

# HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

FRIDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2021

## **PRESENT:**

### **Members**

#### **Representing East Riding of Yorkshire Council:**

Councillors Davison, Dennis, Healing, Jefferson and Smith

#### **Representing Hull City Council:**

Councillors Belcher, Chambers, Dad, Randall and Singh

#### **Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:**

Councillors Lindley, Patrick, Shepherd and Swinburn

#### **Representing North Lincolnshire Council:**

Councillors Briggs (*Chairperson*), Grant, Sherwood and Waltham MBE

### **Officers of Humberside Fire & Rescue Service**

Chris Blacksell - Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Phil Shillito - Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery, Niall McKiniry - Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Kevin Wilson - Executive Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer, Jason Kirby - Temporary Director of People and Development, Paul McCourt - Director of Service Delivery, Steve Topham - Director of Service Delivery Support, Simon Rhodes - Temporary Director of Service Improvement, Mathew Buckley - Monitoring Officer/Secretary and Gareth Naidoo - Committee Manager

### **Also in attendance:**

#### **Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

Andrew Smith and Mandy Thomlinson were in attendance as observers.

The meeting was held at The Village Hotel, Hessle.

**TRIBUTE** - The Authority paid tribute to Chris Long, East Midlands Ambulance Service Paramedic and former Duty Operations Manager in Lincolnshire, who passed away on Friday 8 October 2021.

**130/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Chadwick, Fox, Green and North, and from Jonathan Evison - Police and Crime Commissioner.

**131/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - Councillor Swinburn declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 143/21 insofar as he is in receipt of a firefighter's pension.

**132/21 MINUTES - Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 24 September 2021 be received as a correct record.

**133/21 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS** - Councillor Swinburn questioned when Authority meetings would reconvene at Service Headquarters. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the advice and guidance from the Service's Health and Safety team was to continue to take a cautious approach, in light of the continuance Covid-19 and given due the continuing high level of infection rates, and to review on a meeting by meeting basis.

**134/21 PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS** - None received.

**135/21 COMMUNICATIONS** - The following communications were reported:

- (i) Revised Model Code of Conduct - The LGA had issued a revised model code of conduct and the Authority would look to refresh its own Code in due course.
- (ii) Pay award - The final pay award offer for green book staff had been rejected by the Unions.

**135/21 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2021** - The Executive Director of Corporate Services/S.151 Officer submitted a report that highlighted the current financial position based on information to 30 September 2021.

This is the second set of Management Accounts for the 2021/22 financial year and further updates would be brought to the Authority based on the periods ending 31/12/21 and 28/2/22.

The summary estimated outturn position for the current financial year based on information to 30 September 2021 was as follows:

CATEGORY	2021/22 OUTTURN PROJECTION	
HFA		
Revenue Budget	£0.298m	underspend
Capital Programme	£5.006m	expenditure against £7.029m allocation
Pensions Account	£12.940m	deficit

Further details on all the areas were available electronically alongside the agenda papers on the Fire Authority's website at [www.humbersidefire.gov.uk/fire-authority](http://www.humbersidefire.gov.uk/fire-authority).

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**136/21 DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM RESOURCE STRATEGY 2022/23 - 2025/26** - The Executive Director of Corporate Services/S.151 Officer submitted a report that set out the draft Medium-Term Resource Strategy for 2022/23 to 2025/26.

The Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) covers a period of four years but would be reviewed annually to reflect the dynamic nature of both the fire service and changes in funding. It described the financial direction of the organisation and outlines financial pressures as well as providing options for delivering a sustainable budget and capital programme over the medium term. It also set out how the Authority could provide the resources to deliver the priorities in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) within the challenging financial climate.

The MTRS as presented included an increase in the precept of £1.76 (1.99%) for a Band D property for 2022/23. A prudent planning assumption had been made regarding the future years 2023/24 to 2025/26 of a 1.99% increase. Final decisions on the actual precept would be made each year by the Authority based on the financial circumstances at the time.

The Authority's budget for 2021/22 was £45.089m and the quarter two revenue monitoring report showed a projected budget underspend of £0.298m as at 30 September 2021.

The expected General Reserve at 1 April 2022 would be maintained at £5.9m to match identified level following the risk assessment used to produce the Prudent General Minimum Level of Reserves. The Authority retained £7.685m Earmarked reserves. Overall the forecast closing position on reserves for 2021/22 was £13.530m.

Members discussed the need to ensure financial planning reflected the Service's commitment to tackling climate change and were informed that the following week would see the launch of the Service's Environmental Strategy and the signing of the Emergency Services Charter. Members would be updated on these further in due course.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**137/21 SECONDMENT OF SECTION 151 OFFICER ROLE TO OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER** - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive submitted a report that provided Members with an update regarding the secondment of the Executive Director of Corporate Services, and Head of Finance, for 2 days a week to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

In October 2019 the Authority approved that the Section 151 Officer for the Authority split their time between Humberside Fire Authority (HFA) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) three days a week with HFA and two days with OPCC in order to also act in the capacity as the Section 151 Officer for the PCC. The Authority also approved that the arrangements would be mirrored by the Service's Head of Finance in order to allow the Head of Finance to be the Deputy Section 151 Officer for the PCC. Those arrangements became fully operational in January 2020.

This has been an effective working relationship between the OPCC and the Authority. The OPCC Chief Executive and Chief Fire Officer have an established working relationship and regular contact to discuss the arrangement and any issues that might occur. No negative issues have occurred to date. Furthermore, the HFA Chair, the Chief Fire Officer, the PCC for Humberside and the Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had met recently to discuss the arrangements as the second year drew to a close. All parties were content with the arrangements for the reasons outlined above and wished to continue the sharing of the S151 Officer and the Deputy S151 Officer.

The Chief Fire Officer was content that the secondment arrangements were robust enough and provided sufficient time, skills and experience to ensure the interests of the Authority and the Service were protected.

Members took assurance that the existing arrangements were providing the Authority with suitable financial governance, whilst achieving the anticipated resilience and financial benefits.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**138/21 SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that provided a bi-annual update (April - September 2021) of the Service's Performance and Risk.

The table below summarised the Services performance against performance indicators, further detail of which was provided in the report.

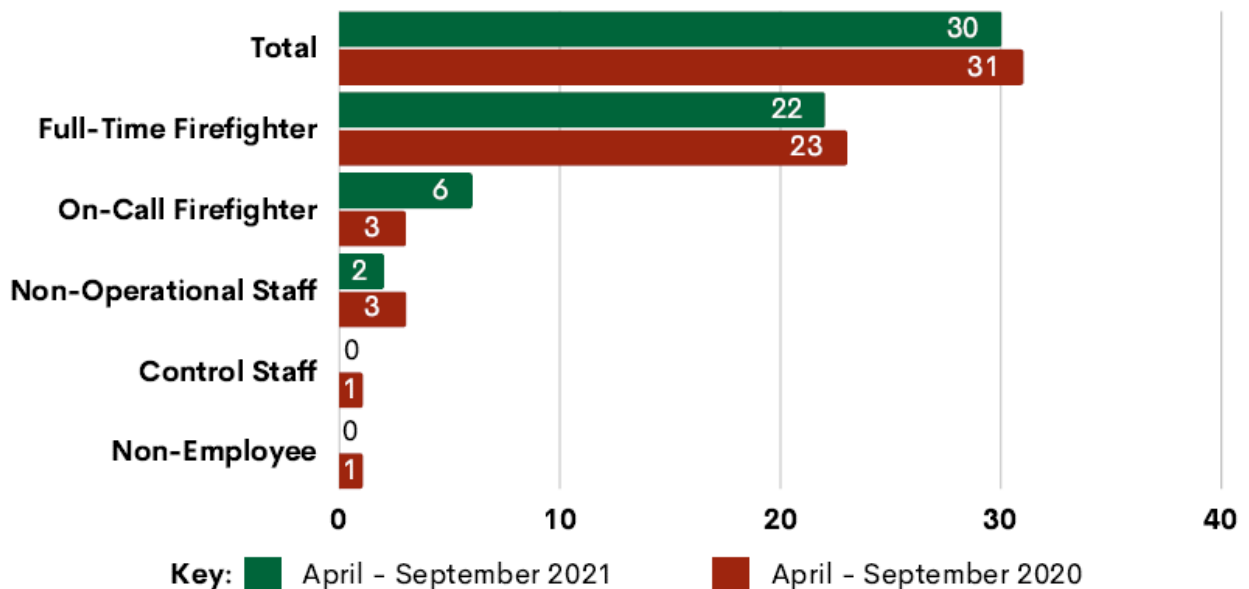
Performance Indicator	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	Total
SPI - High Severity Dwelling Fires	3	0	3	1	1	3	11
SPI 2.2 - Total Deliberate Fires	39	39	24	25	45	59	231
SPI 2.3 - Accidental Dwelling Fires	42	31	28	28	36	28	193
SPI 2.4 - Deliberate Secondary Fires	337	142	171	119	185	229	1183
SPI 2.5b - False Alarm Non Domestic	62	72	85	100	123	110	552
<b>Total</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>2170</b>

Members took assurance from the Service's proactive approach to performance management and reporting.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**139/21 HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that provided a bi-annual update (April - September 2021) of the Service's Health, Safety and Environment performance.

The chart below highlighted the role of those involved in accidents, for the period April - September 2021 alongside a comparison for the same period from the previous year. The total number of reported accidents for the six-month period was 3 per cent lower compared with the same period of the previous year. Accidents affecting Full-Time personnel had reduced by 4 per cent, whilst for On-Call personnel there had been an increase of 100 per cent and for Non-Operational staff this had reduced by 33 per cent. Accidents involving Control staff and Non-Employees had reduced to 0.



The following key current areas were being addressed:

- Continual provision of professional guidance and support for both Humberside Fire and Rescue Service and Humberside Police in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Review and creation of risk assessments and guidance in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Review of Fire Contaminants Policy in line with latest guidance from FBU and looking at best practice across the sector.
- Continuation of review and creation of policies for Humberside Police.
- Roll out of Service Sustainability Plan and delivery of the new Sustainability Group.
- Adoption of the new Emergency Services Sustainability Charter.
- Re-engagement with the One Hull of a Forest project, the project aims to increase the amount of trees planted in our service area.
- Conduct Health and Safety Audits across all sites and review HSEP data to ensure we have appropriate auditing in place.
- Support Operational Assurance in the delivery of new Operational Assurance process.
- Continual alignment to NOG.
- Identify and implement an electronic health and safety management system for Humberside Police
- Conclude ongoing work with the Police risk assessment working group
- Raise the profile of the JHSS through location visits and the development of a new communications plan


Members took assurance from the Service's proactive approach to performance management and reporting.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**140/21 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING REPORT** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that provided a bi-annual update (April - September 2021) of the Service's Occupational Health and Wellbeing performance.

The table below provided a summary of the statistical data. Performance would be provided for the full six month period alongside the second bi-annual report to the Authority in June 2022.

Activity	April to September
Management referrals	78*
Self-Referrals	39*
Discharges	12
Open Cases	40
IHER (Ill Health Early Retirement)	2
CISM Defusing/Debriefing (Critical Incident Stress Management)	18*
Physio Referrals	12
Counselling Referrals	1
CiC Contacts	52*
DNA (Did Not Attend)	11*

 \*Q1 and partial Q2 data

Members took assurance from the Service's proactive approach to performance management and reporting.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**141/21 OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE REPORT** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that provided a bi-annual update (April - September 2021) on the Service's Operational Assurance.

The table below provided a summary of the statistical data.

Activity Area	April 2021 to August 2021		
	Safety Critical Action	Area of Concern	Exceptional Practice
A - Control	0	22	323
B - Incident Management	5	37	85
C - Firefighting	1	15	52
D - Road Traffic Collision	0	7	2
E - Water Rescue	2	5	4
F - Animal Rescue	0	0	0
G - Hazmat	0	1	13
H - Working at Heights/Rope Rescue	0	0	5
J - Command School	0	2	2
L - Thematic Reviews	0	28	5
Operational Discretion	0	0	0

Members took assurance from the Service's proactive approach to Performance Management and reporting.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**142/21 ABSENCE MANAGEMENT REPORT** - The Temporary Director of People and Development submitted a report that provided an update on the Service's Absence Management for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021. In keeping with the Service's sustained approach, absence remained a key area of focus for the Service.

Table 1 showed the performance during this period against the target, by staff group with 3 staff groups being significantly below target and 1 area of focus slightly above target due to long term absence in that area.

**Table 1 - Duty Days Lost**

	Days Lost (Total)	Headcount	Days Lost (Average\ Person)	2021/22 Target (per person)	YTD Target
Control	64	26.93	2.38	8.70	4.35
Fire Staff	973.01	180.79	5.38	10.00	5.00
On Call	854.77	341.00	2.51	7.00	3.5
Full Time	1092.00	433.71	2.52	7.00	3.5
Total	2983.78	982.43	3.04		

Table 2 showed that both full-time attendance at 97.25 per cent (against a target of 95 per cent) and Control Room attendance at 97.40 per cent (against a target of 95 per cent) were both ahead of target, meaning that the majority of the workforce during this period had had full attendance. This was exceptional performance, particularly given the additional challenges of improving and maintaining attendance during the pandemic.

**Table 2 Quarter 2 Attendance last 3 Years**

	2019/20 Q1 & Q2	2020/21 Q1 & Q2	2021/22 Q1 & Q2	Target attendance
Full time	95.69%	96.61%	97.25%	95%
Control	88.26%	94.84%	97.40%	95%
Fire Staff	94.85%	98.03%	95.88%	97%

Table 3 showed the top four reasons for absence for all staff groups during the period and showed that, once again, mental health conditions were the top reason for absence. Work continued by the Service in raising awareness of mental health and encouraging staff to be open about the impact of mental ill-health on individuals. Mental health was now extremely high profile in the media and staff continued to be encouraged to raise and seek assistance for mental health issues.

**Table 3 - Top four reasons for absence**

CLG Category	Short Term days lost	Long Term days lost	Total duty days lost
Mental Health Anxiety/Depression	30.94	845.95	876.89
Musculo Skeletal Back	82.94	353.38	436.31
Musculo Skeletal Lower limb	36.59	264.96	301.55
Musculo Skeletal Shoulders	6.00	252.34	258.34

Table 4 showed the number of employees by group who had been affected by Covid-19, both directly and indirectly during the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.

**Table 4 - number of staff affected by COVID-19**

	No of employees	No of employees	No of employees	No of employees
	Confirmed Covid	Self Isolation Symptoms of Covid	Self Isolation – Household symptoms	Self-isolation – team, watch and Test and Trace
Control	0	1	3	3
Fire Staff	3	14	12	14
On Call	16	10	18	25
Full Time	19	14	45	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>81</b>

Table 5 showed a comparison of absence during the same period for 2020/21 and 2019/20. Figures for 2019/20 provided a comparison to a 'normal' year rather than a sustained period through which the Service had endured the pandemic.

**Table 5 - Duty Days Lost Comparison to Previous Years**

	2021/22 Sum of Duty Days Lost	2020/21 Sum of Duty Days Lost	Difference 2021/22 vs 2020/21	2019/20 Sum of Duty Days Lost	Difference 2021/22 vs 2019/20
Control	64	138	74	317	253
Fire Staff	973	447	526	1175	202
On-Call	855	397	458	556	299
Full-Time	1092	1376	284	1846	754
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2984</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>3895</b>	<b>911</b>

Members took assurance that absence was being managed fairly, consistently, and appropriately in the Service and necessary follow-up actions were taken to address short and long-term absence issues.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**143/21 FIREFIGHTERS' PENSIONS REMEDY - IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT FRAMEWORK** - The Executive Director of Corporate Services/S.151 Officer submitted a report that updates the Authority on the finalisation at a national level of a Framework for dealing with Immediate Detriment cases that would now be used by the Authority.

In June 2021 the Authority approved the application of the Immediate Detriment Guidance subject to the following:

- *Once a framework for the application of the Immediate Detriment Guidance has been nationally agreed between the Government, Fire and Rescue Authorities and relevant Representative Bodies; and*
- *Where calculation of benefits under the Immediate Detriment Guidance in accordance with the nationally agreed framework is possible.*

The Framework had now been finalised between the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) and was attached at Appendices 1 and 2 of the report. As a result, the Framework was now being applied to Immediate Detriment cases relating to the Authority.

The framework was intended to apply to all retrospective and prospective immediate detriment cases. It was estimated that the Authority had 13 retrospective cases and 9 prospective cases affected by the framework.



**Resolved** - That Members note the publication of a nationally agreed Framework for dealing with Immediate Detriment cases that has now been implemented by the Service.

**144/21 HMICFRS UPDATE** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement provided the Authority with a verbal update in relation to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service's (HMICFRS).

- The draft timetable for the six week inspection period had now been received and the Service had received an Inspection update letter on 14 October from HMICFRS. Reports from first tranche of Inspections were due to be published in December alongside Sir Tom Windsor's State of Fire report.
- The HMICFRS staff survey will be received during November and communicated.
- An independent reporting line (not for complaints or whistle blowing) was open for all service staff in preparation for the upcoming inspection and the Service continued to raise awareness of this.

**Resolved** - That the update be noted.

**145/21 COVID-19 INTERNAL DEBRIEF REPORT** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement submitted a report that provided a summary of the Service's internal formal Covid-19 de-brief, used to assess the impact on staff and services, the identification of good practice, areas for improvement and arising actions.

Two internal de-brief processes had been conducted to date. The first, interim review, was conducted in July 2020, to evaluate the Service's ongoing response. Outcomes were used to inform approaches to the Recovery phase of Business Continuity arrangements. The second exercise was conducted in August 2021 whilst still in Recovery, when the management and delivery of activities had reached a steady state, almost business as usual, albeit still working under government guidance and restrictions applicable to the national roadmap. It was also appropriate to draw on the outcomes and recommendations arising from the HMICFRS Covid-19 themed inspection, conducted in October 2020, in terms of an independent review.

Members were reminded that the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) also reported on the national response by the fire sector and separately the NFCC Business Continuity - Covid-19 Pandemic Advisory Group, that met throughout the pandemic, held a separate debrief for group members in June 2021, including the Service.

It was likely that every agency the Service interacted with during the pandemic would ill conduct some form of debrief or review, for practicality purposes and relevance for Members, this report focussed on the outcome of the Service's internal debrief conducted in August 2021.

A timeline for the lockdown period, providing a useful reminder of the key dates and government decisions, was provided at Appendix A of the report. Copies of the internal debriefs were also included at Appendix B and Appendix C of the report. The HMICFRS inspection report was included at Appendix D.

Members took assurance from the process used to review and learn from the response of the Service to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic.

**Resolved** - That the report be received.

**146/21 CFO UPDATE** - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive provided a verbal update on the following areas:

- The Appointments Committee would meet on 8 November 2021 to appoint to the post of Executive Director of HR & Training.
- New fire kit was being issued to all fire stations across the Authority area.

**Resolved** - That the update be noted.