

At a **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington** held in Morton Room, Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Belmont Business Park, Durham, DH1 1TW, on **Monday 23 September 2019** at 10.00 am.

Present:

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, R Bell, P Brooks, C Carr, M Davison (substitute for C Potts) D Freeman, D Hicks, L Maddison, R Manchester, L Marshall, L Pounder (substitute for J Bell) J Robinson, E Scott, J Shuttleworth, J Stephenson (substitute for A Laing) D Stoker, F Tinsley and J Turnbull.

Darlington Borough Councillors:

Councillors B Jones, H Crumbie and A Scott.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Bell, A Laing, G Richardson, C Potts and G Lee.

Independent Standards Members:

N Johnson and A Simpson.

A1 Chief Fire Officers Commendation

A Chief Fire Officers Commendation was awarded to Fire Cadet Karla Fish in recognition of her calm, professional response to an incident where she performed lifesaving first aid following a road traffic collision to a fellow pupil suffering from severe bleeding whilst controlling the scene and liaising with on-coming emergency services.

The Chair noted the awards recently received by the Service. The Service has recently been recognised as highly commended at the National Apprenticeship Awards regional finals in the Large Employer of the Year category. The Service has achieved the Gold Award in the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme in recognition of its work in support of the armed forces community.

The Chair noted, on behalf of the Authority, his thanks to the Chief Fire Officer and all service personnel for all their work in preparing for the HMICFRS Inspection and the work undertaken during the Inspection.

A2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 July 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair (for copy see file of minutes).

A4 Current Correspondence

The Authority received an update from the Assistant Chief Fire Officer Service Support in relation to current correspondence received from government and other bodies relevant to the Authority and the status of each (for copy see file of minutes).

A5 Notes of the Finance Committee

The Authority considered a report of the Chair of the Finance Committee which provided an update on the discussions at the meeting held on 18 July 2019 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Chair of the Finance Committee noted the presentation on the medium-term financial plan. The Chief Fire Officer noted a similar presentation would be given at the Strategic Planning day on 11 October.

A6 Notes of the Audit and Risk Committee

The Authority considered a report of the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee which provided an update on the discussions at the meeting held on 31 July 2019 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee thanked the Treasurer, Finance Team, Mazars and internal audit for their continued hard work.

A7 Notes of the Performance Committee

The Authority considered a report of the Chair of the Performance Committee which provided an update on the discussions at the meeting held on 11 September 2019 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Chair of the Performance Committee noted that a meeting had been set up between T Hope and J Hewitt to discuss the issues around connectivity of the Service's and DCC's IT systems.

A8 Performance Report – Quarter One 2019/20

The Authority considered a report of the Area Manager Emergency Response which presented a summary of organisational performance at the end of the first quarter of the 2019/20 financial year (for copy see file of minutes).

Members stressed the importance of reporting any inappropriate parking in their wards to themselves.

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

A9 The Spending Round 2019

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer which provided the outcome of the Spending Round for 2019 and possible implications for the Authority (for copy see file of minutes).

Members queried how funds were distributed. The Chair noted that a Senior Sector Services Group had been set up. The Chief Fire Officer noted that it was unlikely any capital funding would be received as the Home Office appear to hold the view that nationally fire and rescue services' reserve levels are too high.

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

A10 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Update

The Authority considered a report of the Area Manager Community Risk Management which provided members with an update on the current position and next steps of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection of the Service (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

A11 Estates Update

The Authority considered a report of the Head of Corporate Resources which provided members with the latest position in relation to the Estates Improvement Programme (EIP) and plans to address the risks associated with outstanding estates maintenance. Approval was sought to seek delegate authority to be granted to approve any increase of budget, limited to 10% for Darlington Station rebuild (for copy see file of minutes).

Members from Darlington Borough Council noted that they would be taking the matter further with the planning department in relation to the Environment Agency.

Resolved:

- i. That the contents of the report be noted

- ii. Delegated authority for up to a 10% increase in expenditure for the Darlington estates project was approved

A12 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

A 13 Exclusion of the public

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

B 14 HMICFRS: Request for Information to Support the Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Authorities in England

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer which informed Members of the request from Sir Thomas Winsor for supporting information to assist with the annual assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England and to present the Service's response (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

B15 Any Other Business

Cllr Batey thanked the Service for their assistance at the fire at Twizell Farm on Saturday 15 September.

The Chair noted a card would be sent to Ron Hogg and noted that in his absence the Chief Executive of the Police, Crime and Victim's Office would undertake the role of Police, Crime and Victim's Commissioner on a temporary basis.

Significant Dates

Friday 11 October – Strategic Planning Day

Tuesday 15 October - Long Service awards

CLOSE OF MEETING