



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: 26 July 2024

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in March/April 2024.

Recommendations:

That Members note the contents of this report.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Craig Parkin
Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 8388100

Email : craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact : Corporate Communications Team
0115 8388100 corporatecomms@notts-fire.gov.uk

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	15 March 2024
Finance and Resources Committee	22 March 2024
Human Resources Committee	19 April 2024
Policy and Strategy Committee	26 April 2024

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 AND ETHICAL 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. There are no ethical implications arising from this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental or sustainability 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**

**Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority -
Community Safety**

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Joint Fire and Rescue Service/
Police Headquarters - Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 15
March 2024 from 10.00 am - 10.35 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Robert Corden
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Devontay Okure
Councillor Nick Raine
Councillor Nigel Turner

Absent

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Bryn Coleman	- Area Manager for Prevention and Protection
Andy Macey	- Area Manager for Response
Damien West	- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Laura Wilson	- Senior Governance Officer

21 Chair

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

22 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Jason Zadrozny – other County Council business.

23 Declarations of Interests

None.

24 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

25 On-Call Duty System Update

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the report updating the Committee on the achievements of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's On-Call Sections in 2023/24 and the measures being taken to support their success in the future, highlighting that:

- (a) 16 out of the Service's 24 fire stations host an On-Call crew, and most of Nottinghamshire's 30 fire appliances are crewed by On-Call firefighters (16 during the day, and 17 at night).
- (b) On-Call firefighters are those who live or work within a short distance of their fire station and usually have alternative employment away from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) (although some also have another role with the Service on a dual-employment basis). They carry an 'alerter' which activates when they are required to respond to an emergency incident and provide up to 120 hours of availability each week. In addition, they maintain their operational competence by attending weekly training sessions and completing learning events.
- (c) Nationally, fire and rescue services (FRSs), are struggling to recruit and retain On-Call firefighters. Changes in society, such as people travelling further to work, house prices, general cost of living and busy lifestyles have all impacted On-Call firefighter recruitment and retention figures.

Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response, presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- (d) The key metric by which NFRS measures the success of its On-Call is appliance availability. The Service targets On-Call availability to be above 85%, with each individual section being available no less than 70% of the time. As of 17 February 2024, NFRS On-Call appliances have collectively been available 86.2% of the time during 2023/24. This places the Service in fourth place nationally when it comes to On-Call availability. Only Southwell fire station, at 69.8%, has fallen below the individual 70% minimum target.
- (e) Attending operational incidents is a key motivator for On-Call firefighters. Maintaining appliance availability therefore plays a significant role in their retention.
- (f) An innovative approach to maintaining appliance availability has been the introduction of the Service's On-Call Support Team (OCST). The team's primary function is to mobilise members to crew On-Call appliances where they would otherwise be unavailable. When fully established, the team consists of five whole time employees, all of whom have appropriate incident command and driving qualifications to enable them to fulfil any role on a deficient On-Call crew. During 2023/24 this team has contributed 1,452 hours to On-Call crewing.
- (g) Another innovation to maintain On-Call appliance availability in Nottinghamshire has been the introduction of alternative crewing over several years. This relates

to the crewing of standard fire appliances with three On- Call firefighters at times when the section is unable to maintain the traditional minimum crewing level of four. This has enabled On-Call appliances to remain available to attend operational incidents as an additional resource at the most serious, or as part of a pre-determined attendance at those that are less significant. The ability to alternatively crew appliances has contributed over 6.5% to On-Call appliance availability in 2023/24.

- (h) Some of the Service's On-Call firefighters also have another role within the Service on a 'dual employed' basis. There are currently 69 whole time firefighters who also perform an On-Call role. Not only does dual employment support the availability of On-Call appliances, but it also has many other benefits, including the sharing of knowledge and experience, and the breaking down of cultural barriers which had once existed between the On-Call and whole time staff.
- (i) Whilst the OCST, alternative crewing and dual employment have increased On-Call appliance availability, the sections that have the highest establishment numbers always perform better in this area. Targeted recruitment remains a real focus for On-Call sections and the OCST. In 2023/24, the delivery of local recruitment campaigns, 'have-a-go-days' and primary employer liaison have resulted in 24 new On-Call trainees beginning a career with NFRS. The ability for new trainees to now undertake modular ('safe-to-ride') initial training that has removed the potential barrier of a 13-week initial course, which has been cited by many as a key enabler to On-Call recruitment.
- (j) The success of On-Call recruitment in 2023/24 has meant that NFRS will end the year with up to 14 more On-Call firefighters than it had at the end of 2022/23, which bucks the national trend of reducing On-Call establishment numbers.
- (k) Whilst On-Call recruitment is crucial, the Service also recognises the importance of similar efforts being placed on the retention of existing On-Call firefighters. Currently, 85 of the Service's On-Call firefighters have between 10 and 40 years' experience in the role. This commitment and dedication to serving their local community cannot be understated, especially when considering that many of these On-Call staff provide over 120 hours of availability each week for those years.
- (l) Attending operational incidents is a key motivator for On-Call firefighters, however, nationally the number of operational incidents attended by FRSs is reducing. It has therefore been important to enhance the role of the On-Call firefighter with additional opportunities to attend operational incidents. One way this has been achieved is to have special appliances such as the welfare unit, water and foam bowser and high-volume pump crewed by On-Call sections and special attributes such as marauding terrorist attack capability provided by them.
- (m) Another way of increasing opportunities for the On-Call to attend operational incidents, has been the introduction of 'short-crewing'. This enables an On-Call firefighter to volunteer to undertake shifts on a whole time watch when there are

shortfalls in the whole time ridership, and when it does not affect the availability of their On-Call appliance. The concept of short-crewing was introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic, but has been retained as it has proved to be very popular and provides flexibility and resilience for the Service.

- (n) Retention has also been enhanced by providing On-Call firefighters with the opportunity to undertake the full firefighter role. Whereas other FRSs may not enable On-Call firefighters to undertake prevention and protection activities, this is encouraged in NFRS wherever an On-Call firefighter has the capacity to do so, and the benefit for communities can be evidenced.
- (o) For some, the potential for progression within the On-Call is a key factor in their decision to remain in role. Whilst dual employment has been beneficial in terms of enhanced appliance availability, an unintended consequence has been the proportion of dual employees who have successfully achieved On-Call supervisory manager roles. To counter this, every section is permitted to recruit to an additional temporary crew manager role for the development of their firefighters who are solely On-Call employees.
- (p) National research has shown that alongside attendance at operational incidents, another crucial factor in an On-Call firefighter's decision to leave their role, is the feeling of being under-valued. In 2023/24, NFRS has taken several steps to address this. At Christmas, the OCST facilitated arrangements for each On-Call section to have a 12-hour period free from providing availability so that they could celebrate with family and friends. Social media promotion of the achievements of On-Call sections has increased, and a letter of appreciation will be sent to On-Call firefighters from the Chief Fire Officer at the end of 2023/24.
- (q) Removing complexity from the On-Call role is also important. The introduction of Fire Service Rota for the start of 2023/24 has improved an On-Call firefighter's ability to access real-time insights into the availability of their section, and to arrange their periods of unavailability at any time that suits them. It is now far easier for On-Call firefighters to be on call when needed, but also free when possible.
- (r) To ensure appropriate support can be provided, during 2023/24, District Manager responsibilities have been reviewed and realigned to provide them with more capacity to be available to support and attend the On-Call sections for which they are responsible.
- (s) In 2024/25, NFRS will continue to focus on the On-Call. Initial training courses are planned for August and September so targeted recruitment campaigns have begun. To support the OCST's decisions regarding the mobilisation of team members to improve On-Call appliance availability, the upcoming Fire Cover Review will consider the impact on attendance times when each On-Call fire appliance is unavailable. Opportunities to attend operational incidents will be further enhanced by the introduction of three rural firefighting vehicles which will each be crewed by On-Call sections. More opportunities to undertake prevention and protection activities will also be provided with the increase of achievement targets for both safety and welfare visits and business safety

checks, and the community befriending scheme will be rolled out to On-Call sections too. In addition to this local work, throughout 2024/25, NFRS will remain committed to supporting national On-Call working groups at both practitioner and strategic levels.

Members commended the Service for its achievements and the good work taking place.

Resolved to note the report.

26 Review of Fatal Fires 2023

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report updating the Committee on the fatal fire incidents that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service attended between 1 January and 31 December 2023, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) Within the 2023 calendar year, there has been a decrease in fire fatalities from the preceding five years with four incidents resulting in four fatalities within 2023. The annual figures are:

Calendar Year	Number of Fire Fatalities	Number of Incidents
2023	4	4
2022	7	4
2021	7	7
2020	4*	3
2019	6	7
2018	10	7

**an incident in 2019 resulted in a death in 2020, due to the length of time spent in hospital receiving treatment.*

- (b) Whilst every loss of life is a tragedy, it is also an opportunity for NFRS to learn lessons and, where necessary, adapt its approach to prevention and response activities, and engagement with partner organisations.
- (c) One fatal fire incident occurred in January 2023, two fatal incidents in June 2023 and one in December 2023. Of the four fatal incidents, three of these incidents took place in a domestic premises whilst one took place in a vehicle.
- (d) Of the four fatal incidents, two incidents took place in the Mansfield District, one took place in Nottingham City, and one took place in the Bassetlaw District. The four fatalities were adults over the age of 45. The youngest fatality was 47 years old and the oldest 61 years old.
- (e) Two of the four incidents were determined as accidental causation, with one being deliberate ignition and one where the cause remains as undetermined and under Police investigation.
- (f) NFRS's fatal fire (CHARLIE) profile was examined against the four incidents:
- two of the four fatalities lived alone;

- all had underlying medical conditions, mobility impairments or mental health issues;
 - three of the fatalities were known smokers;
 - two had care and support packages in place from local health providers;
 - all four incidents had working smoke alarms, three of which were monitored systems.
- (g) Of the four fatal incidents, one address was previously known to NFRS regarding previous interaction. Work continues to raise awareness with partner agencies to ensure that referrals are made to NFRS for all vulnerable people, and especially those who are subject to in-home care provisions.
- (h) NFRS commissions a Serious Event Review Group (SERG) following any incident resulting in death or serious injury from fire. The group is convened as soon as is reasonably practicable after a fatal fire or serious event has occurred to manage the Service's response. The group's responsibilities include reviewing the Service's response to the incident, planning for immediate prevention activities to take place, deciding on appropriate messages that the Service will put out to the media, interrogating systems to ascertain what knowledge was held on the person(s) involved and what information had been shared with partners, and ensuring that the welfare needs of attending crews have been met.
- (i) Community Reassurance and Engagement (CRaE) activities take place as soon as possible following a fatal fire to offer engagement at a time of heightened awareness of the local communities. This involves a high-visibility presence of response and prevention personnel in an affected area to carry out door-to-door visits.
- (j) Of the fatal incidents which took place in domestic premises in 2023, each area received a CRaE. This resulted in a total of 620 properties being given safety advice. Of these properties, 165 safe and well visits were conducted, with 39 smoke alarms fitted.
- (k) Where a serious but non-fatal incident takes place, CRaE activity will still be considered to reassure communities. NFRS also work with the 'Safer Houses' scheme to ensure that living standards and home fire safety within the private rental sector is supported.
- (l) The Service continues to fund a seconded Occupational Therapist from the public health sector. This role continues to work closely with prevention and fire investigation teams to identify trends and areas for collaborative working between NFRS and the NHS. This work aims to prevent future fires, injuries and ultimately fatal incidents, as well as improving a person's standard of living where required and reducing duplication and inefficiencies between partner agencies.
- (m) The CHARLIE fatal fire profile is continually reviewed to ensure this still reflects the demographic of fatal fire or serious fire injury incidents that NFRS attend. The CHARLIE profile questionnaire, used by NFRS staff and partners, is also analysed to ensure standardisation of the approach and identification of risks.

- (n) The Service is undertaking a review of the CHARLIE profile in 2024 to ensure that the Service's identification of, and targeting of, those most at risk from fire continues to be accurate. Efforts will continue to educate partner organisations of the CHARLIE profile and when appropriate referrals should be made to the Service. Support from Members to continue promoting the CHARLIE profile and referrals from partner organisations is also seen as key.
- (o) Prevention staff will continue to focus on safety messages and proactive engagement with communities, linked to the outcomes from fire investigations, where criminal and Coronal limitations allow.
- (p) The Prevention Team has embedded links with Nottinghamshire County, and Nottingham City, Trading Standards teams. The work focuses on electrical appliances which may cause fires and highlighting trends which are fed back to manufacturers to allow for recall notices to be issued.

Members commented that these fatalities had been tragic losses and that their thoughts were with the families of the victims.

During the discussion that followed the following comments were made:

- (q) There is an increasing number of lithium ion battery fires, which are used in vapes, eScooters, etc, as those not made to European standards can cause a risk if they are not charged and stored correctly. Reputable products that aren't tampered with and are charged correctly are safe.
- (r) There will be a renewed campaign on lithium ion batteries focussing on the risks of inappropriate charging, the disposal of damaged batteries, and the importance of charging and storage not taking place in areas that are used as a means of escape.
- (s) Lithium ion battery fires can not be put out as they create their own heat source, so they have to burn themselves out, for example, if an electric car catches fire, it has to be submerged in water for a number of days to stop the fire spreading until it is burnt out.
- (t) Technology grows quicker than regulations and fire fighting techniques, and more needs to be done to ensure that regulations can keep up with the speed of development in technology to keep everyone safe.

Resolved to note the report.



Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Finance and Resources

Date: Friday 22 March 2024 **Time:** 10.00 am

Venue: Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP

Members are requested to attend the above meeting to be held at the time, place and date mentioned to transact the following business

Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

Agenda	Pages
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Declarations of Interests	
3 Minutes Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2024, for confirmation	3 - 8
4 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Report to 31 January 2024 Report of the Chief Fire Officer	9 - 28
5 Corporate Risk Management Report of the Chief Fire Officer	29 - 60

Any councillor who is unable to attend the meeting and wishes to submit apologies should do so via the Personal Assistant to the Chief Fire Officer at Fire Services Headquarters on 0115 967 0880



Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on
19 April 2024 from 10.00 am - 10.40 am**

Membership

Present

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

Absent

Councillor Tom Hollis
Councillor John Lee

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Leila Berry - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Nick Linthwaite - HR Manager
Matt Sismey - Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager
Jane Garrard - Governance Officer

15 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Tom Hollis – other Council business

16 Declarations of Interests

None

17 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

18 Human Resources Update

Nick Linthwaite, HR Manager, and Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, presented the report updating the Committee on key human

resources metrics for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023 and key equalities metrics for the period 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. They highlighted the following information:

- a) During the reporting period, there were 12 new starters and 20 employees left the organisation. There was a total of 414 wholetime staff against an establishment of 431 posts. The Service undertook a national transfer process to fill this gap and as a result 15 firefighters (11 firefighters, 2 crew managers and 2 watch managers) were appointed – four of whom started employment during the reporting period, and a further 11 started in early 2024. The Service has undertaken a wholetime apprentice firefighter recruitment campaign, which resulted in 34 individuals being appointed.
- b) Absence during the reporting period increased by 299.5 days compared to the previous quarter. This largely relates to seasonal factors, and absence figures are historically higher during that quarter. Long-term absence equated to 57.4% of sickness absence - 47.9% for operational employees and 70.7% for support employees.
- c) For the on-call workforce there was an increase in absence of 122 days compared to the previous quarter. This was a decrease compared to the same quarter in 2022/23. Long-term absence equated to 58.6% of sickness absence.
- d) Sickness absence mirrors national trends with musculo-skeletal and mental health issues the most significant reasons for absence. For wholetime staff, NFRS ranks 16 out of 35 Services for days lost per employee. For on-call staff, NFRS ranks 16 out of 22 Services for days lost per employee. For support staff, NFRS ranks 34 out of 35 Services for days lost per employee. For support staff there is an average of 11.87 days lost per employee compared to the sector average of 7.72 days. Long-term sickness equates to 70% of this.
- e) During the reporting period there had been one disciplinary hearing and that resulted in dismissal, and one grievance which was not upheld. Four employees did not pass their probationary period and were dismissed on capability grounds.
- f) During the reporting period, there had been no significant change in key indicators (proportion of female firefighters; proportion of black, Asian, and minority ethnic employees (BAME); proportion of lesbian, gay or bisexual employees; and proportion of disabled employees) compared to the previous six months.
- g) During the reporting period, women constituted 16.9% of the workforce; employees from BAME backgrounds constituted 5.8% of the workforce; employees identifying as being lesbian, gay or bisexual constituted 3.9% of the workforce; and disability declaration was at 4.6% of the workforce. The proportion of the workforce identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual was particularly positive as it compared to 2.68% of the population in Nottinghamshire in the national census, however this was the first time that it was measured so figures may change in future years.

