

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

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

MINUTES

PRESENT:

F De Molfetta (Chairman)

Councillors

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

22/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors J Eaton, D Stansfield and M Tomlinson.

23/17 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

24/17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

CC Britcliffe asked that the Clerk clarify why the Performance Committee meeting scheduled for 8 June 2017 had been cancelled (resolution 14/17 refers). The Clerk confirmed that he had written to CC Britcliffe outside the meeting to clarify this and would resend his response.

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 19 June 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

25/17 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2017 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 22 June 2017 be noted.

26/17 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 26 JUNE 2017 OF STRATEGY GROUP

With regard to electronic access to committee papers CC O'Toole advised that Members had experienced problems accessing the Service wifi that morning and that he had suggested at the Strategy Group that an electronic method of claiming travel and expenses be considered. CC De Molfetta confirmed that Officers were available to support Members to access their papers and that a process for Members to claim their expenses electronically was being investigated.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Strategy Group held on 26 June 2017 be noted.

27/17 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 2017 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CC O'Toole referred to his question in the minutes (resolution 5/17 refers) as to whether it would be prudent to use reserves to pay off some debt. In response, the Director of Corporate Services advised that a report on this would be presented to the next Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 27 September 2017. He confirmed that the Reserves Policy was presented to the Authority at its meeting in February each year with the Resources Committee considering the detail.

In response to Member questions the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the Year End Revenue outturn 2016/17 report (resolution 7/17 refers) had identified a total in-year efficiency saving of £3.971m compared with a target of £2.502m; these figures had been incorrectly transposed in the minutes; performance had exceeded the efficiency target largely as a result of staffing savings made and procurement savings in respect of contracts let during the year. In addition, the overall reserves level for Other Earmarked Reserves had decreased from £5.7m to £3.5m.

In response to a question from Cllr Coleman regarding the total earmarked reserves detailed in the statement of accounts (resolution 8/17 refers) the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the amounts had been checked and corrected before being placed on public record.

CC O'Toole stated that preferential treatment should not be given to Retained Duty System (RDS) staff when recruiting for wholetime roles. In response to this statement and Member questions regarding the impact of successful RDS staff transferring to wholetime roles the Chairman advised that he had attended a passing out parade where 36 Fire Cadets had been successful, of which 50% had been RDS staff. He confirmed he would want to see a fair number of RDS staff recruited to future wholetime positions providing they met the required standards. The Vice-Chairman advised that a number of years ago a salary scheme had been brought in to encourage RDS retention. RDS staff may wish to move to wholetime and undertake a dual-contract which retained knowledge and experience. It was acknowledged that RDS staff were difficult to recruit and the Authority wanted a representative balance across the community, which included more female firefighters. CC Holgate confirmed that RDS availability was discussed at the Performance Committee and challenges were more geographical based with people not living and working close to the RDS stations.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 28 June 2017 be noted.

28/17 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 17 JULY 2017 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 17 July 2017 be noted.

29/17 MINUTES OF MEETING, WEDNESDAY 26 JULY 2017 OF NORTH WEST FIRE AND RESCUE FORUM

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the North West Fire and Rescue Forum held on 26 July 2017 be noted.

30/17 GRENPELL TOWER FIRE TRAGEDY IN LONDON - HIGH RISE BUILDINGS IN LANCASHIRE - UPDATE

The Chief Fire Officer introduced Group Manager Tony Crook to provide Members with an update on the Grenfell Tower Fire investigation process and the actions being undertaken to reassure the public in Lancashire.

The Grenfell Tower Fire occurred on 14 June 2017 at the 24-storey tower block. It caused at least 80 deaths and over 70 injuries. A definitive death toll was not expected until at least 2018. Sadly, this was the biggest loss of life from fire in the UK in a generation.

GM Crook advised that the Public Inquiry had opened on 14 September 2017. Police and Fire services believed that the fire had started accidentally in a fridge-freezer on the fourth floor. The rapid growth of the fire was thought to have increased by the building's exterior cladding which was of a common type in widespread use.

An independent review of building regulations and fire safety had been launched. The National Fire Chiefs Council was co-ordinating a Fire and Rescue Services' inspection of high rise premises and the Building Research Establishment were testing all ACM (aluminium composite) cladding material.

The National Fire Chiefs Council had put forward a submission to the Inquiry, outlining what it thought should be included in the terms of reference to help shape the Inquiry; this included: a review of the Building Regulations and associated guidance; the role of building control and approved inspectors; the relationship between the Housing Act and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order; the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order; Firefighting equipment and fixed installations in high rise premises (sprinklers); Competency of Fire Risk Assessors; Competency of the construction industry to understand and apply appropriate fire safety measures when constructing or refurbishing a building; suitability of tests for materials used in building construction, and in this case for high-rise buildings. This should include the appropriateness of desk-top studies to assess the compliance of building materials and solutions to the Building Regulations; Stay Put evacuation strategy; the role of other Category 1 and 2 responders within the Civil Contingencies Act, in both the Response and Recovery

phases of the incident; the (Construction Design and Management) Regulations; review of DCLG Fire Safety Guides including LACORS; product recall – white goods and how the fire service is organised to provide the 999 operational response to fires in high rise buildings.

It was noted that North West Fire and Rescue Services via the North West protection Task Group was leading on developing the National Fire Chiefs Council position statement for ‘the suitability of tests for materials used in building construction, and in this case for high-rise buildings’.

The Authority was pleased to note that at the Lancashire County Council’s full Council meeting held on 20 July 2017 a resolution was unanimously approved that called for the Government to legislate for the retro-fitting of sprinklers into residential high-rise buildings and that this should be called the Grenfell Act in memory of many lives lost in the disaster and it resolved to install sprinklers in all new Lancashire County Council schools and major school extensions.

GM Crook advised that inspections had been carried out by the Service with the current position as follows:

‘Residential high rise’ buildings- 100% of 72 had been inspected of which 1 building had been found with ACM cladding panels on the top storey of a 6-storey building; this was being managed locally to limit the risk;

‘Other high rise’ buildings – 83% of 48 had been inspected;

‘Lancashire’s Hospitals’ – 40% of 30 sites had been inspected;

‘Schools’ – to be completed, however it was noted that no school fell into the category of 18 metres or more.

The findings from the above inspections would be reviewed to inform our risk based inspection programme for 2018/19, along with the recommendations from the Public Inquiry and potential future governmental changes to fire safety standards.

It was noted that as from 17 July 2017 the Service had assisted Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service for a period of 7 weeks undertaking 130 inspections.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted the report.

31/17 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 June 2017 to 1 September 2017 was provided.

In addition, Fire Protection and Business Support Information was included in the report which included an update on the Primary Authority Scheme and Business Safety Advisor activity.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor O’Toole the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service looked at trends in relation to arson incidents which occurred across the county.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the Service had trained detectives in the investigation of arson a number of years ago. In response to general comments from Members regarding the training and education of young people he advised that the Service was currently running a number of pilots for children in year 7 at school which included anti-social behaviour and deliberate fire setting. He advised that in 2018 a new training education programme would be delivered to all year 7 pupils across Lancashire.

RESOLVED: - that the Authority noted the report.

32/17 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.

As part of the report Members received a presentation by Area Manager Simon Fryer on the Service's response to a Pylon Rescue at Howick Cross.

AM Fryer advised that the call was received at 15:03 on 7th August 2017, reporting that a man, alive but incapacitated was trapped at a height of 20 metres above the ground hanging upside down from an electricity pylon.

The Air Support Unit was requested and Fire crews from Penwortham, Fulwood, Hyndburn and 'Rope Rescue' colleagues from St Annes and Urban Search and Rescue were assigned. The utility company shut off the electricity to the pylon and members of the Rope Rescue Team ascended the pylon, initially securing the casualty to prevent him falling, then they administered medication provided by medical personnel at the scene. Agencies in attendance were Lancashire Constabulary, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), NWAS HART, Millers Recovery and the National Grid.

The casualty had climbed the side of the pylon, which had been electrically isolated for maintenance purposes. The hem of his jeans had caught on a pylon nut which had prevented his fall. At 6.36pm the casualty was rescued. He was then transferred by the Rope Rescue personnel to a stretcher on Hyndburn's Aerial Ladder Platform, then lowered to the ground and attended to by paramedics.

In response to Members that staff be acknowledged for their dedication, professionalism and bravery the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the process to recognise staff who had undertaken such difficult deeds was the Chief Fire Officer Commendation Award.

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

33/17 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.

34/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 18 December 2017 at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood