



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: 18 December 2015

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in October and November 2015.

CONTACT OFFICER

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1. BACKGROUND

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

2. REPORT

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

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Community Safety Committee | 02 October 2015 |
| Finance and Resources Committee | 09 October 2015 |
| Human Resources Committee | 16 October 2015 |
| Policy and Strategy Committee | 13 November 2015 |

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 2 October 2015 from 10.00am to 11.14am.

Membership

Present

Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Roger Jackson
Councillor Dave Liversidge
Councillor Mike Pringle

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell (Chair)
Councillor Ken Rigby

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Substitute for Councillor Eunice Campbell)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor Gordon Wheeler | - Observer |
| John Buckley | - Chief Fire Officer |
| Sally Savage | - Housing Lead |
| Catherine Ziane-Pryor | - Governance Officer |

7 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

Resolved for Councillor Grocock to Chair the meeting in the absence of Councillor Campbell.

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Eunice Campbell (personal)
Councillor Ken Rigby (personal)

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

10 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2015 as a true record and they were signed by the Chair presiding at the meeting.

11 HOARDING FRAMEWORK

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs members of the release of the multi-agency Hoarding Framework for which Sally Savage, Housing Lead, has been a driving force.

The Framework which has been developed in partnership to provide a co-ordinated approach to help partners address situations where hoarding becomes an unsafe environment for the citizens involved, but in the case of a fire, also an unsafe environment for fire fighters.

Where hoarding occurs, some partner agencies may be perceived as a threat by the hoarder but the Fire and Rescue Service are predominantly perceived as neutral or positive presence where other agencies may not be welcomed. This means that the Service is better able to engage with hoarders, help assess the situation and where necessary, support progression towards a resolution. In addition, partnership working prevents duplication and with each partner issued with a tool kit, information and guidance of which agency should do what and when, ensures that all organisations are aware of their specific roles and responsibilities and the situation can be handled gently in a manner most suitable for each case.

Other partner organisations include but are not exclusive to:

Nottingham City Council;
City and County Council Environmental Health
City and County Council Social Care;
City and County Council Safeguarding Boards;
Police;
NHS;
East Midlands Ambulance Service;
Social Housing and Housing Associations;
Nottingham City Homes;
Mental Health Teams;
Public Health.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the Hoarding Framework has proved to be such a success that it has now been widely shared with other Fire and Rescue Authorities and is recognised as best practice by the Chief Fire Officers Association;
- (b) the next stage for the framework is for it to be rolled out to all fire crews to enable them to identify and share information on hoarding issues when they appear. From a Fire and Rescue safety approach, the crew consider where the person/people are sleeping, and which doors can be accessed in the case of a fire;
- (c) the Hoarding Steering Group will manage and maintain the Framework which will be reviewed every 6 months;

- (d) the Framework has also been launched at a Social Housing Best Practice event where it was enthusiastically received;
- (e) owner occupiers are often more difficult to approach;
- (f) between 2% and 6% of the population are estimated to have a hoarding issue of some sort;
- (g) hoarders often attach a sentimental value to the items they collect and keep and this must be taken into account when trying to help resolve a potentially hazardous situation.

Members commented as follows:

- (h) the Hoarding Framework is welcomed and the Service must be commended for initiating and hosting such an important element for Community Safety;
- (i) as elected Councillors who were often invited into citizen's homes, the pictorial overview of 'clutter images' provided in the Framework are extremely helpful in identifying at what level of hoarding concerns should be raised;
- (j) prior to the Framework being implemented, it was very difficult to assess and address hoarding issues.

The Multi-Agency Hoarding Framework document can be found here:

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=56661&p=0>

RESOLVED to note the report.

12 CONTRIBUTION TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which outlined how the role of Service was changing as it is now responding to 27.9% fewer incidents than during 2010, but has a far more substantial role in fire prevention and promoting safety.

The trusted image of the Service has enabled access to sections of the community when other organisations and agencies have been refused and so the Service is engaging with many 'hard to reach' individuals and communities, therefore providing a valuable partnership channel for information gaining and sharing.

The home safety checks initiative proved to be a valuable tool for providing help and advice to citizens on home health and safety issues beyond fire prevention. The checks were targeted at known high incident risk, vulnerable members of the community and the results of the checks can be seen as contributing to the reduction of reported incidents.

Two documents have recently been released 'Beyond Fighting Fires' by the LGA, and 'Fire Works' by the New Local Government Network, both acknowledge that Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) provide an integral part of Public Services and support the preventative role of Services, along with previous reports such as 'Facing the Future Review' and the 'Bain Report'. The latest documents also suggest extending this expertise to include a role in early intervention and helping to promote and even facilitate community wellbeing.

The priorities of Nottinghamshire's Fire and Rescue Community Safety Strategy (2015-18) of 'persons at risk', 'older persons', 'youth and education' and 'road safety' have been aligned to objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that work in these areas are contributing to the wider health agenda and can assist in reducing the health burden on the public sector.

Potential collaborations are being considered which could result in the Service's involvement in 'Safe and Well' assessments and provision of information to replace the 'Home Safety Checks'. There is also a possibility that the Service has a role in some areas of early intervention, helping to prevent diseases and illness.

It has been disappointing that, unlike some Fire and Rescue authorities in other areas, a seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board was not available to the Service. However, the Service is recognised as a key provider and now has representation on the Health and Wellbeing Steering Group.

RESOLVED to note the report and support a broadening of the Service's prevention function to include health and wellbeing.

13 FIRE COVER REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

Following a resolution by the full Fire and Rescue Authority at the last meeting, John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report and presentation which outlines the community safety implications of the Fire Cover Review 2015. The presentation was added to the agenda following the meeting.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the nature of business of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has changed with a 27.9% reduction in emergency calls since 2010 but with a greater emphasis on incident prevention and improving safety;
- (b) currently uniformed pay accounts for 64% of the NFRS budget;
- (c) the Service operates two traditional crewing models of whole time and retained crews with a crew of 5, suitable to tackle building fires, attending every type of incident;
- (d) there is an internal target of 90% of incidents to be attended within 10 minutes with the Service Currently achieving 82%;
- (e) an activity and cost analysis of a whole time crewed station (Retford) and a retained crew station (Eastwood) were presented with the following figures;

| | Retford (WDS) | Eastwood (RDS) |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Peak hours incidents responded to (3pm-10pm) | 213 | 346 |
| Off-peak incidents responded to | 44 | 71 |
| Annual Station operating costs(approx.) | £1m | £120 |

- (f) whilst Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue continue to apply the traditional crewing and duty models, some other Fire and Rescue Authorities operate a range of different models;
- (g) collaboration opportunities are being explored and some are already in operation with Fire and Rescue Authorities and also with the Police, Ambulance and the wider public sector;
- (h) several options for future crewing and duty arrangements are being investigated and considered, including:
 - (i) varying the ratio of whole time and retained staff;
 - (ii) secondary contracts for varying the level of cover to match demand but ensuring that provision stability remains;
 - (iii) a more flexible model of cover, deploying variable response (time and number of FF's) dependent on incident types.

Members made the following comments;

- (i) once the 169 co-responding call-outs at Eastwood were removed from the chart there was little difference in the activity of the two stations and yet the cost differences are significant;
- (j) a broader view of the Service needs to be considered as not all stations could effectively operate with retained crews, especially where there are currently issues with recruiting retained fire fighters from within the response time boundary;
- (k) the difference in cost needs to be justified and value for money assured;
- (l) unless decisions are to be made to close stations, there has to be changes to the way in which the Service operates to meet the savings required between now and 2020, while maintaining an appropriate level of cover;
- (m) operating targets could be revised with consideration of the reasonableness of responding to all types of incident within 10 minutes when some are less urgent than others;
- (n) attendance of automated fire alarm calls could be revisited as there are approximately 3,000 per year and 99% are false alarms;
- (o) changes will need to be very carefully considered and the impact on citizens, not just the financial constraints, fully investigated.

RESOLVED for the Chief Fire Officer to formulate and present to the Committee a range of more detailed operating options.



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -
FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 9 October 2015 from 10.00 - 11.05**

Membership

Present

Councillor Malcolm Wood (Chair)
Councillor John Allin
Councillor Chris Barnfather
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Dave Liversidge
Councillor Gordon Wheeler

Absent

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| John Buckley | - Chief Fire Officer |
| Cllr Brian Grocock | - Present as an observer |
| Mark Kimberley | - Interim Treasurer |
| Sue Maycock | - Head of Finance |
| Ian Pritchard | - Head of Procurement and Resources |
| Cllr Darrell Pulk | - Present as an observer |
| James Welbourn | - Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council |

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

10 MINUTES

Councillor Brian Grocock informed the Chair that he was recorded as being a member of the Committee at the last meeting dated 10 July 2015, when in fact he was an observer. On the basis that this would be amended, the Chair signed the minutes as a correct record.

11 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING TO AUGUST 2015

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance, introduced the Revenue and Capital Monitoring Report to August 2015, highlighting the following points:

- (a) overall, pay variances are at 1%;
- (b) delays on the London Road site have mean that some of the budget will slip forward to 2016/17;
- (c) there is no longer a capital grant being received from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG);

Following questions from Councillors, the following information was provided:

- (d) there has been a period of transition where the Fire Service has required additional capacity, and overtime has been used as an interim measure. Overtime is a concern, and efforts have been made to reduce it;
- (e) the Supplies and Services budget is expected to be overspent by £204,000. Previous years have seen underspends in this area; retained staff were 70 posts short of current levels. The retained budget will need to increase next year, and will recognise the greater contribution retained employees will be making to the Fire Service;
- (f) on the project to implement the Tri-Service Control system is on-going. The 3rd stage payment at Go Live has not taken place as yet, as the system is not delivering to the required standard. A full report is to be brought to the next Policy and Strategy meeting;
- (g) industrial action remains a risk, although a 7 day notice for a strike would be required. Contingency crews continue to be monitored. Some appliances and equipment have been released, and if there is a strike, front-line appliances will be used.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report;**
- (2) update members at the next meeting on how the delivery of new vehicles is progressing.**

12 PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2015

Mark Kimberley, Interim Treasurer to the Fire Authority presented the Prudential Code Monitoring Report to 31 August 2015, highlighting the following points:

- (a) the main exception to compliance is loan maturity;
- (b) there is an opportunity to borrow, which would have interest implications. The Fire Authority would need to stay conscious of the market;

RESOLVED to note the report.

13 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – CARDIFF CHECKS

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance introduced the Internal Audit Report.

RESOLVED to note the report.

14 RESCUE PUMP COLLABORATIVE PROCUREMENT

Ian Pritchard, Head of Procurement and Resources presented the report on Rescue Pump Collaborative Procurement, highlighting the following points:

- (a) a contract is in place which will allow 24 pumps to be purchased in total by the Fire Service and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue (12 pumps each). There is a discount associated with the purchase; the more pumps that are bought, the higher the level of discount. The cost of a pump is around £160,000 before the discount is applied;
- (b) reductions nationally to the Fire Service may impact on cross-border support. This applies to the Loughborough area in particular at a local level. This is becoming an increasing factor for risk management;
- (c) the current 12 pump commitment can be reduced, but the discount would fall accordingly;

RESOLVED to note the report.

15 NEW LONDON ROAD FIRE STATION PROJECT

Ian Pritchard, Head of Procurement and Resources presented the report on the new London Road Fire Station Project, highlighting the following points:

- (a) accommodation is to be provided for the Nottingham City Council's (NCC) Emergency Planning Team (EPT) who are to take out a 50 year lease. NCC will pay for their own gas and electric supplies. NCC is able to terminate its lease after 10 years without any financial claw-back from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service;

- (b) early reports for the project reported a cost of £5.5million. After competitive tender, the project cost came to £5million;
- (c) qualified risks such as contamination cleaning needed to be addressed. There was more asbestos than expected;
- (d) a verbal response from the Environmental Agency (EA) has been received saying that they are happy with the work that has been carried out. This response is required in writing;
- (e) insurance was taken out on the site. If any risks are found off-site and are traced back, the insurance will cover this eventuality;

Following questions from Councillors, the following information was provided:

- (f) Councillor Clarke expressed concern that some manufacturers of steel are providing low quality steel that can be difficult to weld. He was reassured that any steel being used must meet British standards, and the steel supplier to the site has been happy with the standard;
- (g) the total cost of the project is due to come in under the original forecast of £5.5million. Councillors expressed pleasure at this announcement;

RESOLVED to note the content of the report.



