

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 18 December 2017 at 10.00 am in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton

MINUTES

PRESENT:

F De Molfetta (Chairman)

Councillors

L Beavers	A Kay
P Britcliffe	M Khan
I Brown	Z Khan
S Clarke	T Martin
D Coleman	D O'Toole
J Eaton	M Parkinson (Vice-Chair)
N Hennessy	D Smith
S Holgate	M Tomlinson
D Howarth	G Wilkins
F Jackson	T Williams

35/17 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

CC Wilkins suggested and it was agreed that a letter of condolence be sent on behalf of the Authority to the family of Firefighter Cory Iverson who had sadly died on the previous Thursday of burns and smoke inhalation while attending what had been reported as the third-largest wildfire in California history.

36/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors: Oades, Perks, Shedwick and Stansfield.

37/17 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

38/17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 18 September 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

39/17 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2017 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the Performance Committee held 14 September 2017 be noted.

40/17 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2017 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

It was noted that at the meeting Debt Restructuring had been considered (resolution 22/17 refers); and it was acknowledged that this was an item for further debate later on the agenda.

In response to a question raised by CC Eaton the Chairman confirmed that the meeting referred to under the part 2 Car Allowances – Tax Implications item had not taken place due to insufficient information (resolution 27/17 refers). This had however been discussed at the following Resources Committee, the minutes of which were later on the agenda.

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the Resources Committee held 27 September 2017 be noted.

41/17 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2017 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

In response to a question raised by CC O’Toole in relation to External Audit – Audit Findings Report (resolution 14/17 refers), the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the auditors had identified an issue in the way the Authority’s share of North West Fire Control had been reflected in the statement of accounts. This was not a significant issue however it was recommended inclusion for forthcoming years to ensure full compliance with accounting standards.

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the Audit Committee held 28 September 2017 be noted.

42/17 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2017 OF NORTH WEST FIRE FORUM

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the North West Fire & Rescue Forum held 18 October 2017 be noted.

43/17 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2017 OF STRATEGY GROUP

The Chief Fire Officer advised that notification had been received from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services that Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service would be inspected in the first tranche of inspections due in the summer of 2018. He confirmed that the Service continued its preparations and Members would be kept informed of progress.

RESOLVED: - That the Notes of Strategy Group held 6 November 2017 be noted.

44/17 MINUTES OF MEETING, WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2017 OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED: - That the Notes of the Member Training & Development Working Group held 8 November 2017 be noted.

45/17 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2017 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE INCLUDING EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW 2017

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, CC Parkinson advised that the Committee had approved the purchase of 2 AT Stinger (Water Tower) vehicles. The Chairman confirmed that 1 vehicle was being used currently and the other was expected to be purchased in approximately 12 months' time. The vehicles would be used at Blackburn and Skelmersdale stations.

RESOLVED: - That:

- i) The Minutes of the Planning Committee held 27 November 2017 be noted;
- ii) The Emergency Cover Review proposals be approved:
 - a. A no change ECR in relation to LFRS's 58 Fire Appliances and the associated crewing arrangements;
 - b. Pre-alerting as a policy position including the commissioning of further work to identify the potential benefits of a Dynamic Cover Tool; and
 - c. The principle that LFRS extend its collaborative response arrangements.

46/17 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2017 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the Resources Committee held 29 November 2017 be noted and that the Car Allowance – Tax Implications Update be considered further as a part 2 Urgent Business item later on the agenda.

47/17 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2017 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the Performance Committee held 30 November 2017 be noted.

48/17 CAPITAL BUDGET 2018/19 - 2022/23

With regard to both the draft capital and revenue budgets, the Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer advised that when the Fire Service had been initially set up there was an Authority meeting held each December to notify the constituent Authorities of the levy however, when the Authority became a precepting Authority, although not necessary, this principle had continued particularly given the financial information had been provided by the Government each year in November. However, over the past couple of years that position had changed significantly with the financial statement being issued later and later in the year. This had made the production of meaningful reports to this meeting increasingly more difficult. The Director of Corporate Services advised that he would bring a report to a future meeting for Member consideration of whether to continue the practice of providing draft reports in December or to consider an alternative.

The Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer presented the draft capital programme 2018/19 – 2022/23.

Capital Budget Strategy

The Authority's capital strategy was designed to ensure that the Authority's capital

investment:-

- Assisted in delivering the corporate objectives;
- Supported priorities identified in asset management plans;
- Ensured statutory requirements were met, i.e. Health and Safety issues;
- Supported the Medium Term Financial Strategy by ensuring all capital investment decisions considered the future impact on revenue budgets;
- Represented value for money.

Capital Requirements

Capital expenditure was expenditure on major assets such as new buildings, significant building modifications and major pieces of equipment/vehicles.

The Service had developed asset management plans which assisted in identifying the long-term capital requirements. These plans, together with the operational equipment register had been used to assist in identifying total requirements and the relevant priorities. The report set out the detailed capital programme as summarised in the table below: -

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Vehicles	2.428	1.648	1.968	1.173	1.169	8.385
Operational Equipment	-	1.000	-	0.895	0.100	1.995
Buildings	4.140	2.500	1.500	-	-	8.140
IT Equipment	0.270	0.765	0.560	0.100	-	1.695
Total	6.838	5.913	4.028	2.168	1.269	20.215

No allowance had been included for the potential relocation of SHQ, as this project was currently on hold however this would be revisited in 2018/19 in line with the Authority's previous decision.

Capital Funding

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the Local Government finance settlement was not currently available but he felt it was likely to include any capital grant allocation for the Fire Service nationally hence no allowance was included.

The report set out the level of capital funding available as summarised in the table below: -

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	-	-	0.876	0.168	-	1.044
Capital Reserves	4.838	3.913	1.152	-	(0.732)	9.171
Revenue Contributions	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	10.000
	6.838	5.913	4.028	2.168	1.268	20.215

Summary Programme

The summary of the programme, in terms of requirements and available funding, are set out below:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Requirements	6.838	5.913	4.028	2.168	1.269	20.215
Capital Funding	6.838	5.923	4.028	2.168	1.269	20.215
Surplus/(Shortfall)	-	-	-	-	-	-

Over the next five years the capital programme was currently balanced without a need for any new borrowing. However it was noted that any significant additional items would potentially result in a need to borrow in the future. It was also noted that the following assumptions could change as follows:-

- Operational Communications replacements (ESMCP) were subject to a great deal of uncertainty;
- Capital grant may be made available in future years, in order to assist service transformation and greater collaboration;
- The further introduction of Water Towers was subject to a review and vehicle requirements could be amended;
- New Dimensions vehicle replacements were expected to be carried out by CLG, however this position may change;
- All operational equipment item replacements were at estimated costs and would be subject to proper costings nearer the time;
- ICT software replacements were based largely on the ICT asset management plan, and were subject to review prior to replacement, which has led in the past to significant slippage.

The programme was balanced, and as such was considered prudent, sustainable and affordable. However, should any of the funding assumptions or expenditure items within the programme change; this would have an impact on the overall affordability of the programme.

Impact on the Revenue budget

It was noted that the capital programme and its funding directly impacted on the revenue budget in terms of capital financing charges and in terms of the revenue contribution to capital outlay. Based on the provisional 4 year settlement and the assumptions included within it, the position in respect of the revenue budget appeared sustainable until at least March 2020. Dependent upon future funding the revenue contribution to capital may come under increasing pressure, or alternatively if the Authority needed to borrow to meet future capital requirements this would impact the revenue budget as capital financing charges, the scale of which would depend upon the type of asset the borrowing was charged against, as it was linked to the life of assets.

Prudential Indicators

The Authority was required to calculate various prudential indicators to demonstrate that the proposed capital programme was affordable, prudent and sustainable. These had not yet been calculated, but would be included in the Authority report in February.

In response to CC O'Toole who stated that he had supported the early relocation of Service Headquarters to Service Training Centre to remove the duplication of effort and provide a better working environment for staff, the Chairman advised that the decision to relocate had been postponed at the time due to uncertainty surrounding funding and the national direction for Fire & Rescue Authorities / Services both in terms of collaboration and the potential for different governance changes, such as the involvement of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The Chief Fire Officer advised that detailed a report would be presented to Members next year.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the draft Capital Programme 2018/19 - 2022/23 be noted;
- (ii) That the Authority authorised consultation with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers and Trade Unions on the budget proposals;
- (iii) That the Authority would give further consideration to the capital budget at their next meeting on 19 February 2018, in light of the consultation process;
- (iv) That the Authority approved the removal of £1.25m in respect of training assets from the 2017/18 capital budget, having noted that this was now incorporated into the 5-year programme as presented.

49/17 REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19 - 2022/23

The Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer presented the draft revenue budget for 2018/19-2022/23 and the resultant council tax implications.

In line with the Authority's objective to deliver affordable, value for money services the Authority's Budget Strategy remained one of:-

- Maintaining future council tax increases at reasonable levels, reducing if possible;
- Continuing to deliver efficiencies in line with targets;
- Continuing to invest in improvements in service delivery;
- Continuing to invest in improving facilities;
- Setting a robust budget;
- Maintaining an adequate level of reserves.

Draft Budget

In order to determine the future budget requirement, the Authority had used the approved 2017/18 budget as a starting point and had uplifted this for inflation and other known changes and pressures to arrive at a draft budgetary requirement, prior to utilising any reserves, as set out below:-

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Preceding Years Draft Net Budget Requirement	53.9	54.5	55.9	57.7	59.8
Add back Previous Years Vacancy Factors	1.2	1.7	0.4	0.6	0.6
Inflation	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.9	2.0
Other Pay Pressures	(0.4)	0.3	0.8	0.3	-
Committed Variations	0.1	0.1	-	-	-
Growth	1.3	(1.0)	0.1	-	-
Efficiency Savings	(0.8)	(0.3)	(0.1)	-	-
Vacancy Factors	(1.7)	(0.4)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.5)
Net Budget Requirement	54.5	55.9	57.7	59.8	61.9

In relation to inflationary pressures the Director of Corporate Services advised that a 1% allowance had been built in for all pay-awards for 2017/18-2019/20. However since the publication of the report there had been an offer of a 2% pay award for green book staff.

In addition, it was noted for grey book staff that the NJC had offered a 2% award in 2017/18 and identified a further potential award of 3% in 2018/19 subject to further funding being made available. This had subsequently been withdrawn on the back of the current pay discussions, but did give a strong indication that the 1% increase included in the budget may not be sufficient; which presented an ongoing uncertainty for grey book pay awards.

It was noted that the 2020/21 budget allowed for a 2.5% pay award in 2021/22 and 3.6% in 2022/23 and non-pay inflation averaged 2.5% each year.

Each 1% pay award in excess of the above assumptions equated to an additional cost of £340k per year for grey book personnel, and if this was mirrored for green book personnel an additional £70k. Therefore assuming a 2% pay award for grey book in 2017/18, and a 2% pay award for all staff in 2018/19 this would increase the 2018/19 budget by £0.6m. A further 2% pay award for all staff in 2019/20 would add in a further £0.4m to this figure (i.e. a total additional budget of £1.0m in 2019/20 and each subsequent year).

Grant Funding

As a major precepting authority the Authority received funding in the form of:-

2017/18	
Settlement Funding Assessment (Grant)	
Revenue Support Grant, direct from the Government	£10.7m
Individual Authority Business Rates Baseline	£4.1m
Business Rates Top-Up, from the Government	£10.5m
Business Rates collection fund deficit	(£0.2m)
Section 31 Grant - Business Rates Capping	£0.5m
	£25.6m
Council Tax	
Council Tax	£27.8m
Council Tax collection fund surplus	£0.5m
	£28.3m
Total Funding	£53.9m

It was noted that the Local Government finance settlement was awaited and that future funding was based on the four year settlement figures previously identified, with an assumption that funding was frozen thereafter.

The Government remained committed to Local Authorities retaining 100% of business rates by 2020/21, but details were not available as to how this would work and what the impact on the fire sector would be, and hence for the purpose of financial planning it had been assumed that this would be cost neutral.

Funding projections would be updated once the Local Government Finance Settlement provided further details which were anticipated in late December, and as Billing Authorities provided more detail regarding business rates.

Council Tax

In setting the council tax, the Authority aimed to balance the public's requirement for our services with the cost of providing this. As such the underlying principle of any increase in council tax was that this must be seen as reasonable within the context of service provision.

The Authority became a precepting authority on 1 April 2004. Since this our council tax increases have been limited by either capping or the current referendum thresholds set by the Government. As such our council tax increases and hence budget increases have been constrained by these and our desire to deliver value for money services, culminating in a council tax freeze between 2011/12-2014/15, a 1.90% increase in 2015/16, 1.0% in 2016/17 and a freeze last year. Our council tax of £65.50 was still below the national average of £72.80 (being the 8th lowest out of 29 Authorities), and our increase of just 2.90% over the last 6 years (2011/12-2017/18) compared with an average increase of 10.50% over the same period and was the joint lowest of any Fire Authority.

The latest consultation document on the 2018/19 Local Government Finance Settlement maintained the council tax referendum principle of any increase being lower than 2%, otherwise a referendum would be triggered.

It was worth noting that as part of the consultation the Fire sector as a whole made representations on the council tax referendum principles, proposing that the same flexibility be provided to the Fire Sector as to District Councils and Police and Crime Commissioners in the lower quartile, namely an ability to raise council tax by a maximum of £5. The Home Office had confirmed that Lancashire was in the lower quartile for council tax. Dependent upon the outcome of the current consultation process and the final pay awards agreed this flexibility may be required in future years.

Council Tax-Base

It was assumed that the council tax base continued to grow at the rate of 1.75% per year in line with historic trends.

In terms of the council tax collection fund, draft figures were still awaited from billing authorities, and hence an allowance for a £500k surplus each year had been included, which again was broadly in line with recent years.

Both the tax base and collection fund deficit would be updated once figures were received from billing authorities.

Draft Council Tax Requirements

Members noted the draft council tax requirements as presented: -

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Draft Budget Requirement	54.5	55.9	57.7	59.8	61.9
Less Total Grant	(24.6)	(24.3)	(24.3)	(24.3)	(24.3)
Council Tax Collection Surplus	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)
Equals Precept	29.4	31.1	32.9	35.0	37.1
Estimated Number of Band D equivalent properties	432,464	440,032	447,733	455,568	463,540
Equates to Council Tax Band D Property	£67.93	£70.64	£73.47	£76.86	£79.97
Increase in Council Tax	3.7%	4.0%	4.0%	4.6%	4.0%

(For information, a 1% change to the council tax equated to £0.285m.)

It was noted that the increases were all above the referendum limit. In order to set a budget within the existing draft referendum principles i.e. limit council tax increases to 2%, the budget requirement would need to reduce each year by:-

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
A 2% increase in council tax each year	(£0.5m)	(£1.1m)	(£1.8m)	(£2.7m)	(£3.6m)

Freezing council tax in 2018/19 would increase the gap by £0.5m each year.

As highlighted earlier if pay awards were higher than the 1% allowed for in the budget then the funding gaps would increase. Assuming a 2% pay award for grey book in 2017/18, and a 2% pay award for all staff in 2018/19 would increase the 2018/19 budget gap by £0.6m. A further 2% pay award for all staff in 2019/20 would add in a further £0.4m to this figure i.e. a total additional budget gap of £1.0m in 2019/20 and each subsequent year. However until such time as a more definitive position emerged this had not been allowed for in the budget.

Reserves

An accurate review of future reserve requirements would be undertaken, and reported to the Authority's budget setting meeting in February. However, in order to give an overview of this area, a minimum uncommitted reserve requirement of £2.8m was identified last year. At 31 March 2018 it was anticipated that the Authority would hold £8.4m at the end of the current year, providing scope to utilise approx. £5.6m of reserves. As such they could be used to meet the funding gap across the remainder of the four year settlement period, as well as offset some of the gap in future years.

The position would change significantly if pay awards were higher than anticipated or if funding changed.

For comparative purposes the usable reserves set out in the report at 31 March 2018 were forecast at £28.6m, 52.5% of our turnover, which compared with a sector average of 47%. However within usable reserves were £4.0m of PFI reserve and without this the overall reserve percentage would reduce to 45% which was in line with the sector average. Not only that, the draft capital programme showed a significant proportion of reserves being used in the next 2 years, reducing this figure down to approx. 30% by March 2020.

Summary Council Tax options 2018/19

Based on the scenarios outlined, and specifically allowing for a 1% pay award, the council tax options for 2018/19 were as follows:-

	2% Increase	Freeze
	£m	£m
Gross Budget Requirement	54.5	54.5
Utilisation of reserves/additional savings	(0.5)	(1.0)
Final Budget Requirement	54.0	53.5
Less Revenue Support Grant & Baseline Funding	(24.4)	(24.4)

Less Section 31 Grant re Business Rates Capping	(0.5)	(0.5)
Add Business Rates Collection Deficit	0.2	0.2
Less Council Tax Collection Surplus	(0.5)	(0.5)
Equals Precept	28.9	28.4
Estimated Number of Band D equivalent properties	432,464	432,464
Equates to Council Tax Band D Property	£66.80	£65.50
Increase in Council Tax	1.99%	0.00%

It was noted that a 2% increase equated to an additional £1.30 council tax for a band D property per annum, £0.03 per week.

The draft budget showed the Authority being able to set a balanced budget in 2018/19, based on the draft 4 year settlement. It was noted that this was based on a 1% pay award being agreed for both 2017/18 and 2018/19, any pay award in excess of this would build in additional costs which may, or may not, be met with additional funding.

A final revenue budget would be presented to the Authority in February 2018, for formal approval.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the draft Revenue Budget be noted as presented;
- (ii) That the Authority authorise consultation with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers and Trade Unions on the budget proposals;
- (iii) That the Authority gives further consideration to the revenue budget at their next meeting on the 19th February 2018, in light of the consultation process.

50/17 DEBT RESTRUCTURING

The Director of Corporate Services advised that a report was submitted to the Resources Committee on 27 September which provided information on the impact of repaying loans. As a result the Committee agreed to pay off all loans that matured in the next 10 years. Subsequently on 5 October loans of £3.184m were repaid which incurred a penalty charge of £0.636m. Therefore the outstanding PWLB balance was reduced to £2.330m. Of this £0.330m was due to mature in December 2017 and was not repaid as PWLB did not normally accept repayments for loans with less than one year to maturity. Therefore the estimated balance at the end of the financial year was £2m with a maturity profile and interest rate applicable of:-

Loan Amount	Maturity Date	Interest rate
£650k	December 2035	4.49%
£650k	June 2036	4.49%
£700k	June 2037	4.48%

Following the change in base rate to 0.5% in November the Resources Committee requested that a revised position should be presented to this Authority meeting.

The level of penalty applicable on early repayment of loans had been reviewed again and now stood at £877k compared with the penalty applicable in September of £971k. (As previously reported the level of penalty was dependent upon two factors, the difference between the interest chargeable on the loan and current interest rates, the greater this difference the greater the penalty, and the length to maturity, the greater the remaining time of the loan the greater the penalty. Hence, as interest rates increase or as loans got closer to maturity the level of penalty would reduce.) This compared with the outstanding interest payable between now and maturity of £1.684k. This gave a gross saving of £807k. However, any early repayment meant that cash balances available for investment would be reduced and hence interest receivable would also be reduced. The extent of which was dependent upon future interest rates.

Comparisons utilising i) the updated base rate of 0.5%; ii) current gilt rates; and iii) demonstrating a breakeven position were considered as set out in the report. If returns on investments over the next 20 years exceeded 1.49% it was financially disadvantageous to pay off the loans, if interest rate averages less than 1.49% it was financially advantageous. It was noted that other than during the current financial crisis interest rates had never been as such a low rate. If, as seemed likely, interest rates proved to be higher than this then the early repayment of debt resulted in a worse overall financial position.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the current PWLB loan rates were 1.77% for a 5-year loan; 2.25% for a 10-year loan and 2.74% for a 20-year loan, all higher than the breakeven position.

Ultimately any decision regarding early repayment of debt relied on future interest rates which could not be known with any degree of certainty, hence there was always a risk that any decision would be incorrect. Paying off debt early gave certainty, it enabled all costs to be met in the current year and eliminated the interest payable budget in future years, reducing the pressure on the revenue budget. The Authority had sufficient cash balances to meet any repayment costs, still having £365k of an earmarked reserve to offset a proportion of any penalty costs associated with this, with any balance being met from either the revenue budget or from a drawdown against the general reserve. The draft capital budget did not show any additional borrowing being required in the next 5 years however, any major additional item of capital expenditure could impact on that position.

Members discussed whether to repay the remaining 3 loans, whether it would be feasible to consolidate the 3 loans into 1 at a lower rate and whether it would be beneficial to reconsider after a decision had been taken on the future relocation of Service headquarters in order to minimise the need to take out future borrowing.

RESOLVED: - The Authority agreed not to repay the remaining 3 loans at this time.

51/17 CORPORATE SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers must prepare, and where necessary revise, a written statement of health and safety policy. The existing safety, health and environment policy document, which was last considered by the Authority in September 2016, had been recently reviewed, amended as required, and was now presented to Members for consideration.

As the health and safety and environment functions were managed in a similar way it was considered appropriate for the Authority to declare its intent for both health and safety and the environment in the same document.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority endorse the revised Safety, Health and Environment Policy as now presented.

52/17 MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY - QUARTERLY REPORT

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007. A review of the areas of focus for member Champions was considered at the Authority meeting held in June 2017 where new areas of responsibility were discussed and agreed as follows: -

- Community Safety – CC Mark Perks
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Cllr Zamir Khan;
- Health and Wellbeing – CC Tony Martin;
- Road Safety – Cllr Fred Jackson.

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a quarterly basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period up to November 2017. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference.

Member Champions thanked lead officers and staff members for their support and excellent work during the period.

Cllr Jackson encouraged Members and Senior Officers who had not attended a Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) event recently to do so in order to show their support for this important work. CC Hennessy advised that she had attended a recent SDSA event in Blackpool and she was very moved by it. She also urged Members to use their links to raise awareness of this work particularly with educational establishments in their districts and was pleased to report an event was being organised for Edge Hill University.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.

53/17 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 September 2017 to 1 December 2017 was provided. There were 4 prosecutions pending under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire protection and business support information was provided and Members noted that there were 2 arson convictions during the period.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted the report.

54/17 COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

This report included information for the 2 Unitary and 12 District Authorities relating to Fire Safety Initiatives and Fires and Incidents of particular interest.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted the report.

55/17 MEMBER COMPLAINTS (STANDING ITEM)

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that there had been no complaints since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

56/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 19 February 2018 at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.

57/17 URGENT BUSINESS - CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FRA COMBINATION SCHEME ORDER

Mr Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer apologised for the late urgent business item that brought to the Authority's attention the commencement of a consultation process on 27 November 2017 which was initiated by the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service.

The Government consultation sought to vary combination schemes of Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities to enable the application of the 'representation model' (referred to in the Policing and Crime Act 2017); this would enable Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities to appoint Police and Crime Commissioners to be represented with voting rights, where the Authority had agreed.

The consultation was due to end on 15 January 2018. The Police and Crime Commissioner would only be appointed to the Authority with voting rights in response to a request by the Commissioner. If such a request was made the Authority must: i) consider the request; ii) give reasons for its decision to agree or refuse the request; and iii) publish those reasons in a manner it considered appropriate. The substantive question was whether the Fire Authority agreed with the proposal to amend the combination scheme to enable the implementation of the representation model.

Members discussed the proposal and different views were expressed. Some Members were concerned that the Government's intention to enable further integration allowed for the potential takeover by the Police and Crime Commissioner when the Authority, which was a democratic body, was already working well for the benefit of the people of Lancashire. Concern was also expressed that this would enable the Police and Crime Commissioner to have a vote which would affect the political balance of the Authority.

Conversely, some Members thought it would be a positive opportunity for the Police and Crime Commissioner to attend Authority meetings to gain a better understanding

of the work of the Fire Authority and evidence the level of collaboration particularly for the Inspection next year.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that benefits for the community of collaboration between Lancashire Police and LFRS included: Gaining Entry, Missing Persons and use of the Drone. He confirmed that a Memorandum of Understanding between both organisations was currently being drafted and meetings between senior officers and senior managers to look for opportunities for synergy had already taken place.

CC Howarth MOVED the recommendation as outlined in the report; to respond to the consultation with a “yes”- to agree with the proposed amendments to vary the combination schemes of Fire and Rescue Authorities in order to implement the ‘representation model’ which was SECONDED by CC De Molfetta.

A recorded vote was requested by CC Wilkins and the names of Members who voted for or against the motion are set out below:

For (15)

L Beavers, I Brown, S Clarke, D Coleman, F De Molfetta, N Hennessy, S Holgate, D Howarth, F Jackson, M Khan, Z Khan, T Martin, M Parkinson, D Smith and M Tomlinson.

Against (6)

P Britcliffe, J Eaton, A Kay, D O’Toole, G Wilkins and T Williams.

No Members abstained.

The motion was therefore CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED: That the Authority authorised the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to respond to the consultation with a “yes” to agree with the proposed amendments to vary the combination schemes of Fire and Rescue Authorities in order to implement the ‘representation model’.

58/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: - that the press and members of the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.

59/17 URGENT BUSINESS - RESOURCES COMMITTEE PART 2 ITEM, CAR ALLOWANCE - TAX IMPLICATIONS UPDATE REPORT

(Paragraphs 2 and 3)

Uniformed Officers of the Service were not present for this item.

At the request of CC O’Toole during earlier consideration by the Authority of the Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held 29 November 2017 (resolution 46/17 refers), it was agreed that the Car Allowance – Tax Implications Update Report

be discussed as a part 2 urgent business item.

For the benefit of Members who were not present at the Resources Committee CC O'Toole explained the detail behind the decision to accept the financial implications up to the cut over date of 1 January 2018. He confirmed that he continued to be opposed to that decision.

The Chairman, CC F De Molfetta confirmed that the decision had been taken in a democratic manner.

CC Britcliffe MOVED that the Resources Committee decision be reversed which was SECONDED by CC S Clarke.

CC F De Molfetta requested that a recorded vote be held. The names of Members who voted for or against the motion are set out below:

For (7)

P Britcliffe, I Brown, S Clarke, J Eaton, D O'Toole, G Wilkins and T Williams.

Against (13)

L Beavers, D Coleman, F De Molfetta, N Hennessy, S Holgate, F Jackson, A Kay, M Khan, Z Khan, T Martin, M Parkinson, D Smith and M Tomlinson.

Abstained (1)

D Howarth.

On being put to the vote 7 were in favour, 13 were against and there was 1 abstention therefore the motion was lost and it was

RESOLVED: that the decision by the Resources Committee (resolution 39/16 refers) be upheld.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood