

Minutes of the meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH 2019 at 10.00 AM

**Present:** Councillors Carroll, Clare, Hopkins, Lambert, Marland and Reed (Chairman)

**Officers:** J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development), M Hemming (Director of Finance and Assets), D Norris (Head of Service Delivery), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), P Mould (Group Commander Community & Business Safety Policy), D Whitelock (Station Commander POD Projects), C Koutsou (Firefighter), E Williams (Operational Assurance Apprentice), M Chandler (Apprentice Firefighter) and M Morton (Procurement/Firefighter Apprentice), A Collett (Organisational Development Manager) and F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager)

**Apologies:** Councillors McDonald and Roberts

**EX34 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Wednesday 6 February 2019, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**EX35 EXEMPT MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Wednesday 6 February 2019, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**EX36 THE AUTHORITY'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity introduced the report and advised Members that the Children Act 2004 and Care Act 2014 set out the statutory responsibilities for the promotion and safeguarding of the welfare of children; and of the promotion and safeguarding of the wellbeing of vulnerable adults respectively.

Group Commander Community & Business Safety Policy advised Members that as they would be aware, there was no statutory duty placed on the Authority with regard to safeguarding adults and children, but under the umbrella of the Prevention Strategy, the Safeguarding Policy Statement had been drafted to confirm the Authority's commitment to ensure that everyone had the right to live their life free from abuse and neglect, safeguarding the most vulnerable members of its community. These vulnerable characteristics being determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes, which increased the susceptibility of an individual or community, to the impacts of hazards.

The Group Commander Community & Business Safety Policy advised Members that this policy statement had been consulted on through the joint consultation forum, leadership group, members of the senior management team, and the Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity. The Safeguarding Procedure Note had been produced following an extensive review and consultation process to ensure that all information was correct and that the referral process was easy for staff to follow.

The Group Commander Community & Business Safety Policy advised Members that the Policy Statement referenced the Safeguarding Board and following a financial review, the Committee had previously recommended continuing to support both the Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Boards. Membership had helped to develop community and agency engagement, information sharing, access to data sets and joint working. Since the 1 April 2018, 72 safeguarding referrals had been made across the county, relatively evenly spread across Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire. The referrals ranged from self-neglect, mental health, modern slavery and most recently historical financial abuse.

The proposed policy statement if approved would be continually monitored and updated should there be significant changes in legislation or best practice effecting its delivery or compliance.

A Member advised that legislation was changing this year and local authorities would no longer be obliged to have the same safeguarding board arrangements. Milton Keynes Council was currently discussing and consulting on what the future safeguarding arrangements would be in Milton Keynes, the old safeguarding board with an independent chair person was no longer a legislative requirement.

RESOLVED –

That the new Safeguarding Policy Statement be approved.

## **EX37**

### **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2018**

The Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity advised Members that as they were aware, The Equalities Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 require public sector organisations employing over 250 staff to carry out gender pay gap reporting. In accordance with the Regulations, the Authority was required to annually publish six pieces of prescribed data about the pay and bonuses of male and female workers within the organisation: mean gender pay gap in hourly pay; median gender pay gap in hourly pay; mean bonus gender pay gap; median bonus gender pay gap; proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment and proportion of males and females in each pay quartile. The snapshot data for public sector employers was 31 March each year. It was encouraging to note that the mean gender pay gap had decreased by 2.75%.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that one of the key points to note about gender pay,

was that it should not be confused with equal pay. The Authority does pay its males and females the same and where the gap comes, was around earnings. Males on average, as the data shows, were earning more than females. There had been some initial analysis, and like most fire and rescue services, there was a low proportion of females, particularly in operational roles. The Authority was focusing on raising awareness that if someone wants to become a firefighter or have a career in the fire service, this was open to females, ethnic minorities etc., The Authority's long term strategy was to try and bring more females into the service. The data showed that male increase in earnings was slightly higher than female increase in earnings. A focus group was being set up, to try and understand if there were any structural reasons why females in particular, did not put themselves forward for promotion.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that included in the report was a comparison of other fire and rescue services. Although the Authority's gender pay gap was significantly higher than some other services, it had been noted that the range of ways of measuring data was different across all fire services. The LGA had issued some guidance for fire and rescue services and their advice was followed to try and ensure that the gender pay gap figure was as accurate as it could be. There was a national piece of work, coordinated by Essex Fire and Rescue Service, to ensure that in future years, all services would measure it the same.

Members noted the excellent work of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group.

RESOLVED –

1. That the content of the gender pay gap report 2018 be noted.
2. That the report be approved for submission to the government's website (gov.uk) as per reporting requirements, before the 30 March 2019.

## **EX38**

### **APPRENTICESHIPS – CELEBRATING SUCCESS**

As part of National Apprenticeship Week, Members received a presentation from Station Commander POD Projects, Firefighter Chantelle Koutsou and Operational Assurance Apprentice Elias Williams. Station Commander POD Projects highlighted the excellent contribution that apprentices had made to the Service, as well as the national recognition the Authority had received for its innovative approach to introducing apprentices in the sector. Chantelle and Elias shared their personal journeys, and how being an apprentice had made a huge positive impact on their lives.

Members were shown a video produced by the Institute for Apprenticeships featuring the Authority's own Apprentice Firefighter Michael Chandler. The Committee were also introduced to Melissa Morton. Last month Melissa completed her Business & Administration Apprenticeship whilst working in the

Procurement team. Melissa was now leaving Procurement to become one of the new cohort of Firefighter Apprentices.

The Chairman presented Melissa with her certificate for completing the Business & Administration Level 3 Apprenticeship.

Members thanked the apprentices for their presentations.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11.00 AM