

Minutes of the meeting of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE 2016 at 11.00 am

**Present** Councillors Busby (Chairman), Carroll, Clarke OBE (part), Dransfield, Glover, Gomm, Huxley, Lambert, Mallen, Marland (part), Reed, Schofield, Teesdale (part), Watson (part) and Wilson

**Officers:** J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development) D Sutherland (Director of Finance and Assets), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery), P Holland (Head of Service Transformation), D Melia (Group Commander Policy and Resilience), G Taylor (Group Commander Service Delivery South), S Wells (Group Commander Training, Learning and Development), S Tuffley (Station Commander Buckingham and Co-Responding), M Ridder (Employee Relations Manager), A Burch (Crew Commander), P Henderson (Crew Commander), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), G Porter (Communications Officer) and A McCallum (Executive Assistant to Chief Fire Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillors Brunning and Exon

**FA01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

(Councillor Dransfield presiding)

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Busby be re-elected Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2016/17.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Busby be re-elected Chairman of the Authority for 2016/17.

(Councillor Busby in the Chair)

**FA02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Dransfield be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2016/17.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Dransfield be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Authority for 2016/17.

**FA03 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 10 February 2016, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **FA04 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed the new Members Councillors David Carroll and Jean Teesdale from Buckinghamshire County Council (and Councillor Denise Brunning from Milton Keynes Council) to the Authority.

The Chairman's Announcements had been circulated in advance.

#### **FA05 MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY**

The Authority noted that the following Members had been appointed by the Constituent Authorities to serve on the Fire Authority for 2016/17:

##### Buckinghamshire County Council (12)

Councillors Busby, Carroll, Clarke, Glover, Gomm, Huxley, Lambert, Mallen, Reed, Schofield, Teesdale and Watson

##### Milton Keynes Council (5)

Councillors Brunning, Dransfield, Exon, Marland and Wilson

A discussion was held on membership of the Authority and it was requested that a review of the number of Members on the Fire Authority be reported to the Fire Authority meeting February 2017 with recommendations and taking into account a potential seat for the Police and Crime Commissioner.

#### **FA06 COMMITTEE MATTERS**

- (a) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

The Authority noted that the allocation of seats on the Authority was:

(i) Conservative Group:	11 seats	(64.7059%)
(ii) Liberal Democrat Group:	2 seats	(11.7647%)
(iii) Labour Group:	2 seats	(11.7647%)
(iv) UK Independence Party	1 seat	(5.8823%)
(v) Independent Group	1 seat	(5.8823%)

- (b) Committee Matters – Committee Appointments

RESOLVED -

That the following Committees be appointed and seats allocated, as follows:

- (a) Executive Committee (8 members):
- (i) Conservatives – 5 seats
  - (ii) Liberal Democrats – 1 seat
  - (iii) Labour – 1 seat

- (iv) Ungrouped Member – 1 seat
- (b) Overview and Audit Committee (9 members):
  - (i) Conservatives – 6 seats
  - (ii) Liberal Democrats – 1 seat
  - (iii) Labour – 1 seat
  - (iv) Ungrouped Member – 1 seat
- 2. That the following Members be appointed to the Executive Committee:
 

Councillors Busby, Carroll, Dransfield, Gomm, Lambert, Marland, Reed, Schofield
- 3. That the following Members be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee:
 

Councillors Brunning, Clarke, Exon, Glover, Huxley, Mallen, Teesdale, Watson and Wilson

**FA07**

**CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

The Authority considered possible dates for its meetings and meetings of its committees during 2016/17.

RESOLVED -

1. That meetings of the Authority be held on Wednesday 19 October 2016, 14 December 2016, Wednesday 15 February 2017 and Wednesday 7 June 2017, all at 11 a.m.
2. That meetings of the Executive Committee be held on Wednesday 13 July 2016, Wednesday 21 September 2016, Wednesday 23 November 2016, Wednesday 8 February 2017, Wednesday 15 March 2017 and Wednesday 10 May 2017, all at 10 a.m.
3. That meetings of the Overview and Audit Committee be held on Wednesday 27 July 2016, Wednesday 14 September 2016, Wednesday 7 December 2016 and Wednesday 8 March 2017, all at 10 a.m.

**FA08**

**APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Authority considered the appointment of representatives to outside bodies:

RESOLVED -

1. That Councillor Busby be appointed as the Authority's representative to the Local Government Association Annual Conference.
2. That Councillor Busby be appointed as the Authority's representative (and Councillor Dransfield as the Standing

Deputy) to the Local Government Association Fire Commission.

3. That Councillor Busby be appointed as the Authority's representative to the Local Government Association Annual Fire Conference.
4. That Councillor Busby be appointed as the Authority's representative to the Combined Fire Authorities Conference.
5. That Councillors Dransfield and Reed be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee.
6. That Councillors Busby and Clarke OBE be nominated as substitute members on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee.

## **FA09**

### **LEAD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Authority considered the allocation of Lead Member responsibilities.

RESOLVED –

That Members be appointed as Lead Members for 2016/17 as follows:

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Lead Member</b>
Community Protection	Councillor Carroll
Human Resources, Equality and Diversity	Councillor Reed
Finance, IT, Procurement and Control	Councillor Dransfield
Health and Safety, Corporate Risk	Councillor Schofield
Property and Resource Management	Councillor Gomm

## **FA10**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

#### **Executive Committee – 11 May 2016**

The Authority received a presentation from officers about the Strategic Training and Development Partnership on the recommendation of Executive Committee.

#### **Strategic Training and Development Partnership**

Members were advised that the innovative approach towards the delivery of operational training, in partnership with the Fire Service College, had not only proven to be financially intelligent, but also enabled the operational competencies of all front-line supervisory commanders and firefighters to be realistically challenged, whilst at the same time, being subject to independent assessment and scrutiny.

Members noted that although originally introduced as a 'pilot' in May 2015, the Strategic Training and Delivery Partnership had already realised notable benefits, not only in terms of the training outcomes, but also towards the continual enhancement of the Authority's professional reputation, with the Authority's employees delivering what was essentially Fire Service College courses, to both national and international delegates.

Members also noted that from the period 1 October 2015 to 30 April 2016, a total of 232 operational staff had attended the validation exercises, during which 230 staff were assessed in respect of their Breathing Apparatus competencies, with all but 3 operational staff attaining the required standards. These 3 staff were subsequently provided with development plans and support, enabling them to all successfully complete their respective re-assessments. In addition to Breathing Apparatus, 84 supervisory commanders underwent Incident Command System (Level 1) assessments, with all demonstrating the required level of competence.

The Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity advised Members that the original reason for using the Fire Service College was not financial, but to provide the best quality training for all the Authority's operational staff and this was indeed the case. This training had given the Authority's operational staff the opportunity to train in a safe environment in a way that would not usually be possible.

In response to a Member's question the Authority was advised that at the Fire Service College, there were many different scenarios: an airplane, train, helicopter, high-rise building, shops etc., and this scheme gives the Authority's firefighters the best possible facilities for its firefighters to train for the whole spectrum of types of emergency.

A Member asked whether, if more fire and rescue services used it, this would impact on availability; and was advised that the college facilities were so extensive that many services could use them simultaneously if they wished.

Members noted the resolutions already agreed at the Executive Committee meeting on 11 May 2016.

**FA11**

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (E&D) OBJECTIVES 2016-20, PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY AND REVIEW OF 2012-15 OBJECTIVES**

The Lead Member for Human and Resources and Equality Diversity advised Members that it was a comprehensive report and sets out how the Authority would comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED); set the Authority's four yearly objectives; and update on progress since 2012.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised

Members that the Authority had always taken its commitment to equality diversity and inclusion seriously, and had a declared aim as part of the Authority's Core Values that it values equality and diversity within the service and the community. It was four years since the Authority last presented an outline plan and strategy around equality and diversity, and it was a statutory requirement that it was completed every four years. The difference this year was that it had integrated the equality and diversity of its employees with the equality and diversity work it carries out in the community, so there was one holistic view.

The Employee Relations Manager gave Members a brief presentation and advised that the purpose of the report was to set the Authority's four yearly objectives for 2016-2020; comply with the public sector equality duty; present the workforce diversity data in the form of charts and tables; review the 2012-15 objectives; and to set out measures needed to meet the objectives.

Members were advised that:

- the equality and diversity objective was designed to underpin the people strategy; to deliver the public safety plan; and to meet the requirements of the equality duty in the exercise of its functions.
- the Authority aimed to be an employer of choice, attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing staff from diverse backgrounds, to reflect the communities it serves. It would also provide a more diverse range of services to better protect the communities it served. The employment offer would be inclusive and embrace flexibility to support improved diversity representation across the service and the culture would engage and value diversity and difference to enhance its service offering to the public.
- the Authority employs 538 people. Operational employees make up 78% of the entire workforce and it was important to note that there was a low turnover of whole time firefighters, mainly as a result of pension arrangements. There had been a whole time firefighter recruitment freeze and a decline in the overall numbers of operational staff employed and as a result of this, there had been limited opportunities to recruit; therefore it has been historically difficult to change the composition of the workforce in terms of diversity in order to better reflect the communities served. The last recruitment for whole time operational firefighters was in 2009.

A Member asked that if the Authority was going to promote more Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) employees how would this be achieved and was advised that it would be achieved through engaging with community groups through prevention and protection work and the recruitment the Authority was currently undertaking for On Call/Part Time Firefighters and

apprenticeships over the next three years. The under-represented groups would be high-lighted and the Authority would welcome applications and would focus on applications from those groups.

A Member asked if a whistleblowing procedure was in place and was advised that it was; and was advised that the Authority had written to every employee advising them of this policy when it was updated a year ago. There was also an external body that employees can use anonymously as well as through the monitoring officer.

A Member also asked how health and fitness of employees was monitored and was advised that there were various tests that were undertaken annually and the Authority had recently updated its fitness procedure and invested in updating fitness facilities on fire stations. The Authority also focused on mental health and wellbeing and was signed up with MIND in terms of mental health awareness and there was 24/7 support for issues such as stress, welfare, financial debt, relationship issues etc.

A Member asked how the new Government legislation regarding targets for apprenticeships would affect the Authority and was advised that with the current apprenticeship programme for the next three years (assuming that the Authority takes the numbers of apprenticeships currently planned) plus a small number of support staff apprenticeships, the Authority would hit its targets.

A Member stated it was widely known that the fire service nationally had the worst equality and diversity record for percentage of workforce due in most part to most fire and rescue services not recruiting for many years and was advised that , for this reason, the report was very open in stating that the Authority didn't have full data to know what a realistic target would be and the trend data would be captured this year by using the first apprenticeship recruitment to see what it could do in reaching out to the whole community.

RESOLVED –

1. that the contents of the report at Annex A, and Appendices 2, 3 and 4 be noted;
2. that the new 2016-2020 E&D objectives set out at Appendix 1 be approved and published;
3. that the progress against objectives be monitored annually by update reports to the Authority.

**FA12**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY FIREFIGHTER INJURIES FAMILY GROUP PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS 2013/14 AND 2014/15**

The Lead Member for Health and Safety and Corporate Risk introduced the report and advised Members that following the

presentation of the Annual Health and Safety Report at the Fire Authority meeting in December 2015 a request was made by a Member for performance comparisons between Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and fire services of a similar size and demographic.

The Head of Service Transformation advised Members that the statistical information was provided from returns to the Department of Communities and Local Government at the end of May each year for the previous year. In future, the statistics would now be reported into the Home Office in the same way.

Members were advised that although the increase in injuries at fires figure was very low, the Authority was not complacent, and although only cuts and grazes had occurred at operational incidents, they would be investigated to find out the underlying cause and an intervention put in place. Members could be assured that the Authority had a very good safety record.

Members were also advised that there had been a positive decrease in vehicle accidents. Time and effort had been invested into training and a new procedure for staff to follow and line managers would ensure their staff followed those procedures.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

## **FA13**

### **THAMES VALLEY CARDIAC ARREST RESPONSE PILOT**

The Head of Service Delivery introduced the report and explained to Members that this was part of the way the Authority was starting to diversify its activities and look at different ways to help and save lives in the community. This pilot scheme was now being progressed and extending co-responding to the deployment of defibrillators to confirmed cardiac incidents.

Members received a presentation from the Station Commander Buckingham and Co-Responding regarding developing the Co-Responder partnership with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS).

Members were advised that an opportunity had been identified to take a collaborative approach and assist in a new way with existing equipment and skills to make the residents of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes safer. The pilot provided a timely and proportionate response to incidents in line with corporate objectives. The Resuscitation Council Guidelines 2015 state that a community response was the way forward. Victims of cardiac arrest had a 50-70% chance of survival if defibrillated in 3-5 minutes of collapse. Currently only 2% of victims in the UK are defibrillated before arrival of the ambulance. This pilot aims to improve those statistics and was another example of improving the community response to medical emergencies.

Members were advised that following an online survey which 118 staff responded to, the following was noted:-



- 82% of staff agreed that there should be a trial to assist SCAS when attending cardiac arrest incidents;
- 82% of staff would volunteer to take part in such a trial;
- 81% of crews agreed that they had the required basic skills to make an intervention at a cardiac arrest incident before the arrival of an ambulance;
- 87% of respondents agreed that the Authority's appliances carry the basic essential equipment required to make an intervention at a cardiac arrest incident before the arrival of an ambulance.

Members were advised that looking forward, the following could be expected this year:

- A new Memorandum of Understanding with SCAS would include cardiac arrest;
- A service-wide response to the most serious incidents that SCAS face - with existing skills and equipment our staff would respond to confirmed cardiac arrests on a voluntary basis. This would make the people of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes safer;
- Expansion of co-responder schemes across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes - Stations including Newport Pagnell and Gerrards Cross had put themselves forward to become co-responder stations. Watches in High Wycombe and Aylesbury had also expressed an interest;
- Improved mobilisation to co-responder incidents - the Authority was looking to make improvements to the way co-responders were mobilised. SCAS were centralising the co-responder mobilising desks and the Authority was proposing to place equipment in Thames Valley Fire Control to speed up call handling and mobilisation to cardiac arrest incidents;
- Enhanced and standardised equipment - the Thames Valley fire and rescue services would work with SCAS to have standardised and interchangeable equipment on all appliances.
- The Immediate Emergency Care qualification - the ambitious plan was to train all fire and rescue employees to IEC standard. The five day course covers co-response, trauma care, first aid at work and much more. This would bring an assumed level of competence across the region when paramedics work with firefighters, ultimately with better patient outcomes.

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that defibrillators were on the majority of accessible fire stations and on all our fire engines. The expansion into the co-responder and medical emergency role wasn't just about response and emergency response, it was about that wider public safety, public protection wider public education role the Authority can have in the community.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

(Councillor Clarke OBE left the meeting)

**FA14**

### **INCIDENT REVIEW OLNEY AND STONY STRATFORD 1 MAY 2016**

The presentation given to Members by the Group Commander, Service Delivery South, gave an overview of the two noteworthy incidents that occurred simultaneously in Olney and Stony Stratford on the afternoon of 1 May 2016.

Members were informed that the incident at Olney began around 1pm and was a fire that started in the courtyard of an old inn and hotel and rapidly spread, causing damage to the first and second floors, and roof of the premises. Members were also informed that at around 3pm, whilst still dealing with the incident at Olney, the Service received another call to a fire in Stony Stratford that had started in commercial premises and which caused significant damage to the whole building including an adjoining property. The Group Commander, who attended both incidents, reported to Members on the challenges faced by the attending crews and how the two incidents were professionally and effectively dealt with.

