

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
held on Wednesday, 10 October 2018, at 2.00 pm
in the Oak Room, Headquarters, Shrewsbury**

Present

Members

Councillors Adams, Blundell, Carter (Chair), Dee, Hartin, Hosken, Jones, Mellings, Milner, Murray, Pardy, Roberts (Vice-Chair), Sahota and Wynn

Officers

Rod Hammerton	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Andy Johnson	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	DCFO
Dave Myers	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	ACFO
Jonathan Eatough	Clerk and Monitoring Officer	Clerk
Joanne Coadey	Head of Finance	HoF
Andrew Kelcey	Head of Resources	HoR
Germaine Worker	Head of Human Resources and Administration	HHRA
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Officer	ESO

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Minnery, Phillips and Price and James Walton, Treasurer.

2 Vote of Thanks and Welcome

The Chair thanked Councillor Pinter, who left the Fire Authority in September for her time and contribution to the Authority and Committees that she sat on. The Chair welcomed Councillor Karen Blundell from Telford & Wrekin Council back to the Fire Authority.

The Chair then made the following announcements:

- Councillor Minnery is currently receiving treatment for cancer and the Fire Authority send him their best wishes
- Councillor Phillips is currently on paternity leave following the birth of his second child. Congratulations from the Fire Authority
- The Chair has been appointed to the Fire Service Management Committee (FSMC) which he will sit on from 1 September 2018 to 31 July 2019 irrespective of any changes in governance. As part of his role on the FSMC, the Chair has also been appointed to the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group which is chaired by Phillip Seccombe (PCC for Warwickshire)

- The Chair has responded, in writing, to the PCC's comments regarding the Fire Alliance with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) and has clarified to the PCC the Fire Authority's future intentions in respect of this.
- The Chair and the CFO are to give a presentation to the national CFA Conference on the Authority's recent experiences with collaboration and governance

Judicial Review

- Officers have received notification that the Judicial Review has been approved on two points, as set out below, and
 - The 3 Es – Efficiency, Economy and Effectiveness which should have been given separate consideration in the initial decision; and
 - Public Safety was omitted from the original consideration
- Confirmation of the hearing date is awaited but the Clerk advised that it is anticipated that it will be at least three months before it happens due to the statutory timescales involved.
- The Fire Authority have made delegation to the Chair and the Clerk to consider and pursue any other grounds for appeal. The Chair advised that they will consider this and take forward as necessary.
- The Chair thanked the Fire Authority for their backing and support

In response to the Chair's announcements, Members congratulated him on his appointment to the two national bodies and expressed their hope that common sense will prevail with regard to the PCC issue.

3 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Councillors Dee and Pardy declared that they are in receipt of Fire Service Pensions, in relation – to be recorded by the ESO.

4 Public Questions

None

5 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Fire Authority Annual Meeting, held on 20 June 2018, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

6 Audit and Performance Management Committee Minutes

6a 19 July 2018

Resolved that the minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 19 July 2018, be noted and that the recommendation at item 10a, as given below, be agreed

Item 10a – Updated Internal Audit Plan 2018/19

Resolved that the Fire Authority approve the audit plan for 2018/19, as set out in the report.

6b 20 September 2018

Resolved that the minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 20 September 2018, be noted and that the recommendations at item 7, as given below, be agreed.

Item 7 – Annual Review 2017/18

Resolved that the Fire Authority approve the draft Annual Review 2017/18.

7 Strategy and Resources Committee Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 18 September 2018, be noted and the recommendations at item 6, as given below, be agreed.

Item 6 – Financial Performance to July 2018

Resolved that the Fire Authority

- a) Note the position of the revenue budget;
- b) Approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested; and
- c) Note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2018/19;
- d) Approve changes to the prudential indicators; and
- e) Approve the Medium Term Financial Plan to 2022/23, which will be appended to the Service Plan 2015-20.

8 Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

This report asked the Fire Authority to agree both the composition of its Committees, the allocations of seats on its committees to political groups and the membership of its Committees, following a change in membership from Telford & Wrekin Council.

It was noted that the changes to Liberal Democrat appointments have been notified to the ESO before the meeting. The Clerk advised that he has the delegated power to agree changes to Conservative and Labour appointments outside the meeting.

Resolved that the Fire Authority decide upon its Committee composition and allocation of seats to political groups, specifically:

- a) The allocation of seats, as proposed in Appendix A to the report; and
- b) The appointment of Members to serve on Committees, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

9 Meeting Schedule 2019

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the draft Meeting Schedule for 2019.

10 Fire Alliance Strategic Plan

This report presented a plan to create a strategic alliance between Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Services.

The CFO presented this report and stressed that this is not a plan for a merger. It is a plan for an alliance which will enable the two Fire and Rescue Services to work together to build capacity and resilience to ensure sustainability.

The CFO also reassured Members that the relationship between the Fire Authority and the Strategic Alliance Board, which is the Alliance's governing body, does not take away sovereignty from this Authority. The CFO also clarified that the Strategic Alliance Board is not a statutory board and therefore its membership is able to include both members and officers.

Members thanked the CFO for the paper they considered to show a positive way forward. Members also expressed their hope that the Alliance plans would be flexible for the future, irrespective of what decisions are made regarding the Fire Authority's governance.

Councillor Mellings commented that whilst it was encouraging to see references to collaboration with West Mercia Police, there needed to be more reference to the involvement of the Fire Authority, for example in the review of structure etc. He expressed concern that the Strategic Alliance Board appears to be a top down approach which needs reflection by the Fire Authority to ensure it is a two-way process. Overall, Councillor Mellings considered the Alliance Plan to broadly be a move in the right direction. It is not a new development more a formalising of an existing relationship but the 'devil is in the detail' and the Fire Authority needs to be clear about the expectation and anticipated outcomes of an Alliance.

The Chair thanked Councillor Mellings for his comments and informed the Fire Authority that he does not intend to go against the Fire Authority's wishes with regard to the Alliance.

The CFO explained that the proposed relationship will allow the Fire Authority to hold the Alliance to account with regard to it discharging the Fire Authority's will. The Integrated, or Community, Risk Management Plans will be harmonised to take account of changes to risk in both Services but each authority will have control and ownership of their own strategic direction.

Members commented that they hoped that the Alliance Plan can fulfil its aims but felt that discussion was needed regarding the guiding principles for the Alliance and that this should be done at the first meeting of the Strategic Alliance Board.

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree to adopt the Fire Alliance Strategic Plan 2018-2022, as recommended by the Strategy and Resources Committee, and attached at the Appendix to the report.

11 Progress Report on Telford Central Fire Station Project

The Head of Resources gave a presentation on the progress with the Telford Central Fire Station Project.

The following points were raised in response to Members' questions and comments during the presentation:

- A clear indication of the levels of risk is needed when the decision is made regarding the choice of procurement approach. The indications are that the design and build option should be less costly.
- More specific information is needed regarding the financial input from West Mercia Police. As it is proposed that a joint training centre will be developed, there is a need to ensure interaction between the two services.
- The ethical standards and financial situation of companies and / or contractors involved in the project will be considered in order to minimise risk to the Authority.
- It was noted that the Programme Board is currently made up of internal members but Member input and representation, especially in relation to the final decision, would be advantageous. The CFO advised that the facilitation of the decision-making process had been discussed and it is recognised that there are junctures and milestones within the project where the Fire Authority will be asked to review the project.
- The involvement of an independent Clerk of Works is an architect function, which will be included in the full tender document.
- There is provision with the building specification for community involvement in the building for example use of the lecture theatre. There is not, at present, any provision for use for commercial training
- The HoF advised that the costs for funding Telford Central Project will be brought before the Fire Authority for approval but there are no timelines for this as yet.

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the presentation.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....