



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 28 February 2025

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in October/November 2024 and January 2025.

Recommendations:

That Members note the contents of this report.

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1. BACKGROUND

As part of the revised governance arrangements the Authority has delegated key responsibilities to specific committees of the Authority. As part of those delegated responsibilities, the chairs of committees and the management leads report to the Authority on the business and actions as agreed at Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 1 June 2007.

2. REPORT

The minutes of the following meetings are attached at Appendix A for the information of all Fire Authority Members:

Community Safety Committee	11 October 2024
Finance and Resources Committee	18 October 2024; 17 January 2025
Human Resources Committee	08 November 2024; 24 January 2025
Policy and Strategy Committee	15 November 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 Dunkirk and Beeston Suites - Highfields Fire
Station, Hassocks Lane, Beeston, Nottingham. NG9 2GQ on 11 October 2024
from 10.03 am - 11.51 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Jason Zadrozny (Chair)
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Nick Raine
Councillor Samina Riaz

Absent

Councillor Robert Corden
Councillor Nigel Turner

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Catherine Ziane- Pryor - Governance Officer
Andy Macey - Area Manager for Response
Damien West - Nott's and Nott'm Fire and Rescue Service
Tom Archer - Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue
Phil Wye - Governance Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Nigel Turner - unwell

2 Declarations of Interests

None.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Service Delivery Performance

Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response and Tom Archer, Area Manager for Prevention, Protection and Investigation, presented the report providing a summary of the performance of Service Delivery in 2023-24, and an update on performance from 01 April to 31 August 2024, highlighting the following:

Response

- (a) in 2023-24, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) attended a total of 10,595 incidents. This constituted a 6.6% decrease on 2022-23, driven by a 30.3% reduction in fires after the extreme weather conditions experienced in the summer of 2022-23 did not re-occur. 2023-24 saw a 3.9% increase in special service calls and a 7.9% increase in false alarms. Fires followed a typical pattern of peaking in the spring, remaining relatively high in the summer, and then falling during the autumn and winter. Special service calls peaked in October and January due to the Service's response to Storm Babet and Storm Hen;
- (b) whilst Broxtowe and Rushcliffe experienced slight increases in incident numbers from 2022-23 to 2023-24, all other Districts saw reductions. The most significant reductions being in Mansfield (-20%) and Newark & Sherwood (-17.4%);
- (c) between 01 April and 31 August 2024, NFRS attended 4,621 incidents. This represents a 1.5% increase on incidents attended during the same period in 2023-24 and suggests that the Service will attend in the region of 10,750 incidents this year;
- (d) Whilst P1 and P2 incidents remained relatively consistent throughout 2023-24, a higher number of P3 incidents were attended in the spring and summer months. These are incidents which pose a potential hazard to human life, the environment, society, property or heritage or incidents which pose a confirmed low hazard to human life;
- (e) whilst there was a slight improvement on 2022-23, the average attendance time in 2023-24 was outside of the 8 minute target at 8 minutes and 14 seconds. Several factors including appliances being mobilised outside of their typical 'turn-out area' during periods of flooding, and software issues relating to the introduction of new appliance mobile data terminals (MDTs) contributed to this under-performance. During the first five months of 2024-25 the average attendance time has improved to 8 minutes and 1 seconds, representing a 12 second improvement on 2023-24.;
- (f) On-Call station availability for 2023-24 averaged 86.4%. This was above the target of 85% and placed NFRS in the top three fire and rescue services, nationally. However, this was slightly below the 87.1% achieved in 2022-23. The Service sets a minimum station standard for On-Call availability at 70%, and Southwell was the only section to not achieve this. Ten sections achieved above the average 85% availability target with the highest levels at Hucknall, Warsop and Stapleford;
- (g) in April 2024, the Service introduced a new Dual Employment Policy which aims to ensure that those that fulfil both a wholetime and on-call role with the Service

comply with The Working Time Regulations 1998 and have sufficient periods of rest. An anticipated consequence of this is that there will be an impact on On-Call availability, and as of October 2024, the On-Call Support Team is fully established and the mobilisation of its members to support at stations that would otherwise be unavailable will help to mitigate;

- (h) On-Call availability will also be improved by a continued focus on recruitment. 13 new On-Call trainees began training in September 2024 and a further 11 are scheduled to commence in January 2025;
- (i) in 2023-24, Retford Day Shift Crewing reported significantly worsening availability compared to the previous year, but there has been some improvement between 01 April and 31 August 2024;
- (j) The Service's target of at least 98% wholtime appliance availability has been achieved by every appliance in 2023-4 and this has continued in 2024-25 with appliances collectively being available 99.3% of the time;
- (k) as part of the 'Functional Collaboration Agreement', between Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services and the ongoing monitoring of Joint Fire Control (JFC), three key performance measures are monitored. For the percentage of 999 calls answered within seven seconds, the performance in 2023-24 was below target at 94.2% but this has improved to the target figure in Quarter 1 of 2024-25. The average call-handling times for P1 and P2 incidents averaged below target at 81 seconds and has fallen again to 80% in Quarter 1 of 2024-25. In 2023-24 mobilisation system availability was below target at 97.3%, however, Quarter 1 of 2024-25 has seen a significant improvement at an above target 99.5%.

Prevention

- (l) The Service completed 15,765 Safe & Well Visits (SWVs) in 2023-24 which was 12% above the Community and Risk Management Plan (CRMP) target of 14,000. Overall in Quarter 1 of 2024-25, the Service has delivered 3552 SWVs; this level of performance will ensure the CRMP target of 15,000 visits is met at the end of Quarter 4;
- (m) Data Intelligence and Community Engagement (DICE) events resulted in 1349 SWVs in 2023-24. These specific community events focus on specific areas within Nottinghamshire's communities based on a data led approach. Due to a restructure of the Prevention department, there have been no DICE events so far in 2024-25, however these are being planned for later in the year to address any outstanding visits as a result of increased partner referrals;
- (n) of the SWVs delivered in 2023-24, 53% were to those over the age of 65 and 44% were to those who identified as having a disability. Advanced age and disability are key characteristics on the Service's CHARLIE profile that identifies individuals who are at a higher risk of fire in their home;
- (o) In 2023-24 and into Quarter 1 of 2024-25, NFRS has seen a significant increase in referrals from partners including all local councils and the ambulance service as

a result of the increased delivery of CHARLIE training to these partners, departmental engagement at community safety partnerships safeguarding boards and the online tool Safelincs, an online tool where members of the community can undertake their own home fire safety audit, with access to an onward referral for a safe and well visit where appropriate;

- (p) in 2023-24, 100% of qualifying incidents had a Serious Event Review Group held with a subsequent and appropriate Community Reassurance and Engagement organised and delivered in conjunction with response crews;
- (q) during 2023-24, 552 fire safety, 29 road safety and 47 water safety activities were arranged and completed by members of the Prevention team with support from Response crews. The Prevention team delivered two Safety Zone events in 2023-24, one at Ashfield Fire Station attended by 449 pupils and another two-week event at Holme Pierrepont attended by 1406 pupils from schools across both the City and County;
- (r) the Service continues to support and educate individuals who deliberately start fires. The Firesetter scheme uses specially trained NFRS staff to work with individuals on a tailored programme of support. During 2023/24, 130 individuals were referred to the scheme with post intervention evaluations showing that 80% of carers felt that the individuals' risk of setting fires had reduced;
- (s) NFRS has recently restructured the Prevention department, in order to more effectively utilise its resources to engage with vulnerable members of the community, interact with young people and deliver a significantly enhanced community engagement provision;
- (t) the Prevention safeguarding officer has completed the delivery of safeguarding training to all wholetime watches. In 2023-24, 85% of referrals made by the Service were accepted as Section 42 enquiries by the relevant Local Authority. In 2023-24, 100% of child safeguarding referrals (Section 47) were accepted by the relevant Local Authority. In Quarter 1 of 2024-25, 100% of both Section 42 and Section 47 referrals were accepted by the relevant Local Authority. The target has remained the same at 60%;
- (u) the Prevention team have worked with partners in the delivery of the Safer Streets project, including wrapping a fire engine with safety messages and training fire crews in the delivery of advice and support around safe spaces. Selected appliances travel on designated routes to improve the safety of women and girls during the nighttime economy;
- (v) fire investigations are delivered, managed and coordinated as part of the Prevention team, working closely with the Police Crime Scene Investigation Team. In 2023/24, 99% of Tier 2 fire investigations were undertaken by NFRS personnel against a 90% target. After more serious incidents where a fire investigation report was required for His Majesty's Coroner, 100% of these detailed reports were delivered within the timescales required by the Coroner's office.

Protection

- (w) during 2023-24 the Service completed 1,180 Fire Safety Audits (FSAs) from a target of 1,500. Of these FSAs, 472 required informal action with a further 44 formal Enforcement Notices being issued. The number of FSAs completed is less than the target following the introduction of the Building Safety Act. The Protection team have allocated resources to support the workstream and additionally, Fire Safety Inspectors have been undertaking necessary qualifications to upskill them in line with the NFCC competency framework, which removes capacity from the team. In Quarter 1 of 2024-25, 277 FSAs have been completed in line with the inspection methodology contained in the Risk Based Inspection Programme;
- (x) Fire Safety Inspectors continue to shadow inspections undertaken by supervisory managers as part of the Business Safety Check (BSC) development process. These shadowed inspections provide scrutiny and assurance of this work prior to supervisory managers being allowed to inspect premises alone as part of their warranted status;
- (y) During 2023-24 the Service completed 1,039 BSCs from a target of 1,000. In Quarter 1 2024/45, the Service completed 306 BSCs;
- (z) as well as completing FSAs and BSCs in 2023-24, the Service has also completed 175 post fire inspections, 308 follow-ups to complaints, 47 Enforcement Notices, 21 Prohibition Notices, 641 building regulation consultations with local authority building control or approved inspectors, 310 licencing consultations and 437 other consultations with agencies including Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission;
- (aa) during 2023/24, the Service responded to 4,411 False Alarms (an 11% increase on the 3,906 attended in 2022/23). The CRMP sets a target of a 3% reduction in Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS). In 2023-24 the Service has responded to 3,740 UwFS incidents which constituted a 4% increase on 2022-23. Further work will be undertaken as part of the 2025/28 CRMP to identify and work with premises to reduce the number of UwFS attended. The trend for an increasing number of attendances to UwFS is a national one, and not confined to NFRS. The Service will continue to work with responsible persons to reduce these incidents and utilise national best practice in their reduction where available;
- (bb) the CRMP set a target of a 3% reduction of Unwanted Lift Rescues for 2023-24. During the year the Service responded to 181 lift rescues (a 2% increase on 2022-23);
- (cc) in Quarter 1 of 2024/25, the JAIT has inspected six high risk buildings. The team has had vacancies in key posts which have now been filled and performance levels are increasing. Performance levels will be reported to Members in subsequent reports;
- (dd) the Building Safety Act received Royal Assent during 2023-24. The Building Safety Act has seen the creation of a new Building Safety Regulator (BSR), with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) being appointed to lead on the regulation of new and existing buildings, which fall within scope;

- (ee) The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 became law on 23 January 2023. The regulations place a number of statutory duties on Responsible Persons and NFRS, particularly in buildings over 18 metres in height. The Fire Protection department continues to communicate with all building owners within scope of the new regulations to raise their understanding and awareness of this new legislation.

The following points were raised during the discussions which followed:

- (ff) The drop in the number of incidents from 2022-23 to 2023-24 is due to the extreme weather in the summer of 2022 which caused a number of wild fires in the region;
- (gg) the primary cause for the delay of calls answered during 2023-24 was the period of Storm Henk when the number of calls made greatly increased, which affected the statistics for the whole year. A review of Staffing Control is being made which may mitigate this in future. For major national incidents, BT can divert calls to other authorities;
- (hh) a breadth of responses is being made relating to false alarms. The response has been rationalised by only sending one appliance, and formal action can be taken against repeat offenders;
- (ii) stronger links could be established with Registered Landlords to make referrals into the Service;
- (jj) despite the number of FSAs being below target, when they go to prosecution the service has a 100% success rate, and NFRS is 3 times more productive than the national average.

Committee members commended the service for its achievements and requested an invite to a future Safety Zone event.

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

5 National Resilience - Annual Assurance Report

Damien West, Assistant Chief Officer, presented the report providing an update on recent audits of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's national resilience assets, highlighting the following:

- (a) Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has hosted national resilience assets since 2002, when the New Dimensions project was introduced following the terror attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001;
- (b) the National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) undertook an audit of the Marauding Terrorism Attack capability in NFRS in December 2023, and reported 26 instances of Good practice and one instance of Outstanding practice;
- (c) NFRS carried out a self-assessment on the National Interagency Liaison Officer (NILO) capability in August 2023. This was led by the Service's Lead NILO and

ratified by the National NILO group. The assessment reported 19 areas of substantial assurance, 4 areas of adequate assurance, and 2 areas of limited assurance. The report shows that NFRS scored 'limited assurance' on the organisation's future training delivery programme including regional NILO training, and the capability to work across borders, which has seen guidance produced on working across borders, and regional training and exercises becoming more consistent;

- (d) NRAT undertook an audit of NFRS's flood rescue capability in February 2024. The report showed that NFRS scored 'good' across the broader categories of preparedness, mobilisation and response, but scored 'requires improvement' for the repatriation of the national resilience assets back into Nottinghamshire and recommended a policy to cover current practices. This policy is now in place, along with additional equipment purchased and training carried out across all flood rescue responders;
- (e) NRAT undertook an audit of the High Volume Pump capability in NFRS in November 2023. The report shows that NFRS scored 'requires improvement' in 12 instances. The main reason for this, was due to a change in the self-assessment process which initially led to insufficient evidence being submitted. NFRS submitted further evidence which completed 11 of the 12 action plans moving the scores to 'good' in those areas;
- (f) NRAT carried out an assessment of the Service's Enhanced Logistical Support (ELS) capability. However, as the asset was removed from NFRS in April 2024, following a change in the national model for this capability, this assessment was not finalised. The NFRS ELS capability has been widely commended over the years. The asset has been mobilised to many major incidents across the country over the years and has been recognised for its professional work;
- (g) recent communications from the Home Office have outlined that future grant for providing National Resilience assets have been reduced by approximately 66% across all assets. With current financial pressures, the reduction in grants will need to be considered in conjunction with wider budgeting should the Service wish to deliver these capabilities in line with current ways of working. The Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer will be writing to local MPs outlining these concerns.

Resolved to

- (1) note the contents of the report;**
- (2) endorse the approach of the Service with regards to its national resilience capabilities and addressing improvement in highlighted areas**

6 Evaluation of Changes to Ashfield Fire Station Crewing

Andy Macey, Area Manager for Response, presented the report providing an update on the impact of re-instating a 24-hour Wholetime provision at Ashfield fire station, highlighting the following:

- (a) to understand the impact of re-instating 24-hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station, data contained within the report compares performance in the nine months post-implementation with the same time period prior to the change taking place;
- (b) the re-instatement of 24-hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station required 30 moves across the Wholetime establishment. Proactive engagement with staff, representative bodies, and internal and external stakeholders enabled these changes to be implemented with minimal disruption;
- (c) during the reporting period post-implementation, 469 incidents occurred within the Ashfield district. For comparison, during the reporting period pre-implementation, 433 incidents were attended;
- (d) a key consideration in the decision to re-instate 24-hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station was the predicted impact it would have on attendance times in the area. During the post implementation reporting period, attendance times in the Ashfield district averaged 7 minutes and 24 seconds. This is well below the Community Risk Management Plan commitment of 8 minutes;
- (e) the impact of re-instating 24- hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station has therefore contributed to an improvement to the average attendance time of 1 minute and 12 seconds over the reporting periods. This exceeds the expectations of the modelling conducted as part of the 2021 Fire Cover Review which predicted a 48 second improvement;
- (f) facilitating the re-instatement of 24-hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station has meant a reduction in establishment numbers at other stations. However, this has not resulted in a reduction in Wholetime appliance availability;
- (g) the re-instatement of 24-hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station has also had a positive impact on the number of times an appliance from Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service has been called to cross the border into Ashfield district;
- (h) the creation of an additional two Wholetime watches at Ashfield fire station has greatly increased productivity of deliverable services within Ashfield district. Safe and well visit completion has increased 93% between the post and pre-implementation reporting periods, and business safety check completion has increased by over 250%;
- (i) a further benefit has been an increase in the number of groups that are included within Ashfield district under the Community Befriending Scheme. Selston Youth Initiative, Models For Heros, Teversal Ladies Football Club, Ashfield LGBT+ Drop-in, and Academy Transformation Trust Education College are all being supported this year;
- (j) being mobilised to incidents is a key retention factor cited by On-Call employees. Since the re-instatement of 24-hour Wholetime crewing, Ashfield fire station has lost two On-Call firefighters. However, during exit interviews it was confirmed that the reason for this was not due to reduced mobilisations but other factors. In addition, one new trainee who will be based at Ashfield is currently undertaking an

initial On-Call course, with a further one due to begin in January 2025;

- (k) the reduction in On-Call mobilisations in and around Ashfield district as a result of reinstating 24-hour Wholetime crewing at Ashfield fire station has contributed to cost saving for NFRS. Hucknall On-Call section has experienced an 18% reduction in mobilisations over the reporting periods, contributing to a net £65k underspend currently forecasted for the On-Call pay and will assist in alleviating the cost pressures arising from the re-banding on On-Call pay in the 2025-26 budget;
- (l) despite the significant change that has been made at Ashfield fire station, responses from those employees who are based there to the recent staff satisfaction survey show some marked improvements to responses given in 2022;
- (m) the Service continues to monitor the impacts of the changes, as well as the impacts on the wider ridership. This performance is measured and monitored internally through the Service Delivery Evaluation and Assurance Group. A further report of performance will be provided after a 12-month period of evaluation. It is proposed that this is reported to full Fire Authority and therefore, formally close the evaluation process.

Committee Members expressed their gratitude for the implementation of the changes and the positive impact they have made in Ashfield.

Resolved to

- (1) note the contents of the report;**
- (2) support the reporting of 12-month evaluation of changes to Full Authority and close the evaluation process.**

7 Embedding Occupational Therapy

Tom Archer, Area Manager, presented the report provide an update on the work of the embedded Occupational Therapist within the Community Safety and Engagement Team, highlighting the following:

- (a) NFRS has utilised an Occupational Therapist (OT) within the Prevention department since September 2020 in order to provide a wider range of services to the most vulnerable members of Nottinghamshire's communities. The OT role was originally a secondment into the department from the NHS with temporary funding. While the role remains seconded, the funding for it has been added to the permanent establishment from 1 September 2024 as part of the Futures 25 workstream restructuring the Prevention Department into the Community Safety and Engagement Team. NFRS remains the only fire and rescue service in England to employ an OT;
- (b) the OT offers home visits to occupiers where it is clear they would benefit from specialist intervention; this is usually to those who score highly on the CHARLIE matrix following partner referral or those who have had repeated incidents. The core role of the OT visit is to undertake a holistic, functional assessment of the

individual's ability to carry out daily tasks. Typically, NFRS focuses on cooking, smoking, use of electrical equipment, the ability to respond to and raise an alarm and to evacuate to and/or stay in a place of safety.

- (c) smoking is a significantly high-risk activity, especially in those for whom other tasks are becoming increasingly difficult. Where appropriate, the OT will complete cognitive screening for memory impairment, signpost to specialist NHS teams, provide equipment and minor adaptations. The OT can purchase bespoke, specialist equipment) to be truly responsive to the individual's needs and reduce wastage when standard equipment is inappropriate or will not be used;
- (d) in order to prevent duplication of work and ensure NFRS's limited resources are targeted at those most in need, if another professional and/or service is already involved in an individual's care, the NFRS OT will ensure they are being referred to that Service's OTs and then provide 'long-arm' advice, supervision and support;
- (e) since March 2024, the OT has discharged 34 patients, each of whom has a personalised care plan, with goals relating to reducing fire risk. The average success rate for meeting the goals set by the OT is 84%, giving some of the most vulnerable members of Nottinghamshire's community a tangible and measurable improvement in their quality of life. Moving forwards data will provide a robust body of evidence which can be scrutinised to improve the efficiency, referral criteria and type of interventions offered
- (f) the OT triages all safe and well visit (SWV) questionnaires where a response crew or specialist home safety operative (SHSO) record concerns about an occupier's mental health or wellbeing. If appropriate and necessary, these concerns are raised with the GP or the relevant mental health teams. Presently, an average of 11 cases a week are triaged in this way;
- (a) since the introduction of the OT role into Prevention, a weekly 'drop-in' case clinic has been provided for all Prevention team members where cases can be discussed confidentially to ensure the right support is given to individuals with complex needs.

Committee Members requested that the print article from OT Magazine co-authored by the OT be circulated.

Resolved to note the contents of the report.



**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 18 October 2024 from 10.02 am - 10.41 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor John Clarke MBE (Chair)
Councillor Callum Bailey
Councillor Richard Butler
Councillor Salma Mumtaz
Councillor Nayab Patel
Councillor Tom Smith

Absent

Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Anwar Khan, Substituted
by Councillor Nayab Patel

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Bev Bull - Head of Finance and Treasurer
Richard Walton - Director of KPMG LLP External Auditor
Mick Sharman - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Malcolm Townroe - Solicitor, Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Laura Wilson - Senior Governance Officer

31 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Anwar Khan (Councillor Nayab Patel substituting)
Councillor Sybil Fielding

32 Declarations of Interests

None.

33 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2024 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**34 Audit Backlog Arrangements – Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and
2022/23**

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer, presented the report, detailing the audit backlog arrangements following legislation being laid by the UK government, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) The draft Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 have been presented and noted by the Finance and Resources Committee on the 14 October 2022 and 16 June 2023 respectively. Both draft sets of accounts have been published on the Authority's website and the required public inspection notice was advertised implementing the required the inspection periods.
- (b) Both the external audits of 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts have been delayed due to resourcing issues at Ernst Young LLP (EY). This is a national issue caused by the increased amount of regulatory requirement and the lack of audit resources within the public sector. The 2021/22 audit commenced during July 2023 and a substantial amount of the audit had been completed. In February 2024 the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities opened a consultation on 'Addressing the local audit backlog in England'. In light of the consultation EY did not progress any further work on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts. EY continued to progress their work for their commentary on Value For Money (VFM) for 2021/22 and 2022/23. The interim commentary on VFM was reported and noted by Fire Authority on the 26 July 2024.
- (c) The UK Government has now laid legislation setting statutory backstop dates, starting with 13 December 2024, to clear unaudited accounts up to Financial Year 2022/23. Two pieces of legislation have been laid in Parliament, the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and on behalf of the Comptroller & Auditor General of the National Audit Office (NAO), a draft Code of Audit Practice 2024.
- (d) EY are planning to issue an audit completion report for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts by the end of November 2024 to enable them to meet the backstop date of 13 December 2024. The completion report will include a disclaimed or modified opinion on the Statement of Accounts and summarise their final view of the VFM arrangements.
- (e) The Letter of Management Representation is a letter written by the external auditors. The letter is required to be signed by the Head of Finance/Treasurer (Section 151 Officer) and the Chair of Finance and Resources Committee. The letter confirms that they have the responsibility for the proper administration of the financial affairs of the authority and the duties this entails have been undertaken. It also evidences that the Auditors have been provided with all relevant and accurate information in relation to the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and 2022/23. The wording on the draft letter will be finalised following the receipt of the draft completion report and be signed on the date of the audit opinion.
- (f) The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 remove the current requirement to publish audited accounts for financial year 2023/24 by the 30 September 2024. The deadline for the publication of audited accounts for financial year 2023/24 will, instead, be 28 February 2025 to coincide with the second backstop. The Regulations also amend the date by which bodies should publish draft (unaudited) accounts to 30 June for financial years 2024/25 – 2027/28.
- (g) The FRC have also issued a 'Local Audit Backlog Rebuilding Assurance' Accessible Guide explaining the reset/recovery process will operate. It has been recommended to

share this guidance with the Finance and Resources Committee so is therefore included with the report.

Resolved to

- (1) Delegate authority to the Head of Finance/Treasurer (Section151 Officer) and the Chair of Finance and Resources Committee to approve the External Auditors Completion Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and to sign the final 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts; with the completion report and any changes to final 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts being presented to the next Finance and Resources Committee.**
- (2) Approve the draft Letter of Management Representation, subject to final amendments to reflect the completion report, for signing by the Finance/Treasurer (Section151 Officer) and the Chair of Finance and Resources Committee.**
- (3) To note the Financial Reporting Council 'Local Audit Backlog Rebuilding Assurance' Accessible Guide.**

35 Audit Progress

The External Auditor provided the following update:

- (a) In normal circumstances, where a disclaimer is issued, an auditor would effectively have to perform work to assure all the opening balances and prior year comparatives in a single year. The Recovery period has been designed to allow auditors to rebuild assurance for balances related to 2022/23 or earlier over multiple audit cycles, reducing the risk of the backlog recurring. Because auditors will need to make prioritisation decisions to issue audit opinions ahead of the backstop dates, they may not be able to obtain evidence to support all balances nor all in-year and comparative expenditure, income, cash flow and reserves movements.
- (b) The knock-on impact of the auditor not having assurance over in-year movements means they will also not have assurance over those figures when they are shown as comparatives in the following year.
- (c) It is anticipated that many bodies that received disclaimers in 2022/23 will follow a similar cycle to the one below. However, this depends on individual circumstances and it may take longer for auditors to rebuild assurance on some bodies, especially those with underlying weaknesses in financial reporting:

2023/24 Disclaimer

The auditor has begun limited work to rebuild assurance ahead of the 2023/24 backstop date. They have not obtained sufficient evidence to have reasonable assurance over closing balances. The auditor does not have assurance over the brought forward balances from 2022/23 (the opening balances). This means they do not have assurance over the in-year movements. They also do not have assurance over the comparative prior year movements. The auditor judges the lack of evidence over these movements and balances means they cannot conclude that the accounts

are free from material and pervasive misstatement of the financial statements. Therefore, they disclaim their audit opinion.

2024/25 Disclaimer

The auditor has obtained sufficient evidence to have assurance over closing balances in 2024/25. Page 26 FRC | Local Audit Backlog: Rebuilding Assurance 5 The auditor does not have assurance over brought forward balances that were deprioritised on the 2023/24 audit. This means they do not have assurance over all in-year movements. They also do not have assurance over the comparative prior year movements. The auditor judges the lack of evidence over these movements and balances means they cannot conclude that the accounts are free from material and pervasive misstatement of the financial statements. Therefore, they disclaim their audit opinion.

2025/26 Qualified (Except for)

The auditor has assurance over the opening and closing balances plus in-year movements. The auditor does not have assurance over the comparative figures. The auditor judges that this means there could be material but not pervasive misstatement and will need to qualify their opinion for 2025/26 by limiting its scope to not provide assurance over the comparative figures.

2026/27 Unmodified

The auditor has assurance over opening balances, closing balances, in-year movements and prior year comparatives. The auditor can therefore issue an unmodified opinion.

- (d) The timeline to get to a position of assurance is credible.

The Committee noted the update.

36 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Report to 31 August 2024

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer, presented the report detailing the 2024/25 financial performance of the Service and Prudential Code monitoring to the end of August 2024, and highlighted the following points:

- (a) The revenue monitoring position shows a forecast outturn position of £51.308m, which is an £1.467m (2.78%) underspend against the revised budget of £52.775m. The original approved budget of £52.688m included a £138k contribution from the general reserve address a funding deficit. The revised budget reflects the planned use of £87k of earmarked reserves relating to various projects.
- (b) During 2024/25 the Authority has received government grants for Fire Pensions Administration and Fire Protection totalling £117k and £128k respectively. The receipt of these grants has been reflected in 'Other Income'. There are plans for this funding to be spent in future years, so approval is sought to transfer this grant funding to earmarked reserves.
- (c) After the transfer to earmarked reserves the forecast underspend would be reduced to £1.222m. The underspend means the £138k use of the general reserve to balance the budget will not be required. It is proposed the £1.084m remaining forecast underspend

will be used to fund the capital programme, to reduce the level of borrowing required and therefore reduce the capital charges to revenue in future years.

- (d) In wholetime pay, the main forecast variances are:
- £760k underspend on basic pay. The pay award for July 2024 was agreed at 4%, which is lower than the budgeted pay award of 5%. There is also a higher number of people on development rates of pay than budgeted. There is a higher number of vacant posts within wholetime. Staff numbers are projected to be 13 posts below the approved establishment by the end of year, with the recruit course that was initially planned for January 2025 being pushed back to April 2025.
 - £333k underspend on employer's NI and pension contributions aligned with the underspend on basic pay.
 - £225k overspend on unplanned overtime. This budget can hard to predict, the current forecast is based on average rates of expenditure in the most recent months.
 - £59k overspend on pre-planned overtime, this is due to covering of shifts due to vacancies and annual leave.
 - There is also a minor overspend of £5k relating to bank holiday pay.
- (e) The budgeted pay award for on-call was 5%, compared with the agreed pay award of 4%. The forecast variances are:
- £57k overspend on retaining fee. The agreed pay settlement included changes to the level of retaining fee received by on-call staff. These changes will take effect from 1 January 2025 and will result in retaining fees increasing by between 33% and 50%, depending on individual's contracts.
 - £19k overspend relating to drills and training. This is mostly resulting from an increase in expenditure on attendance at training courses, which is due to course scheduling.
 - £72k underspend relating to turnouts, disturbance allowances and attendance fees. A significant proportion of this underspend is due to the return of 24/7 wholetime crewing at Ashfield station, which has decreased the levels of on-call activity at both Ashfield and at neighbouring Hucknall. The 2025/26 budget will be reduced to take account of this change.
 - £42k underspend relating annual leave. Individual's annual leave rates are calculated at the beginning of each financial year and are based on the previous year's earnings. The budget calculations therefore must be based on estimates, and this can sometime lead to variances.
 - £18k underspend relating to employer's NI and pension contributions, due to the overall underspends in pay.
 - £9k variance relating to other work (equates to 2% of the budget).
- (f) The forecast for non-uniformed pay is based on the budgeted pay award assumption of 5%. The current pay award offer from the National Employers has been rejected by Unison members, prompting an industrial action ballot which will run until 16 October. Had this offer been accepted it would have decreased the forecast overspend by £70k. The current forecast includes a saving for the Prevention restructure. This underspend is being offset by temporary resources supporting ICT, and a decrease in the number of vacant posts. The budget assumed a vacancy factor of 10% whereas the actual vacancy factor is currently 7%.

- (g) The redundancies and settlements overspend is due to the settlement and redundancy costs which were not included in the budget. These costs mostly relate to the restructure of the Prevention team and were due to be funded from the Efficiency Programme earmarked reserve. The earmarked reserve funding is no longer required due to the overall underspend.
- (h) The pensions underspend is due to the number of injury allowance recipients being lower than budgeted.
- (i) The premises costs underspend is mainly due to reductions in expenditure on electricity and gas. The unit prices for energy have decreased, with gas prices down by almost half. Estimates provided by the supplier indicate that gas and electricity are likely to underspend by £175k and £194k respectively.
- (j) Transport cost presented an overspend of £312k, the majority of which is due to unplanned maintenance as a result of delayed replacement of appliances. There was an underspend relating to fuel as a reflection of usage by Nottinghamshire Police, however, this reduced usage is reflected in the income receivable from the Police.
- (k) There has been an overspend of £125k for supplies and services, mainly relating to software maintenance contracts.
- (l) Sales fees and charges income underachieved by £150k as a result in reduced fuel usage by Police, and a reduction in the feed-in tariff for the generation of the Service's renewable energy.
- (m) 'Other income' exceeded expectations by £550k, attributed to surpluses from interest receivable, which was boosted by Central Government grants of £8m for pension top pension administration, and revenue grants including fire protection.
- (n) Capital financing costs is forecast with a £486k underspend, including £334k on interest payable as less borrowing was required, along with £152k for the replacement mobilisation system which has been deferred until operational.
- (o) Table 2 of the report efficiency savings are set out, with further detail provided in the report later in the agenda. Where savings have not been achieved in this financial year to is anticipated they will be achieved next year, including fleet and the ICT network. Additional savings have been identified relating to contracts, business rates, and the prevention the structure.
- (p) It is anticipated that the level of reserves by the end of the year will be £11.086m, including £5.083m of general reserves.
- (q) A breakdown of the 2025/26 Capital Programme is attached to the report at Appendix B, with the most significant areas of variance being:

Transport

- i. Fire Appliances (£2.877m) although there may be slippage into next year
- ii. Special Appliances (£410k) with £254k requested to be slipped into 2025/26
- iii. Light Vehicles (£83k) with a request to increase by £40k from capital receipts

- iv. Rural Firefighting (£95k)
- v. Aerial Ladder Platform Appliances (£1.275m) with a request to slip £1.050m to 2025/26

Equipment

- i. replacement duty rig (£250k)
- ii. coveralls (£100k)
- iii. Fire hoods (£140k)
- iv. body cameras (£65k)
- v. contaminants work (£87k)
- vi. personal issue dry suits (£57k)
- vii. National interagency liaison officer radios (£12k)

Estates

- i. Access And Inclusion (£1.172m)
- ii. Service Development Centre Phase 1 (£21m)
- iii. Service Development Centre Phase 2 (£500k)
- iv. Stockhill Fire Station (£30k)
- v. electric vehicle charging points (£60k)
- vi. energy reduction in decarbonisation (£657k, including a grant of £357k)
- vii. joint headquarters (£43k)
- viii. Worksop Station (£31k)
- ix. work at height- tower anchor bolts (£68k)

ICT

- i. replacement equipment (£316k)
- ii. Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) development (£349k)
- iii. mobile computing (£90k)
- iv. cyber security project (£22k)
- v. appliance handheld airwave radio (£29k)
- vi. system upgrades (£101k)
- vii. Airwave Mobilisation System (£60k)
- viii. Tri Service Control Project (£29k)
- ix. command support unit software installation (£55k)
- x. replacement mobilising system (£2.503m)

- (r) With regard to Prudential code monitoring, table 4 of the report provides detailed information of indicator performance against the approved indicator as of 31 August 2024, with it noted that the local indicator for proportion of net debt to gross debt, is lower than approved as a result of increased investment from grants received.

Members questions were responded to as follows:

- (s) Moving grants into reserves is within the terms of the grant conditions.
- (t) There have been some contract challenges with regard to the new Appliances, including supply of parts from Europe and the rise in costs, but there has been ongoing engagement with the supplier to ensure tender specifications are met within the set budget. The arrival of the first appliance is imminent, and a contractual

agreement has confirmed that the cost of the remaining appliances will not be further impacted by further delays.

Resolved to:

- 1) note the contents of the report;**
- 2) approve:**
 - a) the transfer of the £117k pensions administration grant to earmarked reserves;**
 - b) the transfer of the £128k fire protection grant to earmarked reserves;**
 - c) the principle that the in-year revenue underspend will be used to fund the capital programme;**
 - d) the addition of £40k to the light vehicle scheme in the capital programme funded from capital receipts;**
 - e) the following slippage on the capital programme into 2025/26:**
 - i. £254k on special appliances;**
 - ii. £1.050m on Aerial Ladder Platform appliances.**
- 3) note the reductions in the following capital schemes:**
 - a) £150k on Community Fire Risk Management Information System development;**
 - b) £22k on cyber security.**

37 Home Office Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2024-25

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Productivity and Efficiency Plan for the financial year 2024/25, and covering report.

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

- a) The Plan is in response to the Home Office request for a Productivity and Efficiency Plan be provided for all Fire and Rescue Services across the country, with the intention increase wholetime firefighter productivity by 3% and create 2% of non-pay efficiency savings.
- b) As directed by the Home Office, this plan is a refresh of the plan submitted 2023/24;
- c) The report summarises where the savings have been achieved and a narrative on how performance efficiency has been increased is included in the Plan.

Resolved to note the content of the Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2024/25.

38 Stockhill Fire Station Capital Programme

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

39 Corporate Risk Management

Mick Sharman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the 6 monthly report which provides a periodic oversight of Service's Corporate Risk Management, which is reviewed on a monthly basis.

- a) A copy of the Corporate Risk Register is attached to the report as Appendix A.
- b) It is noted that there are currently no 'Very High' risks identified.
- c) Whilst the majority of identified risks remain stable, the only changes since the last report are:
 - i. Balanced Budget (Risk 1) has been increased to High (risk rating of 12), from Medium (risk rating of 8);
 - ii. Information Security (Risk 16) is a newly added risk, rating 12;
 - iii. Service Reputation (Risk 15) has lowered from High (risk rating of 12) to Medium (risk rating 8).

Resolved

- 1) to endorse the Service's approach to managing the key risks to the Authority;**
- 1) to note the most recent version of the Corporate Risk Register detailed in Appendix A to the report.**



**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 17 January 2025 from 10.05 am - 11.28 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor John Clarke MBE (Chair)
Councillor Richard Butler
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Tom Smith

Absent

Councillor Callum Bailey
Councillor Salma Mumtaz

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Bev Bull - Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority
Richard Walton - Director of KPMG LLP External Auditor
Andrew Howarth - Internal Auditor from Nottinghamshire County Council
Mick Sharman - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

40 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Callum Bailey (personal)

41 Declarations of Interests

None.

42 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2024 were confirmed as true record and signed by the Chair.

**43 Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Report to 30
November 2024**

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which provides an update to the committee on the 2024-25 financial performance of the Service to the end of November 2024, including monitoring of Prudential Indicators.

The report provides detailed information on the following;

- a) a summary of expenditure and funding, including the £1.244m underspend;
- b) commentary on the following budget variances;
 - i. employee in costs underspend of £881k
 - ii. premises costs, underspend £368k;
 - iii. transport -related costs, overspend £306k;
 - iv. supplies and services, overspend £329k;
 - v. third party, overspend of £90k;
 - vi. support services, underspend of £23k;
 - vii. capital financing costs, underspend of £486k;
 - viii. sales, fees, and charges, under achieved income of £139k;
 - ix. other income, overachieved income of £350k;
- c) target efficiency savings are listed in Table 2 of the report, including newly identified savings, which, if achieved, will provide an additional £11k;
- d) the current and anticipated levels of earmarked reserves are outlined in Table 3 of the report, and it is predicted that the general reserve will total £5.083m by the end of the financial year;
- e) the Capital Programme budgets, activity, and forecasts are presented in Tables 4 and 5 of the report, accompanied by narrative, including adjustments due to an expenditure being incorrectly accrued in a previous year;
- f) a detailed narrative of Capital Programme Net Slippage and Acceleration is provided in paragraph 2.27 of the report;
- g) areas of Capital Programme over and underspend since last reported in August 2024 are identified in paragraph 2.28 of the report. This specifically relates to £357k underspend to Estates Energy Reduction and Decarbonisation TO (this grant will be returned), and an overspend of £18k on ICT and Communications;
- h) Prudential Code Monitoring is presented in Table 6 of the report, and whilst at this stage in the financial year indicators are mainly in line with agreed levels, it is noted that a precise overview will not be available until the year end.

Members' questions were responded to as follows:

- i) the Service did not lose money when the contractors for the 'access and inclusion' contract went into administration, but the Service has made a claim to the administrators as a new contractor will need to be found;
- j) the 'On-Call' pay budget is difficult to accurately determine as it is dependent on the number of incidents requiring on-call staff, meaning that fewer incidents result in lower costs. The Service is currently implementing the national position of a retained

fee and payment for the number of hours worked. There is potential for fluctuation, for which must be provided for in the budget;

- k) the 'Whole-Time' pay budget is underspent as the Service took a cautious approach to recruitment due to the unknown figure of the yearly settlement from Central Government. A multi-year settlement would be helpful for longer term planning, particularly as it takes several months to recruit and train firefighters before they can become operational.

Resolved to:

- 1) **note the contents of the report;**
- 2) **approve the slippage and acceleration in the capital programme into/from 2025/26 as detailed in Section 2.27 and Appendix B of the report;**
- 3) **approve the forecasted capital programme over / underspends as set out in Section 2.28 of the report.**

44 Budget Proposals for 2025/26 to 2028/29 and Options for Council Tax 2025/26

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which tasks members of the committee with identifying a preferred council tax option to recommend to the full Fire Authority. Members were also asked to consider and discuss pay award assumptions for the final 2025/26 budget.

The report provides a narrative overview of the potential budgets compared to previous years and projected into 2028/2029, and presents members with three options from which to select a council tax approach for 2025/26, with details on how each option would impact the Service's budget in 2025/26 and ongoing years.

The three options presented to the committee are as follows:

- 1 to accept a service budget deficit with a nil Council Tax rise;
- 2 to apply a 2.95% Council Tax increase in all years;
- 3 to apply a £5 Council Tax increase (to property band D, pro rata) in 2025/26 and a 2.95% increase in all following years.

It was emphasised that whatever the final decision of the Authority for 2025/26, that the amount received in next financial year's Council Tax precept would be in the base for following year's potential income and budget deficits.

With regard to pay award assumptions, Mick Sharman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, informed the committee that there are significant factors to take into consideration, including the change in leadership of the Secretariat. The FBU has written to the Local Government Association's National Joint Council requesting further consultation. Most Authorities are

presuming a 2% pay rise for the uniform staff a contingency is included in the budget that would allow for an additional 1% pay award. The Chief Fire Officer and Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority have been consulted on pay rise affordability, but it is likely that other sector pay rises will have an influence.

Resolved

- 1) that having considered the budget proposals for 2025/26 to 2028/29, and the proposed council tax options set out within the report, the committee unanimously recommends that the Fire Authority approves the implementation of option 3, to apply a £5 pounds Council Tax increase (to band D property pro rata) in 2025/26 and a 2.95% increase in all following years;**
- 2) that with regard to the pay award assumptions for the final 2025/26 budget, the committee supported the budgetary assumption of a 2% pay award for uniform staff and 3% pay award for support staff for 2025/26. n.**

45 Update on Final Audited Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and 2022/23

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, presented the report which provides an update on the final audited statement of accounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23, noting that the accounts were signed on 5 December 2024.

Resolved to:

- 1) note that the Final Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 were signed and published by the statutory backstop date;**
- 2) note the Final Audit Completion Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23 enclosed at Appendix A to the report.**

46 Audited Statement of Accounts 2023-24

Bev Bull, Head of Finance and Treasurer to the Authority, introduced the report which presents Members with the Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 and requests approval for the signing of the 2023/24 accounts to enable publication of the final Statement of Accounts by the backstop date of 28 February 2025.

Bev Bull offered to meet with Councillors in person at any time during the year, if they wished to discuss any specific areas of the Accounts.

Resolved

- 1) to note that the audited Statement of Accounts 2023/24 as attached at Appendix A to the report;**

- 2) **to delegated authority to the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee to sign the final Statement of Accounts 2023/24;**
- 3) **that any changes to the 2023/24 accounts are presented to the next Finance and Resources Committee.**

47 Draft Audit Completion Report 2023/24

Richard Walton, Director of KPMG LLP External Auditor, presented the Draft Audit Completion Report. Points highlighted included:

- a) whilst the first KPMG appended report is issued to the Authority as ‘those tasked with Governance’, the second report is specific to Local Authority audits for public issue on the Service’s website, alongside the accounts at a later date;
- b) the last completed financial detailed audit of the Service was undertaken in 2021, but due to NFRS having a ‘disclaimed’ audit opinion for the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23, KPMG have had no alternative other than to issue a further ‘disclaimed’ audit opinion, as the starting point information is yet to be confirmed;
- c) in normal circumstances a disclaimed opinion would be issued if something has had gone wrong, but this is not the case for NFRS, and relates to the national circumstances of the financial audit back logs. The Service is not alone in late completions, with multiple Local Authorities in the same position. Central Government has emphasised that this should not be considered to the detriment of Authorities;
- d) it is anticipated that the national Auditing Schedule will comply to the original timescales within 2-3 years, through the ‘reset, recovery, and reform’ programme established by Central Government and the Financial Reporting Council, a result of which will be the ability to issue definite audit opinions;
- e) Page 6 of the ‘End of Year’ audit report provides a summary of the audit findings with regard to risk, for which detailed narrative is provided within the KPMG report:
 - i. Significant audit risks
 - management override of controls,
 - evaluation of post-retirement benefit obligations, (no concerns raised),
 - valuation of land and buildings;
 - ii. other audit risks
 - valuation of land building;
 - iii. uncorrected audit differences
 - defined benefit asset;
 - iv. number of control deficiencies
 - bank reconciliation;

- f) some areas of the audit are still outstanding at this point in time, but will be completed and an opinion issued by the end of February;
- (f) 5 areas of audit misstatements were identified and are explained in page 14 of the KPMG report, but none are of particular concern at this time;
- g) one area hasn't been amended regarding pension accounting as it is below the materiality threshold for a required amendment;
- h) page 19 provides a summary of Value For Money work, followed by a more detailed narrative, no areas of significant concern were identified;
- i) Audit Recommendations are made within the KPMG audit report, but none are considered significant.

In response to members questions:

- j) it was noted that the 'estimates' point regarding pension costs is an unknown, but is reasonably assumed within accepted boundaries, so is considered neutral. Actuaries can pose alternative presumptions, but the true figures cannot yet be determined.

Resolved:

- 1) to note the contents of the External Auditors Draft Completion Report as attached at Appendix A to the report;**
- 2) to grant delegated authority to the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee to approve the External Auditors Final Completion Report for 2023/24;**
- 3) for the Final Completion Report and any final changes to 2023/24 Statement of Accounts to be presented to the next Finance and Resources Committee.**

48 Internal Audit Report 2024/25 Update

Andrew Howarth, Internal Auditor from Nottinghamshire County Council, presented the Internal Audit progress report which outlined the 6 audits for this year, all of which are on track for completion as planned.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) the 'procurement of goods and services' audit is complete and presented to the committee as an appendix to the report;
- b) the 'data protection' audit was in draft form at the time of agenda publication, but has since been completed and will be presented to the next committee;
- c) the 'Replacement Mobilisation System (RMS)' audit has been delayed until the end of February due to an RMS project officer post being vacant;

- d) the Fire Standards Board, 'Leading the Service' standard audit will start a week on Monday;
- e) 'On-call Firefighter remuneration rostering system' audit has started;
- f) the 'Corporate Governance' audit is being scoped and will be completed by the end of March;
- g) the procurement report was issued with 'reasonable assurance' with recommendations issued in the following areas, the detail of which is set out in the report with a detailed narrative;
 - i. Single Source Supplier Forms (Priority 1 Area)
 - ii. Financial Regulations and Procedures (Priority 2 Area)
 - iii. Contract Register (Priority 2 Area)
 - iv. Procurement Planning for New and Expiring Contracts (Priority 2 Area)
 - v. Electronic Procurement (Priority 2 Area)
 - vi. Signed Contracts (Priority 2 Area)
 - vii. Staff Procurement Training (Priority 2 Area)
- h) as agreed last year by the Fire and Rescue Authority, the committee is tasked with monitoring the progress against the recommendations of last year's 'contract management' audit. Appendix 2 to the report provides the update on progress against the audit recommendations, including the latest action taken of boosting resources within the team which will increase the pace of progress;
- i) members of the committee were assured that training sessions are being held with individual managers to support targeted learning both in specific areas and roles, but also more broadly. Supporting documented guidance is provided along with ensuring that staff are aware of the significance of the methodology of the processes and the implications of not following the processes.

Resolved to note the report.

49 Exclusion of the Public

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

50 Stockhill Fire Station Capital Programme

Mick Sharman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented report.

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



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 Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold,
Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 8 November 2024 from 10.00 am - 11.12 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Nick Raine (Chair)
Councillor Tom Hollis
Councillor Nayab Patel
Councillor Audra Wynter

Absent

Councillor Robert Corden
Councillor John Lee

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Leila Berry	- Area Manager
Mick Sharman	- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Malcolm Townroe	- Solicitor, Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Laura Wilson	- Senior Governance Officer

21 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Robert Corden

22 Declarations of Interests

None.

23 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

24 In2People Report: Understanding our Communities

Leila Berry, Area Manager, presented the report which provides the findings of research commissioned to measure the perceptions of minoritised groups in Nottingham City towards Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, highlighting the following:

- (a) the focus of the research was on women and racially minoritised groups in Nottingham City, although learning can be extrapolated to similar communities living in other areas of the county;
- (b) over 35 groups and 400 people participated in the research and the work explored key themes of perception, barriers, accessibility and engagement with NFRS. The groups were drawn from youth clubs, sports clubs, community projects, education establishments, external staff networks and groups relating to faith, women, LGBTQ+ and older people;
- (c) insights drawn from the findings of the research will be used to inform the People and Culture Strategy 2025-28 and associated workforce planning activities. As an example, findings from Gen Z participants (born mid 1990s – mid 2020s) indicated:
 - a lack of knowledge of the different roles available within NFRS;
 - graduates do not understand how their skills and qualifications can be used and about opportunities for career advancement;
 - those who knew a firefighter were more likely to be attracted to the role;
 - there is a lack of visibility of NFRS at schools/colleges;
 - there are concerns about negative media portrayals of the fire service;
 - there is a perceived stigma regarding the suitability of certain religions or cultures for roles in the fire service;
- (d) a need for strong and consistent leadership and collective narrative about benefits of diversifying the workforce has been identified. For this reason, the Service is opting to incorporate the wider learning from the research into strategy and planning activities to ensure consistency of approach over the medium term;
- (e) the report recommends building and engaging the understanding of the wider workforce, as well as harnessing the capabilities and potential of internal support departments including the Community Engagement Team, Corporate Communications and Human Resources teams;
- (f) the research indicated that style and breadth of some of the Service's current communications activities are failing to reach prominence within minority communities, and that the Service would benefit from having a more prominent marketing and public relations approach to its communications activities;
- (g) recruitment practices should be improved to actively promote available opportunities, as well as to demonstrate that the Service is a welcoming and progressive environment where individuals can grow, thrive and progress on merit;
- (h) the report recommends measuring and reporting of progress, as well as maximising opportunities to learn from the experience of community organisations who have extensive experience of working with Nottinghamshire Police in support of their positive action activities;
- (i) the report has now been published internally for NFRS staff and externally on the Service's website. An initial workshop with the Service's Strategic Leadership Team has been undertaken and proposals are being formulated to progress the

recommendations made as part of the People and Culture Strategy development underpinning the next CRMP;

- (j) following the engagement with In2People, 53% of respondents expressed an interest in visiting the Service to view life as a firefighter. The Service is currently arranging a number of 'have a go' days to support this aspiration.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- (k) the report focuses on improvements, but NFRS is already working well and leading the way on inclusivity, and is trusted by most people. More work could be done to engage minority communities in Nottingham City, building sustainable and long term relations, as well as working class white communities in the wider Nottinghamshire area;
- (l) it would be good to circulate examples of success stories of recruitments from under-represented groups to advertise the wider work of the fire service and inspire people to work for NFRS.

Resolved to

(1) note the findings of the research conducted by In2People;

(2) endorse the use of the findings to inform the development of the People and Culture Strategy 2025-28 and subsequent workforce planning activities.

