



Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 15 June 2022.

PRESENT

Mr. N. D. Bannister CC	Mr. K. Ghattoraya CC
Cllr. S. Barton	Mr. D. J. Grimley CC
Cllr. K. Bool	Mr. R. Hills CC
Mr. S. L. Bray CC	Mr. B. Lovegrove CC
Cllr. A. Byrne	Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. B. Champion CC	Mr. N. J. Rushton CC
Cllr. L. Fonseca	Cllr. M. Valand
Mr. D. A. Gamble CC	

In attendance

Callum Faint, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
 Lauren Haslam, Monitoring Officer
 Colin Sharpe, Deputy Director of Finance, Leicester City Council
 Paul Weston, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
 Karl Bowden, Interim Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
 Gemma Duckworth, Democratic Services Officer

1. Election of Chairman.

The Democratic Services Officer invited nominations for the position of Chairman.

It was moved by Councillor K Bool and seconded by Mr. S. Bray CC that Mr. N. J. Rushton CC be elected Chairman of the Combined Fire Authority (CFA).

There being no other nominations, the Democratic Services Officer declared Mr. N. J. Rushton CC elected as Chairman of the CFA.

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC – in the Chair

2. Election of Vice Chairman.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC that Councillor H. Rae Bhatia be elected Vice Chairman of the CFA.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

There being no other nominations, the Chairman declared Councillor H Rae Bhatia elected as Vice Chairman of the CFA.

The Chairman thanked the previous Vice Chairman, Councillor E Pantling, for her support.

3. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H Rae Bhatia and Mr J. Orson CC.

4. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare an interest in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

5. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items.

6. Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman's announcements were circulated in advance of the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. The announcements covered the following matters:

- An MBE for Harshad Saujani, a Community Educator, for his services to Community Fire Safety
- Two nominations for staff in the Women in the Fire Service National Awards
- The HMICFRS Inspection was well underway
- New Recruits.

7. Public Participation/ CFA Rules of Procedure Rule 9 - Member Questions.

It was reported that no questions had been received.

8. Minutes.

The minutes of the CFA meeting held on 9 February 2022 were considered.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC that the minutes of the CFA meeting held on 9 February 2022 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the CFA meeting held on 9 February 2022 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

9. Minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee.

The minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 9 March 2022 were considered.

It was moved by Councillor K. Bool and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC that the minutes of the Corporate Governance meeting held on 9 March 2022 be noted.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Corporate Governance meeting held on 9 March 2022 be noted.

10. Schedule of Nominations and Appointments for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

The CFA considered a report of the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer which set out the Nominations and Appointments to the Committees of the Combined Fire Authority for the Municipal Year 2022/23. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC that the membership of the Corporate Governance Committee, the Employment Committee and the Local Pension Board; and the appointment of the Equality Champion and a CFA representative for the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board and the LGA Fire Services Commission, as set out in the report, be approved.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments to Committees for 2022/23 be agreed:

Corporate Governance Committee

5 Conservative (4 County and 1 Rutland) 3 Labour (1 County and 2 City) 1 Liberal Democrat (1 County)

Cllr. K. Bool (Chairman)
 Mr. N. Bannister CC
 Mr. K. Ghattoraya CC
 Mr. R. Hills CC
 Mr. J. T. Orson CC
 Mr. D. Gamble CC
 Mrs. M. E. Newton CC
 Cllr. A. Byrne
 Cllr. S. Barton

Employment Committee

5 Conservative (4 County and 1 Rutland) 3 Labour (1 County and 2 City) 1 Liberal Democrat (1 County)

Mr. N. Bannister CC
 Cllr. K. Bool
 Mr. B. Champion CC
 Mr. D. Grimley CC
 Mr. B. Lovegrove CC
 Mr. S. Bray CC
 Mrs. M. E. Newton CC
 Cllr. L. Fonseca
 Cllr. M. Valand

Local Pension Board

Mr. J. T. Orson CC (Chairman)
Cllr. H. Rae Bhatia

Equality Champion 2022/23

Mrs. M. E. Newton CC

Outside Bodies

Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board 2022/23

Mr. N. Bannister CC

LGA Fire Services Commission 2022/23

Mr. N. Bannister CC.

11. Our Plan 2020-24 (2022 Refresh) and Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2021-22.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which presented Our Plan 2020-2024 (2022 Refresh) and the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for 2021-22. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

Although this was a mostly positive report, it was acknowledged that there were areas of focus including reducing the number of fire related deaths, improving on-call availability and reducing the target time for reaching a fire.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:

- i) In response to a question around how the document was distributed, it was stated that it was published on the LFRS website and on a variety of social media platforms.
- ii) It was acknowledged that there had been a number of changes since the document had originally been produced and the response to the needs of new communities was queried. There had been an increase in the population size of LLR, which generated more income from the Council Tax precept and new houses were now built with fire safety alarms. However, this increase did not necessarily mean a greater requirement for the Service. It was hoped that there would be an opportunity to recruit from new housing developments which would increase the diversity of the Service and consideration was being given to the potential to link into Section 106 funding from developers. Assurance was given that the situation was monitored continually to ensure that all risks were being met and to assess whether new fire stations were required. The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer felt that this provided good opportunities to improve the Service.
- iii) It was noted that plans were in place to ensure that the appropriate equipment was deployed to fires and an order had been placed for new vehicles which would give greater flexibility and could be crewed by two, three, four or five

firefighters. These were felt to be ideal for more rural areas. The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer stated, however, that all fires could spread rapidly and in all instances, the nearest available vehicle would be mobilised.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the refreshed version of Our Plan 2020-2024 and the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for 2021-22 be noted, giving delegated powers to the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer to make any minor amendments where necessary.

12. Organisational Structure.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which detailed organisational structure changes following the approval of the 2022-23 budget. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Following approval at the last meeting of the CFA to accept the £5 increase to the Council Tax precept, the introduction of an enhanced structure would be commenced, including a number of new roles being introduced. It was noted that there was no specific detail on the resources required to be moved away from the Day Crewing Plus duty system, but a large portion of the money was earmarked for the required increase in whole-time establishment. Before the conclusion of the public consultation on the Community Risk Management Plan, the Service would actively look to over recruit in the whole-time establishment to ensure that staff were in place and skilled for the commencement of the 'new' system.

It was anticipated that there would be an underspend until this had occurred as the appointment of staff would be phased. The underspend would be invested into the property and facilities portfolio to ensure that facilities were up to date and fit for purpose. This would involve full refurbishments at Western, Eastern and Loughborough Fire Stations and work at many on-call stations to improve welfare and learning provision.

Due to the fact that this would introduce a slight organisational change, it was agreed that a report would be presented to the next meeting around the change in establishment numbers.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mr. S. Bray CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That:

- a) The alterations and additions to the organisational structure be noted, along with the positive benefit and effects they are likely to bring for staff and the community;
- b) A report be presented to the next meeting on the Change in Establishment Numbers.

13. Service Delivery Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which gave an update on the key service delivery performance for the period April 2021 – March 2022. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 13' is filed with these minutes. Of note was the positive increase in performance and productivity in Prevention and Protection.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Councillor K Bool. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on the key service delivery matters for the period April 2021 – March 2022 be noted, in particular the positive increase in performance and productivity in Prevention and Protection.

14. Firefighters' Pension Scheme - Age Discrimination Remedy Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Scheme Manager which provided an update on the developments concerning the age discrimination remedy/ immediate detriment related to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 14', is filed with these minutes.

Essentially, it was reported that the position regarding the processing of immediate detriment had not changed. The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 had taken effect on 1 April 2022. The remaining protected members still in their legacy scheme had moved into the 2015 scheme on 1 April 2022; all active members were now in the 2015 scheme. Retrospective remedy for members who had already retired would not be implemented nationally until further legislation was enacted, and this was expected from 1 October 2023.

It was stated that lots of work was required of the Finance and HR Teams and the Scheme Administrator to prepare for the expected impact of the 2023 legislation. Work was also required in respect of retained firefighters employed between 2000 – 2006 who may have been disadvantaged by being treated differently to wholetime firefighters.

Attention was drawn to the fact that an employee of LFRS had been selected as one of a number of potential test claimants for the purpose of an injury to feelings award in the remedy proceedings.

A further update would be presented to the next meeting of the CFA Local Pension Board.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the update concerning the age discrimination remedy/immediate detriment related to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme be noted.

15. CFA Member Code of Conduct.

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which presented a revised Member's Code of Conduct for approval. The Code mirrored that adopted by Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council. The CFA Corporate Governance Committee had considered the Code at its meeting on 9 March 2022 and had determined that the Code be submitted to the CFA for approval. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 15', is filed with these minutes.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Councillor K Bool and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the adoption of the revised Code of Conduct for Members, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved with effect from 1 July 2022.

16. Amendment to Calendar of Meetings.

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which detailed a proposed change to the previously approved calendar of meetings, in particular the dates for the Local Pension Board. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 16', is filed with these minutes.

Discussions had taken place around the timing of the Local Pension Board and it had been proposed that these meetings should take place approximately two weeks before the CFA meetings. This would allow for any planned decisions required of the CFA to be considered in detail by the Local Pension Board. The new arrangements would take effect immediately.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the change to the calendar of meetings, in particular the dates for future meetings of the Local Pension Board, be noted.

17. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority will be held on 27 July 2022 at 10.00am.

18. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information during consideration of the following item of business as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act detailed below:

- Training Facility – Service Leadership and Development Centre: Project Update, as defined in Paragraph 3; and

That, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information during consideration of the following item of business as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act detailed below:

- Training Facility – Service Leadership and Development Centre: Project Update, as defined in Paragraph 3; and

That, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

19. Training Facility - Service Leadership and Development Centre: Project Update.

The CFA considered an exempt report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which provided an update on the progress of land acquisition for the Fire Behaviour Unit and training facility. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 20', is filed with these minutes.

It was agreed to arrange a site visit to a newly built training facility in Derbyshire. A video would also be made available so that the public could see what training would be undertaken at the facility.

The proposed recommendations contained within the report were moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That:

- a) The process of progressing and prioritising a refined shortlist of sire suitable for fire behaviour training continues, to determine suitability; and
- b) A further progress update will be presented to the CFA at its meeting on 21 September 2022.

10.00 - 10.51 am
15 June 2022

CHAIRMAN