

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on Wednesday, 14 June 2017, at 2.00 pm at Headquarters, Shrewsbury

Present

Members

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

Officers

Rod Hammerton	Chief Fire Officer	CFO
Andy Johnson	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	DCFO
Louise McKenzie	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	ACFO
Jonathan Eatough	Clerk and Monitoring Officer	Clerk
Joanne Coadey	Head of Finance	HoF
Ged Edwards	Planning, Performance and Communications Manager	PPCM
Germaine Worker	Head of HR and Administration	HHRA
Lynn Ince	Executive Support Officer	ESO

External Bodies

John Campion	West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner	PCC
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1 Election of Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Wynn and seconded by Councillor Sahota

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 elected Chair.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Hosken and seconded by Councillor Wynn

That Councillor Roberts 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 Roberts was duly appointed as Vice-Chair.

3 Vote of Thanks and Welcome

The Fire Authority gave a vote of thanks to Councillors Barrow, Turley and West, who had left the Fire Authority in May.

The Chair welcomed Councillors Dee, Milner, Pardy, Phillips and Price from Shropshire Council and Councillor Jones from Telford & Wrekin Council to the Fire Authority.

Councillor Hartin asked that a special vote of thanks be recorded for Councillor West, who had been Chair of the Fire Authority for a number of years. His significant input will be missed by the Authority.

The Chair also welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion to the meeting.

The DCFO provided an update on the Grenfell Tower incident and extended the sympathies of the Service and Authority to all those who had been affected. This Service has been reflecting on the incident and have identified four high rise properties in its area. Work is being undertaken with the owners and residents of these properties to ensure safety.

4 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Minnery and Pardy and the Treasurer, Mr Walton.

5 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Councillors Carter, Hartin and Mellings declared Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in item 8, as Directors of Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd.

They had been granted a dispensation by the Fire Authority to take part in the discussion of, and voting on, certain matters which relate to Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd. Item 8 fell within this dispensation, as it related to the performance of the Company.

6 Public Questions

None

7 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting, held on 26 April 2017, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

8 Audit and Performance Management Committee Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 26 April 2017, be noted and that the recommendations at items 7 and 12, as given below, be agreed.

Item 7 – Code of Corporate Governance 2016/17

Resolved that the Fire Authority formally adopt the Code of Corporate Governance 2016/17.

Item 12 – Review of Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy, as recommended by the Audit and Performance Management Committee.

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 allocation 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, specifically:

- a) That the political balance requirements should not apply to the Authority's Pensions Panel; and
- b) The allocation of seats, as proposed in the Appendix to the report;
- c) That the membership of the Strategy and Planning Working Group should be reduced to 7; and
- d) That the Strategy and Planning Working Group should continue to be politically balanced

9b Committee Membership and Constitution

This report asked the Fire Authority to confirm appointments to committees and to the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission and to review the constitution of its committees.

Resolved that the Fire Authority:

- a) Agree the appointment of Members to serve on committees, as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- b) Appoint Councillor Carter as its representative on the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission;
- c) Appoint Councillor Sahota as the Equality and Diversity Member Champion;
- d) Appoint Councillor Sahota as the Risk Management and Audit Champion; and
- e) Agree the proposed amendments to the constitution of its various committees, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

9c Review of Member Role Descriptions

This report asked Members to review and agree the Fire Authority's Member Role Descriptions.

Resolved that the Fire Authority, having reviewed the Role Descriptions listed below, agree the minor changes proposed

- Member
- Chair of the Fire Authority
- Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority
- Leaders of Main Opposition Groups
- Equality and Diversity Champion
- Independent Person, including Skills and Competencies

9d Review of Scheme 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.

Resolved that the amendments, as proposed in the report, be agreed to:

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

9e Meeting Schedule 2017/18

The Fire Authority received a schedule of proposed dates for meetings of the Fire Authority and its committees from June 2017 to April 2018 for approval.

The Standards and Human Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 17 October 2017 is to be moved due to a clash with Shropshire Council's North Planning Committee, which several members of the Committee sit on.

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the draft Meeting Schedule for June 2017 to April 2018.

10 Statement of Accounts 2016/17

This report set out the key revenue issues, which had arisen from work on the Statement of Accounts 2016/17, and sought approval for use of the General Fund balance in 2017/18.

Resolved unanimously that the Fire Authority:

- a) Approve the addition of £49,000 to 2017/18 revenue budgets, for expenditure that had slipped from 2016/17; and
- b) Note the final position of the revenue budget and the General Fund balance in 2016/17.

11 Technical Collaboration Funding

This report provided information in support of a request for funding for further technical development and collaborative work with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS)

The HoF advised that the recommendation should read ‘....approve the transfer of £262,000 from the 2016/17 General **Fund**...instead of Reserve. The Fire Authority noted this amendment.

Members queried the potential lifetime of the proposed investment. The ACFO explained that it is an ongoing process with no specific end date on the technology concerned.

The CFO explained that the Service has a long term ambition to harmonise with HWFRS and this is a valuable opportunity to adopt common ideologies and improve the resilience of both organisations.

Members confirmed that they fully support the collaboration agenda and acknowledged the importance of pushing forward process sharing. The PCC also acknowledged the importance of process sharing and queried how data sharing work was allowing the Service to work more closely with other partners. The CFO responded that the issues with data sharing relate more to the approach and / or willingness to work collaboratively rather than the technology involved. The solution is a will and a want for organisations to work together and important work is being undertaken with local authorities to build relationships and trust to enable this.

The Authority requested illustration and demonstration of the detailed technological changes that the Service has been making. The ACFO explained that a demonstration of some of the changes made under the Service Transformation Programme will be included in the Member Induction session that is scheduled for September. The full Fire Authority will be invited to attend this session.

Resolved that the Fire Authority approve the transfer of £262,000 from the 2016/17 General Fund to the Service Transformation Programme staff reserve to support in-house technical development and technical collaboration with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

12 Amendment to the Reserve Rescue Tender Replacement Scheme

This report provided the Fire Authority with information regarding the decision to delay the purchase of the replacement Reserve Rescue Tender (RT).

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the contents of the report.

13 Police and Crime Commissioner Initial Business Case

The CFO gave the following verbal update on the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Initial Business Case.

More than 100 staff attended a meeting on Monday where the process was explained and staff were encouraged to read the consultation document before answering the questionnaire. The Representative Bodies have also been briefed regarding the consultation. Officers are remaining impartial but are encouraging staff to respond.

Members thanked CFO for the update that he had given and asked how the Fire Authority could state its response. It was then suggested that a cross party meeting be held to discuss and agree the Fire Authority's response. The Fire Authority then agreed that an Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting be held for this purpose.

Members asked if a consultant's report could be undertaken to provide an alternative case. The CFO explained that if the Fire Authority were minded to do this, funds would be available.

Members queried the cost of the PCC's consultant report. The PCC explained that the costs were circa £34k and that a Government grant had been given for the whole amount. The PCC also advised that the legislation does not set out a specific consultation period but that he had chosen to give the maximum period possible with statutory consultees being the Authorities concerned and the employees of both Fire Services and Police.

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the update given.

14 Integrated Risk Management Plan IRMP 3 Telford Central Project

This report updated Members on progress with the Telford Central Review Project, with specific reference to the updated Feasibility Study, which now included the results of further collaboration between West Mercia Police (WMP) and the Service. Members were asked to decide how they wished to progress with this project.

The DCFO presented this report and advised that at the time of writing the report, no confirmation regarding the project had been received from WMP, however the Service has now had a commitment from WMP. The commitment includes entering the tendering process, which will be brought back to Fire Authority for decision later this year. Details about how the cost apportionment approach will work need to be progressed.

The PCC reiterated WMP's commitment to the project and that it remained open minded regarding the funding of the Scheme although a percentage cost apportionment seems to be a sensible approach.

Members raised a query regarding the projected costs of the project which show a 8% increase in costs and runs greater than inflation. The DCFO explained that these are indicative inflation figures per m² of building. Definitive figures and details will come out at the Tender stage of the Scheme but officers are erring on the side of caution at present.

The Authority noted that it was pleased that the Deputy PCC had taken its' concerns regarding the considerable delay on the Project back to WMP and that the necessary response had been provided. .

The CFO apologised for the absence of the letter which sets out WMP's commitment to the project. The CFO acknowledged that the delay is frustrating but, importantly, it has enabled the Service to achieve a better level of engagement with regard to creating a multi-function facility. It has allowed a stronger decision to be made and has put the Authority in a better position. There are complex decisions to be made and the Project needs to move forward quickly but without rash decisions being made.

The PCC read out the letter regarding the commitment of WMP to the Scheme. After this the Chair referred to the recommendations at Section 7 of the report and advised that recommendation 3 needed to either be amended or removed, as WMP had now given their commitment. The Fire Authority agreed that recommendation 3 should be removed completely.

Resolved that the Fire Authority

- a) Note the contents of this report; and
- b) Approve the recommendations contained in Section 7 of the report, which are as follows:
 - 1. Members gave their approval to the Telford Central Project being progressed; and
 - 2. Members gave their approval to Officers exploring the 'Fixed Percentage' cost apportionment option with West Mercia Police.

15 Strategic Planning Process Timetable 2018/19

This report outlined how the Service would continue to align service, financial and improvement planning, the result of which would culminate in the 2018/19 budget, publication of the 2018/19 Annual Plan and an update of the 2015/20 Action Plan, if required.

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the contents of the report and agree the timetable set out in the appendix to the report.

16 Partnership Working

This report provided Members with an overview of the partnership working being undertaken by the Fire Authority and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The DCFO presented this report and advised that a collaboration report will be brought to the Fire Authority, later in the year.

Members acknowledged the partnership working that is undertaken by the Service and commended and commended Crucial Crew in particular.

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the report

17 Corporate Risk Management Annual Report 2016/17

This report informed Members about the corporate level risk management work that had been undertaken during the previous twelve months.

An amended appendix to the report was tabled to the meeting. A copy will be placed on the signed minute file.

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the report.

18 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 Paragraph 3

19 Exempt Appendix to Corporate Risk Management Annual Report 2016/17 (Paragraph 4)

Members received the exempt Appendix B to report 16 – Corporate Risk Management Annual Report 2016/17.

Resolved that the exempt Appendix B to report 16 – Corporate Risk Management Summary Annual Report 2016/17 be noted.

At this point the meeting reverted to open session.

20 Election of Chairs and Appointment of Vice-Chairs to Committees

Members of Committees were asked to elect a Chair and appoint a Vice-Chair, to hold office until the Fire Authority's Annual Meeting in June 2016.

Strategy and Resources Committee

Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin and seconded by Councillor Wynn that Councillor Roberts be elected Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Roberts was duly elected Chair.

Vice Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Wynn and seconded by Councillor Roberts that Councillor Hartin be appointed Vice-Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

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

Audit and Performance Management Committee

Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Mellings and seconded by Councillor Murray that Councillor Sahota be elected Chair of the Audit and Performance Management Committee.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Sahota was duly elected Chair.

Vice Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin and seconded by Councillor Wynn that Councillor Mellings be appointed Vice-Chair of the Audit and Performance Management Committee.

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

Standards and Human Resources Committee

Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Mellings and seconded by Councillor Dee that Councillor Adams be elected Chair of the Standards and Human Resources Committee.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Adams was duly elected Chair.

Vice Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin and seconded by Councillor Mellings that Councillor Dee be appointed Vice-Chair of the Standards and Human Resources Committee.

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

Brigade Managers' Employment Panel

Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin and seconded by Councillor Roberts that Councillor Carter be elected Chair of the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel.

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

Vice-Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Carter and seconded by Councillor Adams that Councillor Roberts be appointed Vice-Chair of the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel.

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

Pensions Panel

The members of the Pensions Panel agreed that the Chair of the Pensions Panel would be elected on an ad-hoc basis.

Strategy and Planning Working Group

Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair would be elected at first meeting of Strategy and Planning Working Group following this Fire Authority meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.50 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....