



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 13 October 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 D Chambers, Mr B Clayton, Mr A Ditta, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Mrs E Marshall, Ms N McVey, Mr R J Morris, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs D Toynbee, Mr T Wells

335 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr K Guthrie, Cllr J Monk, Cllr D Morehead, Cllr J Robinson and Cllr R Udall.

336 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr 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), a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book) and represented the Fire Authority on the Place Partnership Ltd Shareholder Group.

337 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced to Members that he had recently attended the Dying to Drive Road Safety event at the Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub and encouraged Authority Members to attend future sessions.

The Chairman invited the Chief Fire Officer to provide an update for Members on recent key events. The Chief Fire Officer stated that:

- the recent fire at Park Street in Kidderminster had been declared a major incident by the Police. It had a severe impact on the area but no injuries had been sustained. Firefighting crews had undertaken excellent work in order to get residents and businesses back to their

- properties within 24 hours;
- the Service had stood down its previous position in response to the Covid-19 pandemic with all services back to normal. However, some internal control measures were still in effect and precautionary measures were being undertaken with regards to vulnerable people; and
- the three Core Strategies in respect of Response, Prevention and Protection had been circulated to all Members. The Chief Fire Officer thanked Members for their support.

The Chief Fire Officer provided a brief update with regards to capital projects in respect of Broadway Fire Station, Redditch Fire Station, Hereford Fire Station and North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility. Members were also informed about the relocation of the Incident Command Training Centre to Worcester Fire Station and the work that was underway to evaluate the relocation of the Service Training Centre from Droitwich Fire Station to the Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub.

The Chairman informed Members that item 7: Public Consultation on a Revised Attendance Measure was to be deferred to a future meeting to enable new Authority Members an opportunity to be provided with the background to the attendance measure via a series of workshops.

338 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

339 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

340 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

The Treasurer explained that the results of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) were not expected until late October and indications were that useable information at individual authority level would not emerge until very late December.

Therefore, the Treasurer recommended revisions to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) on the basis of the known variables and indicated some of the potential impacts where there was uncertainty over the direction of funding that might arise from the CSR .

The Treasurer advised that the MTFP remained within the manageable parameters approved by the Authority on 24th February 2021 and

informed the meeting that a further report would be brought to the Authority following the announcement of the CSR.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

i) approves the known changes to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP);

ii) notes that the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and its impact on the emerging MTFP is still awaited; and

iii) notes that the Policy and Resources Committee will receive further reports as more information is received.

341 Arrangements for Appointment of External Auditors

The Treasurer explained the three broad options open to the Authority under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 for the appointment of External Auditors following the conclusion of the 2022/23 audit year. The Treasurer recommended the Authority should “opt-in” to the sector led body (Public Services Appointments Limited) which had been approved by the Government to make future audit appointments on behalf of principal local authorities.

RESOLVED that the Authority continues to “opt in” to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) for the procurement of future external audit provision (Option 3).

342 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Improvement Plan – Update September 2021

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the Authority with an update on the implementation of the HMICFRS Improvement Plan following the inspection report dated 20 December 2018. Members were advised that the HMICFRS Improvement Plan before them did not cover the inspection of the Service's response to the Covid-19 pandemic nor the inspection carried out in 2021, which had yet to be published by HMICFRS. Members were advised that once HMICFRS had published its next report (expected December 2021) a new action plan would be developed by officers and reported to the Authority.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that additional progress had been made up to September 2021, with all items now closed and embedded into core work streams.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

i) notes progress on actions to deliver the 2018 HMICFRS Improvement Plan; and

ii) approves the close down of reporting on the 2018 HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

343 Strategic Fire Alliance Board Update

The Deputy Chief Officer presented Members with an update on progress against the programme of priority projects developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services. Progress had been made in respect of:

- aligning the Community Risk Management Plan processes of each Service;
- joint procurement exercises;
- ICT projects such as the Wide Area Network, ICT Helpdesk and joint ICT purchasing;
- a joint specification for the new Command and Control system; and
- opportunities to share learning and to develop policies on Environmental Management.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that although work was undertaken at a strategic level there were user groups set up for each area to enable staff at various levels to be involved.

RESOLVED that progress on the programme to date be noted.

344 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 28 July 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 28 July 2021 be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 11:30

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman