



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 12 June 2019, 11:00

**Chairman: Cllr R Phillips**  
**Vice-Chairman: Cllr P Tuthill**

## **Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr S Bowen, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Dr C A Hotham, J Kenyon, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Dr K Pollock, Mrs J Potter, Professor J W Raine, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall

### **217 Election of Chairman**

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

### **218 Election of Vice Chairman**

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

### **219 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Amos, Cllr I Hardiman and Cllr P Tuthill.

### **220 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was a member of the Firefighters' Scheme Advisory Pensions Board, an employer member of the Fire NJC and a representative on the LGA Fire Commission.

Cllr Oborski declared that she was an additional representative on the

LGA Fire Commission for the Liberal Democrats.

## **221 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed the new Herefordshire Members:

Cllr Bowen, Cllr Hey, Cllr Kenyon and Cllr Stark

and the new Worcestershire Member:

Cllr R Morris

to the Fire Authority and thanked the outgoing Members:

Cllr Bowes, Cllr Greenow, Cllr Guthrie, Cllr Matthews, Cllr Middlebrough and Cllr Williams

for their time on the Authority.

The Chairman informed the Authority of the following:

- Congratulations to Group Commander Martin Lown who had been honoured with the British Empire Medal for his contribution to the Fire Fighters Charity.
- The Judicial Review took place on 5 and 6 June and the Chairman had attended along with representatives from Shropshire Fire Authority, Cambridgeshire Fire Authority, Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. They were still awaiting the outcome from the High Court.
- In April the Deputy Director of the Home Office visited the Authority to attend a meeting with him and officers of the Service.
- Attended meetings with officers.

## **222 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

## **223 Confirmation of Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Fire Authority held on 11 February 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **224 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies**

A report was presented to consider the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups, appointments to those Committees and to outside bodies (insofar as is necessary).

**RESOLVED that:**

**i) the appointment of the following Members from Herefordshire Council be noted:**

**Conservative - Cllr. R. Philips**

**Green Party - Vacancy to be confirmed**

**Herefordshire Independents (2) - Cllr. S. Bowen, Cllr J Kenyon**

**Liberal Democrat - Cllr. L. Stark**

**It's Our County - Cllr. K. Hey**

**ii) the number of seats on each Committee and the allocation of those seats to political groups be noted:**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Appointments Committee</b>	<b>Audit &amp; Standards Committee</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Labour</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Independent</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Non-Aligned</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(Total)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>

**iii) the following Members be appointed as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the following Committees:**

**a. Appointments Committee**

**Chairman: Mr R J Phillips**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr P Tuthill**

**b. Audit and Standards Committee**

**Chairman: Mr M Hart**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr A Amos**

**c. Policy and Resources Committee**

**Chairman: Mr C B Taylor**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr R C Adams**

**iv) in accordance with the wishes of Group Leaders, membership of Committees be as set out in Appendix 1 of the minutes;**

**v) the non-aligned member be appointed to the Audit & Standards Committee;**

**vi) Mr B Clayton be appointed to the Health and Safety Committee;**

**vii) Mr T Baker-Price be appointed as Chairman to the Young Firefighters' Association Executive Committee;**

**viii) the current practice for representation and voting on the Local Government Association as set out in Appendix 2 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) the Chairman of the Authority continues as the Member representative on the Place Partnership Ltd. Shareholder Group.**

**225 Provisional Financial Out-turn 2018/19**

The Treasurer presented a report with the provisional financial results for 2018/19 and the Treasury Management activities for 2018/19.

Members were reminded that detailed budget monitoring reports had been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis and the out-turn was consistent with this reporting.

Members were made aware that the revenue budget underspend was slightly more than expected due to the increase from the redistribution of business rates.

Members were also informed that the capital budget was on track due to

the new build projects running well.

The Treasurer was pleased to announce that the Authority's finances for 2018/19 were well controlled and that, despite the late one-off items, the resultant under spend was part of a planned response to known future budget constraints.

There was a query regarding the use of reserves and following a brief explanation by the Treasurer, a formal response would be provided by email. The Chairman also reminded Members that reserves were essential as there was no guarantee the increased employers contributions for the Firefighters pension would be made by the Treasury.

There was also a query regarding Broadway Fire Station reserve of which Members were informed the Authority had identified the budget earlier in the year and agreed to fund the replacement station.

**RESOLVED that:**

**i) the provisional financial results for 2018/19 be noted;**

**ii) the transfers between reserves previously approved in accordance with the Reserves Strategy as below be noted;**

- 1. £0.627m from the Equipment Reserve;**
- 2. £0.124m from the Development Reserve; and**
- 3. £0.097m from the Property Maintenance Reserve.**

**iii) the additional transfers to reserves approved by the Policy and Resources Committee as below be noted;**

- 1. £0.285m to the Pay Award Reserve;**
- 2. £0.075m to the Pension Reserve (ear-marked for 2019/20).**

**iv) the transfer of £0.159m to the Budget Reduction Reserve (ear-marked for Service priorities) be approved;**

**v) the Treasurer will certify the 2018/19 Statement of Accounts, in accordance with the regulatory time-scale, on 31 May 2019 be noted;**

**vi) the Audit of the accounts will be undertaken by Grant Thornton LLP be noted; and**

**vii) the Prudential Code Indicators for 2018/19 were within the limits set by the Authority and no matters required further action.**

Members were informed of a recommendation by the Senior Management Board (SMB) to increase the on-call retaining fee.

