

Minutes of a meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 29 July 2020.

PRESENT

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

Cllr. S. Barton	Cllr. K. Singh Johal
Mr. I. E. G. Bentley CC	Mr. J. Kaufman CC
Cllr. Hemant Rae Bhatia	Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC
Cllr. K. Bool	Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC	Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. J. G. Coxon CC	Mr T. Parton CC
Cllr. L. Fonseca	Cllr. A. Thalukdar
Mr. D. Harrison CC	Mrs. M. Wright CC

In attendance

Rick Taylor, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Lauren Haslam, Monitoring Officer
Colin Sharpe, representing the Treasurer
Amy Oliver, Chief Accountant Leicester City Council
Richard Hall, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Callum Faint, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Anna Poole, Democratic Services Officer

80. Election of Chairman.

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

It was moved by Mr. J. G. Coxon CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton 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. Rushton CC – in the Chair

81. Election of Vice Chairman.

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

There being no other nominations, the Chairman declared Councillor K. Singh Johal elected as Vice Chairman of the CFA.

82. Apologies for absence.

No apologies were received.

83. 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.

84. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items.

85. Chair's Announcements.

The Chairman's announcements were tabled at the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes.

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

It was reported that no questions had been received.

87. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the CFA meeting on 12 February 2020 were considered.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal that the minutes should be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 12 February 2020 should be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

88. Minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting.

The minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting on 22 January 2020 were considered.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Bool that the minutes be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Committee held on 22 January 2020 be noted.

89. Membership, Nominations and Appointments 2020/21.

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer concerning the Schedule of Nominations and Appointments for the Municipal Year 2020/21 for the Combined Fire Authority. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal and carried 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 Appendix to the report, be approved.

RESOLVED:

The CFA agreed the following nominations and appointments for 2020/21:

Corporate Governance Committee

4 Conservative (3 County and 1 Rutland) 4 Labour (1 County and 3 City)

1 Liberal Democrat (1 County)

Cllr. K. Bool (Chairman)

Mrs. B. Newton CC (Vice Chairman)

Mr. I. Bentley CC

Mr. D. Harrison CC

Mr. J. Coxon CC

Mr. J. Kaufman CC

Cllr. A. Thalukdar

Cllr. S. Barton

Cllr. L. Fonseca

Employment Committee

4 Conservative (3 County and 1 Rutland) 4 Labour (1 County and 3 City)

1 Liberal Democrat (1 County)

Mr. W. Liquorish CC

Mr. I. Bentley CC

Mr. T. Parton CC

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC

Cllr. K. Bool

Mrs. B. Newton CC

Cllr. L. Fonseca

Cllr. H. Rae Bhatia

Cllr. K. Singh Johal

Local Pension Board

Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC (Chairman)

Cllr. H. Rae Bhatia

Equality Champion 2020/21

Ms. B. Newton CC

Outside Bodies

Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board 2020/21

Mr. T. Parton CC

LGA Fire Services Commission 2020/21

Mrs. M. Wright CC

90. Revenue and Capital Outturn 2019/20.

The CFA considered a report of the Treasurer concerning the final revenue and capital outturn figures for 2019/20. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

In response to questions, the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer assured members that the high level of underspends detailed in the report had not impacted on service delivery. He added, however, that Covid-19 had increased the issues experienced with the Service's ability to recruit staff.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal that the recommendations in the report be approved.

RESOLVED:

That:

- a) the revenue and capital provisional outturn position for 2019/20 be noted;
- b) £2,092,000 of capital funding be carried forward into 2020/21;

- c) a Covid-19 grant of £159,000 be transferred to an earmarked reserve for future Covid-19 related costs;
- d) the remaining revenue underspend of £735,000 be transferred to the Capital Fund earmarked reserve to assist with funding the future capital programme; and
- e) the update on the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Ltd be noted.

91. Service update during Covid-19.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which informed of the activities and actions undertaken by the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service since February 2020, including its response to the Coronavirus pandemic. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal that the update on service delivery and the Service's response to the Coronavirus pandemic be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the update on service delivery and the Service's response to the Coronavirus pandemic be noted.

Callum Faint, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer left the meeting for the discussion of the next item.

92. Appointment of Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the appointment of a substantive Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer, following the resignation of the substantive post holder in December 2019. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13' is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal that the appointment of Callum Faint as Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer from 1 April 2020, be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Callum Faint as Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer from 1 April 2020, be noted.

Callum Faint, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer, returned to the meeting.

93. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal 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 items of business as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act detailed below:

- The Future of Day Crewing Plus - Paragraph 4;
- The Report of the Employment Panel – Chief Fire and Rescue Officer Local Salary Review - Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3;
- The Appointment of an Interim Chief Fire and Rescue Officer – Urgent Action Taken by the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer - Paragraphs 1 and 2; and
- that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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 items of business as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act detailed below:

- The Future of Day Crewing Plus - Paragraph 4;
- The Report of the Employment Panel – Chief Fire and Rescue Officer Local Salary Review - Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3;
- The Appointment of an Interim Chief Fire and Rescue Officer – Urgent Action Taken by the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer - Paragraphs 1 and 2; and
- that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

94. The Future of the Day Crewing Plus Duty System.

The CFA considered an exempt report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the Day Crewing Plus duty system (DCP). A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 15' is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed of issues related to the affordability of the DCP system, the potential impact on service delivery and received legal advice from the Monitoring Officer.

The Monitoring Officer informed members that advice had been taken from the County Council's in-house solicitors and from Counsel to ensure that a complete picture was available that reflected the complexities of the situation.

The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer assured members that if DCP was to be phased out this would happen towards 2024, which would help to manage and mitigate the potential impact of staff leaving the service due to a reduction in their salaries and leading to a

reduction in the skills and experience available. At this stage, a public consultation would be carried out for the next IRMP 2024, and this would include alternative options for a duty system to replace DCP.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal that the recommendations in the report be approved.

RESOLVED:

That

- a) the LFRS proposal to move away from the current DCP crewing system in preparedness for the next IRMP 2024 be approved; and
- b) that alternative options to replace the current DCP duty system, via an officer group working party of relevant stakeholder representatives, be developed.

Rick Taylor, the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer and Richard Hall and Callum Faint the Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officers, left the meeting for the discussion on the following item.

95. Report of the Employment Panel - Chief Fire and Rescue Officer Local Salary Review.

The CFA considered an exempt report of the Chairman of the Employment Panel which sought approval for the salary level of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer following the review by the Employment Panel on 8 June 2020. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 16' is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Councillor K. Bool and seconded by Mrs. B. Newton CC that the recommendations in the report be approved.

RESOLVED:

That

- a) The salary for the position of Chief Fire and Rescue Officer currently be retained at £132,663 and be subject to an agreed pay award back dated to 1 April 2020;
- b) The vacancy for the position of Chief Fire and Rescue Officer be advertised with a salary band of £130,000 - £140,000; and
- c) Officers undertake further analysis of the salary levels of Chief Fire and Rescue Officers in similar-sized Fire Authorities and their management structures to inform a future review of the salary for the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer.

Rick Taylor, the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer and Richard Hall and Callum Faint the Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officers, re-joined the meeting.

96. Appointment of an Interim Chief Fire and Rescue Officer - Urgent Action taken by the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer.

The CFA considered an exempt report of the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer which advised of the urgent taken by the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer, following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the CFA, to put in place arrangements for the appointment of an interim Chief Fire and Rescue Officer following the resignation of the current post holder. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 17' is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. N. J. Rushton and seconded by Councillor K. Singh Johal that the recommendations in the report be approved.

RESOLVED:

That

- a) the urgent action taken by the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer to put in place arrangements for the appointment of an interim Chief Fire and Rescue Officer until June 2021 following the resignation of the current Chief Fire and Rescue Officer, be noted;
- b) the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer be authorised to jointly progress the appointment of a permanent Chief Fire and Rescue Officer depending on the current national situation and the challenges facing the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

97. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority will be held on 23 September 2019 at 10.00am as a virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams.

10.00 - 10.54 am
29 July 2020

CHAIRMAN