

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 17 December 2018

PROCEEDINGS OF NORTH WEST FIRE AND RESCUE FORUM HELD

25 JULY 2018

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:-

Diane Brooks – Principal Member Services Officer -Tel No 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of the North West Fire and Rescue Forum held on 25 July 2018.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note/endorse the proceedings as set out at Appendix 1.

Information

Attached for information at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the North West Fire and Rescue Forum meeting held on 25 July 2018.

Business Risk

None for the purposes of this report.

Environmental Impact

None for the purposes of this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None for the purposes of this report.

HR Implications

None for the purposes of this report.

Financial Implications

None for the purposes of this report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

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

North West Fire & Rescue Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2018

At

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

Present:	Authority:
Cllr L Byrom	Merseyside
Cllr S Sullivan	Merseyside
Cllr L Rennie	Merseyside
Cllr B Rudd	Cheshire
Cllr S Nelson	Cheshire
Cllr G Merry	Cheshire
Cllr F De Molfetta	Lancashire
Cllr D O'Toole	Lancashire
Officers/Observers:	Authority:
Mr C Kenny	Lancashire
Mr P Garrigan	Merseyside
Mr M Cashin	Cheshire
Mr S Healey	Cumbria
Ms D Docx	Greater Manchester
Mrs J Henshaw	Merseyside
Mrs S Wainwright	Merseyside (Secretariat)
Apologies:	Authority:
Cllr J Willis	Cumbria
Cllr M Parkinson	Lancashire

Agenda Item	Minute
1.	<p>Appointment of Chair and future of the Forum Cllr Les Byrom was nominated as Chair.</p>
2.	<p>Appointment of Vice Chair Cllr Bob Rudd was nominated as Vice Chair.</p>
3.	<p>Chairman's Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and opened proceedings.</p> <p>A proposal was made for the Forum to meet every 6 months (twice yearly). All scheduled dates to be erased from diaries and new dates agreed.</p> <p>Cllr O'Toole requested regular updates on NW Fire Control. Agreed this would appear as a standing item. It would be for the Directors of the Fire Control Board to determine what is shared with this Forum.</p> <p>Where possible NWFRAF meetings would be aligned to NW Fire Control Meetings: 10:30 hrs – NW Fire Control Board Meeting 12:30 hrs – NWFRAF - Group Meetings 13:30 hrs - NWFRAF 15:00 hrs - NW Chiefs Meeting.</p>
4.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received as shown in the table above.</p>
5.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business on the Agenda.</p>
6.	<p>Items Requiring Urgent Attention</p> <p>There were no matters requiring urgent attention.</p>
7.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of 11th April 2018 were agreed as a true record.</p>
8.	<p>Actions from the Previous Meeting</p> <p>Action 1 – Lobbying: A letter was sent to the Minister, 2nd May 2018, but no response has been received to date.</p> <p>Action 2 – NWAS: It was agreed that a further letter of invitation would be sent to the new Chief Executive once in post.</p> <p>Action 3 – Devolution Deals</p> <p>Greater Manchester: No further update was provided.</p> <p>Merseyside: No further update was provided.</p>

	<p>Action 4 - Shadow Fire Minister: The Shadow Fire Minister is attending the meeting today.</p>
9.	<p><u>Chair's Update</u></p> <p>The Chair updated by suggesting areas to be discussed with the Shadow Fire Minister. The following areas were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Shadow Fire Minister Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Governance of the Fire & Rescue Service • Role of the PCC • Influence over Comprehensive Spending Review • Challenges facing the Fire & Rescue Service now and in the future. • Voluntary Retained Firefighters • Pensions • Pay ➤ The Chair updated on a meeting with the FMC regarding funding for pay. <p>Voluntary Retained Firefighters – CK updated on the system operated during the Wild Fire incidents and praised the working practices of such.</p> <p>PH agreed wholeheartedly with this position, and welcomed the opportunity to discuss retained firefighting with the Shadow Fire Minister.</p> <p>PG advised that given the limited time we are likely to have with the Minister should the Forum concentrate on gaining her (Labour) view on governance arrangements around PCCs, Comprehensive Spending Review and Challenges to the Service?</p> <p>The Chair advised that the LGA FMC Sub Committee was looking at 'on call firefighters' and would be happy to share the information with the Forum.</p> <p>A discussion took place around HMICFRS and the experiences of Lancashire and Cheshire in the first tranche. The message from CK was the importance of the Service Liaison Officer.</p>
10.	<p><u>North West FRS Updates</u></p> <p>Greater Manchester: DD updated on the following issues:</p> <p>Wildfires: Mutual aid was always paramount. MACA agreement was raised - supported by NWF&RS and also the national resilience arrangements. The process undertaken proved to be the correct thing to do. It was a learning curve as wild fires of this stature had not been experienced before. The majority of the land was owned by United Utilities and they commissioned a helicopter to drop water in a very ad hoc manner. On day three the Mayor had intervened and a second helicopter was deployed and was under the control of FRS. The fires continued for 3 weeks with support to cover Business Continuity and welfare issues. Now in the recovery phase. Donations distributed to charity. Monies transferred to firefighters charity. Example on a national basis for resources being used. Discussions with Government. If the incident had prolonged it would have exhausted resources.</p> <p>Appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer to start in September. Worked as a Chief Executive in FRS in Northern Ireland before he retired and prior to that he worked in the Scottish Government in amalgamating F&RS into one.</p>

Cumbria:

SH updated on the following issues:

- No incidents of national significance.
- New IRMP 2019 -23. Looking at a 4 year delivery plan also.
- Senior Team – interim ACFO – 7 applicants – process end of next week for appointment 3rd August.
- Firefighters struggling with number leaving. Difficulties in planning due to retirement age changes. Advert for transfers – looking at a national advert for a wholetime campaign – end of Autumn – new recruits Feb/March 2019.
- Massive challenges retained system – currently 60 vacancies.
- Wholetime duty system – moving to 8 or 12 hr duty system. FBU compromise 14/10 – written to NJC and waiting for a date for arbitration.
- 3 person crewing discussions taking place in quieter retained stations. FBU see 5 as a minimum. Considering a pilot scheme and how this will look.
- In the process of procuring rapid response vehicles – changing fleet
- Commercial opportunities – County Council looking at a platform to generate income.
- Staff cultural survey. Published start of August. Some positives; improvement around communication. Will share the survey results.

Lancashire:

CK updated on the following issues:

- The combined Fire & Ambulance station in Lancaster is nearing completion – open later this year
- Planning a new station at Preston – NWS withdrawn their interest.
- Moorland Fires – Opted not to use MoD. Relied more on skilled teams in FRS. South Wales team burnt back the fire – very effective. Still on site. Grateful to all partners and Services. Currently working with Merseyside as National Resilience Lead Authority to discuss a cost recovery structure.
- Excellent response from the public – unused donations going back to charitable areas.
- Capacity – having a variety of shifts including RDS staff were invaluable
- Staff survey completed. Nearly 500 responses, very positive overall but a core 1 in 10 expressing negativity. Overall highest ever rating of 70 on Government benchmarks; LFRS lowest rating is 59; Home Office is currently at 61.

Merseyside:

PG updated on the following issues:

- All different in the way we deliver services. Notwithstanding from IRMP 17-20; we have some different arrangements in relation to PO Team with the addition of an ACFO. Changes have been made on the significance of national resilience.
- Proposals to merge 8 stations into 4 and subsequently 6 to 3 – continuing to take place.
- Prescott open (merging Huyton and Whiston stations) – Police/Fire Station (NWS should have joined but withdrew).
- 8 months away from completing the building in Saughall Massie (Wirral) – challenging (green belt land) – primary consideration about being able to respond as quickly as possible.
- St Helens Station – ongoing
- Introduction of different duty systems – 2/3rd busier in the day than in the evening (day time – 8.30 am to 8.30 pm). Responding to everything – EMR. If not EMR would be 10.30 am. Introduced a day/crewing system – staff

	<p>available on days 30 mins return. Two further stations where this needs to be enacted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition the Service by bringing in new contracts. Standard contract for a firefighter with additional duties – currently under scrutiny – attending MTFA, flooding and EMR. Contention with FBU is EMR. • Utilisation of our reserves. £27m – majority allocated to capital expenditure. Allocated a recruitment reserve • Argument against using reserves for pay given the commitments required. • Strategy about how to utilise reserves. • Recruitment – could be competing against each other. Not ideal but is the resource we have. • National Resilience work. It is a coordination role. Pressures on the establishment have meant that commitment locally is not always available and the importance on National Resilience is therefore key. PG picked up on this morning’s visit with NW Fire Control and congratulated the Service on its ability to cope throughout the major incidents. Raises some key questions around CSR and further cuts. <p>Cheshire: MC updated on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Structure – CFO, two ACFOs – trial for 6 months with a view to advertising and filling. • Service Review – 4 year plan in 2020 the reason being a number of Cheshire Members could change in the next year. • Safety centre – up and running. Royal visit opening in September. • Apprentices to become wholetime firefighters. Learning to share. • Blue light – tupe’d over (back office, IT, ESTATES, HR) delivered by Police • Police/PCC – PCC voting member of FA – no intention of taking over the FRS. • First tranche of HMICFRS – results in 4 months time • Moorland Fires – supported other Services. Fire control did an amazing job. • Safe and well – live evaluations. Won national and international awards. • Building projects – passed the budget – planning new station in Chester, approved budget for training centre and joint/police fire station in Crew. • Recruiting. <p>MC offered to host a future meeting in the Cheshire Safety Centre to enable members to see the facilities first hand.</p>
11.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>No other business was discussed.</p>
12.	<p><u>Date of the next meeting</u></p> <p>11th December 2018 –</p> <p>Future Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20th June 2019 • 10th December 2019