

## North West Fire & Rescue Forum

### Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018

At

North West Fire Control, Lingley Mere Business Park, Lingley Green Avenue, Great Sankey,  
Warrington, Cheshire

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Authority:</b>
Cllr D Hanratty	Merseyside (Chair)
Cllr D Acton	Greater Manchester
Cllr K Houlton	Greater Manchester
Cllr B Rudd	Cheshire
Cllr S Nelson	Cheshire
Cllr F De Molfetta	Lancashire
Cllr D O'Toole	Lancashire
Cllr L Byrom	Merseyside
<b>Officers/Observers:</b>	<b>Authority:</b>
Mr P Hancock	Cheshire
Mr C Kenny	Lancashire
Mr D Stephens	Merseyside
Mr S Healey	Cumbria
Ms D Docx	Greater Manchester
Mrs J Henshaw	Merseyside
Mrs S Wainwright	Merseyside (Secretariat)
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Authority:</b>
Cllr J Willis	Cumbria
Cllr L Rennie	Merseyside
Cllr G Merry	Cheshire
Cllr M Parkinson	Lancashire

Agenda Item	Minute
1.	<p><b>Chairman's Welcome and Introduction</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and opened proceedings.</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 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were agreed as a true record.</p>
6.	<p><b>Kerslake</b></p> <p>The Chair invited DA to provide an update on the Kerslake Review.</p> <p>DA updated on the criticisms around communication in relation to procedures; particularly declaration of Op PLATO. GMFRA welcomed the report and felt it was important to reflect on the positives. Recommendations are in place and being addressed.</p> <p>DD concurred with these comments and felt the report was very balanced, although was disappointed at the media reporting. A discussion took place around how all of emergency services at the incident adhered to the Joint Operating Procedures (JOPs) and DD went on to confirm that changes around policies and procedures have and are being addressed.</p> <p>DS advised that as Chair of NFCC Operations Coordination Committee he had been tasked with preparing a response to the Kerslake Review on behalf of NFCC. This will be discussed at the next NFCC Operations Coordination Committee (OCC) on 18<sup>th</sup> April and signed off at the following OCC on 11<sup>th</sup> July. An NFCC position statement was agreed by the Capability Leads in relation to the role of the National Interoperability Liaison Officer (NILO).</p> <p>The Chair thanked Members for their contribution to the conversation and extended the support of the Forum to GMFRS and stressed the importance of the NFCC message.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Actions from the Last Meeting</u></b></p> <p><b>Action 1 - Lobbying</b></p> <p>The Chair agreed to write to the Fire Minister in response to the letter sent to Chiefs concerning changes.</p>

	<p><b>Action 2 – NWAS</b> It was agreed that a further letter of invitation would be sent to the new Chief Executive once in post.</p> <p><b>Action 3 – Devolution Deals</b> <b>Greater Manchester:</b> DA updated by advising that the first meeting took place in January with the next meeting in May. Terms of Reference have been agreed and an Advisory Board to the Mayor and a work programme have been established and will be worked through. DD went on to explain the current position and recognised that there is a great deal of work to undertake.</p> <p><b>Merseyside:</b> DS updated by advising that following a meeting with the LCR Metro Mayor it has been agreed that the LCR will seek a variation to the existing devolution order to extend the responsibilities of the Metro Mayor to governance of the FRS and Police across the 5 Merseyside LA areas.</p> <p><b>Action 4 - Shadow Fire Minister:</b> A letter of invitation to be sent to the newly appointed Shadow Minister Karen Lee, MP.</p> <p>DA confirmed that he had contacted Zoe Billingham. Discussions taking place around how Authorities are being inspected; particularly NW Fire Control.</p> <p>A new date for the Chiefs and Chairs meeting yet to be arranged.</p> <p><b>Action 5 – Priorities Going Forward:</b> CK confirmed that on advice from the NFCC Apprentices Lead he had fed back comments through the Lead rather than write an individual letter. Action discharged. Item closed.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Chairman’s Update</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Hanratty advised that he will be retiring from politics after 26 years and therefore standing down as his position of Chair of this Forum and Chair of Merseyside Fire &amp; Rescue Authority. Cllr Hanratty thanked the Forum for their support and sharing of good practice.</p> <p>DA on behalf of the Forum thanked Cllr Hanratty for his hard work and commitment. This was unanimously agreed throughout the meeting.</p>
8.	<p><b><u>Appointment of New Chair</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Acton was voted as the new Chair.</p>

9.	<p><b><u>Home Office approval for three contested business cases for PCC takeover of Fire and Rescue Authorities</u></b></p> <p>DH referred to the Essex position and more lately to Staffordshire, West Mercia and Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>FDM provided an update on the current position in Lancashire.</p> <p>A lengthy discussion took place and the Forum offered their full support to Lancashire Fire &amp; Rescue Authority in remaining as a single entity.</p> <p>The Chair was tasked with writing a letter of support on behalf of the Forum to LFRA.</p>
10.	<p><b><u>North West FRS Updates</u></b></p> <p><b>Lancashire:</b> CK provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCC options report being developed to inform the potential of changing current governance arrangements. CK has prepared a paper for the next CFA and agreed to forward to the Chair to assist in providing a letter of support;</li> <li>• HMICFRS planning to attend forthcoming CFA meeting</li> <li>• Lancashire within the first HMICFRS Inspection with preparation work ongoing</li> <li>• 15 recruits due to pass out this week. In next tranche of 72 recruits over courses underrepresented groups have been targeted by positive action in resulting in females 20%, BME 20%.</li> <li>• Gender pay gap – CK provided an explanation on how this had been reported. This was a lower figure than anticipated but was due to the reporting requirement for the RDS salary system which is unique to LFRS.</li> <li>• Key stations and possible IT installed.</li> </ul> <p>CK to contact Sarah Wilson at NWFC to report on mobilising for the different services to MTFA and bomb incidents. These will be circulated amongst the NW Chiefs so they are sighted on any anomalies that exist. Follow this consideration to be given to Brian Massie taking action through NW NOG Group.</p> <p><b>Cumbria:</b> SH provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRMP Year 3 Action Plan approved by Cabinet:</li> <li>• Increase Ulverston from 8hr to 12hr Day Crew (Traditional Day crewing)</li> <li>• Introduce On-Call Pump in to Barrow</li> <li>• Move some Firefighters back to Kendal and provide a Wholetime night crew (2-2-4 option but not 9/15 – either 12/12 but if can't agree for whole Service then will look at a 12hr night crew only option with no stand down)</li> <li>• Introduce MSO's but fund differently – PCC or sponsorship</li> <li>• On-Call Resourcing Strategy (strategic / lite stns, establishment levels, CCC employees peripatetic on-call firefighters). Currently have around 50 on-call firefighter vacancies</li> <li>• Budget. Council found £215m savings, another £70m to find 18/19-21/22. Fire budget agreed for next year with no savings to deliver for the first time since austerity started – net budget (without capital depreciation) £15.3m + £1.5m capital depreciation, total net budget of £16.8m.</li> </ul>

- Revised wholetime duty system arrangements (8s or 12s), looking likely it will go to arbitration (TAP or RAP).
- Commercialism – income generation. Training contract for Sellafield almost in place (£100k p/a)
- Staff cultural survey just gone live
- Use of social media and officer code of conduct

**Greater Manchester:**

DD provided the following update:

- Following a recent arson attack resulting in multiple fatalities the Mayor suspended the current IRMP.
- Appointed as Acting Chief on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and confirmed a new team
- Immediately set about recruiting 332 firefighters over the next 2 years.
- Recommendations from the Kerslake Review received end of March.
- Cultural/Structural Review being designed across GMFRS.

**Cheshire:**

PH provided the following update:

- IRMP 15 (18/19) approved by the Authority on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018. MTFP forecasts £4m savings. Key projects include a whole Service review (outcomes to be reported to the Fire Authority in February 2020) and specific reviews of the ALP at Macclesfield fire station and the Protection department.
- Outcomes of the review into the Authority's 2013 plans for the second pump at Crewe and Ellesmere Port (wholetime to on-call) were presented to the Authority on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Members voted to maintain a wholetime duty system for the second pump at Crewe and asked officers to determine if the second pump at Ellesmere Port could be relocated to another station in order to satisfy the sustainability question and value for money challenge presented by the review.
- Safety Centre (Lymm) opened its doors to schools in September 2017. 4000 school children now visited the Centre. The official opening by HRH Princess Royal on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018 was postponed due to the bad weather.
- Apprentices (cohort one) recently returned from a school building project in Nepal (third school).
- Preliminary and enabling works (ground surveys etc) for the new Training Centre at Sadler Road have commenced. Main build scheduled to start in August/September.
- Blue Light Collaboration Programme – all of the corporate services staff (ICT, Estates, Strategic Change, Corporate Communications, Business Intelligence, Legal, HR, Finance, Stores and Procurement have now completed their TUPE transfer to the new joint corporate services team (Police and Fire). Programme on track for completion by October 2018 (revised date for the Multi Force Shared Service – MFSS). Arrangements still in hand to appoint the PCC as a Member of the Authority.
- Stonewall Top 100 – Service was ranked fourth in the Top 100 of Employers. Also presented with a Star Performer Commendation and Highly Commended Network Group.
- HMICFRS – Cheshire FRS is in the first tranche of inspections. Fieldwork visit scheduled to take place week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018.

DH updated by advising that PH had announced his retirement and wished to place on record his thanks and appreciation on behalf of Members for the support and guidance PH had given to the Forum.

## **Merseyside:**

### Budget Update

Confirmation of 2% pay rise being accepted by Green Book Unions. This results in an additional savings target of £425k rising to £1m by end of 2019/20.

### Station Mergers

An archaeological survey has been concluded at Saughall Massie with no issues identified. Site investigation work is now underway. It is hoped to commence construction in early June 2018 with the station being operational 12 months after that.

The new Police FRS station at Prescot has been operational from January. NWAS have still not given a definitive over taking a bay and office space within the station.

NWAS are actively considering joining the Authority at the new station planned for St Helens. A site has been secured, subject to site investigation works which have been commissioned, with the interim report expected by the end of June. This report should provide sufficient information to allow a properly costed construction proposal to be prepared and a decision then taken on whether a cost-effective solution can be provided at this site.

### Firefighter recruitment and transition to days and retained crewing

The latest recruit course commenced in February and is due to conclude in June. The next recruit course is scheduled to start in July.

The transition to days and retained at Liverpool City and Wallasey will take effect in late 2018/early 2019.

As advised previously the Firefighter recruit contracts now contain the following requirement;

- 3.4 *You will be required to undertake such duties as determined by the Chief Fire Officer as required for the implementation of the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (or its replacement) and/or as determined by the Chief Fire Officer in response to current and emerging threats and risks as identified in the National Risk Register or detailed in the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (or its replacement), including but not restricted to;*
- a. *Terrorist attack and terrorist related incidents,*
  - b. *Response to flood and other water related incidents*
  - c. *Emergency Medical Response*

This has now been disputed by the FBU who have requested a referral to the NJC. Officers are not minded to agree to the referral to the NJC as the contractual changes do not apply to existing personnel.

As previously advised the legal advice received by Officers is that inclusion of local requirements that are not subject to a national collective agreement by a Trade Union on an offer and acceptance basis are legal as long as the position has been clearly explained to the recruits prior to them signing their contract of employment. The FBU have received the same advice which is why Officers

	<p>believe this has not been subject to a legal challenge.</p> <p><u>Industrial Relations</u></p> <p>The FBU Brigade Committee have passed a resolution to cease the Additional Voluntary Hours agreement. This agreement has been used to maintain appliance availability and crew sizes of 5 riders through Firefighters working additional shifts at flat rate. It is the understanding of Officers that the reason for the resolution is that GM FRS are now paying time and a half although conflicting reports state it is as a result of the recruit contracts dispute.</p> <p>In any event as there is no AVH budget let alone overtime budget all that will result is more appliance unavailability.</p> <p><u>Authority Reform</u></p> <p>Following a meeting with the LCR Metro Mayor it has been agreed that the LCR will seek a variation to the existing devolution order to extend the responsibilities of the Metro Mayor to governance of the FRS and Police across the 5 Merseyside LA areas.</p> <p><u>ADF and Fatalities</u></p> <p>Merseyside has recorded our lowest level of fire deaths (4) and accidental dwelling fires (below 1000 for the second year running).</p>
11.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>No further business raised.</p>
	<p>DH thanked everyone for attending, wished them a safe journey onwards and closed the meeting at 12:40 hrs</p>
	<p>Date of the next meeting: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018</p>