

Minutes of the meeting of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2017 at 11.00 am

**Present** Councillors Carroll, Cranmer, Exon, Glover, Irwin, Lambert, Reed (Chairman), Roberts, Sullivan and Watson

**Officers:** J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), D Sutherland (Director of Finance and Assets), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), M Hemming (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), K McCafferty (Head of Human Resources), A Chart (Health and Safety Manager), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager), R Priest (Group Commander Community and Business Safety), C Duncan (Community Safety Co-ordinator) and G Taylor (Group Commander)

1 Member of the Public

**Apologies:** Councillors Marland, McCall, McDonald, Teesdale and Wilson

**FA31 WELCOME ANY NEW MEMBERS ONTO THE AUTHORITY**

The Chairman welcomed the new Member to the Fire Authority Councillor Anita Cranmer from Buckinghamshire County Council and advised that it was the Group Leader's wish that she be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Cranmer be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee.

**FA32 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 18 October 2017, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**FA33 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman's Announcements had been circulated in advance but the Chairman also announced that after many months of tough negotiation the Authority had finally reached agreement with EE/T-Mobile for renewed mobile mast licences. On top of the agreement already reached with O2/Vodafone, this would push the Authority's total income on these licences to circa £190k per annum. There were some costs to the Authority associated with the agreements, nevertheless, the net return would be significant. This was a great result given that, due to new technologies, the Authority had originally thought such income would fall to around £50k in total.

The Chairman also announced that in November the National Employers' side of the NJC agreed that while Grey Book pay negotiations continued the employers apply a 1% uplift backdated to 1 July 2017, which had been his wish before the threatened legal action against the Authority by the FBU which had been discussed at the Authority's October meeting.

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the service would be featured on a future episode of Countryfile in January 2018, to be filmed at Olney Fire Station to highlight the issues around how the rural economy had changed and how that impacted on on-call firefighters.

**FA34**

## **COMMITTEE MATTERS**

### **(a) SOA4 Election of and Powers of the Chairman**

RESOLVED –

That the Authority's Standing Orders be amended so that the following text at SOA4 2(b) be deleted:

"In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, the oldest Member present will preside."

and replaced with:

"In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, the Monitoring Officer or an officer nominated by him or her will preside."

### **(b) SOA20 Suspension, Variation, and Revocation of Standing Orders**

RESOLVED –

That the Authority's Standing Orders be amended so that the following text at SOA20 5 (Variation and Revocation) be deleted:

"A printed copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each Member of the Authority, for inclusion in the Member's Handbook, by the Monitoring Officer to the Authority upon nomination to the Authority by the Constituent Authority."

and replaced with:

"A printed copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each Member of the Authority, as part of the induction pack upon nomination to the Authority by the Constituent Authority."

### **(c) Amendment to the Authority's Financial Regulations - Investments and Treasury Management**

RESOLVED –

That the Authority's Financial Regulations be amended so that the following text at C.9 (Investments and Treasury Management) be deleted:

"At or before the start of each financial year the Chief Finance Officer will prepare a report on the Treasury Management Strategy for the coming year for consideration by the Executive Committee before submission to the Authority for approval. The Chief Finance Officer will also report to the Executive Committee and the Authority on the annual performance of the Treasury Management function following the end of the financial year."

and replaced with:

"At or before the start of each financial year the Chief Finance Officer will prepare a report on the Treasury Management Strategy for the coming year for consideration by the Overview and Audit Committee before submission to the Authority for approval. The Chief Finance Officer will

also report to the Overview and Audit Committee and the Authority on the annual performance of the Treasury Management function following the end of the financial year.”

**FA35**

**POLICING AND CRIME ACT 2017 CONSULTATION: CHANGES TO THE AUTHORITY’S COMBINATION SCHEME**

The Director of Legal and Governance advised Members that the purpose of this late item was to bring to the Authority’s attention the consultation issued by the Home Office on 27 November 2017 in order for it to consider its response. The consultation, which closed on 15 January 2018, invited views on proposals to make legislation to “*make amendments to the Combination Scheme of those FRAs who are supportive of the amendments*”. The amendments would create the process by which the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner could become a voting member on the Authority.

