

Minutes of a meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 19 June 2019.

PRESENT

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

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

In attendance

Rick Taylor, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer  
Richard Hall, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer  
Paul Weston, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer  
Alison Greenhill, Treasurer  
Lauren Haslam, Monitoring Officer  
Anna Poole, Democratic Services Officer

1. Election of Chairman.

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

It was moved by Mr. D. Harrison CC and seconded by Mr. J. Poland CC that Mr N Rushton CC be elected Chairman of the Combined Fire Authority (CFA).

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

Mr N Rushton CC – in the Chair

2. Election of Vice Chairman.

It was moved by Mr. N. R. 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.

3. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Mrs. M. Wright CC.

4. Declarations by members of interest.

Mr. Rushton CC, Mr. Bentley CC, Mr. Harrison CC, Mr. Kaufman CC, Mr. Liquorish CC, Mr. Mullaney CC, Mrs. Newton CC, Mr. Parton CC, Mr. Boulter CC and Mrs. Radford CC each declared a personal interest in agenda item 13 'Review of Non-Operational Estate including Support Service Accommodation' as members of the County Council.

Additionally, Mr. Poland CC declared a personal interest in this item as a member of the County Council and as an employee of Leicestershire Police.

5. Urgent items.

The Chairman advised that there was one urgent item for consideration, an exempt verbal report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer on "Day Crewing Plus".

The report was urgent because the latest correspondence had been received from the Fire Brigades Union after the agenda for the CFA meeting had been published and a basis for moving forward needed to be agreed before the next meeting of the CFA in September.

It was noted that the Chairman had agreed to the report being considered in private session as it related to employment matters and advice from Legal Services regarding the options available would be received.

With the agreement of the CFA, the report was taken under item 23 on the agenda (minute 5 refers).

6. Chair's Announcements.

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

- Appointment of new Area Manager
- Work with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Central FRS Break-in
- First Car Road Safety Work Recognised
- Certificate of Commendation
- Events attended by the CFO
- East Midlands Ambulance Service
- Virtual Reality

The Chairman welcomed Callum Faint, the new Area Manager, to the meeting; commended Watch Manager Dave George and Community Educator Sophie Smith for appearing on BBC's Crime Watch to promote their work with the deaf and hard of hearing, and highlighted the Certificate of Commendation awarded to Mr David Brown for saving the life of an elderly resident.

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

It was reported that no questions had been received under Procedure Rule 9.

8. Minutes of the previous meeting.**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 30 April 2019 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

9. Minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 23 January 2019.**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 23 January 2019 be noted.

10. Schedule of Nominations and Appointments for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer concerning the Schedule of Nominations and Appointments for the Municipal Year 2019/20 for the Combined Fire Authority. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

A revised Appendix A was issued at the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed of the nominations from Leicester City Council.

It was moved by Councillor Bool, seconded by Mrs Newton CC 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, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved."

**RESOLVED:**

The CFA agreed the following nominations and appointments for 2019/20:

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)  
Mr. I. Bentley CC  
Mr. D. Harrison CC  
Mr. J. Poland CC  
Mr. J. Kaufman CC  
Mrs. B. Newton 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 2019/20

Ms. B. Newton CC

Outside Bodies**Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board**

Mr. T. Parton CC

11. Revenue and Capital Outturn 2018/19.

The CFA considered a report of the Treasurer concerning the final revenue and capital outturn figures for 2018/19 and seeking approval for the carry forward of funds into 2019/20. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 11", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Underspends would be monitored to ensure that there was no impact on service delivery. Members were pleased that a further report on the use of the transferred funds detailed in the report would be presented to the CFA and the Corporate Governance Committee later in the year;
- ii. It was difficult to compare the level of reserves held by Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) with other FRS as the circumstances for each Service was different and each had different issues to address;
- iii. The CFA's Internal and External Auditors would monitor underspends and the use of transferred funds and any areas of great concern would be highlighted in their report; the Auditors were comfortable with the current level of reserves held by Leicestershire FRS, as this would have been detailed in their report if this was not the case.

**RESOLVED:**

That

- a) the revenue and capital provisional outturn position for 2018/19 be noted;
- b) the carry forward of £146,000 of revenue funding and £1,416,000 of capital funding into 2019/20 be approved;
- c) the transfer of £463,000 to the Management of Change Earmarked Reserve be approved;
- d) the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer will report to the CFA and Corporate Governance Committee on how the transferred funds are used throughout the year; and
- e) the updates on Forge Health Limited and the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Ltd be noted.

12. Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024 - Proposals.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the proposed priorities for the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024 (IRMP) and sought approval for these proposals for use in the public consultation. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 12", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Members' involvement in the IRMP Project Board had been invaluable; this had included scrutinising performance data for the Leicestershire Fire Service. The areas which had been addressed and influenced by members included:
  - Improvements to attendance times;
  - Methods to make retained firefighting more rewarding;
  - Scheduling of duty rotas for times of peak demand; and
  - Changes to the wording used in the consultation on the proposed IRMP priorities.
- ii. CFA members who were local councillors were asked to promote the consultation to residents at ward and community meetings to encourage them to complete the consultation; The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer expressed his gratitude to Councillor Barton and Mr Harrison CC for their involvement in the process;
- iii. Members were keen that all efforts should be made to reach those 'hard to reach' groups and ensure their involvement in the consultation;
- iv. The IRMP would be reviewed and revised according to the timeframes set out in the legislation.

**RESOLVED:**

That the following proposals for public consultation be approved:

- a) Use our fire engines flexibly, aiming to attend life threatening incidents in an average of 10 minutes;
- b) Use our firefighters efficiently and flexibly to maximise our appliance availability;
- c) Purchase a second high reach appliance to replace the older one of the two vehicles;
- d) Continue to undertake our education and enforcement activities, targeting those most at risk;
- e) Continue to collaborate with other blue light services and our partner agencies to support our purpose of safer people, safer places;
- f) Enable our staff to do the right thing to help our communities;
- g) Implement alternative crewing arrangements in the event of the Service moving away from the current Day Crewing Plus duty system.

13. Review of Non-Operational Estate including Support Service Accommodation.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the independent review of the non-operational estate and support service accommodation and informing the CFA of the findings from a strategic review of the estates and facilities team and operational estate. The report was presented by the Director of Estates and Building Services from Leicester City Council. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 13", is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Rushton CC, having declared a personal interest in this item, passed the chair to Councillor Singh Johal, the Vice Chair.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. The independent review had been completed by Leicester City Council;
- ii. The IRMP 2020-24 would determine the locations of fire stations, which would be remodelled rather than relocated;
- iii. The remodelling of the canteen facilities at Head Quarters, Birstall into office space would present opportunity for the co-location of Fire Service departments, bringing efficiencies in working practices; this would also enable space to be freed up elsewhere in the building for use as meeting rooms, which is currently at a premium. Longer term there would also be opportunity for co-working with partners and potential for income generation. Members expressed concern about the availability of car parking spaces and were informed that the Travel Plan completed in 2013 when the HQ building was constructed would be reviewed. Potential reclamation costs for the catering equipment had not been factored in to the review at this stage, although it had been noted that there was some value attached to this;

- iv. The Training, Learning and Development department which was located at five sites across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area, would be run more efficiently if it was consolidated on one site. The business case presented to the Senior Management Team detailed that it was better value for money to run the facility in-house rather than purchase such facilities from other Fire and Rescue Services. The current five sites each had limitations and some of the premises were leased with imminent expiry dates. The buildings had been used for 20 years, beyond the predicted lifetime of 15 years; as such the maintenance regime had increased in the last few years, presenting additional costs. A new Fire Behaviour Unit would be more environmentally friendly and would present the potential for other Fire and Rescue Services to use the facility, although they may decide that running such a facility in-house would be more cost effective. Members were assured that officers would seek to repurpose those premises that were owned by Leicestershire FRS. A new site that could accommodate all training and learning and development activity was currently being sought and the impact on employees based at the current sites would be evaluated;
- v. Officers were looking at opportunities to make the estate more environmentally friendly; electric vehicles had already been introduced.

The recommendations were moved by Cllr. Singh Johal and seconded by Mrs. Newton CC.

The motion was put and carried unanimously, 17 members voting for the motion and none voting against.

**RESOLVED:**

That

- a) the recommendations and action points of the Estates Review be approved. (Appendix, section 7 tables 3 to 5);
- b) the review recommendations with regards to the existing estates and facilities service and operational estate be noted. (Appendix, section 7 Tables 1 to 2);
- c) an addition to the capital programme for the strip out and office remodelling of the second floor Birstall Head Quarters up to £240,000 be approved; and
- d) the costs and location of a new consolidated Learning and Development Training Centre will be subject to final approval within a full business case be acknowledged.

Mr. Rushton CC returned to the chair.

14. Control Room Merger between Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the progress made with the control room merger between Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire

Fire and Rescue Services. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 14", is filed with these minutes.

**RESOLVED:**

That the

- a) arrangements in place for tri-service control, resilience and business continuity planning at the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to meet the statutory duty to make provision to handle calls and mobilise resources following the creation of the joint control facility for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services, be noted;
- b) new arrangements in place for the joint control facility for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services will have no financial impact on Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, be noted.

15. Policy on Sickness Management Proposals.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the programme of activities and support in place to reduce sickness absence in the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 15', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. 78% of the workforce had long service; 28% were over 50 years of age which potentially led to higher sickness levels with an ageing workforce due to wear and tear on the body and joints;
- ii. The procedure for addressing sickness absence had been reviewed and simplified and was now more flexible and holistic. The new procedures showed clear responsibilities of managers and individuals and also required managers to keep in touch with the individual throughout the period of absence, to support a return to work and sustain their attendance going forward. Managers and staff would be trained in the new procedures and their personal responsibilities in terms of maintaining health;
- iii. 38% of sickness absence was due to mental health issues; LFRS had partnered with University Hospitals Leicester, through the provider AMICA, who gave support to individual employees especially following traumatic incidents. All supervisory managers had been trained on how to spot the early signs of mental health issues. In response to questions, members were informed that there were no cases of absence due to post traumatic stress disorder, although mental health was complex and the doctor decided how this was recorded. The new procedures included effective health screening before successful candidates were appointed and also surveillance throughout their employment to ensure that appropriate support mechanisms were in place;
- iv. Individuals would be encouraged to undertake proactive and preventative work to ensure that they remained fit especially to avoid musculo-skeletal illness. Most stations had gym facilities on site; staff at Fire Service Head Quarters used the gym at Birstall Fire Station;



- v. There had been few accidents at work that had been reported to RIDDOR; only 1 had been reported in the last quarter;

**RESOLVED:**

That

- a) the programme of activities and support in place to support health and wellbeing at work and reduce sickness absence within the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, be noted; and
- b) the average number of days/shifts lost and total working days or shifts lost for whole time fire fighters is lower than the average for other Fire and Rescue Services presented by the Cleveland data, be acknowledged.

16. Tactical Response Vehicles.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the progress made with the deployment of Tactical Response Vehicles (TRVs). A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 16', is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that TRVs increased on-call availability as they could attend a range of incidents.

Members commented that the specification of the TRV unit was currently far more enhanced than was originally perceived. Historical evidence in the use of TRVs showed that the units could have attended 55% of call-outs; TRVs were far more cost effective with lower running costs than the main fire engines.

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress made with the deployment of the Tactical Response Vehicles in the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, be noted.

17. Fire Fighter Recruitment.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the action required to recruit firefighters to meet the needs of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service up to 2020/21. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 17', is filed with these minutes.

The Monitoring Officer reminded members that, whilst trying to recruit a diverse workforce, officers must ensure that recruitment practices stayed within the law.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Restricting the recruitment of whole time firefighters to those candidates that live within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland had been a practice approved by the CFA. After consideration, members agreed that this practice should continue so to ensure that the diversity of the workforce reflected the area it served; it was felt that widening the recruitment field to the East Midlands would reduce the diversity and ethnicity of the workforce;

- ii. Positive interventions had been put in place to encourage and support the recruitment of females, for example supporting them with improving their fitness so that they passed the fitness test; positive results had been seen;
- iii. To improve work life balance and offer flexibility, jobshare working was an option and some firefighters currently did so.

Members commended officers for their efforts in recruiting female candidates and those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, something that had also been recognised by the Asian Fire Service Association.

**RESOLVED:**

That the planned approach to Fire Fighter recruitment for 2019 be noted.

18. Service Delivery Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which highlighted the key service delivery matters since the CFA meeting held on 6 February 2019. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 18', is filed with these minutes.

**RESOLVED:**

That the update provided on key service delivery matters since 6 February 2019, particularly the performance improvements and the work in prevention, including the work undertaken with the deaf community, be noted.

19. Urgent Action.

The Chairman reminded members that the urgent item – Day Crewing Plus – would be considered as an exempt item at the end of the agenda.

20. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority will be held on Friday 26 July 2019 at 10.00am at Leicestershire County Council, Glenfield.

21. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

**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 paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act; and, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:-

- i) Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services – Inspection Report; and

ii) Day Crewing Plus.

22. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services - Inspection Report.

The CFA received a presentation from the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the inspection report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The item was not for publication as it contained information related to the financial or business affairs of an individual, including the authority holding that information.

**RESOLVED:**

That

- i. the update provided on the HMICFRS Inspection be noted; and
- ii. a further report would be presented to the CFA at its meeting in September 2019.

23. Day Crewing Plus.

The CFA received a verbal update from the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning Day Crewing Plus.

The item was not for publication as it contained information related to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters.

**RESOLVED:**

That the update provided on Day Crewing Plus be noted.

10.00 am - 12.55 pm  
19 June 2019

CHAIRMAN