25 Gender Pay Gap 2024

Leila Berry, Area Manager, presented the report which outlines the outcomes of the gender pay gap audit for the year ending 31 March 2024, highlighting the following:

- (a) in 2023-24 the mean hourly pay gap was 5.05% compared to 12.53% for 2022-23. The median average was 3.24% for 2023-24 compared to 7.78% for 2022-23. The gender pay gap has significantly reduced, in part due to a refinement of the calculations in line with Government guidance to exclude pay not linked to duties or hours worked and annual leave allowances;
- (b) for all work groups the mean average pay for men is higher than the average for women. This is due to the gender imbalance within the workforce (81.9% men and 18.1% women) and the proportion of men in higher graded operational and managerial roles. The gender pay gap does not indicate a disparity in the hourly rate paid to men and women undertaking the same job. The figures reflect the low number of women in operational roles. The number of women in support roles account for 63.16% of total women in the Service, however more men than women are employed in managerial or senior professional roles which accounts for the pay gap disparity;
- (c) the lack of women in operational supervisory and senior management roles is a perennial issue. The Service is continuing to work to encourage more women to apply for firefighter roles, as well as supporting those already in the Service to

progress to more senior roles;

- (d) the structure and gender profile of the fire and rescue service presents particular challenges to closing the gender pay gap. Over recent years, changes to leadership development programmes have concentrated on a different leadership style based on coaching and effective people skills, which is also reflected in selection processes, and this will change the culture of the Service over time. This is more likely to attract women to leadership roles within the Service;
- (e) the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Women's Network was established in 2021, and provides support and guidance to women across the workforce. As well as this, the network provides targeted learning and development opportunities for members and is a valuable source of challenge to identify barriers to recruitment and progression which particularly impact women;
- (f) the Service is seeking to adopt a longer term and more sustainable approach to diversifying the workforce. The first stage of the process has been to identify dedicated resources to undertake community engagement and positive action activities. This has been delivered as part of the Prevention function review carried out under the Futures 25 change and improvement programme.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- (g) more work could be done on more flexible working opportunities within the shift system which is quite rigid at the moment, which could provide more opportunities for those with caring responsibilities;
- (h) with so few women in operational roles it can be difficult to provide visible role models to encourage other women to apply for these roles;
- (i) reduction of the gender pay gap should be celebrated and communicated appropriately.

Resolved to

- (1) note the contents of the report;**
- (2) endorse the actions set out in Paragraph 2.10 of the report, which are designed to enhance the career advancement of women within the Service.**

26 Human Resources Update

Leila Berry, Area Manager, presented the report providing an update on key human resources metrics for Quarter 4 of the financial year 2023-24 plus Quarters 1 and 2 of financial year 2024-25., highlighting the following:

- (a) during the period 1 January to 30 September 2024, 82 employees commenced employment. There have been 61 leavers and 82 starters during this period. This has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 837 (this includes 69 dual contractors);

- (b) reasons for sickness absence at NFRS broadly mirror the national trends with Musculo skeletal and mental health related absences featuring significantly in all workgroups;
- (c) during the review period, one disciplinary hearing resulted in a dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. There were seven further disciplinary investigations undertaken. Three grievances were raised, two were not upheld, one was partially upheld. Two firefighter apprentices did not pass their probationary assessment and were dismissed on capability grounds. There was one employment tribunal case;
- (d) women currently constitute 17.44% (140) of the total workforce. The gender split in Support staff roles (total 166) is 48% male and 52% female. This is largely reflective in different grade bands although there is a slightly larger percentage of women occupying more junior positions;
- (e) employees from minority ethnic backgrounds constitute 7.3% of the workforce. 2021 Census data shows the working age (18-64) population from ethnic minority backgrounds for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire combined is 21.9% demonstrating that the Service has much more to do to reflect the community it serves;
- (f) a Wholetime firefighter recruitment process took place last year and the initial training course, comprising 20 trainees started in April 2024 with successful trainees completing the course in July. Of the 20 trainees, four were women and six were from a racially minoritised community. An On-Call recruitment campaign closed during April 2024, and 15% of the 85 applicants were women with 25% (three) successful at interview.;
- (g) the monitoring data shows that the workforce profile is not representative of the local population, but it does show that there have been some small, but positive, changes since the last report.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- (h) On-Call roles are specific to location, which can reduce the impact on diversity of those eligible to apply;
- (i) occupational health support has recently been invested in and improved for staff suffering from mental health or trauma related issues, in order to support them and reduce long term sickness absence.

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

27 Review of Workforce Plan 2023-25

Leila Berry, Area Manager, presented the report providing an update on progress against the Workforce Plan 2023-25, highlighting the following:

- (a) the Wholetime establishment is currently 431. The current workforce is 429, which represents a shortfall of two roles;

- (b) the number of employees providing On-Call cover currently stands at 242, of which 69 are dual contract. There have been 13 leavers and 14 new appointments to trainee firefighter roles between April and September 2024. The number of leavers is below workforce projections, however the Service continues its successful work via the On-Call Support Team (OCST) to maintain the number of On-Call firefighters;
- (c) changes to the Prevention Team structure were concluded on 1 September 2024 as an output of the Futures 25 efficiency strategy. This resulted in the disestablishment of 12 posts and the establishment of 10 new posts. Seven colleagues have achieved roles at the same grade, two have been promoted to a role at a higher grade and one into a role at a lower grade with pay protection in accordance with Service policy.

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

28 People Strategy Update

Leila Berry, Area Manager, presented the report providing an update on the priorities for the People Strategy 2022-25, highlighting the following:

- (a) work to date has been centred around the Prevention function review completed as part of the Futures 25 change and improvement programme. The outcomes included identification of dedicated resources to deliver community engagement and positive action activities in a sustainable way, as well as creating clear progression pathways for both Green and Grey Book staff through the department;
- (b) in addition to this, a digital maturity assessment has been commissioned to support the Service to shape its approach to delivering effective digital and ICT functions, which is seen as being key to delivery of aspirations relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service going forward. This is underway now and due to report early in the new year;
- (c) following receipt of the report into the Standards of Behaviour in Fire and Rescue Services from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) relating to delivery of people functions, the Service is reviewing its people functions to ensure that it is suitably structured and adequately resourced to deliver the stretching goals set, both by HMICFRS, as well as the ambitions of the Authority and the Service relating to people and culture;
- (d) the annual Personal Development Review (PDR) supports colleagues who are aspiring for promotion, through dedicated time with their line manager to discuss career aspirations. This is supplemented by a range of development opportunities, including incident command taster sessions, and positive action events targeted at those who are currently underrepresented in the leadership cohort;
- (e) the Service has recently supplemented its leadership and organisational development function, and is seeking to maximise opportunities for coaching, mentoring and reverse mentoring to support colleagues who are already in leadership roles alongside those who are aspiring to be;

- (f) the Service has invested heavily in operational training capabilities, including the creation of a state of the art incident command training suite, alongside significant investment at the Service Development Centre in Ollerton. The investment enhances the training offered at these sites, alongside dignity at work improvements for all colleagues;
- (g) the CRMP Assurance Board routinely reviews compliance rates for operational revalidation training, alongside other mandatory training for all staff to ensure the workforce is competent and effective. The Service has continued to invest in digital learning where appropriate to support the accessible learning and development for colleagues;
- (h) the firefighter apprenticeship programme continues to be delivered successfully, offering an accredited, high quality entry level route into the Service. The Service also has four funded apprenticeship posts aligned to national standards within support functions;
- (i) Throughout the life of this People Strategy the Service has continued to support staff networks at a strategic level to cultivate a culture of trust. Staff networks and other staff groups are regularly engaged to support projects where the employee voice is paramount. Recent examples include the Uniform Review Working Group, and the access and inclusion estates project;
- (j) the Service undertook a staff survey between June and July this year. A 68% completion rate was achieved, alongside an improvement in satisfaction rates in almost all aspects of the previous survey. The results are very strong, with an overall staff satisfaction score of 72.2%;
- (k) during the strategy period, the Service has successfully completed a dedicated project to ensure that the Core Code of Ethics is understood by staff, as well as being embedded into policy, procedures and ways of working;
- (l) the Service has implemented a confidential reporting line, to provide an alternative route for colleagues to report issues anonymously. Between December 2023 to date, 13 concerns have been raised for a range of issues including reporting instances where staff and management behaviour has fallen below the expected standard.

Resolved to note the contents of the report.



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold,
Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 24 January 2025 from 10.00 am - 10.32 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Nick Raine (Chair)
Councillor Robert Corden
Councillor John Lee
Councillor Nayab Patel
Councillor Audra Wynter

Absent

Councillor Tom Hollis

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Leila Berry - Area Manager
Mick Sharman - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

29 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Tom Hollis (personal)

30 Declarations of Interests

None.

31 Minutes

The minutes of meeting held 8 November 2024 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

32 HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour Progress Update

Leila Berry, Area Manager, presented the report which updates the committee on the progress of the Service in implementing the recommendations made by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services Standard of Behaviour report.

Highlighted points included the following:

- a) the 4 areas of recommendation are:
 - i. Cultures in the Fire and Rescue Services;
 - ii. The extent to which Services identify misconduct;
 - iii. The effectiveness of the misconduct processes;
 - iv. Understanding misconduct and sharing lessons learned;
- b) a summary of the total of 15 recommendations is attached as Appendix A to the report, with timescales for implementation, it being noted that 2 recommendations require national action so are not wholly within the control of this Service;
- c) to date, all 6 recommendations relating to Cultures have been completed and closed;
- d) of the 3 recommendations relating to 'the extent to which Services identify misconduct', 2 are now complete, with work to meet the recommendation 'Services should create or have access to a dedicated professional standards function to oversee the investigation of concerns and manage complex cases directly' ongoing and progressing, as outlined in the report;
- e) one of the 7 recommendations for 'the effectiveness of the misconduct processes' has been completed, with the remaining ongoing with completion scheduled between 1 February and 1 November 2025;
- f) both of the recommendations regarding 'understanding misconduct and sharing lessons learned' are outstanding but scheduled to be completed between 1 February and 1 November 2025;
- g) national reporting will inform national collation of anonymised data which will be shared with workforces to help raise awareness. The Fire Chief's Council is considering how this can most effectively be achieved.

Members' questions were responded to as follows:

- h) the Service does look more broadly at culture when dealing with misconduct and bad behaviour, but these count for a small proportion of issues reported;
- i) the Service does provide a variety of welfare provision for those experiencing trauma, with both internal and external help and support available for colleagues, and where issues do arise, members are assured that investigators are trained and processes designed to enable issues such as trauma to be raised as part of any investigation;
- j) the Professional Standards recommendation with a timescale implementation of 1 February 2025 will not be fully met as there is still much conversation nationally between Services, as there appears to be a range of models with differing approaches varying from Service to Service, so this is proving complex. However, it is recognised that the relationship between HR and the Professional Standards Team does need to be clearly defined. Work is still ongoing and does have budgetary implications. Nationally it has been a challenge in interpreting the recommendation, so NFRS has engaged an external consultant who is already working with multiple

emergency services, and who is advising NFRS on their specific circumstances on how best to complete the recommendation whilst maintaining the desired relationship with the workforce. Recently guidance issued by HMICFRS has been welcomed;

- k) it is anticipated that the Committee will be informed of the progress and timescales for completion of all outstanding recommendations at the next meeting;
- l) care will be taken on specifying who can access the nationally gathered sensitive information, possibly single named officers, even if information is anonymised;
- m) there's a balance to be had with sharing information with the workforce and the learning from an incident with the aim to improve the Service, particularly for small Services where there is a risk of identifying individuals. It is also recognised that accessing some types of information could trigger trauma responses in some staff;
- n) the HMI assessment was a thematic review which was then applied to all Services. NFRS was not one of the 10 Services assessed but is expected to apply the Police's model solution at a local level.

Members' comments included:

- o) new independent national research is currently taking place which is investigating how trauma impacts on individuals, including on a long term basis. So far it has proved that those who have experienced trauma will have a higher effect rate of outbursts, destructive and concerning behaviour and alcohol and drug abuse. We know frontline staff within the Service will experience trauma. We need to be sure that unacceptable behaviours are not as a result of trauma experienced in their role whilst doing their job, and that the Service doesn't punish staff for something that is in effect caused as a result for working for the Service. Trauma responses can occur 20 years plus after the traumatic event, so recognising historic traumatic events also needs to be taken into consideration, and support provided. At the very least, trauma needs to be recorded on individuals' files in case related issues surface in future years;
- p) members welcomed the achievements to date and commented that with regard to the Professional Standards, working cultures varied significantly across the Emergency Services and so a one-size-fits-all approach is not always successful at a local level;
- q) the Committee and officers welcomed the offer for Councillor John Lee to share the trauma research information with committee members and officers as soon as it is available;
- r) having a Professional Standards Team separate from HR does create a separate culture and hasn't been especially effective for the Police working culture.
- s) language and cultural barriers aren't always obvious, and can include generationally embedded language, but also recognising that some languages and cultures don't have words for 'upset' or 'depressed' as they don't recognise feelings and behaviours as we accept them. This is why it is vital that training and guidance are ongoing.

Resolved to:

- 1) note the progress made against the recommendations;**
- 2) agree to receive a further update on progress in 3 months.**

33 Hosting of the Local Resilience Forum Secretariat

Mick Sharman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the committee of the updated arrangements for the Service to host the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Secretariat with Nottinghamshire Police.

The arrangements are set out in the report and were summarised as follows:

- a) the Service is a statutory partner of the LRF and a category 1 responder member of the multi-agency Forum;
- b) under current administrative arrangements, the secretariat alternates between the city and the county, but following a Central Government review and a further review commissioned by the Chief Constable, these new arrangements are proposed to be implemented with a partner funded secretariat;
- c) both the Police and Fire Service support a joint hosted approach, with NFRS acting as the sole employer, recruiting 4 individuals to undertake the secretariat duties;
- d) the partner funded financial arrangements are valued at a cost of £17k per annum to the Fire and Rescue Service;
- a) an evaluation of the arrangements will be undertaken after 12 months, but the exact method of evaluation is yet to be confirmed.

Resolved to support the approach of the Chief Fire Officer in hosting the Local Resilience Forum Secretariat.



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

Minutes of the meeting held at Dunkirk and Beeston Suites - Highfields Fire Station, Hassocks Lane, Beeston, Nottingham. NG9 2GQ on 15 November 2024 from 10.00 am - 10.49 am

Membership

Present

Councillor Audra Wynter (Vice Chair)
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Tom Hollis
Councillor Nigel Turner (items 7-9)
Councillor Roger Upton

Absent

Councillor Michael Payne

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Bev Bull	- Head of Finance and Treasurer
Craig Parkin	- Chief Fire Officer
Mick Sharman	- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Malcolm Townroe	- Solicitor, Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Damien West	- Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

1 Chairing Arrangements

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Audra Wynter chaired the meeting

2 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Michael Payne

3 Declarations of Interest

None.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Service Improvement - Futures 25 Closure Report

Mick Sharman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report providing a closure on the Futures 25 change and improvement programme, setting out the achievements and next steps to incorporate service improvement as part of business as usual activities, highlighting the following:

- (a) phase 1 of Futures 25 ran from May 2022 to March 2023 and identified three workstreams, primarily to identify both pay and non-pay efficiencies to ensure the Authority was in a position to set a balanced budget for 2023/24: a workforce review of Green Book posts at Grade 5 and above, a fire cover review, and a review of the flexi duty officer collective agreement;
- (b) phase 2 of Futures 25 was outlined to Members in February 2023, based on the identified need for wider service improvement to support the ambition to be an outstanding fire and rescue service by 2032. Work for Phase 2 was summarised into four key areas: a governance review, revenue budget management, service redesign and a review of culture, EDI and leadership;
- (c) the strategic leadership structure has been reviewed, which has seen a reduction in substantive membership of the strategic leadership team from ten posts to nine. Governance structures have also been reviewed and meeting structures streamlined;
- (d) in February 2023, Chief Fire Officers and Fire Finance Directors were asked by the Home Office to submit annual efficiency and productivity plans, and these were incorporated into the Futures 25 programme of work. The Service continues to develop improved ways of capturing and reporting cashable and non-cashable savings, and these are now embedded as business as usual within corporate and finance teams. Changes to procurement thresholds have been implemented as part of the review of financial regulations;
- (e) the service redesign workstreams have formed the most significant portion of the service improvement programme and these will continue to be driven forward. An assessment of the ICT delivery team has begun and will be reported on to members in the new year;
- (f) the deliverables from the Futures 25 programme have included the commissioning of a comprehensive qualitative data analysis project to inform the Service's understanding of communities, and to ensure the Service is effective in engaging with those who have not yet been reached by the prevention and protection services. The interactive mapping tool, designed with support from Nottingham Trent University and the Office for National statistics, is currently being evaluated by the Community Safety and Community Engagement Team, and the Fire Protection Team, and will be embedded as part of business as usual to ensure the Service is effective in targeting activities for best effect.

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

6 Exclusion of the public

Resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (under Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3) on the basis that, having regard to all the

circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

7 Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8 Resilience Update

Craig Parkin, Chief Fire Officer, presented the exempt report.

Resolved to approve the recommendations in the report.

9 Mobilisation Project Update and Mobile Data Terminal Software Contracts Award

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the exempt report.

Resolved to approve the recommendation in the report.