

## HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

26 JUNE 2017

### PRESENT:

#### Representing East Riding of Yorkshire Council:

Councillors Chadwick, Finlay, Green, Jefferson JP, Matthews, Smith and Turner

#### Representing Kingston upon Hull City Council:

Councillors Belcher, Dad, Fudge and Wilson

#### Representing North Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Briggs (Chairperson), Grant, Sherwood and Waltham

#### Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Jackson and Shepherd

Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery, Executive Director Service Support/Section 151 Officer, Director of Emergency Response, Director of Human Resources, Director of Service Support, Monitoring Officer/Secretary, Committee Manager, Ms J Rae (External Auditor (KPMG)) and Mr D Chapman (Chairperson of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee) were also present.

Mr A Smith, Mrs A Thomlinson and Mr C Vertigans (Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee) also attended as observers.

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Burton, Clarkson, Mathieson, Sharpe and Sutton. Councillor Belcher had indicated that she would arrive later in the meeting.

The meeting was held at the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Kingston upon Hull. Meeting commenced at 10.30 a.m.

*(The Chairperson welcomed the Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and all other persons who were present.)*

**5501 GRENFELL TOWER FIRE, LONDON** – Members stood in silence as a mark of respect for those affected by the recent tragic fire at Grenfell Tower and in recognition of the bravery of the firefighter crews involved in tackling the fire.

**5502 FIRE AND RESCUE DAY JULY 2017** - The Chairperson reminded Members of the Fire and Rescue Day to be held at 7 Lakes Country Park, Crowle on 8 July 2017.

**5503 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations.

**5504 MINUTES** – *Resolved* – That the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Authority held on 5 June 2017 having been printed and circulated amongst the Members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the Chairperson.

**5505 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary stated that one question had been received from Councillor Finlay in accordance with Rule 12.4, Part 4 of the Constitution. At the invitation of the Chairperson Councillor Finlay asked her question as follows:

“Following the Grenfell Towers fire, could you please provide an update on the position regarding tower blocks in the HFRS area? I am particularly concerned about the safety of Ebor Flats, Southcliffe, Bridlington and would like to know if we have any plans to do a check on that tower block?”

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery informed Members of action taken by the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service with regard to tower blocks in the Service area and also that the Service was working with local housing authorities and housing associations with regard to fire safety issues. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery stated that it was the responsibility of housing authorities and landlords to have Fire Risk Assessments and an evacuation plan in the event of a fire taking place, but that Fire Services could be asked to undertake home safety checks for vulnerable persons. In response to a query regarding cladding on Hull Royal Infirmary building the Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery stated that all Fire and Rescue Services had received a request on Saturday 24 June 2017 from the Department of Health for them to inspect all NHS properties in their area by 1800 hours on Sunday 25 June 2017, and informed Members that that was a totally unreasonable timescale as it was estimated that it would take two weeks just to assess the Hull Royal Infirmary, and therefore the Service was working with local NHS officials to identify any higher risk properties. The Service had not been informed of any specific issues at Hull Royal Infirmary but it was not known whether any cladding had been sent for testing. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery informed Members that he had published a generic statement aimed at being of assistance to landlords who were responsible for assuring their tenants regarding the safety of their properties.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for the report and stated that it would be very helpful for Members to have a further update on any developments prior to the next meeting of the Authority.

*(Councillor Belcher arrived at 10.41am during the discussion on the above item. The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Belcher to her first meeting.)*

**5506 PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary stated that no petitions had been received and no requests for a deputation had been received under Rule 13, Part 4 of the Constitution.

### COMMUNICATIONS

**5507 Membership of the Authority** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary reported that a communication had been received from Hull City Council informing the Authority that Councillor Sharon Belcher had been appointed a Member of the Fire Authority in place of Councillor P Allen.

**Resolved** – That the report be noted.

**5508 Membership of the Committees** – The Monitoring Officer/Secretary reported that there was a vacancy on the Appeals Committee as a result of Councillor Allen no longer being a Member of the Authority and that he was awaiting notification from the Group Secretary for the Labour Group regarding the Member nominated by that Group to serve on the Appeals Committee until the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2018.

**Resolved** – That the report be noted.

*(Details of committee memberships subsequently notified to the Monitoring Officer/Secretary by the Labour Group Secretary are set out below:*

*Appeals Committee: Councillor Finlay nominated in place of Councillor Allen  
Appointments Committee Councillor Belcher appointed in place of Councillor Finlay).*

**5509 MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER** – This item was included on the Agenda to allow Members an opportunity to ask questions regarding any items included in the Members' Newsletter that had been emailed recently to all Members of the Authority. There were no questions.

## MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

**5510 Appeals Committee – Resolved** – That the minutes of the Appeals Committee held on 28 April and 13 June 2017 be received.

**5511 Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee** – Mr D Chapman, Chairperson of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee presented the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 June 2017 and drew Members' attention to the following items:

- (i) Term of Office of Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5489 refers) – The Chairperson stated that there was a separate report on the Agenda for his meeting.
- (ii) 2017/18 Scrutiny Work Programme – Update (Minute 5490 refers) – The Chairperson stated that work programme had been revised.
- (iii) Annual Report Re. Declarations of Interest Registers and Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Registers (Minute 5496 refers) – The Chairperson stated that a further report will be considered in September 2017.
- (iv) Public Safety Light Touch Peer Review Outcomes (Minute 5497 refers) – The Chairperson stated that this item had been deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.
- (v) Any Other Business - Police and Crime Commissioner Audit Meeting (Minute 5500 refers) – The Chairperson stated that as indicated that the first meeting had taken place on 23 May 2017 and the next meeting was scheduled for 30 June 2017.

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 June 2017 be received.

**5512 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2016/17 - UNAUDITED** - The Executive Director Service Support/Section151 Officer submitted a report containing the Authority's full unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and also highlighting the key aspects of revenue and capital outturn for the year. The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 16 June 2017 (Minute 5493 refers). The accounts covered by the report were subject to audit by KPMG in their role as the Authority's external auditor. The draft unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 was published on the Authority's website on 24 May 2017 which was an excellent achievement. The intention was that the audited Statement of Accounts will be approved by the Fire Authority by 31 July 2017 although statutorily this could be any time before 30 September 2017. The production of the Annual Accounts was a key task for the Finance Team. The report stated that once again the team has delivered a sound product within the tight deadlines and that they should be commended for that. Notably, this year the team had worked hard again to achieve the Accounts production in line with last year's timetable to ensure completion and sign-off before 31 July 2017. KPMG had been supportive throughout the process and had attended regular meetings held by the Authority's Finance Manager.

The outturn position for the revenue budget for 2016/17 was a £1.095m underspend which compared well to the period 11 end of February 2017 projection in the Management Accounts of a £1.107m underspend. The full schedule of variances was set out in more detail in the Statement of Accounts (Appendix 1, pages 98-100). The outturn for the Capital Programme showed spending of £6.935m (£6.492m was the Authority's Capital Programme and £443k was the East Coast and Hertfordshire Control Room Consortium spend in 2016/17) as detailed in the report. The report identified ten projects that had not been completed in 2016/17 and for which it was proposed that the capital allocations be re-phased into the 2017/18 Capital Programme. Table 1 in paragraph 8 to the report showed the overall position on Reserves at 31 March 2017 and some recommended movements in reserves to be effected from 1 April 2017. Table 1 showed overall revenue reserves of £10.548m at 31 March 2017. The Authority had worked hard in recent years to deliver a sound level of

reserves. This was particularly important against the uncertain financial backdrop for 2018/19 onwards.

In terms of key financial indicators the report indicated that against the backdrop of significant austerity (the Authority’s external financing from Government had been reduced by £11m over the period 2011/12 to 2019/20 as well as a 5 year freeze in the precept/council tax between 2011/12 and 2015/16), and drew attention to the following key financial indicators as set out in the table below:

Key Indicator	2012/13 actual	2013/14 actual	2014/15 actual	2015/16 actual	2016/17 actual (unaudited)
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	£17.7m	£16.6m	£15.6m	£16.1m	£14.5m
Long-term Borrowing(PWLB) (excluding leases)	£18.6m	£17.7m	£16.6m	£15.3m	£14.5m
Revenue Outturn	£2.1m underspend	£1.5m underspend	£1.3m underspend	£1.2m underspend	£1.1m underspend
Total Revenue Reserves	£18.6m	£17.3m	£16.1m	£15.1m	£10.5m

Fundamentally the Authority’s underlying position is sound. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (the Authority’s underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose) had decreased over the 2015/16 level. This showed the CFR stabilising on a downward trend over the period 2012/13 to 2016/17. The recommended movements in reserves in Table 1 showed further resources directed towards the capital programme which will stabilise the CFR further in line with the reducing financial size of the Authority due to austerity. The revenue outturn underspend was lower than in the previous year and overall reserves had also reduced in line with the strategy of applying reserves to deliver capital renewal in the form of the new stations for Central Hull and Brough. The Authority’s budget was balanced for 2017/18. 2018/19 onwards will require careful monitoring given that the Government’s austerity programme is likely to continue beyond 2020.

In conclusion the report captured the financial impact of the Authority’s activities during the 2016/17 financial year. The picture was one of robust finances despite the austerity that had been in place over the period 2011/12 to 2016/17. Judicious use of reserves had ensured that key investment projects had been undertaken. The financial challenges will continue over the period 2018/19 onwards and the Authority is well placed to meet these challenges.

In response to a query by a Member regarding the level of reserves decreasing annually and at what point would the level of reserves become unsound the Executive Director Service Support/Section151 Officer reminded Members of the Authority’s policy in recent years to fund capital schemes from revenue reserves and stated that going forward the Authority did not have any significant capital projects; that there has been an underspend on revenue expenditure annually in recent years, and stated that he would not wish the level of reserves to go below £10m.

**Resolved** - That Members –

- (a) take assurance from the Accounts presented;
- (b) approve the Capital Programme ‘slippage’ at paragraph 7 of the report; and
- (c) approve the position on Reserves as at 1 April 2017.

**5513 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17** – The Executive Director Service Support/Section151 Officer submitted a report providing a review of the Authority's Treasury Management activity and Prudential Indicators for the year 2016/17 in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIFPA) Code of Practice 2009. The report showed full compliance with the Authority's Prudential Indicators for 2016/17. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the agreed Prudential Indicators for 2016/17 and the actual figures for 2016/17. During the financial year the Authority had operated wholly within the limits approved. The report stated that the Section 151 Officer considered the current capital programme to be affordable and sustainable with the revenue effects of capital investment built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Through the Medium-Term Financial Planning Process, the Authority had aligned its resources to key strategic priorities. With regard to Treasury Management the report indicated that based on the Operational Boundary definition, external debt at 31 March 2017 was £7.5m below the agreed Operational Boundary for 2016/17 and the maturity structure for both borrowing and investments remained within the approved upper and lower limits. Subsequent borrowing or re-scheduling during 2017/18 would take in to account prevailing interest rates on offer from the Public Works Loans Board, the current maturity structure of loans, balanced with the need to reduce capital risk by keeping down cash-balances. The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5494 refers).

**Resolved** - That Members take assurance from the Treasury Management activities undertaken during 2016/17 and the Prudential Indicators as outlined in paragraphs 14 and 15 and detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

**5514 ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STATEMENT 2016/17** - The Executive Director Service Support/Section151 Officer submitted a report indicating that in response to a recommendation within the Internal Audit Report 'Counter Fraud Arrangements 2016/17' conducted during the third quarter of 2016/17, the Authority will produce and make publically available an annual Anti-Fraud and Corruption Statement which will cover key actions taken throughout the year, provide an assurance of the processes in place and provide links to key documents.

The report reminded Members that an Internal Audit review of Counter Fraud Arrangements was conducted during the third quarter of 2016/17. The review examined the arrangements in place for dealing with any issues concerning countering fraud, bribery and corruption that might arise within the Fire Authority. That included that key policies were in place to embed those arrangements, the promotion of good governance and principles of ethical behaviour/probity, procedures for dealing with allegations of fraud, bribery or corruption, staff awareness of the potential for criminal acts and how concerns might be reported, and also any measures taken to promote fraud prevention and increase deterrence against potential frauds. The outcomes of the review, including a number of recommendations and agreed actions, were reported to the Committee on 10 April, 2017 (Minute 5430 refers). A specific recommendation was received that 'The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive should make a formal statement of the Fire Authority's commitment to anti-fraud, bribery and corruption measures and publish the statement on the official website'. The arising draft statement, based upon the Audit Commission checklist for Councillors and others responsible for governance, was included at Appendix A. to the report. The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5495 refers). The Executive Director Service Support/Section151 Officer stated that the comments made by the Committee will be taken into account before the statement is signed-off and published.

**Resolved** – That, subject to minor adjustments being made by the Executive Director Service Support/Section151 Officer to reflect the comments made by the GAS Committee, the Authority approve the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Statement for 2016/17.

**5515 DRAFT EQUALITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2017 FOR CONSULTATION** – The Director of Human Resources submitted a report indicating that the Service has a duty, under the Equality Act 2010 to set and publish equality priorities and to

publish a report annually on progress in achieving those priorities. During 2016 equality and inclusion priorities for Humberside Fire and Rescue Service were drafted and after extensive consultation with staff and communities priorities were adopted for the period 2016 -2020 and approved by the Authority (Minute 5260 refers). The report now submitted provided an annual update on progress on equality and inclusion across Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, including on achieving the 5 equality and inclusion priorities.

Under the Equality Act 2010 the Service has to comply with a general duty, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), and with specific duties as outlined below:

General equality duty (section 149 Equality Act 2010)

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups;
- (c) Foster good relations between different groups.

Specific duties (Schedule 19 Equality Act) – Listed public authorities must publish:

- (a) Information on employees (if 150 staff or more) and people affected by policies and practices to demonstrate compliance with the equality duty, at least annually;
- (b) Specific and measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

Further public authorities covered by the specific duties, including Fire and Rescue Authorities, must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the general equality duty in a manner that is accessible to the public. This information includes, in particular:

- Information relating to people who share relevant protected characteristics who are: affected by the authority's policies and practices, and
- (for listed authorities with 150 staff or more), information relating to its employees.

During 2016 Humberside Fire and Rescue Service undertook extensive data collection and consultation with staff to draft 5 new equality and inclusion priorities, which were then published to communities in the form of an Annual Report on Equality and Inclusion. During the summer of 2016 a thorough consultation exercise was undertaken which included holding workshops with diverse people and communities who share relevant protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, along with further staff workshops. Through this consultation approach the draft priorities were refined and strengthened and published as final priorities in September 2016. Those priorities are:

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

During 2016 in order to develop these priorities and in preparation for work to achieve them, along with Humberside Fire and Rescue Service other work to comply with the Equality Act, a corporate steering group was formed. Work is led by two strategic directors with regular updates being reported to both the Corporate Management Team and through them to the Humberside Fire Authority. Councillor Sharpe had been appointed as lead Member for equality and inclusion and she actively participates in the Steering Group and in its work. In addition an officer with specialist knowledge on equality has been appointed within the HR Directorate. To ensure the work to achieve the equality and inclusion priorities takes place in an embedded and SMART way a 4 year action plan has been developed by officers across Humberside Fire and Rescue Service Directorates with managers undertaking allocated responsibilities. Humberside Fire and Rescue Service has also recently adopted the use of

the Local Government Association Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework which will help develop organisational understanding, planning and monitoring to ensure compliance with the Equality Act. With regard to progress on Equality and Inclusion Priorities 2016-2017 the report listed the key work undertaken or completed in relation to each equality and inclusion priority.

A Member referred to Priorities 2 and 3 and sought clarification regarding work done with LGBT groups and also the absence of champions in the workplace. The Director of Human Resources reminded Members of work undertaken with a local Pride group and that a branded fire engine was due to be unveiled tomorrow but acknowledged that more work needed to be done. The Director of Human Resources also stated that the Service was not where it would wish to be with regard to the appointment of Equality Champions and that one approach as an alternative to carrying out a recruitment exercise might be to nominate people who already do that type of work. With regard to Blue Light Champions the Director of Human Resources reported that following the withdrawal of funding for training by MIND discussions were on-going with MIND aimed at securing training for a nominal group.

**Resolved** – (a) That Members approve the Equality and Inclusion Annual Report,  
and  
(b) that a progress report be submitted in six months' time.

**5516 ABSENCE MANAGEMENT** – The Director of Human Resources submitted a report providing the first of the quarterly updates requested by Members on the performance and progress of the management of sickness absence. Sickness absence data was included at Appendix 1 to the report and was referred to throughout the report. The report also gave an update on progress relating to improved awareness of mental health, reducing stigma and earlier intervention and support for staff suffering mental distress. This was in the context of mental health difficulties being the highest reason for absence across the Service in the previous financial year.

In respect to absence management across the Service Members were reminded of the decision taken to commission Capsticks Human Resource Advisory team to undertake the absence management work stream for a 3 month period which began at the end of February 2017. That work includes the complete management of sickness absence for all cases in the Service during this period, as well as a review of the roll out and efficacy of the Sickness Absence Policy and a training needs analysis of management capability in this area. An added benefit of free advice from their legal team in relation to any resulting employment cases was included in the agreement. That work had now been extended for a further 2 months to support completion of key work streams and to ensure a smooth transition of the work to the newly appointed HR Service Partners. It will complete on 31 July 2017. It was planned that this work will leave a legacy for the Service of up to date case work for absence management cases, as well as a detailed plan for any required amendments to policy and management training in the future, which will then be supported and delivered by the HR Service Partners. Significant progress is reported across the Service with positive reports from managers as to their interactions with the representative from Capsticks and earlier interventions and referrals for staff when they become unwell, with appropriate employment advice to managers earlier in the process. A more detailed picture will emerge when the work is completed and Members will be presented with this information at that time.

At the Authority meeting on 17 March 2017, the initial views of the Capsticks representative as to the efficacy of the current approach to absence management were shared with Members to keep them informed of progress. The initial views were as follows:

- (a) That interactions between the Occupational Health team, Line Managers and HR advisory could be more streamlined to provide timely advice and interventions in absence management;
- (b) That employment advice provided to managers needs to be more robust, with HR support given at Occupational Health referral stage;

- (c) That there are significant training needs across the Service in the management of absence both from a management and an HR perspective;
- (d) That information flows should be reviewed;
- (e) That the possibility of accelerated access to certain treatments should be explored to support earlier returns to work.

Early work had been undertaken to resolve some of the concerns raised and the appointment of professionally trained HR Service Partners is expected to accelerate this work. A more detailed report will be prepared as to the plans to integrate Capsticks' recommendations in the Authority's absence management processes going forward to coincide with the appointment of the new HR Service Partners, once the work is completed. It was envisaged that the impact of this targeted approach to sickness absence will yield benefits not only on the levels of absence, given proactive support for staff to return to work earlier, or be fairly exited from the Service, but also, that assurance can be taken that the health of our staff and their regular and reliable attendance at work is being supported consistently and fairly. Members agreed at the Authority meeting on 17 March 2017, that it would be appropriate to support this approach by quarterly reports on the progress being brought to future meetings.

With regard to data management the report reminded Members that at the 17 March 2017 Authority meeting, it was agreed that a quarterly report would be brought before Members with an update on the management of absence to include detailed data on absence levels by staff group, as well as development and dissemination of fair and appropriate mechanisms for the same. The Table 1 at paragraph 18 of the report outlined the current picture with regard to actual absence and performance against target as at 31 May 2017. The data in Table 1 showed that attendance in the Retained workforce is below target for the first time, although still above target in the other staff groups. The data attached in Appendix 1 to the report described the sickness absence data by staff group, reason for absence and the split between long-term and short-term absence. The staff group who work in Control had, once again, been excluded due to the low numbers of staff, which might have revealed identity and breached data protection legislation.

With regard to areas for focus the data in Appendix 1 showed an interesting shift, with Mental Health/Anxiety/Depression no longer being the primary reason for absence, significantly so in the Wholetime staff group. However, the data set represented a short period of time, and further data will need to be gathered in the forthcoming year to establish if this is a longer term trend. Musculoskeletal problems have overtaken mental health as the main reason for absence across the Service, particularly back, knee and lower limb. This data now gives an indicator where the HR and Occupational Health teams should focus in the coming months. Fast track physiotherapy and private healthcare provision for some staff may be areas where an impact on absence due to these issues can be gained, as well as improving wellbeing for our staff. The split between long term and short term absence remains a concern in some staff groups. However, long term sickness in the Control staff group is lower than short term, due to long term cases in that staff group being resolved. Table 2 at paragraph 23 to the report detailed this split by staff group.

With regard to mental health awareness and support the report reminded Members that the Service had held an internal Mental Health Conference on the 8 May 2017 in Hull and Members were invited to attend. There were a number of interesting and inspiring speakers and workshops throughout the day and a large proportion, almost a quarter of the workforce attended, alongside members of Corporate Management Team and some Members. The conference was very well received, with a number of staff coming forward to discuss their experiences of mental ill health, both their own and that of people close to them. Staff who attended were asked to report their experience of the day back to their own workplaces to "start a conversation" about mental health in all corners of the Service. A detailed plan is in place to roll out targeted training on supporting mental health in the workplace and to introduce "Blue Light Champions" at all levels, to enable staff to be signposted to appropriate support should they require it. There are also plans to expand the



Occupational Health offer to staff for both providing more robust welfare arrangements and more specialist services where necessary.

**Resolved** – That Members note the content of the report and take assurance from the actions taken in the HR Directorate to improve the management of absence and the support offered to staff who are unwell.

**5517 SELECTIVE LICENSING IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES** – The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/ Executive Director Service Delivery submitted a report reminding Members that at the Authority meeting on 17 March 2017 (Minute 5393 refers) Members received a briefing of an incident attended by the Service on Beverley Road, Hull. Following this, a request was made to provide an overview of which Local Authorities are implementing ‘Selective Licensing’ under the 2004 Housing Act in their role as Local Housing Authorities (LHAs). Where selective licensing applies, then normally all houses within the private rented sector for that area must be licensed not only those required to be licensed as relevant Houses In Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The report indicated that whilst there are many extremely professional private landlords in the Authority’s area, providing high levels of accommodation and safety there can be occasions when high levels of anti-social behaviour, poor housing standards and varying degrees of property management capability in the private rental sector in an area can have significant negative effects in local communities. Selective licensing was introduced as part of the 2004 Housing Act as a means to support professionalism and good standards amongst private landlords. It exists to encourage responsible landlords to maintain the standards of accommodation and management that attract and retain responsible tenants. A LHA may designate either (a.) *the area of their district*, or (b.) *an area of their district*, as subject to selective licensing, and be applied to all private rented property within a designated area under section 56 of the 2004 Housing Act subject to meeting the general conditions below:

- It has low housing demand, and
- That introducing licensing will, when combined with other measures taken in the area(s) by the LHA, contribute to the improvement of the social or economic conditions in the area, or
- It is experiencing a significant and persistent problem of antisocial behaviour, and
- Private sector landlords in the area are failing to take appropriate action to combat the problem, and
- Making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the LHA, lead to a reduction in, or the elimination of, the problem.

The Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) Guide, contains guidance and practical advice for landlords and fire safety enforcement officers in both LHAs and in Fire Authorities in England. An additional Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) exists between the LHAs and Humberside Fire and Rescue Service with the main aim of:

- Ensuring appropriate standards of fire protection;
- Developing data sharing arrangements;
- Assisting landlords in understanding the legal frameworks they operate under;
- Encouraging opportunities for joint training and awareness;
- Recognising lead authority roles of both Fire and Rescue & Local Housing Authorities and acknowledging that both will seek to act together in good faith.

Under the 2004 Housing Act legislation, LHAs are designated as having the lead enforcing role for the following property types:

- Single Dwellings including shared housing;
- All Houses in multiple occupation (HIMO);
- Self-Contained Flats (purpose built or converted).

Humberside Fire Authority has the lead enforcing role for premises with mixed commercial and associated residential accommodation, including sheltered housing (common areas only), hostels, bed & breakfasts and hotels. Selective Licensing arrangements are currently being considered by North and North East Lincolnshire LHA's as a combined approach. It is understood that Kingston Upon Hull LHA is currently considering the use of Selective Licensing, but are likely to await the outcomes of the changes to Housing Act legislation due in October 2017 and East Riding are not using Selective Licensing, but are using additional licensing, which widens the scope for the relevant properties, for Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Goole area. HFRS Business Safety teams have a good working relationship with Local Authority Housing Officers and are operating in line with the LACORS guide, current protocol and the existing MOU. HFRS is positively encouraging all LHAs to develop and adopt the Selective Licensing scheme arrangements in suitable areas as a way of reducing antisocial behaviour, reducing environmental costs and costs of crime, such as street cleaning and fly tipping. Additional benefits may be improving problem areas, making these safer, more desirable places to live and protecting vulnerable groups, who are more likely to be occupiers of privately rented accommodation.

A Member asked what the definition of 'low housing demand' was. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery undertook to circulate the information to Members.

**Resolved** – (a) That Members note the work undertaken so far;

(b) that Members support the development of Selective Licensing Schemes within Local Housing Authorities, and

(c) that a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the Authority.

**5518 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – The Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee present (Mr D Chapman, Mr A Smith, Mrs A Thomlinson and Mr C Vertigans) declared a pecuniary interest in the following item (Minute 5519 refers) and left the meeting.

**5519 TERM OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** – The Monitoring Officer/Secretary submitted a report reminding Members that the Independent Members of the GAS Committee had been appointed on the basis that they might serve for a maximum of 2 terms of 3 years. The term of office of 3 Members would, if not extended, terminate on 30 September 2017. The term of office of the remaining 4 Members was extended in 2015 to 30 September 2018. Members were also aware that the Members of the GAS Committee had recently been appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Humberside to serve on an audit committee for periods of 3 and 5 years up to 2022 and that there is a possibility that this arrangement might lead to a joint committee being established as a further collaboration initiative. In view of this it is suggested that the Authority review the term of office of all 7 Independent Co-opted Members.

As part of the Authority's review of Corporate Governance in 2012 the Governance Audit and Scrutiny (GAS) Committee was set up. The Authority at its meeting on 26 September 2014 and 24 October 2014 confirmed the appointment of the following three Independent Co-opted Members for an initial 3 year term until 30 September 2017:

Mr J Doyle, Mr A Smith and Mrs P Jackson

In 2015 the Authority agreed to extend the period of appointment of the following Members for a second term of 3 years expiring on 30 September 2018:

Mr M Allingham, Mr D Chapman, Mrs A J Thomlinson and Mr C Vertigans

The Authority has previously indicated that Independent Co-opted Members might serve for a maximum of 2 terms of 3 years. Members are also aware that the Members of the GAS Committee had recently been appointed by the PCC to serve on an audit committee for periods of 3 and 5 years up to 2022 and that there was a possibility that this arrangement might lead to a joint committee being established as a further collaboration initiative. In view of this it was suggested that the Authority review the term of office of all 7 Independent Co-opted Members. Options to extend the term of appointments were as follows:

- (i) Extend all Member appointments in line with the 3 and 5 year terms for the PCC's office;
- (ii) Extend all Member appointments to 31 March 2019 to enable a review of the arrangements and the potential for further collaboration with the PCC's office and also to take into account any impact of the changes to the combination scheme, to allow the PCC to join the Authority, which the Government will be consulting upon;
- (iii) Extend the term of the 3 Members who will have served their initial 3 year term in September 2017 for a second term to September 2020;
- (iv) Do not extend any appointments and carry out a process to replace the three Members whose initial term expires on 30 September 2017.

The report stated that there are benefits to staggering the completion of the terms of office, mainly to allow a more gradual evolution of the Committee rather than a complete change of Members at one point in time. There were risks to not extending the 3 Members whose appointments end in September 2017, due to the need for consistency and continuity in readiness for the upcoming Fire Inspectorate.

**Resolved** – (a) That, subject to the agreement of the individual Members, the period of appointment of all of the Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee be extended to 31 March 2019 to ensure continuity of the Committee, and

(b) that a review is carried out prior to September 2018 to consider the potential for a joint committee with the PCC's office.

**5520 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS/PUBLIC - Resolved** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item (Minute 5521) on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 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).*

**5521 UPDATE ON NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL MATTERS** - The Chairperson and Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive gave an oral update following their attendance at the consultation meeting held in Manchester on 16 June 2017. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive stated that once he has received a collective view from the 3 consultation meetings that had been arranged he will communicate further with Members.

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

**5522 ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING** – The following item was discussed briefly:

- Fire Explosion at a House in Multiple Occupation on Beverley Road, Kingston upon Hull – A Member referred to Minute 5393 and the video that was viewed after the meeting of the Authority on 17 March 2017 and queried whether an

update might be presented at the next Member Day. The Director of Service Support stated that the investigation had just been concluded and undertook to give an update on the findings at the next Member Day.

*Meeting closed at 12.03pm*