

**HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY**

**25 APRIL 2016**

**PRESENT:**

**Representing East Riding of Yorkshire Council:**

Councillors Finlay, Green, Hodgson, Jefferson JP, Matthews, Sharpe and Turner

**Representing Kingston upon Hull City Council:**

Councillors Allen, Clarkson, Fudge, Mathieson and Wilson

**Representing North Lincolnshire Council:**

Councillors Briggs (Chairperson), Grant, Sherwood and Waltham

**Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:**

Councillors Burton, Hudson, Jackson and Sutton

Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer/ Executive Director Service Delivery, Executive Director Service Support/Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer/Secretary, Director of Service Support, Committee Manager, Mrs J Rae (KPMG) and Mrs B Boyes (MIAA) were also present.

Mr D Chapman, Mr M Allingham, Mr J Doyle, Mr A Smith, Mrs M 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 Payne and Pearson.

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 Internal and External Auditors, the Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and all other persons who were present.)

**5094 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - There were no declarations.

**5095 OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME OPTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

– The Chairperson drew Members' attention to this item on the Agenda and reminded Members of the process followed with regard to this matter in terms of discussions at previous meetings of the Authority and at Member Days over the last 9 months, and also that the financial projections for the Authority as detailed at paragraphs 11 to 13 to the report meant that there was still a need to reduce expenditure on operational response and that the options consulted upon could reduce the expenditure as required, whilst ensuring that the Service continues to meet the Authority's Response Standards. The Chairperson stated that it had come to his attention that some Members were not totally clear of the decision making options with regard to the various items that had been consulted upon and in these circumstances proposed that the matter be deferred to make sure that Members are fully aware of all the issues.

**Resolved** – That this matter be deferred to a future meeting.

**5096 MINUTES** – The Chairperson presented the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 18 March 2016. A Member referred to Appendix 2 and queried why the list of Combined Fire Authorities did not include a comparison with North Yorkshire Fire Authority given the discussions that are on-going with that Authority. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive stated that as indicated in Appendix 2 the list was a sample based on available published pay policy statements for 2016/17.

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 18 March 2016 having been printed and circulated amongst the Members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the Chairperson.

**5097 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary stated that no questions had been received from Members in accordance with Rule 12, Part 4 of the Constitution.

**5098 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.

**5099 COMMUNICATIONS** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary stated that no communications had been received.

**5100 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**

**5101 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 11 April 2016.

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 April 2016 be received.

**5102 GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKSTREAMS/ SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2016/17** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary submitted a report indicating that in line with the Constitution, the first meeting of each Committee in a new cycle should receive a report which outlines broadly the substantive reports that Members, as a minimum, can expect to receive during the year. This also enables forward planning for the Corporate Management Team and will assist the Committee in programming its scrutiny work having regard to the workload at individual meetings during the year. The report also sets out the scrutiny topics agreed for inclusion in the programme for 2016/17 and the timing in terms of when the topics will be initially scrutinised. The workstreams and scrutiny programme attached at Appendix 1 to the report were considered and agreed by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 11 April 2016 (Minute 5083 refers). That meeting also considered and agreed the Committee's Calendar of Meetings for 2016/17 and the workstreams and scrutiny programme have been incorporated in the timetable of meetings of the Committee that will be considered as part of the Authority's Calendar of Meetings at the AGM of the Authority on 6 June 2016. Progress against the workstreams and scrutiny programme will be included in the annual report from the Committee to the Fire Authority.

**Resolved** - That the Authority receives the dates and times agreed by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee for its meetings during 2016/17 and also the Committee's workstreams/scrutiny programme for 2016/17.

#### **EXTERNAL AUDIT (KPMG)**

**5103 External Audit Progress Report and Technical Update** – Mrs J Rae (External Audit - KPMG) submitted a report providing an overview on progress in delivering KPMG's responsibilities as external auditors. At the end of each stage of the audit KPMG issued certain deliverables, including reports and opinions. A summary of progress against those deliverables was provided in Appendix 1 of the report. The report also highlighted the main technical issues that were currently having an impact in local government. The report had

previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5087 refers).

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

**INTERNAL AUDIT (MIAA)**

**5104 Director of Audit Opinion and Annual Report 2015/16** – Mrs Boyes (Internal Audit - MIAA) submitted the Director of Audit Opinion and Annual Report 2015/16. The purpose of the Director of Internal Audit Opinion was to contribute to the assurances available to the Accountable Officer and the Authority which underpin their own assessment of the effectiveness of the organisation’s system of internal control. The report indicated that the Auditor’s overall opinion was –

“Significant Assurance can be given that that there is a generally sound system of internal control designed to meet the organisation’s objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently. However, some weaknesses in the design or inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of particular objectives at risk and for which recommendations for improvement have been made.”

The report provided a summary of the outcomes of Internal Audit activity undertaken during the year (Appendix A); further information to consider when compiling the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) (Appendix B), and also assurance regarding the quality of MIAA’s service (Appendix C). The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5088 refers).

Members referred to paragraph 1.2 of the report setting out the Auditor’s opinion and sought clarification of the opinion. Mrs B Boyes reminded Members that individual review reports are considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and that for each review report there was an Action Plan which was subsequently reviewed. Mrs Boyes stated that it was the practice that those review reports are not normally submitted to the Authority unless there were significant issues raised. Members acknowledged that that was the arrangement but nevertheless Members of the Authority just required some further clarity.

**Resolved** – That Members note the Director of Audit Opinion and Annual Report for 2015/16 and request that future reports should include greater clarity in the summary statement in terms of actions recommended/corrective action taken to assist Member to understand the context of the report.

**5105 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 29 FEBRUARY 2016** - The Executive Director Service Support/Section 151 Officer submitted a report highlighting the current financial position based on information to 29 February 2016. The summary estimated outturn position for the current financial year based on information to 29 February 2016 was as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>2015/16 Outturn Projection</u>
Revenue Budget	£1.107m underspend
Capital Programme	£5.138m expenditure against £12.955m allocation
Pensions Account	£11.692m deficit

Further detail was contained within the additional information published alongside the Agenda papers for this meeting on the Authority’s website. The accounts had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5086 refers).

**Resolved** – That Members take assurance from the report and the Authority’s financial position for the period ending 29 February 2016.

**5106 DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2015/16** – The Executive Director Service Support/Section 151 Officer presented a joint report by the Monitoring Officer/Secretary, Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery and himself setting out a draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) in respect to 2015/16 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. Given the content of the Statement, it was considered desirable that the Authority should specifically review the AGS separate from the Annual Accounts, although the AGS would form part of the Annual Accounts once approved in July 2016. It was also desirable that Members receive the report in advance of the draft Annual Accounts at the June 2016 cycle of meetings. There was no model AGS, but rather the Guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) Finance Advisory Network sets out best practice in respect to the production of the AGS. In addition, guidance had also been set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE good governance framework. The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5089 refers).

**Resolved** – That the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16 be approved.

**5107 CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD** - The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery submitted a report reminding Members that the Customer Service Excellence Award (CSE), originally achieved in 2009, was re-certified on an annual basis subject to passing a compliance audit. The award covered a three year period with 2016 being a Year 2 re-validation based on five criteria listed in the report. 3. The re-validation audit for 2016 took place on 3rd February 2016 and it was pleasing to report that the award had been successfully retained for a further twelve months, with no partial or non-compliance issues identified. In summary the Assessor found:

- (a) High levels of customer focus and customer satisfaction throughout the Service;
- (b) Continuing development of strong partnership work with other public and voluntary sectors, adding real value to the community;
- (c) A culture of service improvement, despite the many financial and other pressures facing the service;
- (d) Strong focus on consultation and engagement with customers, demonstrating proactive and effective use of social media and responsiveness to customer requests, and
- (e) Commitment to the development and maintenance of local communities, both through core services, but also by making buildings accessible for community use.

The full report was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

**Resolved** – (a) That Members acknowledge the retention of the Award and take assurance from the on-going commitment to Customer Service Excellence, and

(b) that Members' congratulations be conveyed to those Officers involved in achieving the retention of the Award.

**5108 PERFORMANCE REPORTING AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2016/17** – The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery submitted a report providing information regarding the reporting of Service performance for the period 2016/17 and the proposed Service Performance Indicators and targets for that period which were included at Appendix 1 to the report. Performance against all of the Strategic Objectives will be monitored and retrospectively reported to the Authority (HFA) on a quarterly basis following scrutiny by the Governance Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The Authority will receive three quarterly reports, followed by the Annual Performance Report which will incorporate performance information from the fourth quarter.

This was in line with the reporting of performance for 2015/16 and the Annual Performance Report for that period, which will be presented to Members at the July 2016 meeting. The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5090 refers). The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery drew Members' attention to paragraph 10 of the report regarding the Community Protection Unit (CPU) level Performance and Risk meetings and reminded Members that they were welcome to attend these quarterly meetings.

Members referred to Appendix 1 and sought clarification regarding performance levels in 2015/16 in respect to the target for total accidental fires in 2016/17 and staff absences. A Member suggested that it would help Members monitor the situation regarding staff absences if performance against SPI 24 was reported to every meeting of the Authority. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery answered Members' queries and reminded Members that performance data was reported quarterly to the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the Authority

**Resolved** – (a) That Members endorse the approach for reporting performance and approve the Service Performance Indicators and Targets for 2016/17;

(b) that performance in respect of SPI 24 (staff absences) be reported to every meeting of the Authority, and

(c) that Members commend the professionalism of the Brigade's firefighters on the excellent response standards achieved.

**5109 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary reported orally that that it was good practice that the Constitution of the Authority should be subject to an annual review but that it was considered that no substantive changes were necessary at the present time. The matter had been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5085 refers).

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

**5110 USE OF DELEGATED POWERS UNDER FIRE AUTHORITY CONSTITUTION BY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE** - The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive presented a report by the Monitoring Officer/Secretary providing details of the decisions he had taken during 2015/16 to vary the establishment under his delegated powers within the Fire Authority Constitution. The report had previously been considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 5084 refers).

**Resolved** – That the report be noted and that Members take assurance that the Scheme of Delegations has been properly exercised.

**5111 FIRE AND RESCUE MARINE RESPONSE – IMPACT OF CHANGES IN TRAINING PROVISION** – The Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director Service Delivery submitted a report indicating that the Authority had no statutory duty to attend vessels on fire 'at sea' (outside of the Humber Estuary or beyond the low water mark), but the Authority did have a power to do so. The Service, along with a very small number of other Fire and Rescue Services, do currently attend incidents at sea, as part of the Fire and Rescue Marine Response (FRMR) group nationally. However, recent restrictions on the provision of suitable training to the firefighters that volunteer to undertake that role meant that it was likely that the Service will have to stop attending incidents 'at sea' by August 2016. The report explained the reasons behind that, and the steps being taken to try and resolve the issue so that the Authority can continue to provide this valuable service.

In terms of implications the report indicated that the Humber Community Risk Register identifies a Medium Risk (HL34) of a "fire ... involving a passenger vessel in or close to UK waters", and that Members should be aware that unless the training situation changes there will be no fire fighting capability provided by this Service to mitigate that risk

outside of the estuary. It was not known at this stage whether other Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) will be able to respond to incidents immediately outside of the estuary long term as the other five FRS which provide the UK response are facing the same training restrictions as HFRS and may also be considering their positions. The Service will still be able to deliver the Authority's statutory duty to respond to incidents in the estuary, although the transfer to the vessel will take place via tug rather than helicopter.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer had raised this issue with the Local Resilience Forum, and as a result the Government's Resilience and Emergencies Directorate were considering the impact. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer had also raised the issue, and other issues related to the transport back from incidents for firefighters with the national co-ordinator and the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) lead officer for Fire & Rescue Maritime Response (FRMR), and had requested a Strategic level meeting between Principal Officers from the nine Services currently providing an "at sea" response. The CFOA lead officer had arranged a meeting with the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) and will be discussing the issues, with them and was also endeavouring to arrange a meeting at Ministerial level to discuss the implications, and had agreed to arrange the Strategic meeting after those discussions have taken place. The issues were also on the agenda for the national FRMR meeting on 25/26 April 2016, attended by the Service Emergency Preparedness Manager, Station Manager Leake. It was hoped that the outcome of these meetings and discussions will result in a change of position regarding the provision of training to firefighters, and ideally the transport back from incidents, and that as a result the Authority will be able to continue providing a response to vessel fires at sea. However if the position does not change Officers are of the opinion that the safety of firefighters will be compromised by the lack of available training to such an extent that, as a result, HFRS will reluctantly have to withdraw from providing a response to vessel fires at sea.

**Resolved** – (a) That Members endorse the steps being taken so far by Officers, and  
(b) that Members receive a report at a future meeting of the Authority, prior to August 2016, with a further update of the position.

**5112 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS/PUBLIC - Resolved** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item (Minute 5113) 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).*

*(It was recorded that 1 Member had voted against the above decision (Minute 5112) and 1 Member had abstained.)*

**5113 EAST HULL INTEGRATED CARE CENTRE** – The Director of Service Support presented a joint report by the Director of Emergency Response and himself reminding Members that the Authority on 11 December 2015 had approved in principle to proceed with the relocation of the existing East Hull station within the proposed East Hull Integrated Care Centre (ICC) on the site of the former David Lister School. The report now submitted sought to both satisfy specific issues raised by the Authority at that meeting and approve the scheme moving forward. Relocation within the ICC will facilitate greater integration between the Fire Service and health, social care and the voluntary sector and will allow the Service to further enhance its ability to protect those most vulnerable within its communities whilst ensuring that the Authority makes the very best use of its resources.

**Resolved** - That Members approve the proposal to re-locate the existing East Hull station with a new fit for purpose facility within the proposed East Hull ICC.

*Meeting closed at 11.26 am*