

Minutes of a **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington** held at **Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham** on **11 November 2022** at **10.00 am**.

**Present:**

**Durham County Councillors:**

Councillors J Atkinson, A Batey, A Bell, R Bell, J Cairns, T Duffy, C Hampson, J Howey, N Jones, B Kellet, R Manchester, L Mavin, I McLean, M McGaun, E Peeke, S Quinn, K Rooney, K, Shaw, J Shuttleworth, S Zair

**Darlington Borough Councillors:**

Councillors B Jones, A Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Blakey, L Kennedy, G Lee, C Marshall, J Quinn, G Richardson, and Independent Person N Johnson

**Independent Persons:**

No independent persons present.

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and announced that just before 11:00 hours the meeting will pause, to observe a two-minute silence to remember all those who've fought and died for their country. This would take place outside the front of the building.

**A1 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**A2 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2022 were considered. Cllr Batey queried section A3 on behalf of Cllr Marshall stating that the wording was not a true reflection of what was discussed at the meeting regarding the request for the authority's support for an increase in salary for firefighters. Cllr Batey requested a change to the minutes on behalf of Cllr Marshall. The Clerk suggested that if an amendment was proposed then a form of words for the amendment should be put forward and the meeting could consider them. Cllr Richard Bell stated that he believed that the minutes in their current form reflected the discussion at the meeting. Cllr Duffy proposed that the minutes be accepted. A vote was taken and the minutes in their original form were accepted on a majority vote.

**Resolved:**

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

### **A3 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).

### **A4 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 Committee held on the 28 September 2022 (for copy see file for minutes).

Cllr Richard Bell stated that more discussion around finance will take place at the next committee meeting.

Members **noted** the report.

### **A5 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 Committee held on the 22 September 2022 (for copy see file for minutes).

Members **noted** the report.

### **A6 Tri-Service Community Safety Responders**

The Authority received a report providing an update on the expansion of the Tri-Service Community Responder scheme to the Teesdale and East Durham Coastal area.

Members were informed that implementation of the scheme will be dependent on the budget settlement announced later in the year.

Members **noted** the report.

### **A7 Any other Business**

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

### **A8 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**

### **B9 Vital Fire Solutions Business Update**

The Authority received a presentation regarding the latest position regarding Vital Fire Solutions performance for the year 2021/22.

Vital Fire Solutions have been recognised as the pinnacle of fire safety. They are national leads for Fire Investigation and High-Volume Pump training, attracting services countrywide. Turnover going forward was predicted to be positive due to the contract secured with AIS Survivex.

Members **noted** the presentation.

### **B10 Strategic Planning Day – 10 October 2022**

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer summarising the areas explored, debated and agreed at the Combined Fire Authority Strategic Planning Day that took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Members **noted** and **agreed** the report.

### **B11 Update on Pay Claims**

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer outlining the latest position in relation to pay claims in the Fire and Rescue Service sector.

Members **noted** the report and **agreed** to receive further updates as more information becomes available.

### **B12 Delay of Appointment of Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer informing members of the decision to delay the appointment of the vacant Deputy Chief Fire Officer post. Cllr Batey and Cllr McLean expressed concern that the decision was due to the financial situation facing the Authority and the increased workloads for the rest of the Leadership Team.

A review of work carried out by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is to be undertaken to ensure critical aspects of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer post are covered and that sufficient capacity existed with the remaining SLT members.

The Chair thanked the Senior Leadership Team for their continued hard work.

Members **noted** the report.

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

## **CLOSE OF MEETING**