

At a **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington held at Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham on 13 June 2022 at 10.00 am.**

Present:

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors J Atkinson, A Batey, R Bell, J Blakey, J Cairns, T Duffy, B Kellett, L Kennedy, R Manchester, C Marshall, M McGaun, I McLean, J Quinn, S Quinn, G Richardson, K Rooney, M Simmons (substitute for N Jones), K Shaw (substitute for C Hampson), J Shuttleworth, D Stoker (substitute for L Mavin), and S Zair

Darlington Borough Councillors:

Councillors H Crumbie, G Lee, A Scott and H Scott (substitute for B Jones).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Hampson, B Jones, N Jones and L Mavin.

Independent Persons:

No independent persons present.

A1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A2 Appointment of Chair

The Clerk outlined the standing orders under which the appointments can take place. Members were asked for nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority.

Appointment of Chair

Cllr R Bell proposed Cllr J Shuttleworth as Chair on behalf of the Joint Administration. This was seconded by Cllr J Blakey. Members agreed to appoint Cllr J Shuttleworth as Chair of the Combined Fire Authority.

Appointment of Vice Chair

Cllr R Bell proposed Cllr S Zair as Vice Chair on behalf of the Joint Administration. This was seconded by Cllr J Blakey. Members agreed to appoint Cllr S Zair

A3 Appointment of Opposition Group Leader

Members were asked for nominations for the Opposition Group Leader of the Authority. Cllr I McLean proposed Cllr C Marshall as Opposition Group Leader, and this was seconded by Cllr A Batey. Members agreed to appoint Cllr C Marshall.

A4 Review of the Constitution

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer and Clerk which sought approval for proposed amendments to the Combined Fire Authority Constitution (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

- I. The contents of the report and suggested amendments to the constitution were **noted**.
- II. The amended constitution as outlined at Appendix A was **approved**.

A5 Appointment of Chairs and Committees

The Authority considered a report of the Clerk which proposed the appointments of Chairs of the committees for 2022/23 (for copy see file of minutes).

Cllr H Scott highlighted a vacant post on the Pension Board and nominated Cllr G Lee. It was agreed that the Clerk would confirm the appointment with Darlington Borough Council.

Resolved:

- i Appoint Chairs for 2022/23 for:
 - a The chair of the appeals committee was agreed as Cllr Shuttleworth
 - b The chair of the Audit and Finance Committee was agreed as Cllr Bell
 - c The Chair of the Human Resources Committee was agreed as Cllr Mavin
 - d The Chair of the Joint Consultative Committee was agreed as Cllr Shuttleworth
 - e The Chair of the Pension Board was agreed as Cllr Shuttleworth
 - f The Chair of the Performance Committee was agreed as Cllr Blakey
- ii The appointment of the Chair of the Authority as Chair to the Appointments Panel and Salary Review Group in accordance with the constitution Section 3, Paragraphs 5 and 6 respectively were **agreed**.
- iii The Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority and the appropriate group leader to make any changes to the Committee that may arise during 2022/23 was **authorised**.

A6 Representation on Other Bodies 2022/23

The Authority received a report of the Clerk which sought agreement for the appointments process of Members of the Combined Fire Authority's to the Other Bodies for 2022/23 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

- i The Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair and appropriate Group Leader, to make appointments to the Other Bodies which the Authority are

invited to nominate in accordance with the criteria that the appointment shall be in accordance with the overall political proportionality of the Authority was **authorised**.

- ii The Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair and appropriate Group Leader, to make any changes to membership of the Other Bodies that may arise during 2022/23 was **authorised**.

A7 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2022 and 30 March 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair (for copy see file of minutes).

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair (for copy see file of minutes).

A8 Current Correspondence

The Authority received an update from the 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).

Discussion took place around grant funding and the Treasurer confirmed that the funds had not been ringfenced.

Members requested an update regarding diversity within the sector. The Chief Fire Officer noted that diversity work was a priority for the Authority and the Service, and progress was being made across a number of areas. Research was also ongoing at a national level.

A9 Notes of the Human Resources Committee

The Authority received a report of the Chair of the Human Resources Committee which provided an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Human Resources Committee held 24 May 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

The report was **noted**.

A10 Notes of the Audit and Finance Committee

The Authority received a report of the Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee which provided an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Audit and Finance Committee held on 31 March 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

The report was **noted**.

A11 Member Champions

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services which provided details of Officer contacts for each Member Champion role following the restructure of the Service Leadership Team for the forthcoming year (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

Member champion details attached at Appendix A were **approved**.

A12 Member Buddy System and Affiliation with Fire Stations

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services which confirmed the Service Leadership Team contacts for the Member 'Buddy' arrangements and the fire station affiliation list (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

Member Buddy and fire station affiliation details as set out in Appendices A and B were **approved**.

A13 Home Office White Paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced the report which provided an update following the Government's publication of the white paper entitled Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service.

Discussion took place regarding the governance section of the report noting concern around authorities being able to provide maximum political representation and geographical coverage. The Chair provided an update from the Fire Commission held on 10 June noting that Authorities were against the mandatory transferring of responsibility for fire and rescue services to a single elected individual.

Cllr H Scott stated that the suggestions under paragraph 40 of the report would not be possible for Darlington.

Cllr C Marshall noted disappointment that the consultation did not consider reform of the current funding system. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service was continuing to lobby and challenge the current funding position. A further meeting with the Home Office was being arranged for July/ August 2022.

A workshop had been arranged for Members on Thursday 7 July 2022 to discuss the questions in more detail and prepare a response.

Resolved:

- I. The contents of the report were **noted**.

- II. Initial views in support of the consultation were **provided**.
- III. A separate workshop prior to the July full Combined Fire Authority Meeting to discuss, in detail the response to the consultation was **agreed**.

A14 Combined Fire Authority Strategic Planning Day

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer which summarised the areas explored, debated and agreed at the Combined Fire Authority strategic planning day on Monday 23 May 2022.

Resolved:

The outcomes of the CFA Strategic Planning Day held on 23 May 2022 were **noted and discussed**.

A15 Core Code of Ethics Implementation

Members considered a report of the Director of Emergency Response which provided information on the 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.

Cllrs I Bell and J Atkinson requested clarification around the focus on ethics. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the area had been highlighted in various reports across the sector and during some services HMICFRS inspections. There had not been any specific issues raised for CDDFRS however it was important that the Service did not become complacent.

Resolved:

The contents of the report were **noted**.

A16 Any other Business

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

A17 Exclusion to 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

B18 Chief Fire Officer Appointment Panel

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer which sought approval to convene the Authority's Appointments Panel to oversee the appointment of a replacement Chief Fire Officer.

Cllr C Marshall commented that the proposed process was robust and suggested that the candidates meet with a wider group of members from the Authority. It was agreed that this would be considered by the Appointments Panel and it was suggested that this could be facilitated around the time of the assessment and development centre stage.

Resolved:

- I. The contents of the report and the intention of the current Chief Fire Officer to retire on 11 January 2023 were **noted**.
- II. The convening of the Appointments Panel to oversee the recruitment process for the next Chief Fire Officer was **approved**.
- III. That the current Chief Fire officer and the Director of People and Organisational Development undertake advisor roles to the panel was **approved**.

B19 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