



Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 29 November 2023.

PRESENT

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC (in the Chair)

Cllr. Nags Agath	Mr. K. Ghattoraya CC
Mr. R. G. Allen CC	Mr. D. J. Grimley CC
Mr. N. D. Bannister CC	Mr. B. Harrison-Rushton CC
Cllr. S. Barton	Cllr. S. Harvey
Mr. B. Champion CC	Cllr. M. March
Mr. J. G. Coxon CC	Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. D. A. Gamble CC	Cllr. A. Osman

In attendance

Callum Faint, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
 Paul Weston, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
 Judi Beresford, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
 Lauren Haslam, Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
 Amy Oliver, Treasurer
 Gemma Duckworth, Senior Democratic Services Officer
 Matt Cane, Area Manager
 Gavin Barker, Mazars (for Minute No 60)
 Tom Greensill, Mazars (for Minute No 60)

52. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Mr. S. Bray CC and Councillor H Rae Bhatia.

53. 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.

54. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items.

55. 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:

- Variable Response Vehicle
- Direct Entry Candidates
- Christmas Carol Service

In addition, attention was drawn to the fact that LFRS was attending an increasing number of humanitarian incidents. Leicestershire Police had introduced an initiative – Most Appropriate Agency – which would potentially see them stepping back from a number of incident types which other agencies would then need to attend. There was some concern that this had the potential to significantly impact on the core profile of LFRS and it would be necessary to ensure that the Service did not become overwhelmed with an increase in call volume. This also increased the exposure of staff to fatalities but assurance was given that there was excellent welfare provision in place. The situation would continue to be monitored and a report on humanitarian assistance would be presented to a future meeting, highlighting the increase in incidents along with information on where there had been a positive outcome.

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

It was reported that no questions had been received.

57. Minutes.

The minutes of the CFA meeting held on 4 October 2023 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 4 October 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the CFA meeting held on 4 October 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

58. Minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee.

The minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 20 September 2023 were considered.

It was moved by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC and seconded by Mr. N. Bannister CC that the minutes of the Corporate Governance meeting held on 20 September 2023 be noted.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Corporate Governance meeting held on 20 September 2023 be noted.

59. 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 to September 2023. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) There had been a continued increase in Home Safety Checks, which had led to a decrease in the number of domestic fires. The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer had produced a vlog for staff to highlight the positive impact this work was having on communities. It was also noted that the Fire Protection teams had had significant engagement with businesses, organisations and individuals seeking advice on fire safety measures. Further work was being expanded across the region and videos on fire prevention were being developed which would be available to view on YouTube.
- ii) On-Call availability remained an issue nationally, although locally the introduction of the Variable Response Vehicles would hopefully improve this. It was acknowledged that more on-call staff were now working non-traditional hours. However, the introduction of the 12:12 self-rostering duty system (and ultimately a move away from Day Crewing Plus) would ensure a better work life balance.
- iii) Attendance times had increased, partly due to the challenges around rural road traffic collisions. LFRS included call handling in its attendance time, but new technology was being explored which should hopefully reduce this. In response to a query around whether there were hotspots across the county where there were particular problems, the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer explained that road safety prevention activity was being targeted in specific areas and was delivered jointly with the Police. It was suggested that a workshop be held to highlight to members the areas where the majority of incidents occurred.
- iv) It was stated that education around fire prevention was being delivered to older people. However, due to the transient nature of the county, it was important to ensure that the right people were being targeted and this was being looked into.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

60. Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and External Audit Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Treasurer which sought approval for the Authority's Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and presented the Audit Completion Report from the External Auditor (Mazars), detailing its audit work and recommendations. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

It was reported that the Value for Money assessment had not yet been completed but no issues were expected and an update would be provided in due course. It was the intention for Mazars to issue its audit opinion by the end of the year.

The CFA noted that this would be the last external audit undertaken by Mazars and thanks were given for the work carried out.

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

RESOLVED:

- a) That the External Auditor's Audit Completion Report (ISA 260 Report) to those charged with Governance and the recommendations contained within it be noted;
- b) That the Statement of Accounts 2022/23 be approved, subject to any technical changes that may be required following the completion of outstanding audit work;
- c) That the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 be approved;
- d) That the letter of representation submitted by the Treasurer be approved; and
- e) That the Treasurer be authorised to make any technical changes including those that related to the updated pension figures. Such changes will be reported back to the CFA.

61. Review and Revision of the Constitution of the Combined Fire Authority.

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which presented proposed changes to the CFA's Constitution. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

It was noted that further amendments would be presented to the CFA in the Spring relating to Contract Procedure Rules and Finance Procedure Rules, which were being reviewed.

The recommendation contained within the report was moved by Mr Rushton CC and seconded by Mr Allen CC. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to Part 2 – Constitutional Framework, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved.

62. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority will be held on 14 February 2024 at 10am.

63. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

It was moved by Mr Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs 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:

- Mobilising System Progress Update

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:

- Mobilising System Progress Update

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

64. Mobilising System Progress Update.

The CFA considered an exempt report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which provided an update on the progress made in implementing the new mobilising system in the Service. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes.

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

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

10.00 - 10.45 am
29 November 2023

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank