

**MATTERS ARISING -
FIRE AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

SUMMARY

1. This report consolidates certain matters seeking an Authority decision arising from the AGM of the Authority and the meeting of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 11 June 2013. Members may find it helpful to capture those matters arising in a single report.
2. Members are asked to consider this report and should read the relevant draft meeting minutes for further background and the reports elsewhere on this Agenda in respect to the HFR Solutions (CIC).

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The Fire Authority is asked to:
 - (a) consider and determine its representation at the HFR Solutions (CIC);
 - (b) consider the appointment of a Vice Chair of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee;
 - (c) consider the term of office of Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

HFR SOLUTIONS (CIC)

4. The Authority established a trading company during early 2012 in the form of a Community Interest Company [HFR Solutions (CIC)]. The Company is a local authority controlled company comprising three Officer Directors and reporting to the Corporate Management Team and in turn accountable to the Fire Authority. There has been some previous debate around Elected Member representation on the Board of the CIC, whether in an advisory or simply observer role. It was decided that Members preferred to attend Board meetings, but not as Directors. To that end nominations were sought for two Members, one North Bank and one South Bank. As time has moved on, in discussion with Members at the March 2013 Member Day, it was decided to put the matter of Elected Member attendance to the Annual General Meeting. To that end the Authority should clarify the role and also agree nominations as it sees fit.
5. At the AGM the Authority considered the appointment of its Members to certain bodies, one of which was the CIC.
6. Members are referred to minute 4137 and the debate which took place at the AGM.
7. Following discussion by Members, it was decided to defer consideration to the next meeting of the Authority.

8. The view of the Secretary remains as set out in the draft minutes but ultimately it is a matter for the Authority to decide. The Authority must be satisfied that there exists good governance and accountability arrangements in place and the report later in the agenda in respect to HFR Solutions (CIC) is intended to provide further assurance to the Authority.
9. Members may wish to note the paper concerning the CIC which were considered by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the recommendation from the Committee that it would be preferable that Elected Members do not become Directors of the Company.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR OF GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10. At its meeting on the 11 June 2013, the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee also decided to seek the Authority's approval to the appointment of a Vice Chair.
11. The Constitution does not provide for the appointment of a Vice Chair (other than in respect to the Authority) but nor does it preclude it. This is entirely a matter for the Authority. The previous practice of committees was that there was no Vice Chair and in the absence of the Chair then a Member was nominated to take the Chair for that particular meeting. There is no allowance in the current scheme payable in respect to a Vice Chair of a committee.

TERM OF OFFICE – INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBERS

12. The decision of the Fire Authority at its April meeting was:
 - (a) the continuation of the existing governance structure for 2013/14;
 - (b) that the membership of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee shall continue to comprise 8 Independent Co-opted Members and that accordingly:
 - (i) the vacancy caused by the resignation of Ms J Marr should be filled and the Secretary/Director of People be authorised to commence the process to seek a new Member of the Committee;
 - (ii) in respect to the four recently appointed Independent Co-opted Members of the Committee, namely:

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

their second year of an initial three year term be confirmed until the end of April 2014;
 - (iii) the period of appointment of the three 'continuing Co-opted Members' (from the previous Governance and Standards and Audit, Performance and Scrutiny Committees), namely:

Mrs G Hardy
Mr D Hughes and
Mr J Jepson

be extended for a further year from the end of April 2013 to the end of April 2014, and

(iv) that the Authority further reviews the Committee in April 2014.

13. Primarily this was because the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, while receiving accolades in the Peer Assessment and Sir Ken Knight's visit, is very much in its infancy and had been in place for six months before the Authority review. As such, the Authority decided to review the Committee further in April 2014, resulting in an extension of a year to three continuing co-opted Members:- Mr Hughes (now in eighth year as a co-opted Member), Mrs Hardy (now in fifth year as a co-opted Member) and Mr Jepson (now in sixth year as a co-opted Member). And in respect to the new Members of the Committee, to confirm for a further year subject to that review (the intention had been a three or four year initial term).

14. At the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 11th June 2013 (minute 4146 refers), the Committee requested that the Authority review its decision in respect to the recently appointed Members and confirm their term of office beyond the next review planned for April 2014. This is a matter entirely for the Fire Authority to determine.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

15. No direct relevance.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

16. None arising directly.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. As set out above.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

18. None arising directly.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

19. Having in place strong governance arrangements underpins effective risk management.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

20. None.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

21. None arising directly.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

22. None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

23. Draft minutes of Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee and AGM on the agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

24. The Fire Authority is asked to:

- (a) consider and determine its representation at the HFR Solutions (CIC);
- (b) consider the appointment of a Vice Chair of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee;
- (c) consider the term of office of Independent Co-opted Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

R GRAHAM

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RG/SJ
13 June 2013