

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 20 June 2016

### PROCEEDINGS OF NORTH WEST FIRE & RESCUE FORUM HELD 27 APRIL 2016 (Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

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#### Executive Summary

The proceedings of the North West Fire & Rescue Forum meeting held on 27 April 2016.

#### Recommendation

To note and endorse the proceedings of the North West Fire & Rescue Forum meeting as set out at Appendix 1 now presented.

#### Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the North West Fire & Rescue Forum meeting held on 27 April 2016.

#### Business Risk

None

#### Environmental Impact

None

#### Equality & Diversity Implications

None

#### Financial Risk

None

#### HR Implications

None

#### Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
N/A		Diane Brooks
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate: N/A		

## North West Fire &amp; Rescue Forum

**Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016**  
**At**  
**NW Fire Control, Lingley Mere, Warrington**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Authority:</b>
Cllr D Hanratty	Merseyside (Chair)
Cllr S Nelson	Cheshire
Cllr J Bell	Greater Manchester
Cllr D Acton	Greater Manchester
Cllr D O'Toole	Lancashire
Cllr M Parkinson	Lancashire
Cllr F De Molfetta	Lancashire
<b>Officers/Observers:</b>	<b>Authority:</b>
Mr C Kenny	Lancashire
Mr J Onions	Cumbria
Mr G O'Rourke	Cheshire
Mr D Stephens	Merseyside
Mrs J Henshaw	Merseyside
Cllr L Byrom	Merseyside
Mrs S Wainwright	Merseyside (Note taker)
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Authority:</b>
Cllr J Joyce	Cheshire
Cllr G Merry	Cheshire
Cllr L Maloney	Merseyside
Cllr L Rennie	Merseyside
Cllr B Doughty	Cumbria
Mr P Hancock	Cheshire/Cumbria
Mr K Mattinson	Lancashire

Agenda Item	Minute
1.	<p><b>Chairman's Welcome and Introduction</b></p> <p>The Chair opened proceedings and welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>
2.	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies were received as shown in the table above.</p>
3.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business on the Agenda.</p>
4.	<p><b>Items Requiring Urgent Attention</b></p> <p>There were no matters requiring urgent attention.</p>
5.	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were agreed as a true record.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>Actions from the Last Meeting</u></b></p> <p><b>Action 1 - Lobbying</b></p> <p>The Chair encouraged members to seek further signatures from MP's in relation to the Early Day Motion 513 – Fire Service Reductions in Services, as on checking there were only 88 signatories.</p> <p>Following the last meeting letters of invitation had been sent to Mike Penning, the Chair of NWAS and Dan Greaves. There had been no response from Mike Penning and Dan Greaves to date but the Chair of NWAS had agreed to attend the next meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p><b>Action 2 – Funding Streams</b></p> <p>A meeting had been arranged to discuss opportunities for European Funding on 20<sup>th</sup> May but subsequently cancelled. A new date is yet to be proposed.</p>
7.	<p><b>Chairman's Update</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that there were no issues to update the Forum on.</p>
8.	<p><b>Priorities Going Forward:</b></p> <p>Chris Kenny gave the following update on behalf of the NW Chiefs:</p> <p><b>National Operational Guidance:</b> Work is ongoing between the NW FRS to produce SOP's based on the new National Operational Guidance methodology. The North West are leading on behalf of the country and work is progressing at a good pace and at a very high standard.</p>

	<p><b>Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP):</b> This is a new system to replace Airwave across the Emergency Services. The North West have been chosen as the first region to move over. Although there is risk it is considered a great opportunity to be at the forefront of embracing technology, forging relationships and playing a major role in the success of the scheme.</p> <p>Cllr O'Toole questioned the signal coverage issues. CK was confident that issues are being addressed with extra transmitters and explained that Airwave had merged with Motorola which can only enhance their knowledge and expertise. Government have assured FRS's that the cost to them is neutral.</p> <p><b>NWAS:</b> All NW Services are piloting or working towards an Emergency Medical Response (EMR) pilot. Issues with Trade Unions are being addressed.</p> <p><b>Specialist Officers/Specialist Appliances:</b> Sharing of specialist areas are being considered.</p> <p><b>Research &amp; Development:</b> CFOA are creating a central hub for R&amp;D Officers for Services to feed into. The North West are very much part of this – Greater Manchester are sharing information on firefighter physiology to avoid duplication and enabling more robust procurement.</p> <p>The Chair raised a question around procurement and it was agreed that JH would instruct Sharon Matthews at Merseyside to provide a paper for the next meeting addressing procurement.</p>
9.	<p><b>Strategic Resilience:</b></p> <p>DS updated on the paper submitted advising that Merseyside had taken on the role of Lead Authority for National Resilience.</p> <p>The NW Forum reflected that this was an excellent opportunity for the North West and thanked Dan and his team for the work undertaken.</p> <p>A discussion took place around the need to impress upon Ministers the increase in fire deaths and fire related injuries and the impact cuts were having on communities.</p>
10.	<p><b>Policing and Crime Bill:</b></p> <p>The Chair highlighted that the next stage for the Policing and Crime Bill is the House of Lords and it is essential that MPs give the Fire &amp; Rescue Service their full support. He went on to advise that collaboration is important but not at the detriment of the Service and wider functions.</p> <p>In light of the lack of response from the Minister to the invitation, the Forum felt that they should offer to meet him in London. The Fire Commission are due to meet on 25<sup>th</sup> May and this was proposed as an option.</p>

11.

**North West FRS Updates**

**Lancashire:**

Chris Kenny provided the Forum with the following update on behalf of Lancashire:

- Lancashire F&RS will be recruiting this year for the first time since 2003 (2 x 15 firefighter recruit courses towards the end of this financial year);
- Introduction of 'Action learning sessions' for Watch Managers, which has proven extremely successful.
- Investment in ICT and RDS;
- Blue Light Pledge – Mental Health;
- Day crewing plus accommodation at Skelmersdale receive national bronze award;
- Nomination from Firefighters Charity for Bamber Bridge car wash.

**Cheshire:**

Gus O'Rourke introduced himself to the Forum explaining that he was representing Paul Hancock and update on behalf of Cheshire, as follows:

- Restructure of Senior Management Team – ACFO role removed and Paul Hancock undertaking the role of Chief Fire Officer at Cumbria 2 days a week;
- New station at Alsager is now up and running;
- Penketh due to open August 2016;
- Powey Lane due to open November 2016;
- Lymm due to open March 2017;
- Integrated Safety Centre due to open June 2017;
- Moved to 12 hour shift system;
- Recruiting (Apprentices x 10) and will be paying 25% above recommended rate;
- Also recruiting 12 wholetime firefighters;
- Blue Light Collaboration – support staff being located to Cheshire Police HQ – estimated completion July 2017.
- Option to make the FRS HQ into an Joint Police/FRS Ops Training Leadership Academy – scoping currently taking place;

Gus O'Rourke concluded by expressing his best wishes to the people of Liverpool on the 96 verdict.

**Cumbria:**

There was no update from Cumbria.

**Merseyside:**

Dan Stephens provided an update on the following, on behalf of Merseyside:

Station Mergers

Work will commence on the Prescot build imminently. There have been a number of delays in no small part due to escalating costs. The initial cost estimate of £3.1m dating back to 2013 was unrealistically low. The £3.1m estimate for a single purpose fire station not involving the Police or NWAS. This figure was based on the cost of the PFI stations which involved demolition and rebuild on land which the Authority already owned and which we had a full understanding of the history.

Since the PFI builds there has been an increase in the cost of building projects which has been reflected in the revised figure of £5.350m reported to the Authority in October of 2015.

The £5.350m figure does not take account of the type of 'abnormals' associated with groundwork on a brownfield site and which were not to any great extent encountered during the PFI builds.

It is the reality that on any brownfield site there is a risk of abnormalities which will increase the cost of building a new fire station beyond what can be reasonably assumed as the standard figure of £5.350m.

This is a situation the Authority will undoubtedly face at Canal Street in St Helens and is something that Officers will now take in to account in future financial planning.

EMR trial

The Merseyside EMR trial is limited to 3 stations. This is despite an agreement with the FBU at their request that the pilot was extended across the Service. The reason for the trial not having been extended is due to opposition from the Unions within NWAS.

Dialogue however continues with NWAS over extending the pilot.

Roundtable meeting with the Home Secretary and Fire and Policing Minister

A summary of the meeting is as follows;

In attendance were;

Dan Stephens  
Peter O'Reilly  
Paul Hancock  
Dave Etheridge  
Russell Pearson  
Lee Howell  
Ann Millington  
Jason Thelwell  
Peter Holland  
Steve McGuirk  
Ken Knight

Adrian Thomas  
Andre Gonzalez de Savage (Northamptonshire County Council lead member for the FRS)  
Andrew Haldenby (Reform)

Mike Penning took the chair as Theresa May didn't join the meeting until 1500hrs.

Initial and lengthy discussion around transparency (key performance outcomes to allow meaningful comparison between FRA's - in essence what does good look like).

The discussion then transitioned to procurement. The Minister made clear his intention to publish information on the variation in spend levels across the FRS for single items.

Next up was the need for an inspectorate with broad agreement that something in addition to Peer Review was required but there is a need to agree key performance outcomes first in order for there to be something to inspect against.

Theresa May joined the meeting after a short break.

Thereafter there was an open session which revisited the need for an inspection before moving on to workforce reform within which it was advocated by a number of attendees that the NJC should be dismantled which appeared to have some traction with Mike Penning.

DS made the point that the FRS had world class national resilience assets which were adaptable and had been deployed in very agile and flexible ways at home and abroad often in circumstances which went well beyond their intended use.

DS explained that the National Resilience Assurance Team already performed a function akin to that performed by HMIC and that the FRS had already demonstrated as a sector that we were more than capable of providing assurance to Government.

The discussion then moved on to retained which Ann Millington lead on very well explaining why it was anything but the panacea.

Theresa May left at this point.

There was then an open discussion around the Policing and Crime Bill and devolution.

Peter O'Reilly spoke around the Fire contribution to Health.

Mike Penning was clear that the Bill would go through unaltered and that PCC's were the only game in town in areas which were not subject to a devolution deal.

DS raised the situation in the LCR with Halton and asked a specific question over whether it was the intention to have a Mayor and a PCC in the same area to which Mike Penning confirmed that would not be allowed to happen. Mike Penning said that boundaries were artificial and would be easily changed. He also said that Theresa May had held discussions with Greg Clarke and that they both shared this view.

DS has been invited to a one to one meeting with Mike Penning this afternoon and will report back to the forum thereafter.

	<p><u>Lead Authority for National Resilience Assurance</u></p> <p>Merseyside has taken on the role of Lead Authority for National Resilience assurance.</p> <p>In practical terms this will result in the National Resilience Assurance Team Officers being seconded to Merseyside FRA rather than CFOA National Resilience Limited (CNR) but all other arrangements will operate as before with the CFOA Capability Lead Officers being responsible for their capabilities.</p> <p><u>Collaboration with Merseyside Police</u></p> <p>The 3 months Opportunities Assessment process has concluded and been reported to the Police Fire Collaboration Committee.</p> <p>An IIT for an independent consultant to review and make recommendations for collaboration across all Corporate services will be issued this week.</p> <p>Operational collaboration continues at a pace across Preparedness, Response and Community Risk Management.</p> <p><b>Greater Manchester:</b></p> <p>Cllr Acton updated as follows, on behalf of Greater Manchester:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firefighter Stephen Hunt inquest now running into the second week. A very difficult experience for firefighters.</li> <li>• Developing a new training site in Bury with state of the art facilities;</li> <li>• Joint emergency service station at Wigan due to be open end of July</li> <li>• Developing 12 hour shift pattern. Currently in consultation;</li> <li>• Consultation concluded on how the £15m saving are going to be made over the next 4 years;</li> <li>• First responder cardiac arrest – going really well.</li> <li>• Devolution continuing within Greater Manchester;</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Acton concluded by stating how very proud he was of the people of Liverpool and those who have supported them through the '96 verdict'.</p>
9.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>No business to discuss.</p>
10.	<p><b><u>2017 Dates of meetings</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Nelson requested that the April 2017 meeting be moved to late May. A proposal will be made for the next meeting.</p>
11.	<p><b>Date of the next meeting – 14<sup>th</sup> July – AGM</b></p> <p>Close of meeting.</p>