

# HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

FRIDAY, 23 JUNE 2023

## PRESENT:

### Members

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

Councillors Astell, Casson, Dennis, Healing, Meredith, Nolan and Sutton

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

Councillors Henry, Matthews, Neal and Petrini

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

Councillors Lindley, Patrick and Shepherd

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

Councillors Briggs, Grant, Sherwood and Waltham MBE

#### **Representing the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside**

Jonathan Evison (Police and Crime Commissioner)

### Officers of Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

Phil Shillito - Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Matthew Sutcliffe - Assistant Chief Fire Officer & Executive Director of Corporate Services, Niall McKiniry - Deputy 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, Jon Henderson - Area Manager Prevention, Protection, Fleet and Estates, Jason Kirby - Area Manager of Emergency Response, Steve Duffield - Area Manager of Service Improvement, Lisa Nicholson - Monitoring Officer/Secretary and Matt Turner - Committee Manager.

Also in attendance observing the meeting were Chris Brown (Chair of the GAS Committee) and Sam Miller-Hodges (FBU Secretary).

The meeting was held at Service Headquarters, Hessle.

*Prior to the commencement of the meeting, Members observed a moment of silence to reflect on the tragic death of Iain Hughes of West Midlands Fire Service while he had been undertaking a cross-Channel swim to raise money for charity.*

**60/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Gill, North, Swinburn and Woods.

**61/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – The following declarations were made:

- (i) Councillor Neal declared an interest in Minute 68/23 insofar as she had been involved in the Rookie Reds programme.
- (ii) Officers in the room declared an interest in Minute 74/23.

**62/23 MINUTES - Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 9 June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

**63/23 MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - Resolved** - That the minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 June 2023 received.

**64/23 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS** - there were no questions by Members.

**65/23 COMMUNICATIONS** – none.

**66/23 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23 (UNAUDITED)** - The Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer submitted the unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2022/23.

The report presented the Authority's full unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 (Appendix 1 of the report) and also highlighted the key aspects of revenue and capital outturn for the year.

The Accounts were subject to audit by Mazars in their role as the Authority's external auditor. The draft unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 was signed and published on the Authority's website on 31 May 2023 which was an excellent achievement.

**Resolved** - (a) that Members take assurance from the Accounts presented;

(b) the Capital Programme Rephasing as set out at paragraph 4.5 of the report be approved, and

(c) that staff be thanked for their diligent work in preparing the draft Statement of Accounts.

**67/23 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE** - The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report summarising the draft Annual Performance Report.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England set out a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show they had due regard to the expectations set out in their Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and the requirements included in the Framework.

The Statement of Assurance covered the following areas:

- financial assurance
- governance assurance
- operational assurance

The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny (GAS) Committee considered the draft Statement of Assurance at its meeting of 12 June 2023 and endorsed its publication to the Authority.

**Resolved** - That the Annual Statement of Assurance 2022/23 be approved.

**68/23 DRAFT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT** - The Area Manager for Service Improvement submitted a report summarising the draft Annual Performance Report. The 2022/23 APR included key data and information relating to prevention, protection, response, health, safety, environment and people activities, all of which were aligned to the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and support the delivery of the Strategic Plan (SP).

During the 2022-2023 period, the Service exceeded its targets for responding to Dwelling Fires and Road Traffic Collisions (RTC). First engines arrived within the specified time frame 96 per cent of the time (depending on the level of risk), which was well above the minimum standard of 90 per cent. However, the Service did experience a 4 per cent increase in the total number of emergency incidents attended, responding to 14,467 incidents during 2022-2023 compared to 13,918 during 2021-2022. The Service continued to work closely with its partner agencies to tackle any underlying issues.

Members took assurance from the methodologies and analytical approaches used to performance manage Service activities.

**Resolved** - That the draft Annual Performance Report be approved.

**69/23 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING** - The Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report summarising the bi-annual Occupational Health and Wellbeing Report.

The Occupational Health and Wellbeing Report was published twice per annum and the appended report covered the period from October 2022 to March 2023.

There had been an increase in referrals into Occupational Health both from Managers and 'Self' and the department had responded positively to this increase. The increase demonstrated the collaborative working of Occupational Health with other departments and the increased trust and awareness in staff through self-referrals.

The data from the last report indicated a large increase in activity in the period July to September and it was expected that the volume would level out as the new staff embedded into the department.

Members took assurance from the Service's approach supporting staff through the Occupational Health and Wellbeing team.

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

**70/23 COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (CRMP) CONSULTATION & STRATEGIC PLAN (SP) 2021-24** – The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report summarising the Community Risk Management Plan consultation and Strategic Plan 2021 – 24.

The CRMP was produced in accordance with section 4.6 of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. The CRMP described in detail the risks that were prevalent in the community, alongside the methods and resources applied to mitigate those risks, with the Strategic Plan providing the focus for effectively and efficiently delivering services.

The CRMP 'Consultation Report' (as set out at Appendix 1 of the report) provided Members with information and analysis gathered through the CRMP public consultation. The Service had managed the consultation in accordance with the Consultation Charter Best Practice Principles, The Gunning Principles and Government Consultation Principles 2018.

A full evaluation of the CRMP consultation would be completed which would examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the process, with learning used to inform future practices. Data and information gathered through the public consultation would be used to inform the content of the CRMP with icons used to highlight where feedback had been incorporated. Any data and information used in the CRMP was subject to a rigorous process of analysis and validation before publication.

**Resolved** - (a) that an evaluation of the consultation be undertaken for the identification of learning and best practice;

(b) that data and information gathered from the consultation be subject to rigorous analysis and validation prior to publication;

(c) that evolving revision(s) to the CRMP be managed against the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) CRMP Strategic Framework and the Community Risk Planning Fire Standard criteria, and

(d) that the Service's Strategic Plan objectives be confirmed.

**71/23 WORKFORCE PLANNING** - The Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report summarising the draft Workforce Plan.

The plan reflected how the Service met its obligations under the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and optimised the use of the 24-hour shift system. The document was designed to be a "working document" to enable continual evolution as the Service progresses.

**Resolved** - That the Workforce Plan be approved.

**72/23 UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS UPDATE** - The Area Manager Prevention, Protection, Fleet & Estates submitted a report updating on Unwanted Fire Signals.

The Fire Authority had previously approved the implementation of the Unwanted Fire Signal (UWFS) Reduction Policy which began on 1 October 2019. This involved two aspects, firstly a non-attendance approach to low life risk premises, between the hours of 0800-1800 Monday to Friday, unless it was confirmed

that there was a fire at the premises. Secondly, a mechanism was introduced for cost recovery for those commercial premises which had more than three unwanted fire signals within a rolling 12-month period. The policy had undergone several reviews, with feedback presented to HFA members.

Overall, the Policy had seen a decrease in unwanted fire signals of 25 per cent from a baseline year of 2018/19 to 2021/22. In September 2022 the Fire Authority was presented with a proposal to extend the non-attendance aspect of the policy to cover the full 24 hour period, 7 days a week for low life risk premises. That Policy extension came into force on 1 December 2022 and had led to a further reduction of 19 per cent from 2021/22 to 2022/23, with a continued improved performance into 2023/24. This reduction in unwanted fire signal attendance had also led to the Service being required to recover costs on fewer occasions. In 2022/23 the paid invoices to the Service totalled £15,352.50.

The Policy extension had further increased the time available for operational crews to proactively engage with businesses and vulnerable people as well as maintain competence for operational preparedness.

**Resolved** – that the report be received.

**73/23 VALUES AND CULTURE IN FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES** – The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services & the Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report summarising the values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services.

On Thursday 30 March 2023 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its report 'Values and culture in fire and rescue services'. The report was an outcome of a spotlight review of inspection findings across all 44 English Fire and Rescue Services.

The report made 35 recommendations across 9 themes. Chief Fire Officers (CFO) had accountability for 19 of those recommendations, with the Home Office and the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) having accountability for the other recommendations.

The Service's response to the recommendations was being managed by the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Executive Director of People and Development.

A Gap Analysis and Action Plan, for the actions with direct CFO accountability, had been produced and a cross representative task and finish group had met on three occasions to ensure compliance with recommended actions, required by 1 June 2023. This work would continue, to ensure compliance with the remaining recommended actions.

In addition to the recommended actions from HMICFRS, a Strategic Risk had been added to the Strategic Risk and Opportunity Register regarding 'Public Confidence in Working Culture'. Actions had also been incorporated into the Service Improvement Plan (SIP), to ensure they were effectively managed.

**Resolved** – (a) that the Fire Authority takes assurance from the pro-active actions taken, and

(b) receives further updates on a quarterly basis.

**74/23 STAFF PAY** – the Executive Director of People and Development submitted a report summarising the pay position of Grey and Gold book staff following the recent pay awards. The report highlighted the importance of having a transparent and detailed view of staff pay and how it had changed over time.

The Monitoring Officer referred to Sections 9-11 relating to salary increases in the Gold Book and confirmed a remuneration review was to be conducted and referred to Paragraph 3.5 of the Pay Policy Statement 2023-24 and Agenda item 13 of the HFA 28 April 2023, Paragraphs 4.15 – 4.19, relating to the two-track approach, the requirement for an annual review and references to pay parity.

**Resolved** – that the custom and practice that pay parity should exist between Gold and Grey book staff by implementing the 'twin track' approach when pay awards between the two staff groups are not aligned be approved.

**75/23 AGENDA PRINTING COSTS FOR HFA AND ITS COMMITTEES** – The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report summarising the agenda printing costs for the Authority and its Committees.

Currently all Authority Members (HFA, GAS Committee, Pension Board, Appeals Committee and Appointments Committee Members) received their respective agendas in hard copy format by post. There was an undeniable financial implication to the Service and environmental impact (paper, ink, energy) in producing hard copy agendas, particularly when considered across a full cycle of Authority meetings.

For the 2022/23 financial year a total of £3,793.38 was spent by the Service on printing (£2,708.62) and posting (£1,084.76) agendas out to Members. This involved 48,192 sheets of A4 paper which equated to approximately 96 reams of paper or five trees.

With there being a high proportion and turnover of new Members to the Authority from the June AGM, now provided an opportune moment to affect cultural change in the way Members viewed Authority documentation. Members were to be asked to play their part in supporting and driving forward the Authority's Environmental Sustainability Plan through the proposal to receive agendas electronically by default in the future.

**Resolved** – That all Authority Members (HFA, GAS Committee, Pension Board, Appeals Committee and Appointments Committee Members) only receive their respective agendas electronically by default in the future but with the provision for Members to still opt in to receiving agendas in paper format should there be a specific need.

**76/23 CHIEF FIRE OFFICER UPDATE** - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive provided a verbal update.

- The Reforming our Fire Service White Paper was expected to be published before recess.
- The Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill continued to progress through Parliament. The Government's intention was for the Bill to be enacted in 2023 but not coming into force until 2024.
- A new legal requirement had been placed on all Fire and Rescue Services to undertake DBS checks on all staff. This would have an impact on the Service and needed to be managed carefully.
- The Direct Entry pilot had now closed and proved successful with 21 per cent of the entrant's being women.
- Suicide prevention and mental health support remained a priority and the Service continued to work with the sector to provide support and be an employer of choice.
- A Passing Out parade would take place on Wednesday 28 June for the latest cohort of full time firefighter trainees.
- The Service would be represented at upcoming Pride events across the local area.

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