- h) Women were employed in 10.3% of wholetime operational roles and of these, 5.6% are supervisory roles, 3.4% were middle manager roles and 22.2% were strategic operational roles.
- i) Employees from BAME backgrounds represented 6.2% of wholetime operational roles. 5.6% of these were supervisory roles but there were no BAME employees in middle or senior manager roles. Work will be taking place over the next few months to develop talent management tools that identify potential and support development of those individuals.
- j) For support roles, the position in terms of the proportion of the workforce with protected characteristics is really encouraging - there is a 50/50 split between men and women; employees from BAME backgrounds represent 9.5% of these roles; 10% of roles are held by people with a disability declaration; and 5.9% of employees in these roles identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- k) The Service is working with Nottingham Trent University to improve its understanding of representation in the City and County to inform development of a 10 year Workforce Diversity Plan. This Plan will be brought to a future meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee.
- l) The Service is also working with partners to hold focus groups to help improve understanding of the barriers to recruitment and what can be done to encourage people from a diverse range of backgrounds to apply to join the Service.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- m) There are some female employees from a BAME background but the number is small. The Service wants to do more to better understand their experience and what considerations there are for it as an employer. The outcomes of this work will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.
- n) There is a need for more targeted support for employees with protected characteristics, including through support and positive action. Work is taking place to develop supervisory managers through development pathways. This is important because it will then enable people to have the opportunity to subsequently progress into middle and senior management roles. There will be work taking place over the next 12 months on talent management.
- o) The proportion of sickness absence amongst support staff that was long-term absence is high and the worst in the country. This is not the position that the Service wants to be in. During the reporting period, there were 12 people on long-term sickness absence for a variety of reasons. 10 of those individuals are now back at work or have finished work, and hopefully the metrics will improve. Trends in the reasons for absence are reviewed and if an issue that relates to work is identified, it is referred to the relevant department to be addressed.
- p) Absence management processes are followed, which can lead to occupational health involvement and a range of support is available including talking therapies and there is rehabilitation and physiotherapy support available from the Firefighters Charity. The Service has a fitness adviser to provide support on

issues such as musculo-skeletal concerns. Regular case reviews take place, which support staff to get back to work with modified duties if necessary. Wellbeing is a core part of the People Strategy.

- q) In terms of support for employees identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual, the Service has worked with Stonewall for a number of years and has changed its policies and improved training. There is an active and prominent LGBT+ Network. There is good attendance at Pride events and support for Allies within the Service is strong. There has been targeted advertising over the last few years. The actions that are being taken are working and need to continue.
- r) In relation to ensuring that all employees with a disability have a declaration, the Service tries to go beyond just compliance and is very aware of these issues. More recently there has been a focus on non-visible disability, including neurodiversity and there is more to be considered in terms of training and guidance.

Resolved to note the report.

19 Wholetime Recruitment Process 23-24

Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, presented the report about the outcomes from the positive action recruitment to wholetime firefighter roles that took place between April and August 2023. He highlighted the following information:

- a) The advertising process was supported by the Futures Group and involved a range of activities to promote the idea that a firefighting career can be for everybody. Activities included targeted advertising through social media, posters and leaflets; awareness days at stations; radio adverts on Dawn FM, Kemet FM and Radio Faza; fitness sessions focused on women; attending community events; and linking in with job centres.
- b) There were 461 applicants, of which 34 were successful. 15 of these 34 successful applicants had engaged with the positive action activity. The rates of success by those with protected characteristics were the best for a long time – 14.7% for women; 24% for those from a BAME background; and 14.7% of those with a declared disability.
- c) 17 of the new firefighter apprentices are starting employment on 22 April with a second cohort to commence in January 2025.

The Committee welcomed this positive work to widen the diversity of employees in the Service, noting that given the relatively low numbers of employees with protected characteristics within the existing firefighter workforce this will have a big impact.

Resolved to note the report.

20 HMICFRS Values and Culture Spotlight Report Update

Leila Berry, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report updating the Committee on the progress that has been made against the recommendations for Chief Fire Officers made within the spotlight review of the values and culture in fire and rescue services published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services in March 2023. She highlighted the following information:

- a) Of the 20 recommendations owned by Chief Fire Officers, 12 have been completed and work is well underway on the remaining 8 recommendations.
- b) Actions that have been undertaken include introducing a 'Say So' confidential reporting line to allow anonymous reporting of issues; relaunch of the 'Little Acorns' staff suggestions scheme as a route for escalating issues and amplifying the employee voice; review of the policy framework resulting in the Harassment and Bullying Policy being replaced by a Dignity at Work Policy; review of harassment and bullying cases with action taken to resolve issues; and amplifying the employee voice in areas such as recruitment and procurement.
- c) Action taken in direct response to the recommendations doesn't represent the totality of work on issues relating to values, behaviour and culture. The Service has also been looking at the core code of ethics and service values.
- d) There is further work to be done in relation to background checks. The Service is looking to extend its requirements beyond the basic check. A draft policy has been developed and is currently in consultation with the trade union. It is hoped that it will be possible to implement this soon.
- e) There is also more work needed on equality and diversity issues. The Service is taking action to recruit a more representative workforce and enhance progress pathways for employees with protected characteristics. Workforce diversity plans will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.
- f) It is proposed that progress will continue to be reported to the Committee until all recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed.

Committee members made the following point:

- g) It is important to have enhanced DBS checks for employees, especially those responding to incidents and going into people's homes, as a protection for citizens. It is acknowledged that some employees may have concerns about this, but enhanced DBS checks are used effectively in many other public services so hopefully it will be possible to resolve those concerns.

The Committee welcomed the work that has taken place so far to address the recommendations.

Resolved to:

(1) note the report; and

(1) receive future updates on progress against the recommendations made within the spotlight review of the values and culture in fire and rescue

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Human Resources
- 19.04.24

**services published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire
and Rescue Services in March 2023.**



Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Policy and Strategy

Minutes of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 26 April 2024 from 10.00 am - 10.56 am

Membership

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)
Councillor Richard Butler
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora
Councillor Nigel Turner

Absent

Councillor Tom Hollis
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler
(substituted by Councillor Richard Butler)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Leila Berry - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Craig Parkin - Chief Fire Officer
Mick Sharman - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Damien West - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Laura Wilson - Senior Governance Officer

15 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Jonathan Wheeler (Councillor Richard Butler substituting)
Malcolm Townroe

16 Declarations of Interest

None.

17 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2024 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

18 Governance Arrangements

Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report detailing the updated arrangements for the provision of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer following the termination of the existing provision arrangements with Nottingham City Council, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) Since inception of the Authority in 1998 Clerking and Monitoring Officer arrangements along with governance services have all been provided by Nottingham City Council under a buy-back of services arrangement. Irrespective of this provision, the Authority still had to formally appoint the Monitoring Officer which it did with the current incumbent, Malcolm R. Townroe, in July 2005. Mr Townroe has now confirmed his retirement from Nottingham City Council with effect from 28 April 2024.
- (b) Following confirmation of the proposed retirement of Mr Townroe from Nottingham City Council the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority, served notice on Nottingham City Council to terminate the buyback of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer provision. This takes effect from the date of Mr Townroe's retirement. It does not affect the provision of governance services which will be the subject of further review going forwards.
- (c) Given that Mr Townroe has already been appointed to act as the Authority's Clerk and Monitoring Officer, it is proposed that he be appointed directly as an employee of the Authority on an annualised hours or part time basis immediately following his retirement from Nottingham City Council. This will ensure continuity of the current Clerk and Monitoring Officer provision and also provide an element of corporate memory around the governance agenda. Given that Mr Townroe is also a qualified solicitor his title with the Authority will be reviewed to reflect this.
- (d) The cost of employing the Clerk and Monitoring Officer directly will be contained within the existing financial envelope for the provision of Clerk, Monitoring Officer and governance services.

Members welcomed the continuity that the appointment will provide.

Resolved to note

- (1) The arrangements with regard to the direct employment of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer.**
- (2) That arrangements for provision of governance services will be reviewed in due course.**

19 10-Year Workforce Diversity Planning

Leila Berry, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report providing an update on the Service's progress in developing a 10-Year Workforce Diversity Plan, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) The Service's work to improve the diversity of its workforce has been ongoing for nearly two decades. Numerous reports produced by Central Government have been highly critical of the slow pace of change within the sector.
- (b) The Service commissioned its own review of equality, diversity and inclusion practice during 2021-22 and a revisit was undertaken at the end of last year. One of the recommendations was that 'Resources to match aspiration: shift from expecting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) service delivery excellence and workforce

diversity to reflect the population whilst under-resourcing the work that it takes to achieve this, to a longer-term approach, with more courageous proactive positive action and engagement enabled by stable staffing and budget commitment to achieve success.

