individuals and whole communities of tragedies such as Hillsborough, are deep and long lasting and must not be underestimated.

**Resolved to endorse the adoption of the Bereaved Families Charter.**

### **32 Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining 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.**

### **33 Exempt Minutes**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.