

Minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington held at Fire and Rescue HQ, Durham on 29 July 2024 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Durham County Councillors:

Councillors J Atkinson, A Batey, R Bell, J Cairns, C Hampson, B Kellett, L Maddison, R Manchester, C Marshall, C Martin, I McLean, E Peeke, J Quinn, G Richardson, K Rooney, and J Shuttleworth.

Darlington Borough Councillors:

Councillor G Lee.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Anderson, N Jones, S Quinn, D Ray and S Zair.

Independent Persons:

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A1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A2 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024 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 Performance Committee

The Authority received a report of the Chair of the Performance Committee which provided an update on discussions and recommendations from the Committee held on the 20 June 2024 (for copy see file of minutes).

Cllr Manchester noted an error on the report with members attendance, clarifying that Cllr G Lee was present at the meeting.

Members **noted** the content of the report.

A5 Appointment of Committee Membership

The Authority received a report of the Clerk which sought approval of the Committee Membership for 2024/25 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Clerk provided a verbal update for appendix A outlining the following proposed Labour appointments.

Appeals – Cllrs R Manchester, S Quinn and C Hampson
Audit and Finance – Cllrs A Batey, B Kellett and A Anderson
Human Resources – Cllrs C Marshall, A Batey and D Ray
Performance – Cllrs R Manchester, S Quinn and A Anderson
Joint Consultative Committee – Cllrs I McLean, C Hampson and D Ray
Pension Board – Cllr J Atkinson

The report was moved and seconded.

Resolved:

- i. The Committee membership for 2024/25 as outlined in appendix A and verbal update from the Clerk was **approved**.
- ii. It was **agreed** that the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority and the appropriate Group Leader be authorised to make any changes to the Committees that may arise during 2024/25.

A6 Member Champions

The Authority received a report from the Director of People and Organisational Development which set out details of the Authority's vacant Member Champion roles and sought nominations for the forthcoming year (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

- a. The Member Champion role as set out in the report and as detailed at Appendix A was **noted**.
- b. It was **noted** that the expression of interest form Appendix B needs to be submitted by 9 August 2024.
- c. It was **noted** that the Fire Authority will approve the Member Champion at the Combined Fire Authority meeting on the 16 September 2024, if there is more than one expression of interest for the role a further report will be presented and a vote will take place to allocate the role.

A7 Firefighters' Pension Scheme Update

The Authority received a report from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer which provided Members with information on changes to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes (for copy see file of minutes).

Cllr J Atkinson requested clarity around the term fee-paid judges. K Carruthers confirmed that term related to those who receive a salary as a judge.

Cllr R Bell questioned whether there were any financial implications to the Authority. T Hope stated that the Service were of the understanding they would be reimbursed by Government.

Resolved:

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

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

Resolved:

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 2 and 4 of Part 1 of the schedule 12A of the said Act.

PART B

B10 Survey response to the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (NJC) Employers side self-led review.

The Authority received a report from the Chief Fire Officer which informed members of the Combined Fire Authority's response to the NJC employers' self-led review survey (for copy see file of minutes).

Members commented on the report and proposed response.

The report was moved and seconded.

Members **agreed** the response to the survey on behalf of the Combined Fire Authority.

B11 HMP Deerbolt Presentation 2024

The Authority received a presentation in relation to HMP Deerbolt (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

Members discussed and noted the presentation

B12 Fire Fatality

The Authority received a presentation from the Director of Emergency Response regarding recent fire fatalities.

Members discussed and noted the presentation.

B14 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 noted that the Policy Support Officer would be leaving the Service in August and passed on thanks and well wishes on behalf of the Authority.

CLOSE OF MEETING