

Minutes of a meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 12 December 2018.

PRESENT

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

Cllr. S. Barton	Cllr. K. Master
Mr. I. E. G. Bentley CC	Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC	Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. B. Crooks CC	Mr T. Parton CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC	Mrs. J. Richards CC
Cllr. K. Singh Johal	Cllr. A. Thalukdar
Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC	Mrs. M. Wright CC

In attendance

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

29. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Mr Kaufman CC, Mr Charlesworth CC, Mr Poland CC and Councillor Bool.

30. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

The Chairman invited Members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

31. To advise of any other items which the Chair has decided to take as urgent.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

32. 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:

- The King Power helicopter crash,
- The Inspection of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
- The Hinckley Road incident
- World War One Centenary
- The CFA Conference

- Fire Fighter Bob Miller
- Blood Donor Service
- Long Service Awards
- Carol Concert

The Chairman commended in particular the firefighters who attended the helicopter crash at the King Power stadium.

With regard to the CFA conference, the Chairman suggested that members should advise the CFO of any interest to attend.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Chairman's announcements be noted and that the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer be asked to circulate information regarding the future CFA Conferences to all Members.

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

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

34. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 27 September 2018 as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 27 September 2018 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

35. To consider the minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 21 November 2018.

Arising from consideration of minute 37, members continued to express concern that the lease agreement with the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) for use of facilities at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birstall had yet to be signed.

It was moved by Mr. G. A. Boulter CC and seconded by Mr. N. J. Rushton CC that EMAS be given a six month deadline to sign the lease agreement for accommodation at Fire Services Headquarters, Birstall or be asked to leave the premises at that time if the agreement was not signed.

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That

- EMAS be given a six month deadline to sign the lease agreement for accommodation at Fire Services Headquarters, Birstall or be asked to leave at that time if the agreement was not signed;
- The minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 21 November 2018 be noted.

36. Integrated Risk Management Plan Progress.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which informed the Authority of the successful implementation of the proposals agreed in the “Towards 2020 Integrated Risk Management Plan” and outlined the milestones for the development of the 2020-2024 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 8”, is filed with these minutes.

Members commented that the IRMP was a key strategic plan for the CFA, which set the direction of travel for the next five years; it was important therefore that they should be involved at an early stage in the development and shaping of the Plan. The CFO acknowledged this and indicated that he would ensure that members were engaged in the process.

It was moved by Mr N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Councillor K. Master that:

- a) the CFA notes that the report proposes no involvement of the CFA at this stage in scoping the development of the 2020-2024 IRMP and no involvement of the CFA until June 2019.
- b) accordingly the IRMP work proposed be paused until a report is made to the CFA at its meeting on 6th February to inform the CFA of the scope of the work, the key elements proposed by the SMT for inclusion in the IRMP and the intended or possible consequences, including the impact on the service overall, geographical coverage and individual establishments.
- c) the report to the CFA on 6th February also set out how the IRMP work will fit in practice with the CFA’s budget position and the property strategy.

The motion was put and carried unanimously, 16 members voting for motion and none voting against.

RESOLVED:

That:

- a) the CFA notes that the report proposes no involvement of the CFA at this stage in scoping the development of the 2020-2024 IRMP and no involvement of the CFA until June 2019;
- b) accordingly the IRMP work proposed be paused until a report is made to the CFA at its meeting on 6th February to inform the CFA of the scope of the work, the key elements proposed by the SMT for inclusion in the IRMP and the intended or possible consequences, including the impact on the service overall, geographical coverage and individual establishments.
- c) the report to the CFA on 6th February also set out how the IRMP work will fit in practice with the CFA’s budget position and the property strategy.

37. Home Office Industrial Action Business Continuity Plan Review.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the findings from the Home Office review into the Industrial Action Business Continuity Planning of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 9", is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that the report to the CFA had been written based on the draft report from the Home Office; the final version was awaited.

RESOLVED:

That the findings of the Home Office review into the Industrial Action Business Continuity Planning of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service be recognised and the proposed response to the recommendations made by the Home Office, as set out at paragraph 4.6 of the report, be agreed.

38. Impact of Proposed Control Room Collaboration by NFRS and DFRS.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which informed members of the proposed control room collaboration between Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services and the potential impact on the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

The CFO advised members as follows:

- i. The tri-service control room arrangement had been in place since 2015 and was subject to a contract of seven years duration, with financial penalties in place should any party wish to exit or vary the arrangement. He agreed to liaise with CFOs in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire with a view to re-negotiating the arrangement;
- ii. LFRS had concerns about the impact of the merger of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire control room on local arrangements. The options in the report at paragraph 4.8, were initial thoughts presented for consideration by the CFA;
- iii. The current arrangement was for the three control rooms to be covered by 12 staff. As a result of the merger, the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire control rooms would have a total of 6 staff and within Leicestershire Control Room there would be 4 staff. The concern was that, should technical issues arise in the newly merged control room for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, the 4 control room operatives in Leicestershire would be unable to handle the volume of calls for all three areas. Whilst some assurance had been received regarding the business continuity planning arrangements, concerns still remain. The Chief Fire Officer advised that he had met with the other two authorities to discuss this matter and would continue these discussions.
- iv. Derbyshire Fire Authority had already agreed to the merger and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority would meet on 14 December to consider its response. If agreed, the merger of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire control room would take effect from July 2019.

It was moved by Mr N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Councillor K. Master that:

- a) any decision of the CFA in respect of the proposed collaboration between Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services be deferred until a report is made to the CFA setting out why it is not proposed to involve LFRS in this joint initiative since the different options presented at this stage identify consequential risks for LFRS and/or additional expenditure to be incurred by the CFA.
- b) the same report also informs the CFA as to what discussions have been had recently with other emergency services within the LFRS area and regionally about control room collaboration and shared services, and their outcomes.

The motion was put and carried unanimously, 16 members voting for the motion and none voting against.

RESOLVED:

That

- a) any decision of the CFA in respect of the proposed collaboration between Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services be deferred until a report is made to the CFA in February 2019 setting out why it is not proposed to involve LFRS in this joint initiative since the different options presented at this stage identify consequential risks for LFRS and/or additional expenditure to be incurred by the CFA.
- b) The report referred to in (a) above should also inform the CFA as to what discussions have been had recently with other emergency services within the LFRS area and regionally about control room collaboration and shared services, and their outcomes.

39. Estates Plan Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the progress made on the Estates Plan and its fit within the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2020-2024. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 11", is filed with these minutes.

Members commented that, after staffing, one of the biggest costs was buildings. A strategic review of the Service's estate was needed including details of what the buildings were being used for, but that it would be best to do this within the IRMP.

It was moved by Councillor K. Master and seconded by Councillor A. Thalukdar

"That no decision be taken on the report and that a strategic review of the LFRS estate, including accommodation for support functions and the in-house provision of fleet maintenance, be undertaken for incorporation in the IRMP, to be considered further in the report requested for the CFA's meeting on 6th February."

The motion was put and carried unanimously, 16 members voting for the motion and none voting against.

RESOLVED:

That no decision be taken on the report and that a strategic review of the LFRS estate, including accommodation for support functions and the in-house provision of fleet maintenance, be undertaken for incorporation in the IRMP, to be considered further in the report requested for the CFA's meeting on 6th February.

40. Firefighter 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 12", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. A similar report had been considered by the CFA Corporate Governance Committee at its meeting on 21 November 2018 when concerns had been expressed that the current recruitment practices resulted in a workforce that did not reflect the diversity of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) area. Members were assured that a great deal of activity was undertaken 'behind the scenes' to encourage applications from underrepresented groups; including working with schools and local groups. Members were asked to inform the CFO if they were aware of particular groups that could be approached to encourage applications, especially in Leicester City. The 'Have-a-go' days had also been re-focused in order to attract more female and BAME applicants;
- ii. The decision to restrict recruitment to the LLR area followed a decision made by the CFA some time previously; it was hoped that this would result in applicants that were representative of the area.
- iii. It was highlighted that other blue light services did not have the same issues with recruitment; female police officers and paramedics were more evident. Members were informed that the situation with LFRS was not dissimilar to other fire services. The CFO was looking to engage with other blue light services to learn from their practices, and would also speak with the Trade Unions to explore the issues.
- iv. Apprenticeships were also being used for new recruits; it had taken some time for the standards to be determined nationally and to get the assessment arrangements in place;
- v. The LFRS had a Strategic Equalities and Diversity and Inclusion Board which was considering the longer term aspirations of the organisation, particularly in relation to recruitment;
- vi. Members noted that whilst a great deal was being done to encourage applications from under-represented groups, more needed to be done to ensure that the LFRS workforce was representative of the LLR area.

RESOLVED:

That the report on Firefighter Recruitment be accepted but it be recognised that more needed to be done to ensure that the workforce of LFRS reflected the diversity of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area.

41. On-Call Review Project.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which explained the challenges faced in maintaining on-call appliance availability and the short, medium and long term plans to address them. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 13", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Issues with recruitment of On-call firefighters in rural villages could impact on delivery of the IRMP;
- ii. The On-call provision was a cost effective option and the issue of low levels of remuneration was being addressed with the aim of increasing applications for the available positions, particularly in rural areas;
- iii. An internal officer working group was considering options and activities to address the issues concerning the recruitment and retention of On-call firefighters;
- iv. A regular report was presented to the Corporate Governance Committee at each of its meetings and a report would be presented to the CFA in the future to update on the progress made with On-call recruitment.

RESOLVED:

That

- a. the report on the On-call Review Project be accepted, the problem with on-call recruitment in rural areas be recognised and the efforts being made to address this be welcomed;
- b. an update report be presented to the CFA at its meeting in December 2019.

42. Review of Fleet Arrangements 2016 - Progress Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the progress made following the Review of Fleet Arrangements 2016. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 14", is filed with these minutes.

Members recognised that good progress had been made with the review of the fleet since 2016; there were now 16 fewer vehicles in place. Members also supported the work being done on extending the life of fire appliances and to defer the decision on the replacement of the aerial ladder platform pending the Special Appliances Review. They added that it would be useful to know when the Review would report its findings.

Members remained concerned about the 'provided cars' for officers and agreed that more information was needed on this, including a better understanding of the financing of the scheme, and of the approach taken by other authorities.

It was moved by Mr N. J. Rushton CC and seconded by Councillor K. Master that:

- a) subject to any action which is urgent, no action be taken on this report until a further report is presented to the CFA on the outcome of the review of 'provided cars' for officers, such report to include details of the number and model of vehicles recommended to be provided, the costs thereof and of practice elsewhere.
- b) the Treasurer be consulted in respect of the information provided in paragraphs 8-11 of the report on financial considerations, further information on the comparative costs of and savings from 'provided cars' to be reported to the CFA.
- c) in the event of a requirement for urgent action prior to the next CFA meeting, delegated authority be given to the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer in consultation with the Treasurer as the representative of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The motion was put and carried unanimously, 16 members voting for motion and none voting against.

RESOLVED:

That

- a) subject to any action which is urgent, no action be taken on this report until a further report is presented to the CFA at its meeting on 6 February 2019, on the outcome of the review of 'provided cars' for officers. Such report should include details of the number and model of vehicles recommended to be provided, the costs thereof and of practice elsewhere.
- b) The Treasurer be consulted in respect of the information provided in paragraphs 8-11 of the report on financial considerations, further information on the comparative costs of and savings from 'provided cars' to be reported to the CFA.
- c) In the event of a requirement for urgent action prior to the next CFA meeting, delegated authority be given to the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer in consultation with the Treasurer as the representative of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

43. Policy on Sickness Management Proposals.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the progress made on improving the management of sickness absence within 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. That the work completed on the management of sickness and the support given to staff with mental health issues be commended;

- ii. The levels of sickness absence within support staff was concerning as there were fewer support staff managing multiple jobs. Additionally, the absence of a member of staff may have a greater impact on the team due to the fact that such teams now had less staff;
- iii. Mental health and musculo-skeletal were the top two reasons for sickness absence; the data reported on the number of days/shifts lost;
- iv. Members expressed concern about the category 'not yet known'; it was explained that, under LFRS policies, individuals did not have to disclose the reason for short term sickness absence to their manager as the information was notified to the Occupational Health Team;
- v. Absence data for on-call firefighters was not captured due to the complexity of their employment arrangements;
- vi. It would be beneficial for the CFA to receive a presentation from the new Head of the LFRS Human Resources Team on the conditions of service and the constraints on managers in operating them.

RESOLVED:

That

- a. the report on sickness management proposals be welcomed;
- b. a presentation be made to the CFA meeting in July 2019 on the work undertaken with conditions of service and the constraints on managers in operating them.

44. 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 27 September 2018. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 16", is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that the report, previously called "Operational Update" which was received at each CFA meeting, had been renamed to reflect the three functions within the Service Delivery Directorate of prevention, protection and response.

RESOLVED:

That the CFA welcomed the report on the Service Delivery update for the period 27 September to 12 December 2018.

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

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which sought approval for the proposed changes to the CFA's Constitution. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 17", is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the changes to the CFA Constitution, set out in the Appendices to the report, be approved.

46. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the CFA will be held on Wednesday 6 February 2019 at 11am at Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services Headquarters, Birstall.

47. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 4, 5 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information –

Day Crewing Plus Arrangements.

48. Day Crewing Plus Arrangements.

The CFA considered a report of the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer regarding developments following a recent High Court judgement that was relevant to the Service. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 21", is filed with these minutes. The report was not for publication by virtue of paragraphs 4, 5 and 10 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED:

That:

- a. The report on the Day Crewing Plus Arrangements be accepted;
- b. Officers continue to review the judgement and its implications and engage with the Fire Brigade Union and others as appropriate to identify a resolution.

10.00 - 11.26 am
12 December 2018

CHAIRMAN