- (c) Whilst the pace of change has been slow, some encouraging progress has been made over the years, particularly in improving the numbers of female firefighters and employees who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. However, progress in attracting racially marginalised groups to the Service is not where the organisation would want it to be. In particular, attraction rates of women of colour to employment at the Service remain low and this needs to be addressed as part of this work.
- (d) To improve performance in this area it is proposed that the Service develops a 10-Year Plan. To do this in a methodical way, the following phases will be used - analysis; plan; do; and review.
- (e) The analysis phase consists of three separate workstreams, the first of which involves analysis and insight of the most recent Census data commissioned via Nottingham Trent University (NTU). This work will support the Service's understanding of Nottinghamshire's changing communities and will inform both this programme of work relating to the attraction and recruitment of diverse talent, as well as supporting wider community engagement initiatives across the Service. This work started in March 2024 and will last approximately six months.
- (f) Whilst the quantitative work undertaken by NTU is important, the qualitative insights to be gained from talking to community members is as valuable. A second piece of work starting this month will enable NFRS to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of under-represented groups in Nottingham who may face barriers in accessing employment opportunities or services. The Service has data demonstrating that City residents are underrepresented in its workforce and so the focus will be on this geographical area and those groups who are under-represented in the workforce, including women and ethnic minorities.
- (g) A third party with expertise in this area will be delivering this work between April and July. They will present their findings and recommendations to the Strategic Leadership Team at the end of their field work. This work, alongside the work that NTU is supporting, will enable NFRS to build its diversity plan based on firm foundations. The final part of this work is a desktop review of the research papers and sector-based reports which are in the public domain. This will also be used to inform the planning process.
- (h) Socio-economic deprivation will also be a key area of focus for the Service during the analysis phase. As a result of independent EDI review this has now been added to the Service's equality impact assessment process and template.
- (i) By July 2024, the Service will have a better understanding of what conclusions have been drawn by the quantitative and qualitative studies and Members will be briefed via the Strategic Inclusion Board and the Human Resources Committee.
- (j) The outcomes of the analysis phase will also start to inform a short-term workplan for the newly established Community Engagement Team which will sit in the Fire

Prevention Department. The Community Engagement Team will include both uniformed and non-uniformed colleagues, with a focus on community safety and positive action activities, including youth engagement. The Service's positive action offering will become more comprehensive and consistent than it has been previously with a focus on a regular presence in communities, not just during firefighter recruitment campaigns.

- (k) Defining the ambition and setting smarter targets will happen post analysis phase. By the autumn of this year, the Service will have undertaken the analysis and insight necessary to formulate meaningful and measurable objectives as part of the 10-year plan. Members are a key stakeholder in this work and regular feedback will be sought.

During the discussion which followed, the following points were made:

- (l) It is important that the work of the team is commended, and it is recognised that this report demonstrates that the Authority is self-reflective as it highlights the further work required as well as the progress made to date.
- (m) There is a need to increase representation further, but the Plan is ambitious and falls within the remit of the Human Resources Committee for ongoing monitoring.
- (n) The Plan provides clarity and focus and will demonstrate results over time, which will re-instil confidence in the community.

Resolved to

- (1) Endorse a long-term commitment to workforce diversity via a 10-year Diversity Plan.**
- (2) Note the contents of the report.**
- (3) Agree to receive future updates via the Human Resources Committee.**

20 Manchester Arena Inquiry - Volume Two: Update

Damien West, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report providing an update on progress in relation to the recommendations within Volume Two of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) On 22 May 2017, a homemade explosive device was detonated in the foyer of the Manchester Arena following an Ariana Grande concert. 22 people were killed and 1,017 were injured, many of them being children, with several hundred more left suffering psychological trauma.
- (b) Volume Two of the Manchester Arena Inquiry was published on 3 November 2022. Volume Two focussed on the impact of any inadequacies in the planning and preparation by the emergency services and in the emergency response. This includes whether any inadequacies undermined the ability of the response to save life or contributed to the extent of the loss of life.
- (c) An initial report was first presented to the Policy and Strategy on 27 January 2023 which outlined the approach the Service was taking to implement the identified sector learning.

At that meeting, Members agreed to receive update reports to enable oversight and scrutiny against the Service's action plan.

- (d) The Service's Risk and Assurance Team led on the review of the report and is overseeing the Service's action plan, which has 53 recommendations. Each recommendation is defined as to the action required to deliver the improvement and has a timeframe of completion. Of the 53 recommendations, 32 have been completed and closed and 21 are being worked towards. Progress against all recommendations is on-track and are set to be completed by December 2024.
- (e) As an example of some of the learning that has been implemented, the Service has reviewed all of its operational policy and procedures relating to marauding terrorist attacks (MTA). Amendments have been made in collaboration with regional partners. The Service also has an agreed programme to roll out the new national guidance – Joint Operating Principles for MTA, Edition 3.
- (f) Internal scrutiny of the Service action plan is through the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Assurance Board which is chaired by the Chief Fire Officer.
- (g) The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Operations Committee has also established a strategic board to ensure consistency in responses across all UK Fire and Rescue Services, with quarterly reporting established to track progress of individual fire and rescue services.
- (h) The Service is actively working with colleagues within the Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to implement the learning via a specifically created Manchester Arena Inquiry sub-group. NFRS chairs this sub-group, which has attendance from all Category One and relevant Category Two responders. This group has identified 55 recommendations from the Volume Two report with relevance to the LRF.
- (i) The LRF's action plan defines each recommendation and sets out the timeframe of completion for each. Whilst coordination and engagement across all partners has faced some initial challenges, full completion is anticipated to be by December 2024. Of the 55 recommendations, 33 have been completed and closed and 22 are being worked towards. Scrutiny of the work of the sub-group is through the LRF's Resilience Working Group, with exceptions reported to the full LRF meeting.
- (j) As well as learning from the Volume Two report, in February, colleagues from Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, who were involved in the Manchester Arena organisational debrief, came into Service and presented a case study on the incident, which gave a real insight into events that happened on the night, as well as highlighting some further learning. This learning will be reviewed alongside the MAI action plan.
- (k) In March the Service undertook a full scale, 'no-notice', exercise to test the application of some of the learning from the MAI action plan. This exercise involved the evacuation of around 7000 people from a sports venue, then a realistic MTA scenario, and involved all blue light partners. Special thanks are given to the Ice Arena, the Nottingham Panthers and their fans for their involvement.
- (l) The exercise is subject to a full review and formal debrief report. One key

area of assurance already known was the effective response of the Service's MTA capability, supporting resources and Officers, and initial on scene multiagency working, which is an area which received criticism in the inquiry report.

- (m) The Service will continue to progress the recommendations internally and across the LRF, reporting progress via the governance structure. Progress reports will be presented to the CRMP Assurance Board and to Fire Authority Members, through the Community Safety Committee, at key milestones, with a proposed final sign-off to the Fire Authority in December 2024.
- (n) His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services is expected to audit progress against the recommendations of the Volume Two report during the next tranche of inspections.
- (o) Specific MTA funding from Government has been reduced from £56,000 a year to £19,500 a year, as of April 2023. This reduction will lead to a requirement, after 2024, for the replacement of equipment and facilitation of training to be funded from Service budgets, which do not currently meet this requirement. The additional cost will be addressed as part of Service financial planning.

During the discussion which followed, the following points were made:

- (p) Thoughts are with those killed and injured during the horrific attack and their families.
- (q) The response from staff and practical testing of arrangements is commended.
- (r) The reduction in funding from £56,000 to £19,500, particularly given the recent attacks in Nottingham using a vehicle and knife, is unacceptable and representations will be made to try to get the decision changed.
- (s) In relation to the 55 recommendations identified by the LRF, communication with partners is ongoing regarding the deadline for completion.

Resolved to

- (1) Note the update and endorse the actions being taken by the Service in response to the Manchester Arena Inquiry.**
- (2) Receive further reports for the monitoring and scrutiny of the implementation of learning through the Community Safety Committee.**

21 Exclusion of the public

Resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (under Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 3) 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.

22 Mobilisation Project Update and Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Software Contracts Award

Mick Sharman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report.

Resolved to approve the recommendations in the report, as amended at the meeting.