

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 13 December 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

P Britcliffe

S Clarke

M Dad

N Hennessy

D Howarth

J Hugo

K Iddon

F Jackson

A Kay

H Khan

Z Khan

J Mein

G Mirfin

S Morris

M Pattison

J Rigby

P Rigby

S Serridge

J Singleton

D Smith

R Woollam

37-20/21 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman was pleased to announce that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service had won the prestigious Emergency Service of the Year at the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2021. On behalf of the Authority the Chairman took the opportunity to acknowledge and praise the dedication of all staff.

The Chairman also reported that Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Ben Norman would be leaving the Service in the New Year to join Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service as Deputy Chief Fire Officer. On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman thanked Ben for his hard work and wished him well for the future in his new role.

38-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Tony Williams.

39-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

40-20/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 13 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

41-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2021 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 15 September 2021 be noted and endorsed.

42-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

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

43-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Mirfin regarding the Authority working with local service providers to purchase services from them to the benefit of the local economy (as referred to on page 40 of the agenda pack) the Director of Corporate Services advised that procurement rules were followed and where available to do so, goods and services were purchased locally.

County Councillor Mirfin drew Members' attention to his comments on page 51 of the agenda pack regarding recruitment and the age profile of people recruited. He advised that he had attended the launch of Lancashire Crime Plan the previous week and commented that individuals raised questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable about opportunities for recruitment of armed services personnel. He also queried whether there were any lessons to learn from the constabulary and suggested it could be worth inviting the armed services recruitment team to discuss how we may benefit from their widening pool of resources. In response, the Chairman advised that ex-services personnel had been recruited in the past and when there were vacancies, the process was open for anyone to apply.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Hennessy regarding Member scrutiny of the bullying and harassment policy (referred to on page 50 of the agenda pack), the Director of People and Development confirmed that staff numbers were low and these were referred to in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report which was presented to the Authority.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 29 September 2021 be noted and endorsed.

44-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021 OF STRATEGY GROUP

Following a request from Councillor Hugo, it was agreed that future notes include a summary of the themes where Members had queried or commented on the topics presented.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Strategy Group meeting held on 18 October 2021 be noted and endorsed.

45-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2021 OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

It was noted that a number of Members found the visit to North West Fire Control to be worthwhile, interesting and useful. The Chairman recommended Members attend the visit arranged next year to Safety Central at Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Member Training and Development Working Group held on 4 November 2021 be noted and endorsed.

46-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2021 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

County Councillor Mirfin drew Members' attention to page 72 of the agenda pack where reference was made to expanding apprenticeship opportunities which he thought to be important post covid.

County Councillor Hennessy referred to the Planning Committee recommendations on page 75 of the agenda pack and queried the process going forward. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the adoption of a false alarm reduction and emergency call management policy brought Lancashire into line with other Fire and Rescue Services in North West Fire Control and nationally. He confirmed the Service would still respond to automatic fire alarms should there be a need and that some premises types (educational and heritage) would be exempt. Members considered the recommendations from the Committee which included a three-month implementation phase, in order to engage stakeholders with the launch of the new policy from 1 April 2022. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that changes would be implemented by day in year 1 and during the night from year 2 with a review to Planning Committee after the first 12 months.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 15 November 2021 be noted and endorsed including the recommendations in relation to the Automatic Fire Alarm Attendance Policy.

47-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 30 November 2021 be noted and endorsed.

48-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 1 December 2021 be noted and endorsed.

49-20/21 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Clerk presented a report received on behalf of County Councillor Hennessy which detailed key points raised at Local Government Association (LGA)

meetings of the Fire Service Management Committee attended on behalf of the Authority.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

50-20/21 MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY 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 agreed. The current Member Champions and their areas of responsibility 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 the defined terms of reference.

County Councillor Kay, Health and Wellbeing Champion added that wellbeing dogs were being introduced to support staff to assist communication. They made it easy to show affection and empathy, helped create a compassionate environment and to reduce stress, blood pressure, heart rate and anxiety.

In addition, Councillor Kay advised that she had spoken with Lancashire Youth Council and 2 schools regarding climate change to ask the views of young people on whether any services could be changed and a report was awaited.

County Councillor Mirfin referred to the road safety education evaluation on page 17 of the agenda pack as another aspect of the work of the Fire Service. He advised that at the launch of the Lancashire Crime Plan the Police and Crime Commissioner confirmed additional investment in speed and CCTV cameras. Councillor Mirfin encouraged the Service to use its knowledge about road traffic collisions to work in partnership to help identify which stretches of road required the greatest attention for speed reduction / traffic calming measures. In response, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service was a long-standing member of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership with one of its Area Managers being the national fire chiefs lead for road safety who also chaired the practitioners' group, which considered the detail of the delivery of the road safety partnership and Councillor Jackson from Blackpool was a recent attendee. The governance was therefore not necessarily directly from the Fire Authority but included political membership from the unitarities and County Council to scrutinise proposals by the analyst which were data led. County Councillor Howarth commented that the data collected was not necessarily making roads safer it was tackling incidents of fatality or serious injury. It was noted that this was within the jurisdiction of the police. County Councillor Mirfin considered that the data should be disaggregated to help formulate policy going forward. He agreed that typically, data was recorded only when there was a very serious accident and there was a need therefore to collect a much wider variety of data and use it much more

intuitively, particularly to effect changes to improve road safety.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Howarth, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that Biker Down was open to all members of the public to put themselves forward to attend the course.

County Councillor Mein queried whether the two road safety education programmes being delivered to school children could be rolled out quicker. In response, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service invited all primary and secondary schools in the county to access the education programmes, this was not part of the national curriculum. Those schools who wished to access the training could choose for the programme to be delivered digitally or face to face. Of those responding, 80% had asked for face-to-face delivery but unfortunately this had been paused until pandemic arrangements changed. Members offered their support as required to engage with schools in their districts.

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

51-20/21 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2020-2021

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) set out the Government's high-level expectations, priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) in England. Included within the framework was the requirement that all FRA's must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

The Statement of Assurance was considered by Members. It aimed to provide the required accountability and transparency to Lancashire communities and the Government that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service continued to deliver efficient, effective value for money services.

This statement sat alongside the Community/Integrated Risk Management Plan (C/IRMP), Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Service Plan and Annual Progress Report. It detailed what measures were in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance was efficient, economic, and effective and provided further evidence that LFRS continued to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and its own Risk Management Plan.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority approved the Annual Statement of Assurance 2020-21 as presented and approved the signing of this by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

52-20/21 STRATEGIC AERIAL APPLIANCE REVIEW

The report which provided an update on the proposals brought to the Authority in relation to the replacement of the 4th aerial appliance presently based at Preston fire station.

In December 2020 the Authority approved "the purchase of a turntable ladder

(TTL) to replace the 4th Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) (subject to further evaluation of 32m and 42m options)” (resolution 105/19 refers).

Following completion of an evaluation exercise in relation to the options available within the marketplace and their potential suitability for meeting tall building risk in Lancashire, the findings suggested that the Service should look to procure a replacement Aerial Ladder Platform as opposed to the Turntable Ladder option that was originally proposed.

Overall, the 45 metre Aerial Ladder Platform demonstrated the most favourable characteristics, in terms of the potential to best mitigate tall building risk in Lancashire. In summary, it would offer the highest reach, the longest outreach (beneficial when pitching over smaller buildings / obstructions), the deepest below-ground capability and negligible difference in time to deploy with water when compared to turntable ladder options. Similarly, the versatility, manoeuvrability and capacity of the rescue cage outstripped the turntable options.

RESOLVED: - The Authority noted the Service intention to go to market for a replacement Aerial Ladder Platform within the existing budget provision.

53-20/21 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report.

At the last Audit Committee meeting, Members noted that the Authority had opted into Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) auditor appointment arrangements at its meeting held 20 February 2017 (resolution 6/16 refers). The appointment covered the period 2018/19 to 2022/23. A local auditor must be appointed no later than 31 December in the financial year preceding the financial year of the accounts to be audited therefore, for the audit of the accounts of the 2023/24 financial year, there must be a local auditor appointed by 31 December 2022.

The Audit Committee had considered the options that a principal local government or police body could appoint its auditor for the five financial years from 2023/24 and unanimously determined to recommend to the full Authority that it accepted PSAAs invitation to opt into the national scheme resolution (27-20/21 refers).

RESOLVED: - That the Authority agreed to accept Public Sector Audit Appointments invitation to opt into the national scheme.

54-20/21 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

The report summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) led prosecutions with respect to fire safety offences, and also set out convictions resulting from arson and malicious call incidents for which Officers (mainly from the Incident Intelligence Team) had contributed evidence to the Police led Criminal Justice process. Fire Protection and Business Support Information were also included in the report. It was noted that there were 7 cases of arson which had resulted in sentences of circa 28 years.

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

55-20/21 OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF INTEREST

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

The Vice-Chairman complemented all involved in the major incident in Wyre (detailed on page 155).

Councillor Smith commented that waste recycling site fires were frequently reported, and this report included 2 (in Darwen and Morecambe). He queried whether there was anything specific in place to combat these types of incidents. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that this type of incident was of national concern and the Service engaged at a national level through the National Fire Chiefs Council. Part of the Service's water management strategy included the purchase of stinger appliances to deal with these types of protracted incidents. The challenge was to prevent these types of fires from occurring and a lot of prevention work was undertaken through links with National Fire Chiefs Council.

Councillor J Rigby complemented staff from Darwen Fire Station who had supported a vulnerable resident who had been stuck inside their home without power for a number of days.

As part of the report members received a presentation by Lyndsay Sielski, Crew Manager, Response and Emergency Planning and Bekki Ford, Safety, Health and Environment Advisor on the activities and benefits of the Service's search dogs and wellbeing / trauma support dogs.

The Safety, Health and Environment Advisor advised that she undertook trauma risk management sessions with crews following incidents and the idea of wellbeing dogs had been requested from a number of people. She discussed this request with the Chief Fire Officer who had agreed the wellbeing and trauma support dog team be developed.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman the Safety, Health and Environment Advisor advised that the wellbeing and trauma support dogs would be used if a firefighter had been to a traumatic or protracted incident which they had found difficult to deal with; they would be able to request to have a one-to-one session with a dog for a cuddle or walk. This would also provide an opportunity to debrief with their peer supporter. Another instance where one of the dogs could be requested would be to support a group session where people may have group concerns perhaps about organisational change.

During a session was an important time for the handler to engage and while they did not signpost or diagnose, they could give pertinent messages to help firefighters look after their own wellbeing.

In response to a question from County Councillor Pattison, Crew Manager Sielski advised that as part of the wellbeing and trauma dog programme the team had been involved with Oscar Kilo (which brought together all the emergency services responsible for wellbeing).

Oscar Kilo 9 came from scientific research that the Police forces had undertaken to introduce their own wellbeing support dog programme. She advised that the Service had followed these specific protocols, which had made it more relevant to the workforce than pet wellbeing and therapy support dogs (used for example in care homes). It was noted that Lancashire Police had their own wellbeing support dog and the Service liaised with all other Fire and Rescue and Police Services through Oscar Kilo 9. Each year there was a 2-day session (for dogs and handlers) to increase and develop network capabilities.

In response to a question raised by Councillor J Rigby regarding the wellbeing of the dogs, the Safety, Health and Environmental Advisor advised that the dogs lived with their handlers. There had been a stringent application process. The peer supporter put in an application form setting out the reasons why they wanted to be involved and why their dog would be suitable. A suitability assessment with a dog trainer was then conducted to assess the dogs' behaviour and temperament. The dogs went through a 6-week training programme which would be culminating in a final assessment that night.

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

56-20/21 MEMBER COMPLAINTS

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

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

57-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 21 February 2022 at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.

58-20/21 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chief Fire Officer advised that, following the announcement from the Prime Minister the previous evening regarding the implementation of Plan B measures in response to the Covid-19 Omicron variant (which included the expansion of the vaccination programme), Health colleagues (who were in a situation that could potentially overwhelm them) had contacted partners to assist.

As Members were aware, the Service had been involved in the vaccination programme since December last year and continued to be involved however support would be increased over the course of the next 3 weeks.

Quite how the Service would resource the request was uncertain, given it was not known where the funding would come from but there was a pressing need to continue to support the residents of Lancashire.

59-20/21 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.

60-20/21 PENSIONS UPDATE - IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT

(Paragraphs 3 and 4)

The Director of People and Development presented a report on the current immediate detriment position. The Authority considered the position and the options outlined in paragraph 48 of the report.

RESOLVED: - That option e as outlined in the report be agreed.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood