

Minutes of the **meeting** of the **Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington** held at **Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham** on **25 October 2023** at **10.00 am**.

Present:

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors J Atkinson, A Batey, R Bell, J Blakey, J Cairns, C Hampson, N Jones, R Manchester, C Martin, I McLean, J Quinn, S Quinn, G Richardson, K Rooney, K Shaw, J Shuttleworth and S Zair.

Darlington Borough Councillors:

Councillors A Anderson, J Dulston (substitute for G Lee), D Ray and M Snedker.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Kellett, G Lee, C Marshall and E Peeke.

The Authority were informed that Councillor K Shaw had been appointed as Councillor Leanne Kennedy's replacement.

Independent Persons:

Independent Persons to be appointed.

Before the business of the day a minute's silence was held in memory of Councillor Leanne Kennedy.

A1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A2 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 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 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 Human Resources Committee held on 5 September 2023

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 5 September 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

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

A5 Notes of the Performance Committee held on 12 September 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 12 September 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

Members discussed the performance data attached as an appendix and agreed that, although the data was discussed at the Performance Committee, it was still beneficial for the full authority to have an overview of the information contained within the Appendix.

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

A6 Notes of the Audit and Finance Committee held on 27 September 2023

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 27 September 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

Members discussed ongoing supply and demand issues with audit and queried whether the Service had seen an increase in fees. T Hope confirmed that the Service had seen a 150% increase in audit fees.

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

A7 Firefighters' Pension Scheme – Immediate Detriment Update

The Authority received a report of the Director of Emergency Response which provided an update on the position in relation to the immediate detriment cases under the McCloud/Sargeant ruling (for copy see file of minutes).

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

A8 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 confirmed that there was no other business.

A9 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.

Part B

B10 Estates Update

The Authority received a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the latest position in relation to the Estates Improvement Plan and sought approval for the transfer of Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment responsibility within the current PFI contract from the building owners to the respective North East Fire and Rescue Authorities (NEFRA) (for copy see file of minutes).

The report was moved and seconded.

Resolved:

- a) The NEFRA proposal that each authority adopts its own FF&E responsibility and the PFI contract be amended accordingly was **approved**.
- b) The remainder of the report was **noted**.

B11 Deputy 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 Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) (for copy see file of minutes).

The report was moved, seconded and agreed.

Resolved:

- a) The report and DCFO vacancy was **noted**.
- b) Convening of the Appointments Panel to oversee the recruitment process for the next DCFO was **approved**.
- c) CFO and the Director of People and Organisational Development to undertake advisor roles to the panel, as outlined in paragraph 9, was **approved**.

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 reminded the Authority of the Strategic Planning Day taking place on 16 November 2023 and encouraged everyone to attend.

CLOSE OF MEETING