



Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 4 October 2023.

PRESENT

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

Mr. R. G. Allen CC

Cllr. S. Barton

Mr. S. L. Bray CC

Mr. B. Champion CC

Mr. J. G. Coxon CC

Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC

Mr. D. J. Grimley CC

Mr. B. Harrison-Rushton CC

Cllr. S. Harvey

Cllr. M. March

Ms. Betty Newton CC

Mrs B. Seaton CC

In attendance

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

37. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Mr. N. Bannister CC, Mr. K. Ghattoraya CC, Councillor A Osman and Councillor H Rae Bhatia.

38. 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.

39. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items.

40. 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:

- Direct Entry Programme – it was noted that LFRS was an early adopter of this scheme, with the intention of attracting a greater diversity of people joining the Service. Two individuals had been identified to be appointed at Station Manager level; these were due to start in post in the near future and would undertake a three year programme before becoming part of the middle management cohort.

- Establishment of Whole-time Firefighting Staff – a recruitment campaign was currently underway to employ more wholetime staff. This was largely as a result of the move away from Day Crewing Plus and it was the aim to have the appropriate number of staff in post by April 2025.
- Deployment to Morocco – two members of LFRS had been deployed to Morocco as part of the international search and rescue team. It was noted that, due to the recent retirement of the dog handler, no search and rescue dog had been deployed on this occasion. A recruitment process was currently being undertaken for a new dog handler and dog; once they were in post, it was requested that they attend a meeting of the CFA.
- Western Fire Station – the official opening of the station was due to take place on 24 October. Members of the CFA were invited to attend.
- Road Traffic Collisions – there was concern at the increase in fatal collisions in LLR over recent weeks. The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer stated that the Road Safety Team was being challenged to undertake work around this.

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

It was reported that no questions had been received.

42. Minutes.

The minutes of the CFA meeting held on 26 July 2023 were considered.

It was moved by Mr. N. Rushton CC and seconded by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC that the minutes of the CFA meeting held on 26 July 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 26 July 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

43. Minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee.

The minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 13 July 2023 were considered.

It was moved by Mrs. M. E. Newton CC and seconded by Mr. R. Allen CC that the minutes of the Corporate Governance meeting held on 13 July 2023 be noted.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Corporate Governance meeting held on 13 July 2023 be noted.

44. 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 - June 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) The Service had attended over 2000 incidents during the period, a significant proportion of which were non-fire incidents and false alarms. Work was being undertaken through prevention, protection and education to address this.
- ii) Attendance times to life critical incidents was above the 10 minute target time. The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer stated this was primarily due to road traffic collisions in rural locations. As part of the Community Risk Management Plan, consultation would take place around increasing the attendance time to 12 minutes. The consultation period ended in November, after which the findings would be presented to the CFA.
- iii) A query was raised as to whether it was possible to have attendance times for both urban and rural areas. The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer indicated that this had been considered but was not an option. The attendance time for fires and road traffic collisions already differed and it was the intention to keep the time to 10 minutes for house fires.
- iv) It was noted that the initial call was included in the Service's attendance time. The current call handling time was around 2 minutes, but it was anticipated that this would reduce once the new mobilising system was in place. This would potentially reduce the total attendance time.
- v) It was reported that safety campaigns were being undertaken in rural locations and work was taking place with partners around enforcement.

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.

45. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Home Office Fire Statistics 2022-23.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which presented an update on the performance of the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service compared with all Fire and Rescue Authorities in England for the period 2022/23. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) The analysis provided showed the performance of LFRS compared against other services in England, including total incidents, Home Safety Checks and Fire Safety Audits. It was pleasing to note that LFRS compared extremely well when benchmarked against all Services nationally and was ranked seventh highest out of 44 services for the number of Homes Safety Checks completed per member of staff. Since 2014/15, there had been a 251% increase in the number of Home

Safety Checks completed per member of staff, which placed LFRS in the top three in England for the largest percentage increase per member of staff over that period. When compared against significantly rural services, LFRS was ranked second highest out of 17 services for Home Safety Checks completed per member of staff.

- ii) The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer reported that the total number of fire safety audits in England increased from 48,018 in 2021/22 to 50,424 in 2022/23. LFRS had increased from 877 in 2021/22 to 1,217 in 2022/23. In terms of the number completed, LFRS was ranked twelfth out of 44 services, and when compared against significantly rural services, it was ranked fourth out of the 17 services.
- iii) The CFA congratulated the Service on the work in prevention, protection, Home Safety Checks and fire safety audits. It was suggested that this should be publicised and would provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the work being undertaken.

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 performance of the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service for the period 2022/23 be noted.

#### 46. Members' Allowance Scheme.

The CFA considered a report of the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer which presented an update in relation to the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority's Members' Allowance Scheme and proposals for a voluntary Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to review the allowances. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

The position of the CFA constituent members was reported. As there was no consistent approach between these, it was recommended that the issue be referred to an IRP on a voluntary basis and the Panel to report its recommendation to the CFA. The Panel would comprise of the three Chairmen of the IRPs in each of the constituent authorities of the CFA and was content to receive any comments that members of the CFA may wish to make on the scope of the review.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were made:

- i) A member queried the representation on the IRP and suggested that it be widened to include at least one female representative. The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer confirmed that arrangements would be made to contact female representatives on the constituent authorities IRPs to check whether they would be willing to sit on the Review Panel.
- ii) It was also suggested that consideration be given to reviewing allowances such as the Dependent Carers' Allowance, as it was felt that if this was capped, it could be a barrier to single parents becoming a member. This would be fed to the IRP to take into account. As a result of this, it was agreed that there be a full review of Members' Allowances, rather than just considering the link to indexation.

- iii) Members were encouraged to feed their views into the review, and details were provided on how to comment.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That:

- a) the Members' Allowance Schemes of the constituent members of the Combined Fire Authority be noted; and
- b) an Independent Remuneration Panel be constituted to review the arrangement for the CFA Members' Allowances to include:
  - i) Members' allowances rates and the arrangement for indexation;
  - ii) Roles which should receive the Special Responsibility Allowances;
  - iii) Travel and Subsistence Allowances.

47. Appointment of Independent Members of the Corporate Governance Committee.

The Committee considered a report of the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to seek approval for the appointment of Independent Members to the Corporate Governance Committee. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

The Corporate Governance Committee, at its meeting on 13 July 2023, had resolved to identify if two (one from Leicestershire County Council and one from Leicester City Council) of the Independent Members appointed would be willing and available to sit on the CFA Corporate Governance Committee in rotation. The County Council had two Independent Members and both had expressed an interest in sitting on the Corporate Governance Committee for the CFA. It was therefore proposed that these each serve for a consecutive two-year term of office alongside the Independent Member from the City Council.

It was noted that the appointment of the Independent Members would require an amendment to Article 5 of the CFA's Constitution.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That:

- a) Mr. G. Grimes, Mr. A. Maxfield and Mr. B. Bhakri be appointed to serve as Independent Members of the Corporate Governance Committee up to the Annual Meeting of the Combined Fire Authority in 2027, noting that Mr. G. Grimes and Mr. A. Maxfield will serve, in rotation, consecutive two-year terms as follows:
  - i. From appointment to the date of the Annual Meeting in May 2025 Mr. A. Maxfield; and

ii. From the date of the Annual Meeting in May 2025 to the date of the Annual Meeting in May 2027 Mr. G. Grimes;

- b) the Terms of Reference of the Corporate Governance Committee, as set out in the Constitution of the Combined Fire Authority, be revised as set out in the report to reflect these appointments.

48. Urgent items.

The CFA was reminded that consultation was currently underway on the Community Risk Management Plan. Members were asked to promote the consultation and encourage the public to respond, particularly in areas where public engagement was usually poor.

49. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority will be held on 29 November 2023 at 10am at a venue to be confirmed.

50. 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:

- Forge Health Limited Closure.

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:

- Forge Health Limited Closure, as defined in Paragraph 3 and 10; and

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

51. Forge Health Limited Closure.

The CFA considered an exempt report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which informed of the progress made in closing Forge Health Limited and associated costs.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That the update and closure of Forge Health Limited be noted.

10.00 - 10.42 am  
04 October 2023

CHAIRMAN

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