

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 14 December 2020 at 10.00 am - Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast)

MINUTES

PRESENT:

F De Molfetta (Chairman)

Councillors

N Hennessy (Vice-Chair)

L Beavers

S Blackburn

P Britcliffe

I Brown

S Clarke

J Eaton

S Holgate

J Hugo

A Kay

H Khan

M Khan CBE

Z Khan

T Martin

D O'Toole

E Oades

M Pattison

A Riggott

J Shedwick

D Smith

D Stansfield

G Wilkins

T Williams

93/19 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman, CC Frank De Molfetta welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. He advised that in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Government had made regulations that enabled virtual meetings. This meeting was accessible for Committee Members via Microsoft Teams and for members of the press and public via a live webcast on YouTube.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Steve Healey to the meeting. Mr Healey would be joining the Service as Deputy Chief Fire Officer in the New Year.

Mr Mark Nolan, Clerk to the Authority conducted a roll call and Authority Members individually confirmed their attendance.

94/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillor David Howarth.

95/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

County Councillor Pattison declared a personal interest after the meeting, with reference to the work of the older people's champion. Although she was not the Older People's Champion on the Authority she did work for Age Consulting who worked

alongside Older People's Champions throughout the Northwest. The Authority's Member Champion responsible for older people was Community Safety Champion, Councillor Williams.

96/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 14 September 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

97/19 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2020 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

In response to a procedural query from County Councillor Riggott, the Chairman of the Committee, County Councillor Holgate confirmed that should any amendments to the minutes from the previous meeting be agreed at the next Performance Committee meeting, amended minutes would be presented to the full Authority.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 16 September 2020 be noted and endorsed.

98/19 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2020 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 23 September 2020 be noted and endorsed.

99/19 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2020 OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Member Training and Development Working Group held on 4 November 2020 be noted and endorsed.

100/19 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2020 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

In response to a question raised by County Councillor O'Toole on whether fire stations were being used as part of the vaccination programme the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service was looking to provide support to the main vaccination sites and potentially to satellite sites once established (approximately 22) alongside GP surgeries but this had not yet been requested. It was noted that a Station Manager had been seconded working as part of the planning team alongside military planners and the Local Resilience Forum. A number of fire stations had been visited and assessed alongside other community venues with no stations yet confirmed for use. Members requested notification if their local fire station was to be used.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 16 November 2020 be noted and endorsed.

101/19 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2020 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 25 November 2020 be noted and endorsed.

102/19 MINUTES OF MEETING FRIDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2020 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 27 November 2020 be noted and endorsed.

103/19 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2020 OF STRATEGY GROUP

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Strategy Group held on 30 November 2020 be noted and endorsed.

104/19 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Clerk presented a report received on behalf of County Councillor Hennessy which detailed background information and key points raised at Local Government Association meetings of: the Firefighters Pensions Scheme Advisory Board, the Fire Commission and the Fire Service Management Committee which she had attended on behalf of the Authority.

Following Member questions and discussion County Councillor Hennessy asked that a clear and concise report for Members be provided to a future meeting of the Authority on the person-centred approach to Home Fire Safety Checks which included involvement of the Authority's champion responsible for older people. The Chairman requested that this include the numbers of home fire safety checks completed over time and the impact this had had on the risk map in Lancashire.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Williams in relation to the building safety update, the Chairman confirmed that all buildings in Lancashire over 18 metres high had been identified, however the scope of this work had changed and therefore work continued in this area.

County Councillor Hennessy urged Members to view the member development videos on the LGA website.

RESOLVED: - That the recommendations be noted and endorsed.

105/19 AERIAL APPLIANCE STRATEGY

Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Jon Charters presented the report. The report provided an overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's aerial appliance provision and detailed key drivers for change based upon the ability to manage risk in Lancashire and cognisant of learning emerging from the Grenfell Tower inquiry and other incidents of national significance.

Members considered detailed proposals for changes to the current aerial fleet which

included options for Aerial Ladder Platforms, Turntable Ladders and Water Towers with the aim of strengthening response arrangements whilst providing an effective and efficient distribution of these assets across the county.

County Councillor O'Toole was concerned that the 4 Aerial Ladder Platforms (ALPs) were based in the north and Preston thereby leaving a lack of facilities in the south of the county (Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire). Although he had been assured there were facilities at Bootle and Southport and he appreciated there were not the same number of high-rise buildings in the south of the county there had however, been a proliferation of multi-storey buildings at Edge Hill University with, over the last 10 years, green belt land being taken up with new University buildings or student accommodation. He was therefore concerned that any fire in residential accommodation may require ladders longer than those based at Skelmersdale and Ormskirk.

In response, the Chief Fire Officer advised that increasing the fleet through the purchase of a turntable ladder located at the centre of the county gave the opportunity to primary crew the appliance which would enable it to be moved instantly. He advised that none of the ALPs were permanently crewed, they were switched crewed; which could lead on occasion to respond to an incident without knowing that an ALP was required and one would then need to be brought from elsewhere in the county. The aim was to achieve the best distribution as possible against the number of high-rise buildings across Lancashire. He confirmed that if the picture changed significantly ie: an increase in student high-rise accommodation, a report seeking further investment would be presented to the Authority for consideration.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Shedwick, the Chief Fire Officer provided reassurance that the number of vehicles that were off the run due to maintenance and training etc was monitored with the aim of ensuring that this was limited to one vehicle at a time.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority approved a capital uplift of £661k required to:

- i) Support the purchase of a Turntable Ladder to replace the 4th Aerial Ladder Platform (subject to further evaluation of 32m and 42m options); and
- ii) Purchase 2 further Water Tower appliances (aligned to scheduled replacement of 2 B-type fire engines).

106/19 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

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 Integrated Risk Management Plan (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 IRMP.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority approved the Annual Statement of Assurance 2019-20 as presented and approved the signing of this by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

107/19 POLICY UPDATE REPORT (VERBAL REPORT)

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority, Mark Nolan advised that he was undertaking a review of a number of policies. He had been waiting for the publication by the Local Government Association of a model code of conduct for local authorities which had recently been completed. He would now review this in relation to other governance policies and present a report to the next meeting of the Authority.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

108/19 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

The Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report which detailed significant fire safety prosecutions, arson convictions within the period 1 September 2020 to 30 November 2020. The report also detailed relevant changes to Fire Protection policy and delivery.

County Councillor Shedwick expressed his thanks to the staff who dealt with the prosecutions as the report demonstrated the resultant severity of prison sentences.

Councillor Williams echoed County Councillor Shedwick's comments. In addition, he expressed concern regarding the number of hotels in Blackpool that for some time had been closed (reopened and then closed again); with a lot of owners who had not received an income. It was concerning if properties were not being maintained. He queried whether this was giving the Service any additional work to ensure those buildings were safe from fire. In response the Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service resourced to risk; this was an area of focus with high levels of staffing in that part of the county. He advised that sadly, over a number of years higher numbers and more significant safety failings had been seen in hotels in Blackpool as these premises were not being maintained. He also advised that a piece of work which had been postponed during covid would enable wholtime staff on frontline fire engines to carry out building checks (post-covid) to identify compliance and non-compliance. Training was scheduled for as soon as whenever possible in the New Year to enable this work to begin. This would then allow competent inspecting officers to undertake inspections of non-compliant premises.

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

109/19 COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Steve Morgan presented the report. This report included information for the 2 Unitary and 12 District Authorities relating to Fire Safety Initiatives and Fires and Incidents of particular interest.

The Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer highlighted the adaptability of the community safety team particularly their ability to:

- continue to deliver safe and well visits to vulnerable people in Lancashire in addition to other visits to vulnerable people as part of working within the resilience forum;
- continue to develop partnership work with Lancashire Constabulary;
- focus on the delivery of the Bright Sparx education campaign to schools via digital engagement across the county which culminated in a virtual bonfire evening. This was viewed 103,000 times predominantly by families with young children, there were 3,500 comments and the event was considered to be very positive;
- continue to deliver campaigns primarily for winter safety which was aimed at vulnerable people. Within that there was a focus on cooking safely and the Diwali celebrations which took place in the period; and
- continue to work closely with the local authorities to provide support to people who are hoarding.

County Councillor O'Toole requested that incidents in the report be reflective of the geographical area the incident occurred.

County Councillor Hennessy requested a link to view the video of the firefighter who was also a student at Edge Hill (as referenced on page 180 of the agenda pack).

County Councillor Riggott congratulated officers for the virtual bonfire which was a great alternative. He asked that this be considered for future years as it was a benefit to those people who could not get out and it took some pressure away from residents who raised concerns regarding parking congestion during these events. In response Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer Morgan advised that the covid-19 period had given the Service the opportunity to review a number of approaches and it would be considering a virtual bonfire for 2021.

County Councillor Eaton gave thanks to staff at Bacup for their support to the gentleman referred to on page 178 of the agenda pack.

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

110/19 MEMBER COMPLAINTS

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

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

111/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 22 February 2021 at 10:00am – venue to be confirmed.

112/19 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.

113/19 PENSIONABILITY OF ALLOWANCES

(Paragraph 3)

The Director of People and Development presented a report in respect of pensionability of allowances.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority approved the recommendation as set out in the report.

114/19 SERVICE HEADQUARTERS BUSINESS CASE

(Paragraph 3)

The Director of Corporate Services presented Members with options for the proposed relocation of Service Headquarters.

RESOLVED: - That the position be noted and the course of action outlined at the meeting endorsed including Member engagement through a politically balanced working group of 10 Members, names to be provided by Political Group Leaders, with a report back to a future Authority meeting.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood