

HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

FRIDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

PRESENT:

Members

Representing East Riding of Yorkshire Council:

Councillors Abraham, Davison, Fox, Green, Smith and West

Representing Hull City Council:

Councillors Belcher, Chambers, Dad, McMurray, Neal (attended remotely) and Nicola

Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Lindley, Patrick, Shepherd and Swinburn

Representing North Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Briggs (*Chairperson*), Sherwood (attended remotely) and Waltham MBE

Representing the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner:

Jonathan Evison (Police and Crime Commissioner)

Officers of Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

Chris Blacksell - Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, Niall McKiniry - Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Christine Cooper - Executive Director of People and Development, Kevin Wilson - Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer, Matthew Sutcliffe - Area Manager of Service Improvement, Jon Henderson - Area Manager of Prevention and Protection, Sam O'Connor - Head of Organisational Development, Simon Rhodes - Head of Corporate Assurance, Jamie Morris - Senior Service Improvement Officer, Gareth Naidoo - Senior Corporate Assurance Officer, Lisa Nicholson - Monitoring Officer/Secretary, Samm Campbell - Committee Manager and Alison Finn - Committee Manager. Gavin Barker - Mazars (external audit) and Andrew McCulloch - TIAA (internal audit) attended remotely.

The meeting was held at Service Headquarters, Hessle.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, those present observed a minute's silence in recognition of the passing of Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and the accession of His Majesty, King Charles III.

106/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Dennis, Grant and Jefferson JP.

107/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - There were no declarations of interest.

108/22 MINUTES - Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 22 July 2022 be received as a correct record.

109/22 MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - Resolved - That the minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 September 2022 be received.

110/22 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS - None.

111/22 COMMUNICATIONS - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive provided verbal updates on the following item:

- (i) **HMICFRS Survey** - HMICFRS had circulated a survey seeking feedback on their performance. The Service had fed back that the timelines of the inspection process were too protracted and that the hot debrief following an inspection was more productive when held in person rather than remotely.
- (ii) **Staff Awards** - The Service was due to host its annual awards ceremony on 7 October 2022.

112/22 EXTERNAL AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT - Gavin Barker (Mazars) presented the External Audit Completion Report.

The external audit process for the 2021/22 financial year had been substantially completed and, as in previous years, an unqualified opinion was anticipated. However, the audit would technically remain open due to ongoing delays with the whole of government accounts and would not be formally closed until that process concluded. The audit opinion would be issued by the end of November 2022 pending the receipt of the audit of the pension fund. The audit had focussed on the standard three risks, management override of controls, valuation of land and buildings, and valuation of net defined benefit pension liability. Mazars had received the Service's draft accounts in early June 2022 and remarked on their good quality. The audit opinion on value for money would be reported later in the year.

Resolved - That the External Audit Completion Report be received with thanks to the Service's finance officers and Mazars.

113/22 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE - Andrew McCulloch (TIAA) presented an update on the internal audit process.

Internal audit work had previously been postponed as a result of the cyber attack earlier in the year and work had commenced in mid-August 2022. All audit activities had been scheduled, with some reports already drafted, and all internal audit work was still due to be completed by the agreed deadline at the end of March 2023.

Resolved - That the update be received.

114/22 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22 - The Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer submitted a report summarising the annual accounts for 2021/22.

In financial year ending 31 March 2022, the Authority had received revenue support grant and an allocation of pooled national non-domestic rates directly from central government. It also set a precept (council tax) throughout the Humberside area for the balance of its expenditure requirements. The precept set for 2021/22 was £24.15m (2020/21 was £23.82m) which equated to a Council Tax Band D Equivalent of £88.35 (2020/21 was £86.63). Income of £50.834m was received by the Authority, of which £49.843m was incurred on expenditure during 2021/22 leaving a surplus of £0.991m (Appendix 1 of the report showed how this reconciled with the Movement in Reserves Statement and the Expenditure and Funding Analysis).

