

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of  
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority  
held on Wednesday, 14 October 2020, at 2.00 pm  
via Microsoft Teams**

**Present**

**Members**

Councillors Adams, Blundell, Carter (Chair), Dee, Hartin, Lavery, Mellings (Vice-Chair), Milner, Minnery, Pardy, Price, Roberts, Sahota, Thompson and Wynn

**Officers**

Rod Hammerton	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Dave Myers	Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer	DCFO
Simon Hardiman	Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer	ACFO
Dan Quinn	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (designate)	
Anthea Lowe	Clerk and Monitoring Officer	Clerk
Guy Williams	Head of Transformation and Collaboration	HoTC
Joanne Coadey	Head of Finance	HoF
Germaine Worker	Head of HR and Administration	HHRA
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Officer	ESO

**External Bodies**

Tracey Onslow	West Mercia Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner	DPCC
---------------	--	------

**1 Election of Chair**

It was proposed by Councillor Mellings and seconded by Councillor Roberts that Councillor Carter be elected Chair of the Fire Authority to hold office until immediately after the election of Chair at the next Annual Meeting.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Carter was duly appointed as Chair.

**2 Appointment of Vice-Chair**

It was proposed by Councillor Carter and seconded by Councillor Hartin

That Councillor Mellings be appointed Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority to hold office until immediately after the appointment of Vice-Chair at the next Annual Meeting.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Mellings was duly appointed as Vice-Chair.

### **3 Apologies for Absence**

None

### **4 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None

### **5 Public Questions**

None

### **6 Non-Exempt Minutes**

#### **6a 24 June 2020**

**Resolved** that the non-exempt minutes of the Fire Authority meeting, held on 24 June 2020, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **6b 28 September 2020**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting, held on 28 September 2020, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **7 Standards, Audit and Performance Committee Minutes**

#### **7a 16 July 2020**

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority receive and note the minutes of the Standards, Audit and Performance Committee meeting, held on 16 July 2020.

#### **7b 24 September 2020**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Standards, Audit and Performance Committee meeting, held on 24 September 2020, be noted and that the recommendation at item 8, as given below, be agreed.

#### **Item 8 – Annual Review 2019/20**

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority agree the publication of the Annual Review 2019/20 as proposed by the Committee.

### **8 Strategy and Resources Committee Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 17 September 2020, be noted and that the recommendation at item 6, as given below, be agreed.

## Item 6 – Financial Performance to July 2020

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority

- a) Note the position of the revenue budget;
- b) Approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested;
- c) Note income and expenditure relating to Covid-19; and
- d) Note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2020/21.

## 9 Constitutional Issues

### 9a Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

This report asked the Fire Authority to agree both the composition of its Committees and the allocations of seats on its Committees to political groups.

**Resolved unanimously** that the Fire Authority agree the Committee composition and allocation of seats to political groups, as set out in the Appendix to the report.

### 9b Committee Membership, Appointments and Constitution

This report asked the Fire Authority to agree the constitutions of its committees; confirm appointments to those committees and to the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission and to appoint Member Champions.

The Clerk presented this report and talked through the recommendations as set out in it. Councillor Hartin, Leader of the Liberal Democrat / Independent Group advised that they had no changes to their membership of Committees and proposed that the appointment to the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission and the Member Champion appointments remain as is. Councillor Sahota, Leader of the Labour Group advised that his Group's position was the same.

**Resolved unanimously** that the Fire Authority:

- a) Agree the constitutions of its committees, as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- b) Agree the appointment of Members to serve on committees, as set out in Appendix B to the report;
- c) Confirm the delegation to the Monitoring Officer as detailed in paragraph 6 of the report;
- d) Appoint Councillor Carter as its representative on the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission;
- e) Appoint Councillor Parry as the Equality and Diversity Member Champion; and
- f) Appoint Councillor Sahota as the Risk Management and Audit Champion

## 9c Review of Member Role Descriptions

This report asked the Fire Authority to review and agree its Member Role Descriptions.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority, having reviewed the Role Descriptions listed below, agree the proposed amendments to them

- Member
- Chair of Fire Authority
- Vice-Chair of Fire Authority
- Leaders of Main Opposition Groups
- Chair and Vice-Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee
- Chair of Strategic Advisory Group
- Chair and Vice-Chair of Standards, Audit and Performance Committee
- Risk Management and Audit Champion
- Equality and Diversity Champion
- Independent Person, including Skills and Competencies

## 9d Review of Standing Orders

This report reviewed the Fire Authority's Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business, Standing Orders relating to Contracts and the Scheme of Delegation to Officers and asked Members to consider and decide upon the amendments proposed.

The Authority queried if the reference to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) in the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, needed to be pluralised as the new Executive Officer structure consists of the Chief Fire Officer and two ACFOs. Several options for revised wording were discussed and it was decided that 'relevant' should be inserted into the wording to provide clarity with the amendment reading as below

The ~~Deputy Chief Fire Officer~~, **relevant** Assistant Chief Fire Officer\*, Head of Finance or Deputy Monitoring Officer may exercise these delegated powers in the absence or inability to act of the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer or Monitoring Officer respectively.

\* In the first instance such powers would be delegated to the ~~Deputy Chief Fire Officer and then, in his / her absence or inability to act, to the relevant~~ Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

The amendment was proposed, seconded and agreed, and it was

**Resolved unanimously** that the Fire Authority agree the amendments, proposed in the report, together with the additional amendment, to:

- Standing Orders for the Regulations of Proceedings and Business
- Standing Orders relating to Contracts
- The Scheme of Delegation to Officers

## 9e Meeting Schedule 2021

The Meeting Schedule for the 2021 meetings of the Fire Authority and its Committees was brought to the Fire Authority for approval.

The Authority asked that the Standards, Audit and Performance meeting in April 2021 be moved due to the Shropshire Council elections on 6 May 2021. The ESO undertook to make this amendment to the schedule.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority agree the Meeting Schedule for 2021.

## 10 Wholetime Recruitment Campaign

This report provided the Fire Authority with an update on the decisions made by the Service Management Team (SMT) regarding the most appropriate method of recruiting between 7 and 14 Wholetime Firefighters in 2020/21.

The Chair thanked Officers for the report which was very informative. Members asked what a Fire Bootcamp entailed. The HHRA explained that it is a 10-week programme of training provided by Associate Trainers. The aim is for potential firefighter applicants to develop their fitness levels and skills in preparation for the recruitment process. The DCFO added that the Bootcamp was also run before the recruitment process last year. This was successful with three applicants who attended the Bootcamp getting through to the application stages.

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority note:

- a) The use of HR Solutions Hub managed electronic system 'SIFT for Firefighter' as the preferred method of recruiting Wholetime Firefighters in 2020/21;
- b) The use of post code restricting our campaign to the West Midlands region; and
- c) The approved funding for Boot Camps for underrepresented groups.

## 11 Fire Strategic Alliance Update

This report updated Members on progress in preparing priority projects developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Services.

The HoTC presented this report and advised that the projects have been hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic although the following progress has been made

### **Procurement**

The acquisition of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning resources has been the main Service focus during the pandemic but the joint procurement of smokehoods is currently progressing.

### **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)**

The ICT Strategy has now been finalised and approved and is ready for publication

## **Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)**

The IRMP Consultation progressed on time and ended on 30 September 2020. A report on the outcomes of the consultation will be brought to the December 2020 Fire Authority meeting.

## **Communications Strategy**

The development of this Strategy has been affected by the increased workload of the Communications Team due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the IRMP Consultation. The Programme Delivery Board has now prioritised development of the Strategy and work commenced on this at the end of September.

The HoTC also advised that the Alliance is implementing the findings of the HMI Peel Review into Police Collaboration. The Appendix to the report sets out in detail how the Fire Strategic Alliance is managing this implementation, but the three key findings of the Review were the need for

- Clarity of purpose
- Measurement of progress; and
- Improving public outcomes and not fixating on financial savings

Members commented that they fully backed the Fire Strategic Alliance and the reasons for its creation. The CFO explained that the initial objective of the Fire Strategic Alliance had been to create resilience and capacity across both Services; not to create financial savings although these can be demonstrated. The CFO also added that investment may be needed as the precursor to savings.

The Authority commented that the Fire Strategic Alliance Board needs to ensure that it is monitoring the Alliance's activities and outcomes. Non-cashable efficiencies, as well as savings and benefits, will flow from the development of capacity and resilience and these need to be captured.  
**Resolved** that the Fire Authority note the report.

## **Variation of Agenda**

**Resolved** that the order of the agenda be varied to allow item 15 – Election of Chairs and Appointment of Vice-Chairs to Committees to be considered in the open session of the meeting after Agenda Item 11.

## **12 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Resolved** that, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting room for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined by the provisions of Part I of Schedule 12(A) to the Act, by virtue of Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

## **13 Exempt Fire Authority Minutes (Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

**Resolved** that the exempt minutes of the Fire Authority meeting, held on 24 June 2020, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**14 Brigade Managers' Employment Panel Minutes (Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3)**

**Resolved** that the Fire Authority receive and note the minutes of the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel meeting, held on 15 July 2020.

**15 Election of Chairs and Appointment of Vice-Chairs to Committees**

**Committee Clerk's Note**

This item was considered after item 11 on the agenda with the following Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees being elected to hold office until the Fire Authority's Annual Meeting in June 2021.

**Strategy and Resources**

Chair Councillor Mellings  
Vice-Chair Councillor Hartin

**Standards, Audit and Performance**

Chair Councillor Sahota  
Vice-Chair Councillor Dee

**Strategic Advisory Group**

Chair Councillor Carter  
Vice-Chair Councillor Mellings

**Brigade Managers' Employment Panel**

Chair Councillor Carter  
Vice Chair Councillor Hartin

**Pensions Panel**

Chair to be elected on ad hoc basis, as and when the Panel meets.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm.

**Chair**.....

**Date**.....