

North West Fire & Rescue Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2016

At
NW Fire Control, Lingley Mere, Warrington

Present:	Authority:
Cllr D Hanratty	Merseyside (Chair)
Cllr L Maloney	Merseyside
Cllr J Bell	Greater Manchester
Cllr B Rudd	Cheshire
Cllr S Nelson	Cheshire
Cllr F De Molfetta	Lancashire
Cllr D O'Toole	Lancashire
Cllr B Doughty	Cumbria
Officers/Observers:	Authority:
Mr P Hancock	Cheshire and Cumbria
Mr C Kenny	Lancashire
Mr P Argyle	Greater Manchester
Mr D Stephens	Merseyside
Mrs J Henshaw	Merseyside
Mrs S Wainwright	Merseyside (Note taker)
Apologies:	Authority:
Cllr D Acton	Greater Manchester
Cllr G Merry	Cheshire
Cllr G Strong	Cumbria
Cllr L Rennie	Merseyside
Cllr T Judge	Greater Manchester
Cllr M Parkinson	Lancashire
Mr P O'Reilly	Greater Manchester

Agenda Item	Minute
1.	<p><u>Chairman's Welcome and Introduction</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting, making particular reference to Cllr Rudd, Chair of Cheshire Fire & Rescue Authority attending his first Forum, and Paul Argyle representing Peter O'Reilly, then opened proceedings.</p>
2.	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies were received as shown in the table above.</p>
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business on the Agenda.</p>
4.	<p><u>Items Requiring Urgent Attention</u></p> <p>There were no matters requiring urgent attention.</p>
5.	<p><u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes of 14th July 2016 were agreed as a true record.</p>
6.	<p><u>Actions from the Last Meeting</u></p> <p>Action 1 – Lobbying</p> <p>The Chair updated the Forum on a recent communication from NWAS in which they were making enquiries as to the most appropriate person to attend a future meeting. The Chair indicated that it was the view of the Forum that given the strategic level of discussion it should be the Chief Executive/Chair of NWAS who attends. Discussions would be around collaboration and an overview of working across the North West.</p> <p>DS advised that Services were working collaboratively with NWAS but there were issues with the FBU over extending EMR.</p> <p>Action: Letter to NWAS outlining the purpose and scope of attending a future meeting.</p> <p>A further discussion took place around meeting with Brandon Lewis, MP and Dan Greaves. Cllr Doherty proposed that the Chair/Vice-Chair and DS (as Advisor to the Forum) should arrange to meet with NWAS and Ministers in London. Cllr Molfetta seconded this.</p> <p>Action: Letter to Fire Minister/Dan Greaves requesting a meeting.</p> <p>PA advised that Brandon Lewis, MP was visiting Greater Manchester (GM) FRS on 3rd November to discuss recruitment/diversity and collaboration. The overall work of the North West would be highlighted by GM FRS.</p>

Action 2 – Policing and Crime Bill

The Chair advised that Royal Ascent was expected in the New Year, and that there had been a slight amendment to the Bill whereby if an Elected Mayor was appointed they could take responsibility for Fire.

It was agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to Andy Burnham, MP for his support of the FRS during his time as Shadow Home Secretary.

Action: Letter of appreciation to be sent to Andy Burnham, MP.

Action 3 – Devolution Deals

Greater Manchester devolution arrangements have been agreed and will come into force in May 2017. The Liverpool City Region devolution order is in the process of being laid before Parliament but does not include Police/FRS governance. It is thought that this will be addressed following the election of the Mayor in May 2017.

GM updated on the proposed Governance for a Fire Committee, but no clear decision as yet had been agreed.

It was felt that whatever model was adopted in GM would be adopted in Merseyside.

CLlr Doherty advised that Cumbria had submitted an application to Government for consideration of devolution but to date no agreement had been reached. He went on to state that the Police and Crime Commissioner hold an extremely good relationship and have indicated that they have no wish to take over the FRS.

CLlr Rudd confirmed that Cheshire had looked at a similar proposal, however Warrington are in talks with the Liverpool City Region so at present the proposal cannot move forward. There is also some reluctance to have an Elected Mayor.

PH summed up the conversation by suggesting that Home Office are looking to the Sector for solution and rather than focus on governance models it may be more appropriate to highlight the achievements of the North West FRS and the extended role played within the community. CFOs to compile a list for Members to promote.

Action: CFOs to compile a list of achievements for Members to promote.

Action 4 – Letwin Review

The action to circulate the Letwin Review was discharged. To be discussed as part of the main agenda.

Action 5 – Letter to new Fire Minister

Discussed as part of Action 1 – Item closed.

7.

Chairman's Update

The Chair advised that there were no issues to update the Forum on.

8.	<p><u>Early Day Motion – Sprinklers in Schools</u></p> <p>The Forum unanimously agreed to offer their support. The importance of sprinklers was emphasised. The following actions were agreed:</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to All Parliamentary Group offering support (Ronnie King). • Letter of support to Kate Hoey • Letter to Fire Minister • Letter to Clive Betts, Chair of the Select Committee – DCLG • Speak to Terry McDermott, Lead on behalf of CFOA.
9.	<p><u>Priorities Going Forward</u></p> <p>CK highlighted the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As discussed at Action Point 3 – CFO’s to compile a list of achievements for Members to promote; • Procurement – since the last meeting, procurement data has been published by Government and the North West fared very well. • ESMCP – North West will be the first region to move over. However, delays are expected. The cost sits with Central Government. Motorola have bought out Airwave and so own both systems; • Flooding – A seminar was recently hosted in Lancashire which every FRS attended with the intention of sharing lessons learnt. Very positive outcome. • Unwanted Fire Signals – work is continuing across the Sector. • Collaborative work across the North West with Specialist Officers - providing extra resilience advice and support. • Research and Development – taken over by the CFOA R&D Hub at the FSC. Tapping into this. • DS updated on National Operational Guidance, advising that the North West is ahead of any other region in implementing standardised SOP’s aligned to NOG. <p>CLr Doherty raised a query around the co-ordination of other agencies for national resilience during the floods in Cumbria, whilst at the same time recognising that the FRS were the only co-ordinated agent. DS responded by advising that this point was being addressed through the National Resilience Board/Strategic Resilience Board.</p>

10.

North West FRS Updates

Cheshire:

Chief Fire Officer Paul Hancock gave the following update on behalf of Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service:

- IRMP out for consultation – first year of a four year plan – forecasting £4m savings over the next four years
- 16/17 last year of current four year IRMP – 4 new stations and Safety Centre – savings of £8m
- Redeployments and new management structure for the new stations/fire cover model
- RDS second pumps at Runcorn - Crewe and Ellesmere Port to follow, although there is a proposal to move to a day duty shift model as an interim arrangement to align with the retirement profile
- Focus on WMs – development programme
- Wholetime recruitment campaign ongoing
- Apprentices started – 11 on scheme (4 females – 33%)
- Authority also recently approved a commitment to build enhancements and extensions to current training facilities at Sadler Road - £7m capital investment
- BLC on track and making progress – ICT first team to TUPE transfer to Chief Constable on 1st November; currently consulting on the measures
- Chief Officer group Feb/March to move in to Police HQ next year along with other corporate services departments; process co-location followed by the TUPE transfer

Cumbria:

Chief Fire Officer Paul Hancock gave the following update on behalf of Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service:

- CC Elections – May next year
- CE announced her retirement – leaves CC in February
- CC recent restructure – Communities team integrated into Public Health and our safe and well assessments; FRS became a directorate in its own right; includes Resilience, PREVENT and CS
- Significant financial challenges for the CC - £228m savings thus far and £45m for next year (£15m budget gap). FRS savings are £600k – these will be realised by management restructure and changes to Penrith, plus savings from pensions contributions (Modified scheme and the 92, 06 and 15 schemes employer contribution rates)
- Now developing plans for the new administration – May 2017 – challenging because 92% of our budget is on salaries
- DCP not progressing – alternative proposals being considered
- Furness Peninsula Blue Light Hub progressing; CFRS, NWS, Police and ASC to be located in the same building (partly funded by transformation monies from DCLG)
- Mergers and station closures – not currently an option

- Recently established a BLC WG – no desire or plans for the PCC to take over the FRS – FRS really well embedded in the CC
- EMR finally progressing – hopefully we will have a number of pilots starting in the New Year – really positive meeting with the new CE of NWAS
- Wholetime recruitment campaign started this week
- Apprentices recently offered permanent contracts
- Number of RDS on flexi contracts have also been offered permanent contracts

ClIr O'Toole asked if the 4 new Cheshire stations were PFI Schemes. Paul Hancock indicated that they were not.

ClIr O'Toole asked if they had been to public consultation on reducing pumps. Paul Hancock advised that this had not been necessary as they consulted 4 years ago on the initial IRMP.

ClIr Doherty wished to place on record his appreciation for the work Paul Hancock had undertaken since becoming Chief.

ClIr Byrom enquired about the numbers of retained applicants. Paul Hancock advised that this was dependent on station by station, but attracting candidates for retained duties was getting more difficult.

Greater Manchester:

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Paul Argyle gave the following update on behalf of Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service:

- Refreshing IRMP;
- A further £14m savings to be identified by 2020;
- Political issue – move to a new crewing system as part of 12 hour shifts. TAP response by this Friday. Further talks taking place on Monday 31st October. Section 188 was issued and withdrawn subject to meaningful discussions taking place;
- Proposal to reduce pumps to 50 during the day and 46 at night;
- Community Response Vehicles purchased;
- Underspend being used to invest in appliances and equipment;
- Recruits course – 18 (8 from underrepresented groups);
- Kier key contract at Bury training site. Requested 3 extra weeks for completed. Handover programmed for November. Fully operationally with training April 2017;
- Trialling missing or not seen calls;
- MoU with NWAS enforcing entry;
- Savings – review of all structures;
- Currently reviewing Support Services;
- Devolution:
 - Engaging with staff
 - Interim Mayor visited
 - Trade Unions reps – TUPE transfer what means for them.
 - Identifying opportunities as well as threats as the largest organisation moving into the combined authority.

- Peter O'Reilly appointed to Transformation Committee Project Board.

- Blue Light Collaboration –Irlam: tri station – last week did a signing of the steel with Wigan LA, Fire and Ambulance;
- Whitefield and Philips Park (moving on);
- Co-locate regulatory service with other regulators;
- Local Resilience Forum – Chair that Forum
- Rockerfellers100 Resilient Cities – funding achieved.

Cllr Bell asked about legislation for the material used for Halloween clothing. PH confirmed that most supermarkets do now comply but there is no EN standard.

Cllr Doherty advised that Cllrs of County FRA's are coming together to adopt a business case similar to the Forum.

Lancashire:

Chief Fire Officer Chris Kenny gave the following update on behalf of Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service:

- 19 out of 25 Elected Members are up for election in May 2017;
- IRMP – changed Lancaster second pump from wholetime to retained;
- Retained salary system in place for last 10 years has helped preventative approach but now thinking of going back to 'attendance and turn out approach'. Availability around 90%. Looking to pay over and above grey book;
- Recruitment – 2 tiered approach – first to RDS – next phase will be an open recruitment process;
- Gaining entry - £11k funding received;
- 3rd year of fitness tests;
- Firefighters Charity event in Lancashire – well supported.

Merseyside:

Chief Fire Officer Dan Stephens gave the following update on behalf of Merseyside:

IRMP 2017-20

- The 2017-20 draft IRMP will be issued for 12 weeks consultation subject to Authority approval at its meeting tomorrow (20th October).
- The IRMP contains a number of operational response proposals designed to contribute to an £11m savings target. The proposals include changing the crewing model at five stations from 24 hours WT to 12 hour WT days with retained cover on a 30 minute recall overnight.
- Two stations (Aintree and Kensington) already operate this duty system on an interim basis. The Authority has 18 recruits in training who are conditioned to this duty system with further recruit courses planned to ensure there are sufficient numbers of staff to crew all five stations.

Station Mergers

- Construction on the new Prescott fire and police station is due to commence imminently. This station will replace the existing stations at Huyton and Whiston.
- A planning application for the new fire station at Saughall Massie will be considered on 10th November. This station will replace the existing stations at Upton and West Kirby.
- Ground analysis is ongoing at the Canal Street site in St Helens to determine the extent of remediation that will be required prior to submitting a planning application. This station will replace the existing stations at Eccleston and St Helens.

Police Collaboration

- Deloitte are in the final stages of a 12 week process to develop an outline business case for collaboration around transactional and professional support services.
- The initial view from Deloitte is that there is significant potential to deliver savings through a range of options which will be considered by Chief Officers at a meeting on 4th November.

Lead Authority for National Resilience

- MFRA took on Lead Authority status for National Resilience on 1st July. The process of transition has been seamless and the processes are now well embedded.
- The Authority has responsibility for delivering assurance to Home Office over the operational readiness of the NR capabilities (USAR, CBRNe, HVP, ELS). The Authority also has responsibility for the management of the Training and Long Term Capability Management (Asset Refresh) contract.

Paul Hancock asked the Forum to recognise the hard work that Dan Stephens had undertaken in securing the position of Lead Authority for National Resilience. This was not an easy task and was down to the trust and confidence in Dan himself. **Well done Dan the man!**

DS thanked the Forum and emphasised the expectations of the Home Office for the entire Sector in taking on such responsibility. He went on to recognise the work and leadership of Paul as President of CFOA enabling the Sector to be seen in such a positive light, as well as the political leadership of the North West.

Cllr Rudd asked if this was as a consequence of the NW working together. DS concurred by assuring the Forum that it was due to solid foundations built up within the North West which was starting to be recognised within Home Office.

11.

Any Other Business

There were no items under any other business to be discussed.

12.	<u>Dates of future meetings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18th January 2017• 24th May 2017• 19th July 2017• 18th October 2017
	Close of Meeting.