Resolved - That the Annual Accounts 2021/22 be approved.

115/22 FINANCIAL OUTLOOK 2022/23 ONWARDS - The Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer submitted a report summarising the financial outlook for 2022/23 onwards.

The Authority's outturn for 2021/22 delivered an underspend of £991k and a closing level of total Revenue Reserves of £14.6m. The Authority had set a balanced budget for 2022/23 and the latest budget monitoring to 30 June 2022 had set out a £285k projected underspend, prior to any pay awards over the 2.5% assumption for pay inflation. Pay awards in the current year were yet to be agreed, but every 1% increase on the pay bill, if applied to all staff (Grey, Green and Gold Book), equalled almost £400k. The current financial projections for 2023/24 to 2026/27 had not yet been updated due to the significant uncertainty, however the impact of inflationary pressures were summarised as follows:

	2022/23 Original	2022/23 Latest	Impact £000
Rates	2.00%	2.00%	0
Electricity	55.00%	118.00%	200
Gas	38.00%	38.00%	0
Fuel	10.00%	10.00%	0
Insurance	10.00%	10.00%	0
IT Contracts	3.50%	10.00%	30

A revised version of the report was due to be presented to the Authority at its meeting on 2 December 2022 due to the changing financial environment.

- Resolved -** (a) That the report be received, and
- (b) that the Prudent Minimum Level of General Reserves be approved.

116/22 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22 - The Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report summarising the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2021/22.

The report provided an overview of the wide range of activities, outcomes and progress made by the Service from 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022. During the period of recovery following the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Service had reflected, reviewed and trialled new ways of working, while remaining mindful of its legal equality duties under the Equality Act 2010, particularly the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED). The Service had worked in accordance with five priorities in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion:

1. Leading by example on equality.
2. Increasing diversity throughout our workforce.
3. Ensuring a safe and fair workplace for all staff.
4. Continuing to improve our knowledge of our diverse communities and how we engage with them.
5. Identifying the fire and other emergency risks linked to multiple disadvantage and discrimination.

The Service's most recent HMICFRS inspection report contained many examples of the progress that had been made and was quoted throughout the Annual Report. A Member queried the phrase 'positive attraction' and it was explained that this had replaced the phrase 'positive action' in order to clarify that the Service's intention was to attract people to apply for roles and help them, through initiatives like Rookie Reds, to be the best candidates and be appointed on merit only.

- Resolved -** (a) That the report be approved, and
- (b) that the Service's progress in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion be acknowledged.

117/22 GENDER PAY GAP ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 - The Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report summarising the Gender Pay Gap Annual Report 2022/23.

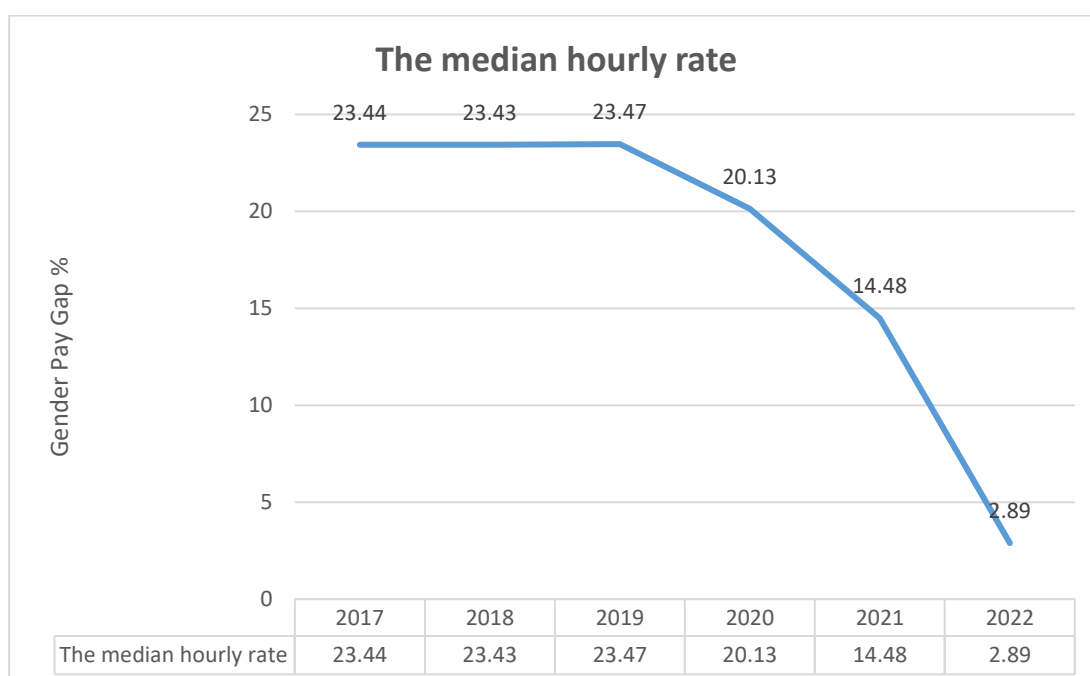
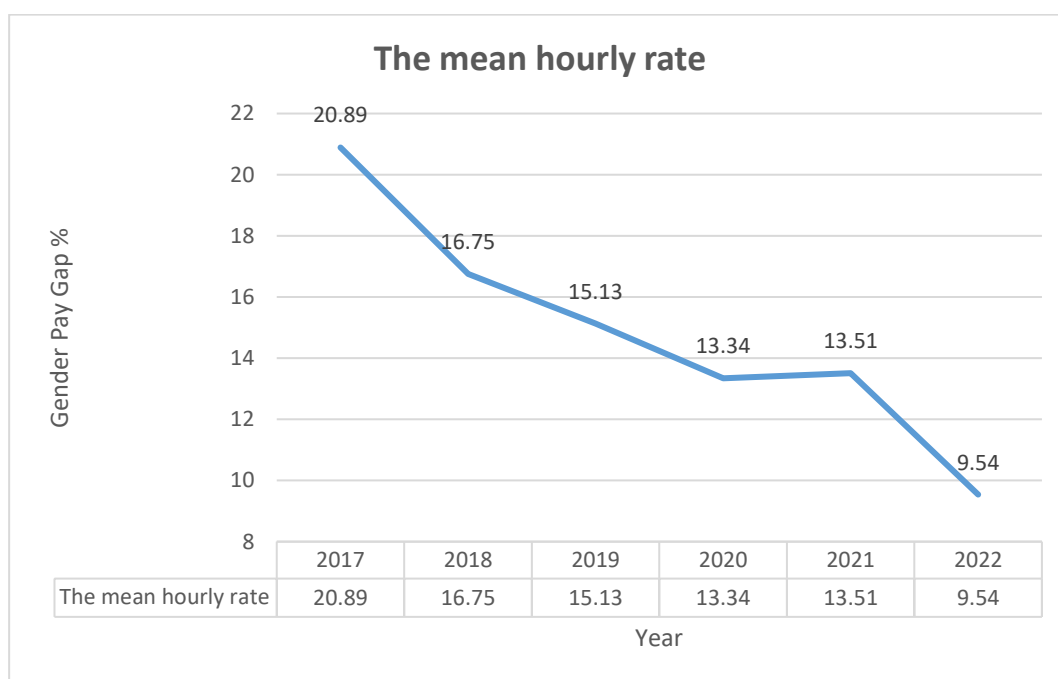
The paper detailed the pay gap reporting information and supportive narrative for the Service to meet its legislative obligations for the 2022/2023 gender pay gap reporting requirements. The Service had met its 2021 gender pay gap reporting requirements by publishing its report in July 2021 for data as at 31 March 2021. The Service had also voluntarily reported on its ethnicity and disability pay gaps. The Annual Report 2022/23 fulfilled the Service's legal duties to publish its gender pay gap reporting information by 31 March 2022. The report summarised gender pay gap data as follows:

Gender	Number of Staff as at 31/3/22	%
Women	230	22%
Men	799	78%
TOTAL	1029	100%

	Women	Men	Gender Pay Gap
The mean hourly rate	£14.64	£16.18	9.54%

	Women	Men	Gender Pay Gap
The median hourly rate	£14.63	£15.06	2.89%

And the Service's progress was summarised as follows:



Resolved - (a) That the report be approved, and

(b) that the Service's progress in relation to gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps be acknowledged.

118/22 COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE - The Area Manager of Service Improvement submitted a report summarising the Community Risk Management Plan.

The Community Risk Management Plan had been written to replace the Integrated Risk Management Plan. The change of the Plan's name reflected its focus and national HMICFRS recommendations. The contents of the Plan would continue to be reviewed regularly and it would be revised annually. Fire and rescue authorities were required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring in their areas and to use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities were expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the community risk management planning process. This gap analysis needs to be conducted by fire and rescue authorities individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas. This then formed the basis of a Community Risk Management Plan, which all fire and rescue services were required to publish in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Resolved - (a) That the Service's response to wildfires in the summer of 2022 be praised, and

(b) that the Service's approach to the community risk management planning process be endorsed.

119/22 HMICFRS REPORT - The Area Manager of Service Improvement submitted a report summarising the Service's recently published HMICFRS inspection report.

The most recent HMICFRS inspection report had been circulated to all Members following its publication in summer 2022. The Service had achieved judgements of 'good' in all areas, improving on the previous inspection (two 'good's and a 'requires improvement'). The report was due to be the subject of a Member Day in autumn 2022, at which Members would be briefed at length on the outcomes of the inspection. The outcomes of the Service's inspection report were summarised as follows:

Pillar	Round 1 (Sep 2019)	Round 2 (Dec 2021)
Effectiveness		
How effective is the service at keeping people safe & secure	Good	Good
Understanding fires and other risks	Good	Good
Preventing fires and other risks	Good	Good
Protecting the public through fire regulation	RI	Good
Responding to fires and other emergencies	Good	Good
Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	Good	Good
Efficiency		
How efficient is the Service at keeping people safe and secure?	Good	Good
Making best use of resources	Good	Good
Future affordability	Good	Good
People		
How well does the Service look after its people?	RI	Good
Promoting the right values and culture	Good	Good
Getting the right people with the right skills	RI	Good
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	RI	Good
Managing performance and developing leaders	RI	Good

Resolved - That the report be received.

120/22 CHIEF FIRE OFFICER UPDATE - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive provided a verbal update.

- i) The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive had resigned as Chair of the Local Resilience Forum ahead of his retirement and the incoming Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, Phil Shillito, had been voted in as Chair.
- ii) The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive offered his thanks to sponsors and Hull City Council for their hard work in hosting the British Firefighter Challenge.
- iii) A delegation of Ukrainian firefighters was due to visit the Service for training.
- iv) The Service's own Watch Manager Alastair Johnson, captain of the England Fire and Rescue Golf Team had captained his final game, beating the Scottish team.

Resolved - That the update be received;

121/22 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.

122/22 INDUSTRIAL ACTION PLANNING AND RESPONSE - The Director of Emergency Response submitted a report summarising planning and response work in relation to industrial action.

Resolved - That the Authority take assurance that suitable business continuity arrangements are in place to ensure the HFA continues to discharge its responsibility under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 during any periods of industrial action undertaken by Emergency Response and Control Room staff groups.

123/22 EAST COAST AND HERTFORDSHIRE CONTROL ROOM CONSORTIUM (ECHCC) UPDATE - The Director of Emergency Response submitted a report summarising the current situation in relation to the East Coast and Hertfordshire Control Room Consortium.

- Resolved** -
- (a) That the report be received, and
 - (b) that a further report be received at future meeting of the Authority.