

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 13 September 2021 at 10.00 am in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton

MINUTES

PRESENT:

D O'Toole (Chairman)

Councillors

J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)

L Beavers

S Clarke

M Dad

N Hennessy

K Iddon

F Jackson

A Kay

H Khan

Z Khan

G Mirfin

S Morris

M Pattison

J Rigby

P Rigby

S Serridge

J Singleton

D Smith

T Williams

R Woollam

21-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors P Britcliffe, D Haworth and J Mein and Councillor J Hugo.

22-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

23-20/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 28 June 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

24-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 1 JULY 2021 OF STRATEGY GROUP

The Chairman took the opportunity to encourage Members to attend meetings of the Strategy Group as these were very informative.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Strategy Group held on 1 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

25-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 7 JULY 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Chairman raised a question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried how the proposed increase in maternity pay provisions to 26 weeks full pay, as referred to in paragraph 3 on page 14 of the agenda pack, compared with other Fire Authorities. In response the Chief Fire Officer advised that the report proposed an enhancement to the provision of maternity and paternity pay to all members of the Service and when compared with other Fire Services, this was in the top quartile of favourable policies across the sector. County Councillor Hennessy felt that 6 months was insufficient, suggesting a year be more appropriate particularly for a first child and where the Service wanted to encourage the retention of female firefighters. The Chief Fire Officer added that it would be possible after the policy had been adopted to reflect on its impact.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 7 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

26-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 12 JULY 2021 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chairman raised a question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried whether all Members would receive a copy of the strategic brief referred to in paragraph 2 on page 41 of the agenda pack. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the document prepared for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services was an internal document that set out the Service position in relation to key lines of enquiry and this would help shape the strategic briefing presentation for the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman to present to the HMI at the start of the inspection. The Clerk to the Authority advised that there were rules in relation to access to information. Where information would not normally be shared any written requests for access would be considered on a need to know and case by case basis.

The Chairman raised a further question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried the level of progress in relation to the 9 recommended changes to the protection workforce listed on page 44 of the agenda pack. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided reassurance that the first 5 recommendations had been completed with the remaining 4 ongoing, some of which related to training which would take some time to complete.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman regarding blue light collaboration, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that throughout the covid pandemic collaboration work had been concentrated through the Lancashire Resilience Forum and there remained some staff working in the vaccination centres. He advised that a review had been undertaken of the blue light collaboration proposals which had focussed on the Service and Lancashire Constabulary actions. A meeting had been held recently with Mr Gene Quinn, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) Interim Head of Service for Cumbria and

Lancashire and it was agreed that project leads would be asked to meet, refocus and draft a proposed forward plan. It was noted that the Service provided support to NWS and Lancashire Constabulary in gaining entry to premises in a medical emergency and there had been successful site sharing arrangements.

The Chairman commented that the Service had very capable staff who could be used as emergency first responders. This was a pilot from a number of years ago where the Service responded to a wide range of medical emergencies on behalf of NWS. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the pilot had not been extended following national terms and conditions negotiations, this was still an issue of interest among colleagues who were happy to respond in their communities and the positive efforts of staff who made life-saving interventions were very well documented.

In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman regarding support provided for missing persons and the availability of assets, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service operated under the Constabulary who had overall responsibility for missing persons. Assets available were staff who had received training, 58 fire engines, drone and canine provision. Positive feedback had been received from NWS that without support from the Service in locating missing persons outcomes might have been very different.

On behalf of the Authority the Chairman expressed pride and gratitude to staff and volunteers who had, and continued, to marshal and give vaccinations at covid centres.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 12 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

27-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 20 JULY 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 20 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

28-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 28 JULY 2021 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

In response to a comment from the Chairman, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that there had been a slight increase in recent months in Accidental Building Fires (non-dwellings) as detailed on page 63 of the agenda pack. There had also been an increase in deliberate fires in these types of premises. The Service worked closely with the Police with the outcome of any prosecutions reported later on the agenda.

The Chairman commented on the term 'accidental' which could only be determined following an investigation. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised on the work of the Incident Intelligence Officers and fire investigations, adding that it was intended to refresh the performance indicators alongside the Community Risk Management Plan for implementation April 2022.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 28 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

29-20/21 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 2019, 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.

The Chairman raised a question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried whether the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) "DECON – to prevent and protect" information for firefighters to better protect themselves would be included in the policy document. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that a lot of work had been done regarding contamination and when Anna Stec, Professor in fire chemistry and toxicity at the University of Central Lancashire produced the report she had undertaken analysis of the Service which showed there was some surface contamination found on the top of some lockers but no air borne contamination was identified which was reassuring. The Policy captured high level narrative and would not go into that level of detail. He confirmed that a lot of work had already been done within LFRS and in consultation with the FBU and other unions. The Service was doing a lot to ensure firefighters continued to be protected. There had been a £4m investment in new facilities at Service Training Centre, state of the art breathing apparatus sets were provided, washing machines and drying machines would be provided, P3 face masks were being issued to every firefighter, training on the correct use of PPE was provided, stations designated separate clean and dirty areas, fire engines had wipeable surfaces and Lancashire operated a pooled PPE system that ensured stores were constantly replenished.

County Councillor Hennessy referred to an internal draft document on the "Management of PPE Contamination". The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised this was being shaped through the Service's Contamination Working Group which included representation from the FBU and the Health and Safety Team. He confirmed that the Service followed best practice and, in many ways, exceeded best practice by taking a whole systems approach. The Chairman cautioned the use of a draft document that had not been completed, approved nor was accessible yet to other Members of the Authority.

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

30-20/21 MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007 with a review of roles in 2017. The Authority appointed its Member Champions at its Annual meeting in June and current Member Champions were:

- Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan;
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Andrea Kay;
- Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam.

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period June – August 2021. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with defined terms of reference.

County Councillor Mirfin added that as a member of Ribble Valley Community Partnership he would receive information on road accident statistics from the previous year and a 3-month rolling update had been requested. If appropriate he would be happy to provide this information at future meetings.

In response to request from County Councillor Hennessy regarding access to the Biker Down course, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised details could be found on Lancashire Road Safety Partnership website and which he would provide separately to her.

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

31-20/21 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021 was provided.

Fire protection and business support information was provided and Members noted that there were 5 arson convictions during the period.

The Vice-Chairman commented that arson prosecutions amounted to over 20 years custodial sentences. He paid tribute to the officers who painstakingly investigated these cases which resulted in these severe penalties.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted and endorsed the report.

32-20/21 OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF NOTE

This report provided Members with information relating to operational incidents of note since the last report to the Authority.

The Chairman and County Councillor Hennessy expressed gratitude for everyone involved in attending the school fire in Ormskirk. Fires in schools did not just damage the premises but impacted greatly on the pupils. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the Authority recommended the installation of sprinklers in all new school buildings and significant renovations or extensions (resolution 31/13 refers).

County Councillor Pattison expressed gratitude for the blue light services that attended a domestic building fire in Morecambe which had sadly resulted in a fatality. She gave thanks to Service personnel who offered reassurance to the

community including the offer of a home fire safety check.

As part of the report Members received a presentation by Station Manager Mark Warwick, Response and Emergency Planning / International Search and Rescue Co-ordinator. SM Warwick introduced Tom Cogley, Crew Manager who advised of the support provided by himself and 3 other members of the International Search and Rescue team from Lancashire. The team were deployed for a week from 7 August 2021. They formed part of a 21-person team to support a UK Fire and Rescue response to devastating wildfires in Greece.

Members noted that the team was put together by the National Fire Chiefs Council who had responded to a request from the Home Office to provide operational assistance to Greece. The wildfires were largely due to the country's most severe heatwave in 30 years, with temperatures soaring to more than 40 degrees centigrade in some areas.

The team's main priority was to protect the areas of greatest need using a wide range of specialised skills. This involved protecting the surrounding village's properties and infrastructures, removing vegetation to create firebreaks close to the wildfires, flying drones, identifying hotspots, and driving fire engines to provide operation cover for Greek firefighters.

On behalf of the Authority the Chairman congratulated the ISAR team on a fantastic job who continuously demonstrated resilience and represented Lancashire to the highest standard.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted and endorsed the report.

33-20/21 MEMBER COMPLAINTS

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

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

34-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 13 December 2021 at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.

35-20/21 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.

36-20/21 RE-APPOINTMENT OF CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER

(Paragraphs 1 and 2)

The Clerk to the Authority withdrew from the meeting for this item.

RESOLVED:- That the Authority approved the re-appointment of Mr Mark Nolan as Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority for a period of twelve months, to the September meeting of the Authority in 2022.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood