



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 11 December 2024, 10:30

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr D Boulter, Mrs J Carwardine, Mr D Chambers, Mr B Clayton, Mr D Davies, Mr A Ditta, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mr J Kenyon, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr C B Taylor, Ms D Toynbee, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

0508 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Brookes and Cllr R Morris.

0509 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), and a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book).

0510 Chairman's Announcements

Storm Bert

Between the 23rd and 25th November 2024, the Service mobilised resources over 240 times and attended 146 incidents. In the last 10 years, this day ranked 5th highest for the number of incidents attended. In total, 127 rescues had been recorded on the IRS at flooding and water related incidents during Storm Bert. A single incident in Pershore accounted for 58 of those rescues when a coach carrying secondary school-aged children became stuck in the flood water. The Service's boats rescued 57 children and the coach driver. There were 33 incidents involving vehicles that had entered flood water, these emergency callouts accounted for over 20% of the total activity in the three-day period. At one

incident in Leintwardine, 29 people were rescued from multiple vehicles in flood water. There were only 22 incidents where crews were mobilised to flooded properties. Crews assisted in evacuations, pumping out water, isolating electrics and checking on the welfare of residents.

During this weekend's Storm Darragh, there were less flooding incidents, mainly due to the high winds which had caused fallen trees and large unsafe structures.

Councillor Chambers thanked the crews and officers who had spent 2 days in Tenbury rescuing residents from the flood water and commented that the work was quite simply exemplary.

Councillor Hardman thanked the crews and officers who had rescued 57 school children from a school bus in flood water, the operation was extremely well managed.

The Chairman attended the Annual Worcestershire Medals and Awards Ceremony on 7 November 2024 at The Guildhall, Worcester.

The Vice-Chairman attended the Annual Herefordshire Medals and Awards Ceremony on 28 November 2024 at The Town Hall, Hereford.

Councillor A Fry was welcomed back onto the Fire Authority, who had replaced Councillor D Boatright-Greene.

0511 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

0512 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 16 October 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0513 Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2025-30 – Consultation

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the report and the Assistant Chief Officer - Prevention then explained in detail that Members were being asked to consider the Draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-30 and approve it for public consultation, which would be for 12 weeks from January 2025 to April 2025. Full details of the consultation and analysis of responses would be presented back to the Fire Authority for consideration at the earliest opportunity to ensure the final CRMP could be published in October 2025.

Members thanked officers for providing briefing sessions and background documents prior to the meeting.

Suggested amendments to the consultation questions were as follows:

Question 5 - split into 2 so that energy/technology and recycling are separate.

Question 6 - reword the beginning of the question so that it is consistent with the previous questions, i.e. 'The Fire Authority should

Question 7 – remove the words 'continue to' as lobbying residential hadn't started yet.

RESOLVED that the Draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-30 be approved for public consultation, following amendment to the questions as detailed above.

0514 Resource Review update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated the Authority on the implementation measures taken in support of the Resource Review.

Members' attention was drawn to an error in paragraph 8, the reinvestment figure should have read circa £180,000.

Members discussed an email they had received the night before the meeting from the Fire Brigades Union, in particular with reference to the use of the 4x4 vehicles. There were concerns that the email had not been sent to senior officers and that these were issues the FBU should have raised with officers in the first instance.

Members were reminded that it was very clear in the resource review that the 4x4 vehicles were to be used to transport people to an incident and anyone with a driving licence could drive them. They were not to replace fire engines, nor to be equipped with equipment and were already proving a valuable asset to the Service by improving response arrangements.

Members noted that the full reallocation of resources should be completed in 2025 and be fully embedded by the end of 2025. Early indications showed the outcomes of the Resource Review were having a positive effect on crewing levels at wholetime locations and the Service should see an upturn in On-Call availability in the near future.

[Cllr D Chambers and Cllr A Ditta left the meeting at 11.41am].

RESOLVED that Members note progress to date regarding measures taken to implement the outcome of the Resource Review, in

particular:

- i) Removal of the proposed fire engines (listed below);*
- ii) The wholetime watch position at Hereford, Worcester and Wyre Forest;*
- iii) Operational use of the new 4x4 vehicles;*
- iv) The updated capital financing costs; and*
- v) Implementation of the new model for daytime support crewing at Leominster and Bromyard.*

0515 Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Phase 2 Report Update

The Chief Fire Officer, on behalf of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, updated Members on scheduled work in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report.

Members noted that the Service had conducted a gap analysis against the 60 recommendations detailed in the Phase 2 Report. The Service were taking a proactive approach by reviewing procedures in areas targeting Fire and Rescue Services and other organisations, and had agreed an action plan with departmental heads to address these recommendations.

RESOLVED that Members noted and approved the scheduled work in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report, in that:

- i) The Service had conducted a gap analysis against the recommendations detailed in the GTI Phase 2 Inquiry Report;***
- ii) The Service were taking a proactive approach, by reviewing procedures in areas targeting FRSS and other organisations, and had agreed an action plan with departmental heads to address these recommendations; and***
- iii) The timescale for completion of this work and future reporting had been agreed and detailed.***

0516 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan 2023-25 – Q2 Update 2024-25

The Assistant Chief Officer - Prevention updated Members on the HMICFRS Improvement Plan and the progress made during Quarter 2 2024-25, following the inspection report dated 29 November 2023.

Members noted that the first update showed that further progress had been made up to the end of September 2024 (Q2). Quarterly updates on the progress would continue to be provided to the Authority.

RESOLVED that Members noted the actions to deliver the HMICFRS Improvement Plan and that notable progress had been made up to the end of September 2024 (Q2).

0517 Fire Authority and Committee Dates 2025/26

The Monitoring Officer presented the Fire Authority and Committee Dates 2025/26 for approval.

Members noted that these dates had been checked with Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council to avoid clashes in Members' diaries as far as possible.

Members would receive electronic meeting calendar invites in due course.

RESOLVED that the meeting dates for 2025/26 be agreed.

0518 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 20 November 2024.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 20 November 2024 be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 12:08

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman