

HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

11 MARCH 2022

PRESENT:

Members

Representing East Riding of Yorkshire Council:

Councillors Davison, Dennis, Fox, Green, Jefferson and Smith

Representing Hull City Council:

Councillors Belcher, Chambers, Dad, North, Randall and Singh

Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Lindley, Patrick, Shepherd and Swinburn

Representing North Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Briggs (*Chairperson*) and Grant

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside

Jonathan Evison - Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside Police

Officers of Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

Chris Blacksell - Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, Phil Shillito - Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services, Niall McKiniry - Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Service Delivery, Christine Cooper - Executive Director of People and Development, Kevin Wilson - Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer, Steve Topham - Director of Emergency Response, Matthew Sutcliffe - Temporary Director of Service Improvement, Lisa Nicholson - Deputy Monitoring Officer/Secretary and Gareth Naidoo - Committee Manager

Internal Auditor

Andrew McCulloch - Director of Audit (TIAA) (presented Minute 27/22)

The meeting was held at The Village Hotel, Hessle.

20/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Chadwick, Healing, Sherwood and Waltham.

21/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Councillor Patrick declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 29/22 insofar as he is a Member of Unite the Union.

22/22 MINUTES - Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 11 February 2022 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

23/22 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS - None

24/22 PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS - No petitions or requests for a deputation had been received under Rule 13, Part 4 of the Constitution.

25/22 COMMUNICATIONS - The following communications were reported:

- (i) Pay Award for staff on Green Book - The Service was keeping a watching brief on any further development. Further information would be provided at a future Member Day.
- (ii) High Sheriff's Award - Three members of staff from the Stores team and two from the Falls team staff had received an award from the High Sheriff of East Riding of Yorkshire.
- (iii) Offer of Support to Ukraine - the Service had issued a communications message in support of the Ukraine. The Service had donated thousands of pieces of fire kit (tunics and trousers) and a fire engine to colleagues in the Ukraine Fire Service. Members welcomed the Service's commitment to helping the people of Ukraine.

26/22 GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY (GAS) COMMITTEE MINUTES - 7 FEBRUARY 2022 - Resolved - That the minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny (GAS) Committee held on 7 February 2022 be received.

27/22 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2022/23 - Andrew McCulloch from TIAA presented the Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 which had been informed by a risk assessment carried out across fire service clients and by an updated audit risk assessment to ensure that planned coverage for the year was focussed on the key audit risks, and that the coverage would enable a robust annual Head of Internal Audit Opinion to be provided.

This year would continue to be another challenging year for the fire service in terms of funding, managing additional recruitment and technological advancement. There were a number of operational issues that had also come to prominence; a number of key areas had been identified which required consideration when planning internal audit coverage:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Health and Well-being
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Cyber-crime

Resolved - That the Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 be received.

28/22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS, TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23 AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP) FOR 2022/23 - The Executive Director of Finance/S.151 Officer submitted a report that sets out the Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management and Capital and the Treasury Management Policy Statement proposed for adoption for the financial year 2022/23.

The Authority's Constitution required that the Policy Statement be approved by the Fire Authority, a responsibility that could not be delegated.

The report also outlined the recommended policy to be adopted in respect of creating the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for 2022/23, in line with the statutory requirements set out in The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and 2017.

It was requested that Members be kept regularly briefed on Treasury Management developments.

Resolved -

- (a) That Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022/23 onwards, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved, and

- (b) that the Authority receives regular briefings on Treasury Management at Member Days.

29/22 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23 - The Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report that provided a proposed Pay Policy Statement for Humberside Fire Authority for 2022/23, as required by the Localism Act 2011.

The Act introduced senior staff pay transparency into local authorities with a requirement that authorities prepared a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. A statement for Humberside Fire Authority was first produced for 2012/13 and approved by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 17 April 2012 (Minute 3839 refers).

The Authority agreed at that time that the Pay Policy Statement should be reviewed annually by officers and that any proposed amendments be brought before the Authority for consideration.

The proposed statement for 2022/23 reflected the pay details for the current Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) posts.

Members queried how the Authority's remuneration of officers compared with other Fire & Rescue Services. This was published on all Fire & Rescue Services' websites and it was agreed that the Executive Director of People and Development would provide Members with comparative data in due course.

Resolved -

- (a) the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;
- (b) that the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Chair, to make factual adjustments to the Policy during the course of 2022/23, for example, in reflection of the impact of any pay awards arising for different employment groups during the year;
- (c) that any other proposed amendments to the Policy during 2022/23 be brought before the full Authority for consideration, and
- (d) that Members receive comparative data against other Fire & Rescue Services on the remuneration of officers.

30/22 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN 2021-24 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that set out the outcomes for the four-week consultation on the Environmental Sustainability Plan (ESP).

The Authority received a report on 3 December 2021 providing assurance that the Strategic Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) had undergone an annual review and that elements of the IRMP had been refreshed, none being of such significance to require public consultation.

The annual process of reporting relevant changes provided an assurance to Members that compliance with the National Framework is regularly reviewed. Details regarding an IRMP aligned Environmental Sustainability Plan (ESP) were also presented to the Authority at its December meeting whereby a four-week consultation period for the ESP was endorsed.

The report informs Members of the outcome of the consultation process. Members were also reminded that, in line with national developments, the IRMP would be re-named Community Risk Plan 2021-24 from 1 April 2022.

Members took assurance from the consultation process and positive support for the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2021-24 and approve the Strategic Plan and IRMP 2021-24 Year One refresh

Resolved - That the Strategic Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021-24 Year One refresh be approved.

31/22 CHARTER FOR FAMILIES BEREAVED THROUGH PUBLIC TRAGEDY- The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Service Delivery submitted a report that proposed the Fire Authority become a signatory of the Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy.

The Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy was proposed by Bishop James Jones in his Report, 'The patronising disposition of unaccountable power', on the experiences of families affected by the Hillsborough disaster and was published in November 2017. It formalised a commitment to transparency and acting in the public interest.

A recommendation that all public bodies commit to sign up to the charter was made in 2018, within a progress report of the Kerslake Manchester Arena Review. Families directly affected by bereavement in the Grenfell incident had also called for public and private bodies to adopt a duty of candour and sign up to the charter.

The National Fire Chiefs Council signed up to the charter in May 2018, joining many other organisations, such as the Crown Prosecution Service, National Police Chiefs Council and College of Policing. A number of Fire Authorities had by now also adopted the Charter.

The Charter acted to formalise a commitment to openness on public scrutiny, making full disclosure of relevant documents, materials and facts. Becoming a signatory would provide additional assurance to communities that the Authority was committed to candour, openness and transparency.

Resolved -That the Authority become a signatory of the Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy, as set out at Appendix A of the report.

The resolution was unanimous.

32/22 GAS COMMITTEE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2022/23 - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that summarised the potential scrutiny topics, proposed by the Strategic Leadership Team, for the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee's (GAS) Scrutiny Programme 2022/23. The GAS Committee would programme six scrutiny items for completion during 2022/23.

A list of ten proposed topics were included in the report for the Authority to consider shortlisting and recommending to the GAS Committee for its 2022/23 programme.

Resolved - That the following topics be shortlisted and recommended to the GAS Committee for inclusion on its Scrutiny Programme 2022/23:

- Procurement processes
- EDI Equality Impact Analysis
- Fire Standards
- Business Continuity
- GDPR

33/22 HMICFRS UPDATE - The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services provided the Authority with a verbal update in relation to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service's (HMICFRS).

HMICFRS had now concluded its six-week inspection of the Service. This had involved a significant number of staff across the Service and its partners in supporting the inspection regime.

A hot debrief took place on 23 February 2022 with members of the Strategic Leadership Team and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority, highlights of which included:

- That the Service engages well with community on risk
- That the Service had clear data sources to analyse risk and effective risk modelling
- That information was clear and available to the public
- That the Service understood well the process for identifying vulnerable people
- That the Service was achieving its response standards as set out in its IRMP
- That the Service had good flexibility in its duty systems
- That the Service had good governance and scrutiny arrangements in place
- That the Service was founded on sound financial management
- That staff had a good understanding of the Service's key values and behaviours
- That equality impact assessments were in place

It was recognised that there would also be some areas for improvement.

It would take a further two to three months for a draft report to be prepared, with the final report being published alongside all other Tranche 2 inspection reports around May 2022.

Resolved - That the update be received.

34/22 COVID-19 UPDATE - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive submitted a verbal report that updated Members on the Service's response to the Pandemic.

Whilst legally individuals no longer were required to self-isolate if testing positive for Covid-19, the guidance remained that people should continue to isolate if testing positive. As such, the Service's arrangements remained the same. From 1 April free testing would be withdrawn and the Service would be considering whether to procure test kits for its staff.

Levels of Covid-19 were increasing across all four local authority areas compared with previous weeks' figures. 24 staff were currently absent from work due to contracting Covid-19 (17 operational and 7 support). The Service would continue to manage and monitor arrangements.

Resolved - That the update be received.

35/22 FUTURE VENUE FOR AUTHORITY MEETINGS - the Authority considered whether it was the right time to return to Service Headquarters for future meetings. Given the rise in Covid-19 cases across the four local authority areas, Members felt it prudent to continue to tread with caution and not put officers at unnecessary risk.

Resolved - That the Authority meets at an external venue for its next meeting, with a decision on future meeting venues taken on a meeting by meeting basis.

36/22 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS/PUBLIC - Resolved - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

In making its decision the Authority confirmed that having regard to all the circumstances it was satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

37/22 EMERGENCY SERVICES HUB - SCUNTHORPE - The Director of Emergency Response submitted a report updating Members on the current position on the proposal from North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) to establish an Emergency Services Hub.

Resolved - That the update be received and further detail be provided to the Authority in due course.