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 16 October 2015 from 10.01am - 11.31am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Negat Nawaz Khan
Councillor Mike Pringle
Councillor Liz Yates

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell
Councillor Michael Payne

Councillor Brian Grocock (Substitute for Councillor Eunice Campbell)
Councillor Darrell Pulk (Substitute for Councillor Michael Payne)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Wayne Bowcock | - Deputy Chief Fire Officer |
| Tracy Crump | - Head of People and Organisational Development |
| Gail Armitage | - Occupational Health Manager |
| Matt Sismey | - Equality and Diversity Officer |
| Catherine Ziane-Pryor | - Governance Officer |

22 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

In the absence of Councillor Michael Payne, Councillor Darrel Pulk was appointed Chair for the meeting.

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Michael Payne (other County Council Business)
Councillor Eunice Campbell (personal)

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

25 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the presiding Chair.

26 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the detailed report which updates the Committee on the key human resources metrics for the quarter 2 period 1 July to 30 September 2015.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) sickness absence has slightly increased to 4% during quarter 2;
- (b) long term absence accounted for 41.5% of absence during this period;
- (c) the main reasons for absence continues to be musculo skeletal and mental health issues which is following a national trend;
- (d) a breakdown of absence for whole time, non-uniformed and control staff is included in Appendix B to the report but it should be noted that with fewer staff, individual sickness absences can have a larger impact on the statistics;
- (e) the peer support programme for colleagues seeking informal mental health support is progressing and the Service is liaising with colleges to secure appropriate training. Following an initial canvas for interest, 15 colleagues have expressed an interest in attending a 5 day course;
- (f) the majority of mental health issues appear to originate from personal issues;
- (g) resilience training is to be available for managers who wish to attend;
- (h) Appendix C to the report provides a ranking chart of how other Authorities are performing with regard to sickness levels. Nottinghamshire ranks 6th with regard to whole time and control staff and 15th for whole time, Control and Support Staff. However, it should be noted that other Services have a different ratio of staff, including retained, who have not been included in the figures and it is not clear exactly how statistics have been interpreted;
- (i) a seasonal peak of short term absence is predicted during the winter months but the Service is offering flu jabs to staff this year. (Some fire fighters in other parts of the Country are administering flu jabs to citizens).

Councillors commented:

- (j) the Service has made good progress in addressing sickness absence;
- (k) the peer support programme is welcomed as sharing and just speaking with people can make a huge difference to mental health and wellbeing;

- (l) the small decline in long term absence at the beginning of the year is positive, especially if the trend continues.

RESOLVED to note the report.

27 EQUALITIES PERFORMANCE

Matt Sismey, Equality and Diversity Officer, presented the report which updates the Committee on the Equality and Diversity work undertaken since the last meeting.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the Service is now ranked as 91 in the top 100 national employers engaged with Stonewall;
- (b) the last whole time recruitment campaign took place in 2012 so it has not been possible to try to meet the equality recruitment targets of ethnic minorities and women when there aren't posts to recruit to;
- (c) it is far more difficult to attract ethnic minority applicants to some retained recruitments due to the make-up of the local communities within the required travelling time of the stations;
- (d) the requirement to be fit, mobile and strong does limit the recruitment of citizens with disabilities as firefighters which is currently 0.9%. The reduction in office based staff has reduced the need for recruitment, but for non-uniformed roles, disability is 7.2%. Existing employees and new applicants are encouraged to report any disabilities, including dyslexia, and mental health issues;
- (e) local stations will be asked to use local knowledge to try and engage the local community, with specific focus on minority groups and women, but expectations must be managed;
- (f) work continues to improve engagement with LGBT communities with more than 40 people expressing an interest and with a further event to be held at the Retford Fire Station;
- (g) the Service is active in promoting the 'Future Leaders' programme;
- (h) 39% of the workforce are aged 45-60 years old, future planning is taking place in preparation of staff leaving the Service although age is relative and overridden by fitness;
- (i) fitness is vital and all operative staff are required to achieve a fitness level of 42. Were staff to fail, the Service works with them to regain and maintain the fitness level;
- (j) although there is no requirement for employees to retire at a specific age, very few decide to continue working beyond the pensionable age with currently

approximately 27 people per year leaving the Service, including for health and disability reasons;

- (k) the disability, ethnic and minority targets, which are internally set, need to be revisited.

Members welcomed the paper and the efforts to ensure that employee make-up of the Service represented the communities within Nottinghamshire.

It was suggested that where whole time firefighters retired from or left the Service, it would be beneficial to all parties if retained staff, who are already fully trained, were given the opportunity to apply.

RESOLVED to note the report and agree to receive a revised performance framework for equality by April 2016.

28 ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR ROLE

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the report which requested that the Committee consider recommending to the Full Authority that a Systems Administrator post be established within the Human Resources Section.

The establishment of this part-time post, which has been evaluated at Grade 3, has been identified following a review of systems support requirements to ensure that the system infrastructure and data integrity are maintained and that systems can be developed in line with technology and user demands.

RESOLVED to:

- (i) **support the creation of the post of Systems Administrator (18.5 hours per week);**
- (ii) **recommend that the Full Fire Authority approve the establishment of this post.**

29 THE NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WELLBEING AT WORK: WORKPLACE HEALTH AWARD SCHEME

Gail Armitage, Occupational Health Manager, presented the report which informs members that the Service has been awarded the 'bronze level' of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Wellbeing at Work Scheme which is run by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The scheme focuses on five key themes which are:

- substance use/misuse;
- emotional mental wellbeing;
- healthy weight;
- protecting health;
- safety at work.

The Service fully believes that it is operating at the gold standard but the scheme is structured so that organisations provide evidence of their activity, support and promotion in each of the intervention tiers and once successfully completed, advance to the next tier. The plan, implementation and assessment of work focusing in the bronze intervention tier of 'Health promotion and information' took approximately a year. The next intervention tier for silver focuses on 'Enabling and increasing access to local well-being services'.

Involvement of the scheme has helped to highlight some areas of health and wellbeing which the Service could further promote or more widely support using alternative methods. It is also a good tool for benchmarking.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the achievement of the Workplace Health Bronze Award;**
- (2) for the Chief Fire Officer to arrange for a letter of congratulation to be sent to the Occupational Health Team, on behalf of the Committee, with regard to the work undertaken to promote employee wellbeing and achieve the award.**

30 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in paragraphs 1 & 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

31 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS RESTRUCTURE

Bridget Aherne, Head of Corporate Communications, presented the report which proposes changes to the Corporate Communications Structure.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations within the report and added to during the meeting.

32 REGRADING OF POSTS

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which, following a job evaluation where the outcome was considered by the Job Evaluation Panel, proposes regrading of posts.

RESOLVED to note the recommendations within the report.



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 13 November 2015 from 14.02 - 15.38**

Membership

Present

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)
Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Chris Barnfather
Councillor Gordon Wheeler
Councillor Yvonne Woodhead
Councillor Malcolm Wood

Absent

Councillor Jon Collins, Substituted
by Councillor Malcolm Wood

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| John Buckley | - Chief Fire Officer |
| Malcolm Townroe | - Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority |
| Neil Timms | - Treasurer to the Authority |
| Catherine Ziane-Pryor | - Governance Officer |

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Jon Collins (Other City Council Business) Councillor Malcolm Wood substituted.

15 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, declared a personal interest in agenda item 9, minute 22), Principal Officer Pay Review, and withdrew from the meeting during the item.

16 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2015 as a true record and they were signed by the Chair.

17 CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON 'ENABLING WORKING BETWEEN EMERGENCY SERVICES'

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provided the consultation document and response to the Government consultation regarding 'Enabling Close Working Between the Emergency Services'. Due to the time constraints of the consultation period the Chair, Vice Chair and Lead Opposition Spokesperson had worked together to compile the response which was submitted on behalf of the Authority.

Members of the Committee commented:

- (a) the response was also presented to the City Council which endorsed it and commented that it was well prepared;
- (b) whilst Nottinghamshire's consultation response has focused on delivery of service, other responses focused on the financial implications;
- (c) devolution and regionalisation may impact on the future provision of services;
- (d) meetings have been held with staff based at headquarters, where the response has received positive feedback;
- (e) staff had also been encouraged to also put their own views forward.

Resolved to ratify the response to Government, on behalf of the Authority, regarding the consultation 'Enabling Closer Working Between The Emergency Services.'

18 OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW REPORT

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which provides the outcome of the peer review operation assessment which had taken place in June 2015.

The assessment outlined which areas had been considered at the request of the Service. This included:

- (a) Community Risk Management;
- (b) Prevention;
- (c) Protection;
- (d) Preparedness;
- (e) Health and Safety and Welfare;
- (f) Training and Development;
- (g) Leadership;
- (h) Organisational Development and Readiness.

Overall the outcome of the independent and objective review was generally seen as positive and will be published. It is noted that the final document was not received in time to be processed and submitted to the last full authority meeting.

Members commented as follows:

- (a) all officers and staff should be pleased with the report and find it useful as the Service continues to develop;
- (b) there is only a passing reference to member involvement in the review although members took time to speak with the reviewers;
- (c) the findings are interesting and where minor concerns have been expressed these should be explored, including ethos in groups and compartmentalisation;

John Buckley responded that some of the areas identified for improvement had already been identified by management and were in the process of being addressed. This included a more joined up approach to communication with workshops scheduled to align and address some of the issues.

Councillors were reassured that managers had identified and were addressing all issues identified in the review and that no unexpected issues were presented.

RESOLVED

- (1) to formally receive the operational assessment report from the peer assessment team;**
- (2) to task the Chief Fire Officer to utilise the observations within the report to contribute towards any key decisions going forward.**

19 FEES AND CHARGES

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report proposing that the scale of charges in relation to Special Service calls and the use of service facilities are revised.

It is noted that there has been no variation in charges for several years and that regular reviews are required.

Charges can only be made to the value of the cost of providing the service and cannot incorporate profit. When called, the Service will always attend.

Room hire needs to be charged at an appropriate rate relevant to users.

Where Special Services are repeatedly requested in preference to businesses carrying out maintenance and repair work, such as to lifts, charges could be considered, in line with other Fire and Rescue Services which charge businesses as a deterrent after a set number of call-outs. However, further careful consideration is required prior to any significant changes.

Councillors commented as follows:

- (a) the perception of citizens is that this is a free service and contributes to the Service's credibility. If charges are to be made, this may negatively impact on reputation, particularly if citizens perception is that they will be charged by the Service for attending;

- (b) further financial information is required regarding attendance cost for special services, and the range of users and market rates for room hire;
- (c) with regard to room hire charges, venues need to compete against each other to maintain their premises, if the Fire and Rescue Service make virtually no charge, this can jeopardise the facilities of other community organisations as they will not receive bookings and income. Room bookings should be charged at the going market rates to ensure that other community facility providers which hire out rooms are not undermined;
- (d) it is a valid point that whilst the Service does not charge for animal rescue, farms are businesses and public funded service is being provided for free;
- (e) charging is wrong as citizens pay council tax;
- (f) it is disturbing that businesses which choose not to maintain their equipment, such as lifts, rely on the Service to rescue their clients when the lifts break down, on the basis that the Fire and Rescue Service is free and responds immediately, in preference to a paid for maintenance service. Maybe, as with roadside recovery, a charge could be made after a certain number of incidents. This would encourage businesses to take maintenance more seriously;
- (g) in no way would the Service want to deter citizens from calling on it when in need;
- (h) caution should be exercised given that in one instance a council started to charge for environmental services regarding rat problems, where the citizens did not want to be charged for the service, they did not report issues and the rat population expanded out of control. It is vital that citizens are not led to believe that they will be charged for fire and rescue services;
- (i) if charges were to be made to repeat negligent offenders, a charging process would be required and a method of funds recovery. However, to pursue the issue further could have more substantial financial implications.

RESOLVED

- (1) to support the proposed new charges for Special Services, as set out in Appendix B, and refer these onto the full Fire Authority for approval;**
- (2) to support the proposal to recover the costs of attending Special Service incidents within the framework as follows and refer these onto the full Fire Authority for approval;**
 - (i) consider approval of charges for the containment and clearance of debris, spillages, discharges or leaks from a vehicle, storage tank or pipe would be made where the owner can be readily identified. With regards to vehicles following road traffic collisions, charging would only be considered after the conclusion of the emergency phase, and where the services provided go beyond that normally encountered from a collision – eg: clearance of a large load or tanker discharge;**

- (ii) **charges for the provision or removal of water would relate to flooding in premises that has been caused by a lack of appropriate maintenance or mistakes on the part of contractors. For example, these could include insurable risks such as burst pipes and leaking roofs. Charges would not be made for flooding caused by inclement weather or other natural disasters;**
- (iii) **charges for effecting entry to a premise would apply in circumstances that would be best facilitated by a locksmith. They would not apply when the incident involves a vulnerable person – eg: elderly person or child, or where there is the potential for a fire, or other emergency to occur;**
- (iv) **charges for the removal of a dangerous structure would only apply where there is no risk to life, property or public infrastructure;**
- (v) **no charge will be made for rescuing animals;**
- (vi) **no charge will be made for lifting incapacitated persons;**
- (3) **to support the proposed new charges for the hire of rooms, as set out in Appendix C and refer these onto the full Fire Authority for approval;**
- (4) **to support the proposal to extend charging for the use of facilities to all Service premises and refer this onto the full Fire Authority for approval;**
- (5) **to approve the proposal to fully review fees and charges every three years, and to amend fees and charges to reflect inflationary changes in the interim years.**

20 LIVING WAGE FOR SUPPLIERS

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which seeks approval to apply to become an Accredited Living Wage Employer.

In 2013 the Service implemented the living wage for its own staff and now proposes to require that all contractors providing services to Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue, ensure that the staff providing that service received at least the living wage, which is £7.85 per hour, while the minimum wage (for 25 year olds) is £7.20 per hour. Implementing this requirement would qualify the Service to become an Accredited Living Wage Employer.

Conservative Councillors commented that whilst the wages of Service employees is the business of the Service, which should quite rightly pay a living wage, it is not for the Service to dictate to businesses how much they should pay their employees. Implementing the living wage would not necessarily be easy for smaller employers and the Service should focus on its core business.

The Chair responded that the proposal follows the ethos of the Service in that implementing the living wage for its own staff was the right thing to do, and this should be extended to other people who provide services to the organisation.

It is noted that Councillors Chris Barnfather and Gordon Wheeler voted against the recommendation. However all other Councillors in attendance voted in favour.

RESOLVED to pursue the accreditation as a Living Wage Employer through the implementation of the requirement for providers of service contracts to pay their staff the living wage through tendering processes as and when they are renewed.

21 INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE AND THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (ENGLAND)

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs members of the information sharing agreement between NHS England and the Fire and Rescue Service nationally.

The agreement involves sharing information such as name and date of birth, gender and address of citizens aged over 65 years old, who may be considered vulnerable and at greater risk should a fire occur, with the following objectives;

- (i) to reduce deaths and injuries as a result of fire;
- (ii) to reduce human misery and impact on the NHS;
- (iii) improving health and well-being by working closely with health and social care.

Members welcomed the initiative.

RESOLVED to note the report.

22 PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY REVIEW

Prior to the Committee considering this item, John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, withdrew from the meeting and was invited to return once the recommendation had been made.

Malcolm Townroe, Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority, presented the report which provided the outcomes of the Principal Officer Pay Review which is undertaken every two years.

It is noted that the Chief Fire Officer was appointed at 90% of the pay scale, which would rise in stages to 100% during a three-year period.

Councillors questions and comments were responded to as follows:

- (a) the requirements of the post have not changed since the last review;
- (b) all current pay scales have been built into the budget, including incremental payments;
- (c) not all Local Authorities have provision for incremental payments;

- (d) it should be noted that some of the Fire and Rescue Authorities within the family group at appendix B, are significantly smaller than this Authority.

RESOLVED to recommend to the full Fire Authority, to maintain the existing pay arrangements for the Chief Fire Officer including the previously agreed phasing of incremental progression as detailed on appointment.

23 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

24 TRI-SERVICE CONTROL UPDATE

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, updated the Committee on the progress of the Tri-Service Control.

RESOLVED to note the report.