Members discussed the consultation and directed that the following points should be drawn to the attention of the Home Office in its response to the Questionnaire:

- The Thames Valley PCC and Deputy PCC both already have an open invitation to attend meetings of the Authority. However, if the PCC were to become a Member of the Authority, the Authority would wish to exclude the PCC from entitlement to the receipt of any Member Allowances. The PCC should be funded by the sponsoring Authority i.e. the Office of the Thames Valley PCC and it should not be down to this Authority to fund that.
- If the PCC were to become a Member of the Authority, the PCC would be entitled to be counted as a Member of a political group on the Authority. The Authority does not agree that it should be the case that membership by the PCC should have an impact on the political proportionality of the Authority.
- If the PCC were to become a Member of the Authority there should be a reciprocal entitlement for the Chairman of this Authority to be a member of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel in order that there was a mutual arrangement for the open exchange of views between the PCC and the Authority.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Chairman be authorised to respond on the Authority’s behalf in respect of the proposed amendments to its Combination Scheme as set out at page 6 of the Home Office consultation that it agrees with the proposed amendments;

2. it be noted that, if the amendments are made, there will be some minor consequential amendments to its Combination Scheme as indicated at page 7 of the Home Office consultation.

**FA36**

**HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17**

The Lead Member for Health and Safety and Corporate Risk advised Members that 2016/17 had been a very busy year for the Health and Safety department with the ‘go live’ of the electronic safety event reporting and investigation system; the health and safety behavioural safety culture survey and the application for the RoSPA Achievement Award for excellence in health and safety performance, for which the service won the prestigious Gold award. Following the health and safety behavioural safety culture a focus group had been set up to work on the

areas identified for development and a review of the suggestions made by those on the front line for improvement. The survey would be repeated in 2019/20 to measure progress.

The Health and Safety Manager thanked the Lead Member for her input into the work of the Health and Safety Department since she had taken over as Lead Member earlier this year.

The Health and Safety Manager advised Members that it was another very good year in terms of health and safety performance particularly in terms of the achievement of the RoSPA Gold Award, the first time since 2012 the service had applied for an award. Another highlight was the setting up of its performance statistics within VIPER which would be displayed at every station so that a holistic picture was seen by all personnel.

The Health and Safety Manager advised Members that the service was working closely with Thames Valley Police and the two Thames Valley fire and rescue services' health and safety counterparts on sharing procedures, learning and incident ground protocols. Thames Valley Police already utilised the Authority's risk assessments at shared incidents where this service had primacy.

Since the training programme educating staff on why reporting events was important, there had been an increase in the number of events being reported from 27 to 46 compared to last year. There had also been a significant increase of 193% in the number of 'near miss' reports shown as a green upward triangle in the 'our performance at a glance' table. Investigations into these events where there had been no injury or loss of any kind would assist in ensuring an actual event does not occur in the future.

There had been increases in the number of injuries at training events and routine activities. A new swift water training regime at Lee Valley was in place which on investigation showed that our personnel need to be fitter which this training will assist with. Work was underway to analyse personal injuries for trends and contributory factors i.e. an aging workforce, fatigue through additional shifts worked etc. Early indications were that working additional shifts was not a causal factor in these injuries.

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that as they may be aware there would be a new inspection programme for fire and rescue services by HMICFRS. There would be three tranches of inspection with the first starting in summer 2018 in which 15 fire and rescue services would be inspected. Tranche two would start in winter 2018 and tranche three would start in spring 2019. The inspections would be conducted in the same way as police inspections. The Chief Fire Officer informed the Authority that it was in tranche three. A report outlining the Authority's plan would be going to a further meeting.

RESOLVED –

That the performance of the Service in terms of Health, Safety and Well-being be noted.

**FA37 SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHO HOARD POSSESSIONS IN THEIR HOMES**

Members received a presentation on people who hoard possessions in their homes, from Group Commander Community and Business Safety Richard Priest and Community Safety Co-ordinator Christine Duncan.

**FA38 CATON HOUSE NURSING HOME FIRE**

Members received a presentation on the Caton House Nursing Home Fire from Area Commander Julian Parsons and Group Commander Gary Taylor. The Chairman also thanked Group Commander Gary Taylor on behalf of the Fire Authority as he was retiring at the end of December 2017 after 28.5 years of service.

**FA39 EXEMPT MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 18 October 2017, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**FA40 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Authority noted that the next meeting of the Fire Authority was to be held on Wednesday 14 February 2017 at 11.00am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.49PM