

Minutes of a **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington** held at **Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham** on **28 March 2022** at **10.00 am**.

**Present:**

**Durham County Councillors:**

Councillors R Bell, J Blakey, J Cairns, T Duffy, C Hampson, N Jones, B Kellet, R Manchester, L Mavin, I McLean, E Peeke, J Quinn, S Quinn, G Richardson, K Rooney, J Shuttleworth, S Zair

**Darlington Borough Councillors:**

Councillors L Hughes (Substitute for C McEwan), B Jones, G Lee, A Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Atkinson, C Marshall and C McEwan

**Independent Persons:**

No independent persons present.

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting.

Members were informed that Cllr M McGaun had resigned from the CFA and Cllr E Peeke had taken up the position.

The Chair noted that the Service were awarded the title of 'UK Fire and Rescue Service of the year' at the IESE Public Sector Transformation Awards and were awarded bronze in the People, Value and Culture category.

Cllr J Quinn provided an update from the LGA Conference held on 7 and 8 March 2023.

**A1 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**A2 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 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 Director of Emergency Response in relation to current correspondence between the Service and government and other bodies relevant to the Authority and the status of each (for copy see file of minutes).

#### **A4 Notes of the Salary Review Group 2 February 2023**

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer which provided an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Salary Review Group held on the 2 February 2023 (for copy see file for minutes).

##### **Resolved:**

Members **noted** the contents of the report.

#### **A5 Notes of the Performance Committee 9 March 2023**

The Authority received a report of the Chair of the Performance Committee which provided an update on the discussions and recommendations of the Committee held on the 9 March 2023 (for copy see file for minutes).

Members queried the performance figures. The Director of Community Risk Management explained that the heatwaves which took place in Summer 2022 influenced the data as many of the incidents were recorded as primary fires.

##### **Resolved:**

Members **noted** the contents of the report.

#### **A6 Localism Act – Pay Policy Statement 2023/24**

The Authority considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Clerk which sought approval of the pay policy statement for 2023/24 (for copy see file of minutes).

##### **Resolved:**

- a) The 2023/24 pay policy statement as set out at Appendix A was **approved**.
- b) **Noted** that the statement would be published on the Authority's website.

#### **A7 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The Authority received a report of the Director of Emergency Response which provided an overview of the work carried out by the Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group over the last year (for copy see file of minutes).

##### **Resolved:**

Members **noted** the contents of the report.

## **A8 Local Government Association (LGA) Subscription**

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer which provided details of the LGA subscription for 2023/24 and sought a decision about continued membership (for copy see file of minutes).

Members questioned the latest position with the White Paper. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the White Paper had been referenced at the LGA Conference, there had been a delay with the release due to the issues with pay and industrial action.

Members queried what the Service gains from the membership. The Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the Service receives legal advice, lobbying, work with national employers, work with NFCC, Good Governance training for the Chair, opportunities for learning, EDI network and Fire Conference.

Members queried whether the LGA is politically neutral. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the LGA works on behalf of all political parties.

Members asked if VAT could be reclaimed. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that it would.

### **Resolved:**

Members **agreed** the LGA subscription for 2023/24.

## **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 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**

### **B11 Update on Pay and Industrial Action**

The Authority received a report of the Chief Fire Officer which informed members of the latest position in relation to the Fire Brigades Union pay claim (for copy see file of minutes).

The Chief Fire Officer noted that a further update in relation to the outstanding pay award for Brigade Managers had been received on 20 March 2023 with the same offer, but the cap removed. A response from the Fire Leaders Association had not yet been received.

Members discussed the possible impact on the Services financial planning and CRMP outcome.

**Resolved:**

- a) The pay award for Grey Book staff was **noted**.
- b) It was **noted** that the position in relation to the pay award for Brigade Managers for 2022 through the Gold Book remains unresolved.

**B12 Any Other Business**

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

The Chair informed Members that Cllr A Scott and B Jones had submitted their resignations and thanked them for their dedication and Service.

Cllr B Jones was presented with a plaque for his length of dedicated service from May 2008 – March 2023.

**CLOSE OF MEETING**