

At a **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington** held at **Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham** on **Friday 17 September 2021** at 10.00 am.

Present:

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors J Atkinson, B Avery, A Batey, R Bell, J Cairns, T Duffy, C Hampson, N Jones, R Manchester, L Mavin, M McGaun, J Quinn, S Quinn, J Shuttleworth.

Darlington Borough Councillors:

Councillor H Crumby, J Dulston (substitute for B Jones) and A Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Kennedy, C Marshall, I McLean, G Richardson, S Zair, G Lee and B Jones.

Independent Persons:

Apologies from N Johnson

A1 Chief Fire Officers Commendation

AM Steve Wharton introduced the Chief Fire Officer's Commendation for Mr John Holmes who assisted a crew at a water rescue incident in Witton Gilbert. His brave lifesaving actions and support of the emergency services, utilising farm machinery to stabilize a vehicle trapped in a fast-flowing river, which allowed the fire crews to rescue the trapped occupant.

A2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2021 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 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 Performance Committee

The Authority received an update from the Chair of the Performance Committee which provided members with an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Performance Committee held on 31 August 2020 (for copy see file of minutes).

A6 Statement of Assurance

The authority received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive which provided members with the 2020/21 Statement of Assurance (SoA) for approval prior to publication (for copy see file of minutes).

Cllr Bell queried the services performance trends affected by Covid 19 which was discussed.

Resolved:

- i. Members approved the 2020/21 statement of assurance

A7 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Update

The Authority received a report from the Area Manger Assets and Assurance which provided members with an update on the inspection programme (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted
- ii. To receive further reports as appropriate

A8 Update on the Services Response to Covid-19

The Authority received a report from the Chief Fire Officer which informed members of the activity the service had been undertaking over the last 12 months of the Covid-19 Pandemic (for copy see file of minutes).

Members passed on their thanks to SLT and all staff for their continued hard work throughout the pandemic.

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted.

A9 Apprenticeship, Predicted Costings and Income Generation

The Authority received a report from Group Manger: Training which provided members with the various types of apprenticeship schemes that were currently operating within the Service, the cost associated with them and the potential income generation opportunities (for copy see file of minutes).

Members queried age limits for the apprentices, the Group Manager: Training noted there wasn't an upper age limit and recruitment campaigns took place via colleges, open days, fire cadets and positive action were discussed.

Members queried success rate for the schemes and the Group Manager: Training confirmed that the firefighter apprentices took on firefighter roles once they had successfully completed their course.

Members queried engagement with schools which Group Manager: Training confirmed was undertaken and residents' associations were noted as a target group.

Members queried the numbers of applications that were received, Group Manager: Training noted that for firefighter apprentice courses between 200 – 500 applications had been received.

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted.

A10 Core Code of Ethics

The Authority considered a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer which informed members of the launch and process of implementation of the Core Code of Ethics which have been produced specifically for Fire and Rescue Services by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (for copy see file of minutes).

A code of ethics form would be sent out to all members to sign and return to the Governance section

Resolved:

- i. content of the report noted
- ii. the adoption and implementation of the Core Code of Ethics was agreed

A11 Our People Project – Creating a Corporate Narrative

The Authority considered a report of the Communications Manager which provided members with the rationale behind creating the "Our People" video (for copy see file of minutes).

Members viewed the video.

Members commented on the excellent material and strong emotive feeling from staff.

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted

A12 Any Other Business

The Chair noted his attendance at the recent Being the Best Awards which were held on 17 August at Hardwick Hall. He passed on his congratulations to the winners and the finalists from the night and thanked the Comms and Governance Teams for organising such a successful event.

The Chair noted his attendance at the Cohort 5 families evening held at the Training Centre on 2 September. He asked members to join him in welcoming the new 8 firefighter apprentices into the service.

A13 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.

Part B

B 14 Update of Business Continuity and Resilience

The authority received a report which provided members with an update on the Service's approach to business continuity and resilience arrangements in the event of chronic staff shortages due to incidents of industrial action or a flu pandemic.

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted.

B15 Any Other Business

Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

CLOSE OF MEETING