

At a **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington held at Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham on Friday 12 November 2021** at 10.00 am.

Present:

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors J Atkinson, A Batey, R Bell, J Cairns, T Duffy, C Hampson, N Jones, R Manchester, M McGaun, J Quinn, J Shuttleworth, S Zair, C Marshall, K Rooney, B Kellett

Darlington Borough Councillors:

B Jones, G Lee and A Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Kennedy, G Richardson, L Mavin, S Quinn

Independent Persons:

Apologies from N Johnson

A1 Chief Fire Officers Commendation

AM Steve Wharton introduced the Chief Fire Officer's Commendation for WM Giles Mercy, FF's Dan Farnell, Nick Meek and Angela Dixon of Darlington Green Watch. WM Mercy's strong, confident, quick decision making effectively managed a well-developed fire in a large four bedroom detached house. The professionalism of the crew of 4 utilising effective use of Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV), Breathing Apparatus (BA) procedures and casualty care brought a very challenging incident to a safe conclusion for all involved and saved the life of a 92-year-old gentleman.

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting.

The Chair expressed condolences to Cllr Avery's family and friends on behalf of the Authority following the sad news of his passing on 30 October 2021.

A minute silence was held to remember him and reflect on his contribution to the Authority.

The Chair noted a number of notices and votes of thanks including contributions to the Strategic Planning Day, congratulations to the recipients of their 20 and 30 years Long Service Awards and a thank you to all staff involved in the busy bonfire period.

A2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 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 Audit and Finance Committee

The Authority received an update from the Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee which provided members with an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Audit and Finance Committee held on 30 September 2021 (for copy see file of minutes).

Cllr Bell noted the delay to signing off the 20/21 accounts is due to lack of auditor resource. It is anticipated that sign off will be achieved in the next 2-3 weeks and accounts will be presented at the next Committee meeting.

A6 Notes of the Human Resources Committee

The Authority received an update from the Assistant Chief Fire Officer which provided members with an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Human Resources Committee held 16 September 2021 (for copy see file of minutes).

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

The Authority received a report from the Area Manager Assets and Assurance which provided members with an update on the current position of the Action Plan and details of the next HMIFRS Inspection.

Cllr Bell queried if training would be available for Members ahead of Inspection activity starting in May 2022. It was noted that only the Chair of the Authority will be requested for interview.

It was noted that the completion of actions will be sign off at the next inspection.

Resolved:

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

A8 Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2025

The Authority received a report from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer updating Members with details of the 2022-2025 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and the proposals contained within the plan and the public consultation on it.

Cllr Batey recommended that the addition of graphics illustrating historical and current data regarding response times may support our argument for the proposed changes.

It was noted that narrative will be added to the consultation providing an evidence base for the proposed change in response times.

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted.
- ii. The questions to be put forward to the public in the Consultation Document approved.

A9 Any Other Business

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

A10 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

B11 Strategic Planning Day

The Authority received a report from the Chief Fire Officer summarising the areas explored and agreed at the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) strategic planning day on Friday 29 October 2021.

It was noted that discussions with local Members of Parliament (MPs) have begun regarding the financial position of the Authority. Key messages for the attention of local MPs will be coordinated and circulated to the Authority for comment. A Strategy will be presented to the Chair and Vice Chair for agreement.

Action:

Key messages for the attention of local MPs to be coordinated and circulated to the Authority for comment.

Resolved:

- i. The report was noted.

B12 Consultation on Giving Police and Crime Commissioners' Greater Powers of Competence

The Authority received a report from the Chief Fire Officer outlining the consultation from the Government entitled 'Giving Police and Crime Commissioners'(PCCs) Greater Powers of Competence' and the response made from the Authority.

It was noted that the CFA would debate a request for the PCC to sit on the Authority. Durham County Council are working closely with the PCC and an update will be provided to the CFA.

Resolved:

- i. The report and consultation was noted
- ii. The response submitted not the consultation on behalf of the Authority was noted

The Uniformed Officers apart from the Chief Fire Officer left the meeting.

B13 Fire Fighters Pension Scheme – Immediate Detriment Framework

The Authority received a report updating Members on the position in relation to immediate detriment cases under the McCloud/Sargeant ruling to seek approval to adopt the 'Framework' for managing immediate detriment cases.

The Chief Fire Officer announced a change in approach since the paper was written and proposed a revised recommendation to the report.

It was noted that the Framework may be released by the National Fire Chiefs Council early next week which will outline the parameters to calculate liability.

A Special meeting of the CFA to be called if settlements costs, when calculated, reach a level which requires agreement.

The Chief Fire Officer left the meeting prior to the discussion and consideration of the recommendations.

Resolved:

- i. That the Authority approved in principle with the adoption of the framework, however, final adoption would be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Treasurer, Chair and Vice Chair, once details of the settlement costs were known.
- ii. A Special Meeting of the CFA would be called to further consider adoption of the framework if the settlement costs exceeded £100,000.

B14 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