During the presentation, the Head of Service Delivery explained how the Authority managed its resources on a day to day basis to ensure that appropriate fire cover was maintained and was available throughout the county to meet its risk demand profile. Members were also informed as to how Thames Valley Fire Control Service and the Resource Management Team managed the operational resource demands during these two simultaneous incidents.

The presentation concluded with Members being shown aerial footage of the premises at Stony Stratford post incident. The footage, utilised at Stony Stratford to support the fire investigation was captured by the Service's drone, which had subsequently been mobilised to an incident at the request of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation be noted.

(Councillors Teesdale and Watson left the meeting)

**FA15****JUNIOR FIREFIT PRESENTATION**

The Head of Service Delivery introduced Crew Commander Adam Burch from Blue Watch High Wycombe who would give a brief presentation on an initiative at High Wycombe Fire Station, which emphasised where the service was not only engaging with the community, but making a real difference working with partners.

The Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity advised Members that he was invited to go to Cressex School, High Wycombe to see this particular project and the impact it had on the children was very significant. The work that the Authority's employees do in the community with children was extremely beneficial.

Crew Commander Burch explained to Members that the new project being piloted at High Wycombe Fire Station was aimed at 11-14 year olds who don't participate in physical activity and who were not achieving the standards they should at school and how the Authority can integrate some key fire safety messages while delivering a good educational package. It was a six week course with topics such as life of a firefighter, diet and nutrition, health and wellbeing, hoax calls and arson, community fire safety and how to maintain a healthy life style.

The course aimed to transform the lives of young people who currently do not actively participate in physical education and aimed to trigger changes in behaviour, improving confidence and self-esteem. Ultimately its aim was to develop young people's understanding of the importance of living a healthier and more active lifestyle, using the role of a firefighter as inspiration and incorporating the delivery of key fire safety messages.

Members were advised that the objectives were to build a more active, inclusive and healthier Community; create a safer community through important educational messages and improved social interaction; inspire and raise aspirations by enabling continued participation and supporting physical, educational and personal development.

Moving forward there was additional Sportivate funding for two new courses; access to LEAP's Coaching Fund; training and mentoring support; discounted development seminars and lectures and an introduction to additional funding streams for future projects. To ensure the project remains sustainable the Authority was looking into improving cost efficiency and building partnerships with local businesses.

(Councillor Marland left the meeting)

**FA16****FALLS PREVENTION PRESENTATION**

The Head of Service Delivery introduced Crew Commander Paul Henderson from Red Watch Broughton Fire Station who would carry on the theme of community engagement. Members were

aware of the home fire risk checks, these were now being developed, along with Age UK and NHS Milton Keynes, to look at the subject of falls prevention alongside fire prevention. As Members would appreciate, a lot of the target groups visited to prevent fires, would come under this group as well.

Crew Commander Henderson advised Members that the Authority had entered into a relationship with NHS Milton Keynes and Age UK and statistics from the Age UK website show that up to 1 in 3 people over 65 suffer a fall in the UK each year (3.4 million people); falls cost the NHS an estimated £4.6m a day (£1.7b a year); it was a major cause of injury/death in the over 70's; and accounts for over 50% of hospital admissions for accidental injuries in over 70's.

It was important to the Authority as it already worked to reduce a person's risk from fire and there was a direct link between falls and an individual's independence, reduced mobility, fitness, which often lead to increased risk of fire and fire death. Age UK and MK Falls would refer to the service individuals to receive home fire risk checks, and the service would identify individuals who could potentially benefit from the Falls Prevention Service, and refer them back to Age UK and MK Falls.

Wholetime crews from Milton Keynes East Stations (Broughton and Newport Pagnell) had received training. The Training was station based and delivered by MK Falls and focused on the risk factors for falls. This would enable crews to identify the appropriate people and make referrals. The new referral process commenced in January 2016 and once this initial phase had been established, any lessons learned would be incorporated and the scheme would be expanded and 'rolled out' across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 2.00PM