



**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:** 27 September 2019

**Purpose of Report:**

To report to Members the business and actions of the Fire Authority committee meetings which took place in June and July 2019.

## 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	21 June 2019
Finance and Resources Committee	28 June 2019
Human Resources Committee	05 July 2019
Policy and Strategy Committee	12 July 2019

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report.

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

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -  
COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 21 June 2019 from 10.00 am - 11.04 am**

**Membership**

Present

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

Absent

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

Craig Parkin - Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
Mick Sharman - Area Manager for Response  
Damian West - Area Manager for Prevention  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the Committee of Service delivery between 1 January and 31 March 2019, with contributions from Mick

Sharman and Damian West, both of whom focus upon Service Delivery, including all Response, Protection and Prevention work.

The report includes information on the numbers and types of incidents responded to, prevention and protection work undertaken and on-call availability by station.

Further to the detailed information in the report, the following points were made and responses provided to questions from the committee:

- (a) Overall, there were 42 fewer incidents compared to the same period last year but the number of deliberate fires has increased by 130;
- (b) On-call availability has increased by 1.26% and whilst the majority of On-call crew stations maintain an availability nearing 90% (one of the highest in the East Midlands), work continues to raise availability, particularly around the Southwell, Ashfield and Retford Stations. It is acknowledged that the On-call system was developed many years ago and that modern living and working is now very different. Nationally it is harder to recruit on-call firefighters, possibly as a reflection that the local nature of much industrial employment no longer exists and people often now travel further to work and can't get to the fire stations within the required 5 minutes travelling time. Recruitment to the Southwell Station continues to be a particular challenge. The on-going reduction of incidents to respond to, whilst committing availability may also impact on recruitment and retention. However, the need to have firefighters available to respond to incidents within a reasonable time remains vital so at this point. There are new approaches to recruiting On-call firefighters, including a national campaign and website for On-call firefighters;
- (c) When not responding, operational crews undertake lower risk Hazard Spotting, which releases capacity for the Protection Team to undertake higher risk checks at businesses within the Services risk based inspection programme. A significant training programme during 2019/20 will see operational crews trained to do Business Safety Checks further increasing the number of non-domestic premises visited by NFRS, with significant issues identified being referred to the Protection Team;
- (d) Joint Road Safety Operations with the Police, such as 'Operation Highway', are planned throughout the year with NFRS providing education on the potential hazards of not wearing seat belts, speeding, drink driving and inadequate car maintenance. There is a duty to promote road safety and this was one of the points of the HMICFRS inspection with encouragement to increase collaboration and co-ordination with partners, including local councils. As a result, the Service is pursuing further citizen and partner engagement activity;
- (e) The Service is fully engaged with national good practice and is able to respond to terrorist attacks as part of its statutory duty to respond but as the breadth of possible attack threat increases, further training has been requested and the Service is working closely with trades unions and staff in this area;
- (f) Last year the Service undertook approximately 4,600 Safe and Well Visits but HMICFRS considered this figure to be below average. As there is no standard format for checks, it is unclear how quality may vary between Services and to what

extent the most vulnerable individuals in society have been helped, advised and supported. NFRS aims to complete 6,000 this year and continue to increase this amount in forthcoming years.

Members of the Committee requested that, to enable an easy comparison, future reports provide performance information for the previous year.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the report;**
- (2) for Craig Parkin to seek availability and arrange for members of this Committee to visit fire stations later in the year.**

## **5 REDUCING THE NUMBER OF UNWANTED FIRE ALARM SIGNALS**

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which informs the Committee of the number of Unwanted Fire alarm Signals (UwFS) which were triggered by automatic detection systems and the impact of the revised response policy to such alarms since its implementation 6 months ago.

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

- (a) With more than 3,000 UwFS per year, the demand on resources can be significant and frustrating, particularly on occasions when responding to what became apparent as false alarms coincided with crews being required to respond to genuine incidents;
- (b) Following guidance issued by the National Fire Chief's Council and approval by the Authority, the three Services of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire (Tri-Service collaboration) introduced a policy on how automated fire alarms are responded to;
- (c) The new policy, which requires automated fire alarms in some categories of building to be challenged before fire crews attend, has resulted in a 17% reduction in UwFS, which equates to a 24% reduction in mobilisations per year;
- (d) The Fire Service takes a staged approach to the engagement with businesses, following the fourth false alarm occasion Officers will attend the premises and provide advice and guidance and emphasise the potential impact of engaging an appliance and crew which may be needed elsewhere for a 'risk to life' incident. If there is a sixth occasion of a false alarm, the inspecting Fire Service Officer will undertake a full audit of the premises to ensure the business is complying to the standards expected and all further alarms will be challenged;
- (e) NFRS is willing to enforce non-attendance, but only after repeated engagement and education has proved ineffective and it can be clearly evidenced as such, and the potential consequences of not responding can be shown to have been fully considered. Generally, Officers initially engaging with businesses provides the desired results of resolving false alarm issues;

- (f) Alarms at schools during daytime are usually challenged as historically schools are very effective and efficient at evacuation which significantly reduces the risk to life, but also the responsible person is required to confirm if it is an isolated alarm triggered or multiple alarms which may indicate an actual incident, before calling the Service;
- (g) Alarms at premises where anyone is sleeping, such as hotels and student accommodation, are automatically responded to without challenge;
- (h) There are approximately 700 known properties listed within the county that have specific risks such as storing or using flammable materials. This information, along with aligned practices is shared between Tri-Service partners and can be shared with other Services.

Some members of the Committee queried the risk implications of attending cross boarder incidents outside of the Tri-Service area.

### **RESOLVED**

- (1) to note the report and the reduction in unwanted fire alarm signals;**
- (2) for a further update report to be provided to the Committee in 6 months' time, to include:**
  - (i) a list of non-challenged premises;**
  - (ii) more information on the response time impact of alarm challenging.**



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

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service HQ,  
Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 28 June 2019 from  
10:02am to 10:55am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)  
Councillor Andrew Brown  
Councillor Toby Neal

Absent

Councillor Mike Quigley MBE  
Councillor Nick Raine

Councillor Vaughan Hopewell  
(Substitute for Councillor Mike Quigley  
MBE)

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

Rob Disney	-	Internal Auditor, Nottinghamshire County Council
Adrian Mann	-	Governance Officer
Ian Pritchard	-	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Charlotte Radford	-	Chief Finance Officer
Terry Scott	-	Head of Procurement and Resources
Becky Smeathers	-	Head of Finance

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Mike Quigley MBE	-	personal reasons
Councillor Nick Raine	-	work commitments

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### **4 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUT-TURN FOR 2018/19**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented a report on the financial performance of the Service for 2018/19 and an analysis of the significant variances against the original revenue and capital budgets. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the out-turn report showed a £67,000 under-spend in the revenue budget. This included the utilisation of a net total of £1,770,000 from reserves, including £393,000 planned expenditure from earmarked reserves;
- (b) to comply with the relevant accounting standards relating to termination benefits, a provision of £647,000 is included in the accounts to cover the redundancy payments arising from the upcoming Joint Control Room merger with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service and the planned closure of the Prince's Trust Programme (which showed a net cost deficit of £223,000);
- (c) the total reserves at the end of the year were £10,337,000, with an earmarked reserve balance of £4,800,000 and a General Reserve of £5,500,000. A one-off payment of £163,735 was received through the Revenue Support Grant, due to the national floors and ceilings safety net programme being delivered at a lower cost than expected, and this has been used to create an operational resilience reserve. Approval is required for the movement into the reserves of the one-off Revenue Support Grant payment, the £50,000 needed to create a reserve to fund any necessary work resulting from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services' upcoming inspection, and the £20,324 of resilience grants that were not spent in 2018/19;
- (d) some slippage of spending into the 2019/20 budget is requested, due to some very positive collaborative initiatives taking slightly longer to deliver than expected, including the Lightweight Fire Coats project (with the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service) and the new fire station in Hucknall (with the East Midlands Ambulance Service);
- (e) three debts totalling £1,491 have been written off, mainly due to a pension overpayment following the death of the pensioner, with the small remainder due to leaving staff having taken more than their pro-rata annual leave entitlement prior to their departure;
- (f) the lack of staff resources leading to the slippage of the project to install CCTV in Service vehicles was caused by the assigned project manager needing to cover another post for a colleague during a period of illness. Both managers are now back in their original posts, so the CCTV project can move forward as planned.

#### **RESOLVED to:**

- (1) note the 2018/19 revenue and capital out-turn report;**
- (2) approve the transfer of £234,000 into reserves;**
- (3) approve carrying forward the 2018/19 total capital slippage of £2,081,000 to the 2019/20 budget.**

## **5 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2018/19**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, gave a presentation on the Fire Authority's 2018/19 final accounts, prior to their approval by the full Authority at its coming meeting on 26 July 2019. The following points were discussed:

- (a) a change to the accounts is required following the McCloud pensions judgement, which found that Government changes to the pension scheme for firefighters in 2015 were age discriminatory. This will result in an increase to the pension liability. The actual costs will need to be incorporated into the pension fund and this will be reviewed by the external auditors;
- (b) the unaudited accounts for 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 have been prepared in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and were submitted to Ernst & Young (EY), as the External Auditor, on 31 May, in line with the statutory deadline. Unfortunately, EY has a shortage of capacity currently and will not be able to carry out the audit until August. As such, consideration is being given to when the Fire Authority should meet to approve the report, and when (and in what form) the final accounts should be published;
- (c) the year-end out-turn position compares expenditure to the approved budget, including the expenditure to be funded from income received in the year, and reflects the cost to the taxpayer of providing the service. It complies with standard accounting practices, but does not require auditing. The Statement of Accounts shows the 'true' cost of providing services, including the notional costs, such as depreciation. It must comply with the relevant Standards and Codes of Practice and be externally audited, for approval by the full Fire Authority;
- (d) the Statement of Accounts includes a summary Narrative Statement and the four Core Statements: the Movement in Reserves Statement (which splits out the cash-backed and non-useable reserves); the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (showing what resources have been consumed, including changes in the pension fund liability); the Balance Sheet (showing the net worth of the organisation – which currently includes a deficit due, primarily, to the net pension deficit); and the Cash Flow (showing the movements in cash during the year, which are normally straightforward).

**RESOLVED to note the Statement of Accounts for 2018/19 and the financial results of the 2018/19 year for Nottinghamshire Fire Safety Limited.**

## **6 REVENUE, CAPITAL AND PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING REPORT TO 31 MAY 2019**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented a report on the financial performance of the Service in 2019/20 to the end of May 2019. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the budget forecast showed an out-turn position of £41,689,000 against a revised budget of £42,864,000, including the planned use of £167,000 of the earmarked reserves. It is difficult to give a fully accurate forecast at this early point of the

year, but the projected under-spend position of £1,175,000 is larger than would be expected, normally. However, some of the under-spend is due to large, one-off items of additional income or savings that have been identified since the budget was set. There is a concerted effort to identify ongoing savings and the Procurement Team are working hard to deliver cost-effective contracts;

- (b) the budgets allowed for a contingency of approximately £200,000 to support the day-crewing project, but this was not needed. The Service also receives grants from the Government to compensate for any loss of income from the National Non-Domestic Rates, where this is caused by a Government policy. The 2019/20 grant figures were released in May and the Service will receive £672,000, which is £233,000 above the estimate used in the budget;
- (c) an under-spend of £367,000 is expected in pay for non-uniformed roles, due to there being 10 vacancies at the end of May. Several of these posts are only vacant on a temporary basis, so it is difficult to appoint cover. The forecast under-spend for pension costs is £137,000, most of which relates to ill health charges. The situation is being monitored and consideration is being given to whether funding should be provided through a reserve, rather than through revenue;
- (d) total Capital Project expenditure to date is £137,000, with a forecast out-turn expenditure of £6,627,000, including the slippage of £2,081,000 from the 2018/19 budget. The new Hucknall station is now progressing well, along with a number of ICT projects. The expected level of reserves at 31 March 2020 is £10,107,000;
- (e) under the Prudential Code, borrowing activity has remained within its set boundaries and there has been no further borrowing since the start of the financial year. All investments have been made securely.

**RESOLVED to note the Revenue, Capital and Prudential Code Monitoring Reports to 31 May 2019.**

**7 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

Rob Disney, the appointed Internal Auditor from Nottinghamshire County Council, presented a report on the annual Internal Audit and the Internal Audit Strategy for 2019/20 to 2020/21. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the audit plan has been largely completed, with only one report yet to be finished. Limited assurance opinions have been provided in relation to the closing Prince's Trust programme and the issues relating to the Redkite system for recording firefighter training;
- (b) the rest of the audit reports have covered important and impactful areas and delivered positive assurances for the organisation, which has good governance, risk management and control processes. Internal audit testing is carried out to ensure that the recommended actions of the audit are carried out and participation from the Fire Authority committees is very valuable to this process;
- (c) the Audit Plan for the next year is flexible and will address any emerging risks.

**RESOLVED to:**

**(1) note the Internal Audit Annual Report;**

**(2) approve the Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21 to 2021/22.**

**8 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 outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.**

**9 ESTATES COLLABORATION UPDATE**

Terry Scott, Head of Procurement and Resources, presented a report on the current and future estates collaboration between Fire and Rescue and other emergency services.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.**



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

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service HQ,  
Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 5 July 2019 from  
10:00am to 11:29am**

**Membership**

<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos (Chair)	None
Councillor Vaughan Hopewell	
Councillor Jawaid Khalil	
Councillor John Longdon	
Councillor Salma Mumtaz	

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

John Buckley	- Chief Fire Officer
Tracy Crump	- Head of People and Organisational Development
Adrian Mann	- Governance Officer
Matt Sismey	- Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on the key Human Resources metrics within the Service, including issues such as

sickness absence, formal discipline, grievance, employment tribunal cases and staffing numbers. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the sickness absence report for 2018/19 showed a decrease of 4.3% relative to the previous year, which reflects the hard work taking place to promote good health, rather than solely managing ill health. Overall, the average employee absence was 7.68 days per year, down from an average of 8.05 days in the previous year. Although this is below the average for the sector (at 8.26 days), the Service's aim is to reduce this to an average of 6 days per employee per year. 68.4% of all absence in the year was due to long-term sickness (defined as an absence of more than 28 days);
- (b) the Fire Authority is required by the Government to report sickness in terms of the number of days taken off by the average employee per year, but it could also be reflected in the reports in terms of the percentage of working time lost, as is often the case in the private sector;
- (c) the sickness figures the period of 1 January to 31 March 2019 (quarter four) showed absence across the workforce, excluding retained employees, increasing by 150 days (13.4%) during the review period. This represents an increase of 53.5 days (4.4%), compared to the same quarter of the previous year. Generally, a number of sickness absences during this fourth quarter can be attributed to seasonal reasons, but results can also be skewed if a small number of employees are off on long-term sickness in a quarter. Work is being carried out with the on-call teams, where the sickness rates are relatively high, to find ways of reducing absence;
- (d) an occupational health team is based on site to provide help and support to employees, and a health benefits scheme is also in place. Due to the statutory requirement for fitness testing for firefighters, there are gyms in all stations and staff are encouraged to use them for a period during the course of their working day;
- (e) there is a strong focus on support for mental health and wellbeing, in addition to the provision for supporting physical good health. Muscular-skeletal injuries and mental health issues constitute the two main reasons for sickness absence, and they can often lead to long-term absence from work. A wellbeing strategy is being produced for adoption by the Authority, which will set out the way in which the Service can support staff with mental health issues, with the aim of enabling mental health to be spoken about more openly. An employment assistance programme is also in place to help staff access various other beneficial forms of support from outside the Service, such as counselling and legal/financial advice;
- (f) a structured management and support procedure for absence is in place, which includes 'return to work' interviews, absence review triggers and occupational health reviews. Employment hearings are not conducted at a set interval of absence, as an assessment of individual circumstances takes place on a case-by-case basis;

- (g) it would be valuable to reflect the absence figures in the context of gender and of minority ethnic groups, which can highlight certain issues, and identify any trends with occupational health;
- (h) following the creation of the new Joint Control Centre as part of the sustainability strategy, the current establishment figure for the total workforce numbers will be amended in September, given that the Authority will no longer be the employing authority in terms of control staff.

**RESOLVED to note the quarterly Human Resources update.**

## **5 EQUALITIES MONITORING REPORT**

Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, presented a report on the breakdown of the workforce and the work being done to address under-representation of groups with protected characteristics, as part of the Service's commitment to promoting equality and diversity. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the report covers the six-month period from 1 January to 30 June 2019 and compares the current numbers of the under-represented groups in the workforce against the data from the 2011 census. The substantial recruitment of operational personnel during 2018, following 6 years of not recruiting to new firefighter roles, has been very successful. There are now many more female firefighters and the numbers of BAME staff have increased over the last 18 months;
- (b) the Service works closely with Stonewall to support LGBT+ staff and is among the top 100 employers in the Stonewall index. However, declaration rates are relatively static and members of staff are more likely to tell colleagues about their sexual orientation than to declare this to the Service. Over the next year, the Service will be taking a wider approach on the range of protected characteristics;
- (c) the rates of staff declaring a disability are low relative to the population as a whole, but some of this is accounted for by the level of physical fitness required for firefighters. There is an improved approach to mental health and wellbeing, and a number of reasonable adjustments have been made for staff with dyslexia;
- (d) representation of BAME groups in the workforce is low relative to the local population and work is underway to engage with these under-represented communities. Firefighter role models have been established and initiatives are being carried out in community sports groups to improve the fitness of people who are considering an operational career in the Service;
- (e) on-call firefighters must live within a certain distance of a fire station, so the potential workforce make-up is restricted to the people who live in the areas around fire stations;
- (f) the number of BAME and female staff reduces at senior levels of the Service. Female firefighters have been employed within the Service for the last 15 years and it will take time for women to progress to senior operational positions. Progress has been made in appointing women to senior positions where an operational background is not a requirement of the role. To attract people from

under-represented groups, it is vital to develop innovative and engaging positive action initiatives;

- (g) the success rate of job applicants with protected characteristics is reviewed regularly to ensure that appointment processes are fair. Interview panels are gender-balanced wherever possible, and personal details on application forms are redacted during the sifting process, so that personal details relating to the applicant are not known to the people carrying out the selection process until the interview stage.

**RESOLVED to note the Equalities Monitoring Report and support the Service's continued commitment to attracting, recruiting and retaining a workforce that is reflective of the population that it serves.**

## **6 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2019**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on the outcomes of the Gender Pay Gap Audit for 2018. The following points were discussed:

- (a) in 2017, the Government introduced a duty on employers with more than 250 employees to calculate and publish specific information in relation to the pay gap between men and women in their organisation. Reports are returned on the mean and median rates of pay for men and women employed by the Authority and the proportion of male and female employees by quartile pay band. As the Service remunerates roles on the basis of fixed pay bands, any given type of post receives the same level of pay, regardless of the gender of the post holder;
- (b) the pay gap present in the Authority reflects the fact that there are more men in senior roles than women. A greater proportion of men in the Service (83.3%) tends to mean that men hold a greater proportion of the senior roles, and this is relatively typical of the sector as a whole. Strategies are being developed to attract more women into the Service, and to encourage women within it to apply for management roles. An 'Aspiring Leaders' programme is in place to support people who are considering applying for these senior posts and there are national networks in place to support women in the sector;
- (c) over the next year, the actions to improve upon the gender pay gap will focus on establishing why more female firefighters do not apply for promotion, reviewing any barriers for women seeking appointment to senior roles, reviewing the requirements of the on-call duty system to make it more attractive to potential female applicants, providing opportunities for women to gain experience in higher level roles, introducing a mentoring scheme to enable women in senior roles within the service to provide advice to women who are interested in development, and exploring any additional flexible working arrangements that can be put in place. Consultations with a wide range of people, including employees and their workplace representatives, will take place shortly, to explore the issues and develop a detailed action plan.

**RESOLVED to note the outcomes of the Gender Pay Gap Audit for 2018.**

**7 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

**8 REDUNDANCY PAYMENTS: PRINCE'S TRUST**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented a report on the recommendations of the Discretionary Compensation Payments Board following the Fire Authority's decision to disestablish the Prince's Trust programme.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.**



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY  
POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,  
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on Friday 12 July 2019 from 10:01am to 11:00am**

**Membership**

<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)	None
Councillor Andrew Brown	
Councillor John Clarke	
Councillor Sybil Fielding	
Councillor Toby Neal	
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler	

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

John Buckley	- Chief Fire Officer
Connie Green	- Solicitor
Charlotte Radford	- Treasurer
Becky Smeathers	- Head of Finance
Matt Sismey	- Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager
Malcolm Townroe	- Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Catherine Ziane-Pryor	- Governance Officer

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**3 MINUTES**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2019 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

#### **4 SHAPING OUR FUTURE 'ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH' UPDATE 2019**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, introduced Matt Sismey, Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager, who presented the report which provides details on a range of workforce areas including:

- Leadership and Development, including the popular aspiring managers programme, 360° feedback, and mentoring;
- Diversity in the workforce, noting that of the 37 new apprentice firefighters, 13 are female and 8 are Black /Asian/ Minority Ethnic (BAME);
- LGBT Equality and Stonewall;
- British Sign Language Charter;
- Employee engagement, including a staff survey, spring conferences, internal communication and collaboration.

Members' questions were responded to as follows:

- (a) with regard to Stonewall, the work of NFRS is recognised as very progressive and positive but the size of the Service and the numbers of openly LGBT employees, does not feasibly justify providing all the facilities, such as an LGBT network, on which Stonewall grade organisations for listing within the top 100 best supporting organisations. However, LGBT network support is available through the Trade Unions, which overall historically appears to be the preferred option for the majority of openly LGBT employees. It is agreed that the broader Stonewall issues of proactive reform need to be addressed in preference to chasing recognition with facilities, which will not be utilised. NFRS has not withdrawn from Stonewall but ranks at 99/100;
- (b) in response to members' concerns that it may appear that the Service is dis-engaging with Stonewall, it is suggested that the Strategic Inclusion Board is tasked with considering the broader implications and reviewing the current provision to propose recommendations as to how the Service could best proceed.

Members made the following comments:

- (c) Councillor Andrew Brown informed the Committee that he had attended one of the Spring Employee Conferences, found it very interesting and valuable and suggested that all members of the Authority are encouraged to attend at least one conference. Employees had welcomed and were appreciative of his attendance and involvement;
- (d) the City Council purposely opted out of Stonewall for a year to ensure that all identified issues could be suitably addressed, and then re-entered. The whole point of providing appropriate support does not and should not focus in on achieving a ranking. Where capacity may be lacking within NFRS, the City Council, or another local authority, may be able to offer support.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) note the progress made in the organisational development and inclusion agenda;**
- (2) task the Strategic Inclusion Board with considering the broader LGBT reform implications and reviewing the current provision to propose recommendations as to how the Service could best proceed;**
- (3) continue to receive the 'organisational health' overview annually.**

## **5 LOCAL FIREFIGHTER PENSION ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

Becky Smeathers, Head of Finance, presented the report that updates the Committee on the activities of the Local Firefighter Pension Board and Scheme Manager up to 31 March 2019.

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

- (a) an application had been made to the Secretary of State to establish an East Midlands Joint Pension Board consisting of Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire Services. Although delayed, this will now progress in line with the drive for efficiency and collaboration;
- (b) in March 2019, revised employer superannuation rates were announced, which are significantly higher than previously, and will place an increased financial burden on the authority, in the region of £2.5 million, but it is anticipated that some of this cost will be offset by a one-off grant from central government;
- (c) as pensions is a highly complex topic, Board Member training sessions take place after every meeting, with a focus on at least one of the seven main pension areas. Externally provided training on pensions is also available;
- (d) members of the pension scheme are kept informed of activity and any issues identified;
- (e) internal audits of pension scheme governance and the pension scheme itself were undertaken in 2017 and both provided substantial assurance that correct procedures are in place.

## **6 COLLABORATION UPDATE**

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report that provides an overview of collaboration activity.

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

- (a) the Collaboration Delivery Board, consisting of officers, and Strategic Collaboration Board, consisting of councillors, both report to the Full Fire Authority;
- (b) planning permission has been submitted for the Joint Police and Fire Service Headquarters at Sherwood Lodge, with a decision expected during the autumn or 2019;
- (c) the LLP agreement is ongoing, as is the work on the tender document, but if approved, development could start next year with an anticipated 18 month build period, meaning that the service could move to Sherwood Lodge as early as 2021;

- (d) consideration of the potential of the current NFRS headquarters site is ongoing;
- (e) there are still sensitivities for some staff, but joint Fire and Police Workshops have been held and are proving successful in broadening understanding of each other and building relationships;
- (f) it is apparent that there are common themes within each service regarding managerial and leadership roles. Each service has the opportunity to learn from the other, both on current practices (the Police are particularly good at handling data), and also further developing processes and approaches, particularly in regard to improving performance for future HMICFRS inspections;
- (g) a Joint Police and Fire Service Cadets Program has been established with an eight week course taking place within the city, which is proposed to be rolled out to other areas;
- (h) the jointly branded Police and Fire Welfare unit is working well for major incidents covered by each or both services and has been particularly welcomed by Police colleagues;
- (i) a mutually beneficial collaboration agreement enabling the Police to access bunkered fuel from some NFRS premises is working well and is likely to reduce the cost of fuel for each service. Another potential collaboration may include Police access to jet washing facilities at fire stations;
- (j) the Fire Service now has access to deploy jointly commissioned drones (with professional Police controllers), which would otherwise require capital investment of between £40-50,000 plus ongoing maintenance and training costs;
- (k) the Joint Control Centre based in Derbyshire is working well and it is anticipated to arrange a visit for Fire Authority members following the Full Fire Authority meeting in September;
- (l) although having a small operational border, discussions are ongoing with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service with regard to a mutual collaborative approach to fire protection and fire investigation learning and support, including potential prosecution;
- (m) Police colleagues are considering the feasibility of reconfiguring the West Bridgford Fire Station site to meet their requirements, and it is anticipated that the joint site will open in the autumn of 2019. A specific briefing by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer can be arranged for local members;
- (n) the additional opportunity suggested by members, of the Police and Fire Services jointly engaging with schools to improve road safety, is welcomed and will be further investigated.

With regard to the increased traffic resulting from the shared headquarters site, members of the committee reiterated safety concerns regarding entry and exit onto the busy A60 and A614 roads. Local Authority highways colleagues had been consulted through the planning permission process and stated that no action is required. However, the professional opinion of services such as Police and Fire, which attend road traffic incidents, should also be

considered and preventative measures to ensure road safety should not be dependent on the potential negative impact to local economy.

Members of the committee welcomed the shared fuel facility, and whilst the Service had been prepared for previous fuel supply disruptions, the provision of further fuel storage capacity would be supported by members, particularly as other public service authorities, including councils delivering crucial services, had approached the Fire Service to request access to its fuel reserves.

## **7 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.**

## **8 EXEMPT MINUTES**

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2019 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.