During a recent survey on-call staff felt undervalued for the commitment they provided to the Service and Members agreed unanimously to increase the on-call retaining fee.

**RESOLVED that the annual retaining fee for on-call firefighters be increased, over and above the nationally agreed terms and conditions of service, as follows:**

- **Bands A to D attract an additional 20% increase**
- **Bands E to F attract an additional 5% increase**

**With the enhancement being reviewed in the event of any future significant increase in nationally agreed rates.**

## **227 Service Values**

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report to seek the Fire Authority's endorsement of the Service's renewed organisational values, which were:

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Honesty
- Openness
- Respect

These had been reviewed and developed in full consultation with all staff groups via workshops and an online survey.

*[Councillor Hart left the meeting at 11.38am and returned at 11.42am]*

Following discussion regarding diversity, Members voted and the decision to implement the Service's renewed organisation values was agreed.

The Chief Fire Officer also proposed a meeting with the Members who had concerns to discuss the views over diversity.

**RESOLVED that the Fire Authority endorse the Service's renewed set of organisation values.**

## **228 Fire Authority Annual Report 2019-20**

The Fire Authority Annual Report 2019-20 was presented by the Chief Fire Officer for adoption and approval for publication.

*[Councillor T Baker-Price left the meeting at 12.00pm]*

Members were informed that the report this year also summarises the findings of the independent inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, which looked at how effective and efficient the Service is and how it supports its people.

Members were also asked to note that, at the time of writing the Report, updated financial information was not available and would be completed by the Director of Finance & Assets before publication on the Service website, subject to agreement from the Chief Fire Officer and the Chairman.

**RESOLVED that the Authority adopts the draft Fire Authority Annual Report 2019-20 and approves it for publication, subject to any final minor changes as agreed by the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman.**

**229 Strategic Fire Alliance - Projects Update**

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the progress in preparing priority projects (Fire Control, IRMP/CRMP and ICT) developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services.

Members were assured that work programmes had been drawn up and were being delivered for the three priority projects identified by the Strategic Alliance Board and good progress was being made. Members would receive further updates as the projects develop.

**RESOLVED that Members note progress to date.**

**230 HMICFRS Improvement Plan - Update**

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on progress in implementing the HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

Members were pleased that the Service was improving how it manages performance and develops leaders and noted that further progress updates would be reported each quarter.

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

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the Service's annual performance for 2018/19.

Members were assured that the number of false alarm incidents were good intent rather than malicious and that the majority of staff sickness was due to long term sickness.

There was concern from Members regarding the response times but were reassured that officers were working with the crews to overcome these issues, particularly in regard to booking the appliance in at incidents.

There was discussion regarding the Day Crew Plus system and the Chief Fire Officer explained to Members that the consultation results were being finalised and the recommendations would be put forward to the Fire Authority at a future meeting. He explained that a local agreement was not available at the present time and although staff and the Service wanted to continue with the system, it was not possible due to the threat of legal action.

There was also concern regarding the mobilising of the boat at Hereford due to 2 appliances needed each time. The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that the new boats now only required 1 appliance to mobilise the boat.

Finally, Members requested that a breakdown of road traffic incidents into Counties and also data when appliances attend incidents over the border be included in future reports.

**RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarters 1-4, 2018-19:**

**i) A total of 7,501 incidents were attended in Q1-Q4, an increase of 8.22% (570 incidents) over the same Quarters of 2017-18, and 11.13% (751 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years. The overall five year trend shows a gradual increase in the total number of incidents.**

**ii) The majority of the increase in Q1-Q4 is accounted for by a rise in the numbers of Fire and Special Service incidents, while the number of False Alarm incidents was also up but at a lower rate:**

**a. Fires: an increase of 14.96% was mainly accounted for by a rise in the number of Secondary Fires (28.74%).**



**b. Special Services:** an increase of 9.63% (168 incidents) was mainly accounted for by increases in the number of Other Special Services (111), Assisting other agencies (56) and Lift release (7) incidents.

**c. False Alarms:** an increase of 3.59% (118 incidents), the most common automatic activations are at a number of sheltered housing, nursing homes and hospitals.

**iii) Overall Staff Sickness level for Q1-Q4 2018-19** was 8.51 days lost per head and was above the 5-year average of 6.71.

**iv) The Service attended 54.41% (358 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarters 1-4, compared with 58.73% in the same period in 2017-18.** The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all Primary Building Fires was 10 minutes and 23 seconds.

**v) The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 84.75%; however, this has decreased by 4.86% when compared to the same period in 2017-18.**

## **232 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee**

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 24 April 2019.

A Member requested further information in relation to the complaints received in the report on Annual Compliments, Complaints, Concerns and Requests for Information 2018/19. This information would be provided after the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 24 April 2019 be received and noted.**

## **233 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee**

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 1 May 2019.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 1 May 2019 be received and noted.**

The Meeting ended at: 12:41

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman