



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Thursday, 17 June 2021, 10:30

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Ms E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Morris, Mr R J Phillips, Mr J Robinson, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

Also in attendance: Mr John Champion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

320 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Mr C B Taylor be elected as Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year, to hold office until his successor becomes entitled to act.

321 Election of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Mr R J Phillips be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year, to hold office until his successor becomes entitled to act.

322 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr D Chambers, Cllr K Guthrie, Cllr A Hardman and Cllr D Toynbee.

323 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

324 Chairman's Announcements

There were no announcements received from the Chairman.

325 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

326 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 24 February 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at an appropriate time.

327 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

A report was presented by the Head of Legal Services to consider the allocation of Committee seats to political groups in accordance with the requirements for political balance, the appointment of Members to those committees and appointments to outside bodies.

RESOLVED that:

i. following the recent elections to Worcestershire County Council, the following changes to the membership of the Authority be noted:

Retirements

Cllr. R. Adams

Cllr. P. Agar

Cllr. T. Baker-Price

Cllr. A. Fry

Cllr. C. Hotham

Cllr. F. Oborski

Cllr. K. Pollock

Cllr. J. Potter

Cllr. P. Tuthill

Cllr. J. Raine

New Appointments

Cllr. R. Brookes

Cllr. D. Chambers

Cllr. A. Ditta

Cllr. N. McVey

Cllr. E. Marshall

Cllr. J. Monk

Cllr. D. Moorhead

Cllr. J. Robinson

Cllr. L. Robinson

Cllr. T. Wells

ii. the formation and membership of political groups, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;

iii. in accordance with the requirements for political balance, Committee seats be allocated to political groups as set out in Appendix 1;

iv. the Authority appoints:

a. Cllr R Phillips and Cllr C B Taylor as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Policy & Resources Committee; and

b. Cllr M Hart and Cllr A Amos as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Audit & Standards Committee.

v. it be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make appointments to the remainder of those Committee seats in accordance with the wishes of the respective Group Leaders; details at Appendix 2.

vi. Cllr S Bowen be appointed as the Member Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;

vii. Cllr B Clayton be appointed as the representative on the Health & Safety Committee;

viii. the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association, as set out in Appendix 1, be continued;

ix. the place and vote on the Local Government Association Fire Commission continues to be exercised by the Chairman of the Authority; and

x. Cllr R Phillips continues as the Authority's nominee on the Board of Place Partnership Ltd and as the Member representative on the Shareholder Group.

Provisional Financial Out-turn 2020-21

The Treasurer presented Members with a report to receive the provisional financial results for 2020-21, approve final transfers to/from reserves, approve the reallocation of reserves and review the Treasury Management activities for 2020-21 and confirm compliance with the Prudential Code indicators.

Members were informed that the Provisional Financial Results, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators normally come under the Terms of Reference of the Policy and Resources Committee, however because they required attention between meetings of that Committee, they were considered by the Full Authority.

Members were also informed that the Audit and Standards Committee would consider the full Statement of Accounts later in the year, ordinarily this would be at the July meeting prior to the 31st July deadline; however again there had been a temporary change to the Account and Audit Regulations this year.

Following a brief outline by the Treasurer of the reserves held, the Chief Fire Officer presented Members with details of the re-allocation following a review of the reserves that had identified areas where they could be used effectively to give significant organisational impacts.

Members were pleased to note the details of the reserves and approved the reallocation as stated in the report.

Finally the Treasurer confirmed that the Prudential Indicators for 2020-21 were within the limits set by the Authority and no matters required further action.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

- i. Notes the provisional financial results for 2020-21;***
- ii. Notes the transfers between reserves previously approved in accordance with the Reserves Strategy, or approved by Policy & Resources Committee 2nd December 2020 as below;***
 - a. £0.310m to the Sustainability Reserve;***
 - b. £0.201m to the Protection Grants Reserve;***
 - c. £0.164m from the Day Crew Plus (DCP) Change Reserve;***
 - d. £0.098m from the Property Maintenance Reserve;***

- e. £0.067m from the Alliance Reserve;*
- f. £0.048m from the Safety Initiatives Reserve;*
- g. £0.048m from the Development Reserve;*
- h. £0.040m from the Fire Control (C&C) Reserve;*
- i. £0.019m from the Broadway Fire Station Reserve;*
- j. £0.011 from the Fire Prevention Reserve; and*
- k. £0.001m from the Equipment Reserve.*

iii. Approves the transfers to Earmarked Reserves as set out below:

- a. £0.054 to the Pension Reserve;*
- b. £0.130m to the Taxation Guarantee Grant (TIG) Reserve;*
- c. £0.602m to the Budget Reduction (Covid) Reserve; and*
- d. £1.185m to the Budget Reduction Reserve.*

iv. Approves the reallocation of Earmarked Reserves to amend the balances to those shown in Appendix 4 Column 7 involving the following net transfers:

- a. £1.040m to a new Organisational Excellence Reserve;*
- b. £0.300m to the Fire Control (C&C) Reserve;*
- c. £0.500m from the ESMCP Reserve;*
- d. £1.000m to a new On-Call Recruitment Reserve;*
- e. £1.200m to a new ICT Replacements Reserve;*
- f. £0.900m to a new Capital Projects Reserve;*
- g. £0.837m from the 2017 Pay Award Reserve to close it down;*
- h. £0.250m to the Property Maintenance Reserve;*
- i. £3.353m from the Budget Reduction Reserve;*
- j. £0.121m from the Alliance Reserve to merge with Development Reserve and to close the former; and*

v. Approves the release of reserves by the Chief Fire Officer after consultation with the Authority Chair, the Chair of Policy &

Resources Committee and the Treasurer.

vi. Notes that the Treasurer will certify the 2020-21 Statement of Accounts, in accordance within the regulatory time-scale, provided relevant information is received from all Billing Authorities;

vii. Notes that the Audit of the accounts will be undertaken by Grant Thornton LLP; and

viii. Confirms that the Prudential Indicators for 2020-21 were within the limits set by the Authority and no matters require further action.

329 Annual Service Review 2020-21 and Annual Service Plan 2021-22

The Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the Annual Service Review 2020-21 and the Annual Service Plan 2021-22 to adopt and approve for publication on the Service's website.

Members were informed that these were two new-style reports; the Annual Service Review looks back at the Service's work over the last year and the Annual Service Plan sets out the Service's key priorities for the coming year.

RESOLVED that the Annual Service Review 2020-21 and the Annual Service Plan 2021-22 be approved for publication on the Service website, subject to any final minor changes as agreed by the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman.

330 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update April 2021

The Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an update on the progress in implementing the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 20 December 2018.

Members were informed that any outstanding actions would now be moved into the new action plan following the recent inspection on 1 April, the results of which will be available later in the year.

RESOLVED that the Authority notes progress on actions to deliver the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

331 Property Services Update

The Head of Legal Services updated Members on the dissolution of Place Partnership Ltd, the new arrangements with the Police and Crime Commissioner for delivery of property services and an update on the

current property programme.

Members were informed that PPL ceased trading on 31st March 2021 and each of the partners have now taken their property functions back in-house or in the case of the Fire Authority, have entered into an arrangement for a joint property service provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia.

A Member was concerned about the delay of signing contracts for Redditch Fire Station. The Head of Legal Services assured Members that matters were progressing, the Heads of Terms had now been agreed and external solicitors had been appointed for the land acquisition for completion the end of June 2021.

A Member queried the disposal of the Windsor Street site and was informed that the local authority were considering whether to make an offer for the site failing which the property would be put back on the open market in August.

There was a question with regard to the Environmental sustainability in properties and the Chief Fire Officer was pleased to confirm that consideration had been included in the budget for improvement to all buildings following a full review of all sites.

[Cllr Amos left the meeting at 11.46am].

The Police and Crime Commissioner assured Members that he would meet the Authority's expectation and deliver their requirements.

[Cllr Amos returned to the meeting at 11.49am].

RESOLVED that Members note:

i. Place Partnership Limited ceased trading on 31st March 2021 following a decision by the shareholders that the company was no longer viable and should be wound up in view of the County Council's decision to withdraw from the venture;

ii. along with the other shareholders, the Fire Authority has entered into a Deed of Assurance in order to facilitate a solvent liquidation of the company and will enter into a supplemental shareholder agreement to give further effect to this;

iii. the Fire Authority has entered into a new arrangement with effect from 1st April 2021 for the provision of property management services on our behalf by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia as part of a joint property function; and

iv. the appendix to the report contained an update on current property schemes.

332 2020-21 Performance Report: Q1-Q4

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a summary of the Service's performance for Quarter 1 to Quarter 4 2020-21 against a comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board (SMB).

The Vice-Chairman informed Members that the Community Risk Management Plan was going to look at new attendance targets for rural areas which was following what Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority were also pursuing.

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Q1-Q4, 2020-21:

i. A total of 7,018 incidents were attended in Q1-Q4 2020-21, a decrease of 11.18% (883 incidents) when compared with Q1-Q4 2019-20.

a. Fires: there were 1,664 Fire incidents in Q1-Q4 2020-21, a decrease of 42 incidents when compared to Q1-Q4 2019-20 which had 1,706. There was a decrease in Primary Fires of 157 incidents and an increase in Secondary Fires of 104 incidents. Overall there has been a 4.76% decrease in the number of casualties. However there has been an increase of one for both fatality and victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious when compared to Q1-Q4 2019-20.

b. Special Services: there were 2,009 Special Services incidents Q1-Q4 2020-21, a decrease of 735 incidents (-26.79%) when compared to Q1-Q4 2019-20. The largest decrease was due to a reduction in flooding incidents (-183 incidents) followed by RTC's (-170) and Rescue or Evacuation from Water (-131 incidents).

c. False Alarms: there were 3,345 Fire False Alarm incidents during Q1-Q4 2020-21, 106 fewer (-3.07%) than Q1-Q4 2019-20. Malicious False alarms had the largest percentage decrease (40.35%). Both Good Intent False Alarms and Fire Alarm Due to Apparatus also had small decreases (-1.39% and 2.84% respectively).

ii. Overall Staff Sickness level for Q1-Q4 2020-21 was 3.75 days lost per head (which is the ratio of the number of days/shifts lost per

person against the average number of personnel) this shows a decrease when compared to Q1-Q4 2019-20, where the number of days lost per head was 5.71. Long term sickness continues to form the greatest proportion of all staff sickness with 72.90% in Q1-Q4 2020-21. Wholetime firefighter sickness, Non-uniformed and Fire Control staff sickness all improved when compared to Q1-Q4 2019-20. Wholetime firefighters lost 5.66 days, Non-uniformed lost 6.28 days and Fire control staff lost 3.75 days per head.

iii. The Service attended 48.49% (241 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Q1-Q4 2020-21, compared with 51.79% (318 incidents) in Q1-Q4 2019-20. The average time for the first fire appliance to attend a Primary Building Fire was 11 minutes 1 seconds for Q1-Q4 2020-21 compared with 10 minutes 27 seconds in Q1-Q4 2019-20.

iv. The average for the overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance was 91.66% in Q1-Q4 2020-21 compared to 84.97% in Q1-Q4 2019-20; an increase in overall average availability of 6.69%. The new Wyre Forest hub is included in this calculation and is compared to the sum of Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport stations in 2019-20.

333 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 21 April 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 21 April 2021 be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 12:00

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman